

# **Teacher Educators' Perceptions of Language in Learning and Teaching**

*Interconnecting language-oriented teaching  
and professional development*

**Fenna Swart**

Beoordelingscommissie:

Prof. dr. Jos Beishuizen  
Prof. dr. Huub van den Bergh  
Prof. dr. Maaïke Hajer  
Dr. Anne Kerkhoff  
Prof. dr. Paulien Meijer

Paranimfen:

Ferry Haan  
Cindy Kuiper-Nijland

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Cover design: Cain Swart

Contact: [fennaswart25@gmail.com](mailto:fennaswart25@gmail.com)

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**Teacher Educators' Perceptions of Language  
in Learning and Teaching**

*Interconnecting language-oriented teaching  
and professional development*

Percepties van Lerarenopleiders over Taal  
in Leren en Lesgeven  
(met een samenvatting in het Nederlands)

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**Fenna Swart**

**Promotor:**

Prof. dr. H.C.J. de Graaff

**Copromotoren:**

Dr. D. Knežić

Dr. J.H.A.M. Onstenk

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Voor Cain



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## Chapter 1

### **General Introduction**

## Chapter 1 General Introduction

*“It is easy to imagine talk in which ideas are explored [...] in which teachers talk less [...] and students correspondingly talk more. [...] Easy to imagine, but not easy to do.”*

Courtney B. Cazden, “The Language of Teaching and Learning,” 2001, p.54

The connection between language and subject-specific content is presently receiving great focus in teacher education (DiCerbo, Anstrom, Baker, & Rivera, 2014; Sedova, 2017). Language-oriented approaches have become a major topic in higher education for a number of reasons, most importantly because of the socially proposed requirements that teachers generally and teacher educators specifically should be able to cope with an increasing cultural, linguistic, and academic diversity in the classroom (Den Brok, van Eerde, & Hajer, 2010). Against this background, and from an increasingly connected world that calls for “new literacies” (Alvermann, 2002, p.189), studies have shown that uncertainties surrounding language policy and related pedagogies potentially lead to not only an increase in language problems but also to problems with teachers’ teaching and student learning itself (Herelixa & Verhulst, 2014). From these developments, we considered it was important to look at what experienced teacher educators, as subject experts and role models, want to learn with regard to their own use of language in classroom practice. More precisely, we investigate what and how they learn as it applies to language in their learning and teaching, based on their practical knowledge in content-based classrooms. The examination of language in learning and teaching draws on research on both professional teacher development, such as Darling-Hammond (2006, 2017), Louws (2016), and Tynjälä (2008), as well as on language-oriented learning and teaching, such as Kumpulainen, Karttunen, Juurola, & Mikkola (2014), Lantolf, Thorne, & Poehner (2015), and Love (2009, 2010). Combining these two lines of scientific inquiry corroborates the close relationship between language, teaching, and learning.

This dissertation describes a series of studies that offer insight into the needs, concept development, implementation, and evaluation of language-oriented professional learning and teaching of experienced teacher educators in higher education. The general aim of this dissertation is to contribute to the current body of knowledge on language-oriented teaching and teacher professional development guided by the question “How do experienced teacher educators develop and improve their language-oriented professional learning and teaching?” The specific goal is to understand teacher educators’ needs and preferences about their own learning while teaching based on their personal practical knowledge of language in content-based teaching.

### *Context of teacher educators’ professional development*

According to Tynjälä (2008), there is a consensus about how learning is related to, and situated in, specific cultural contexts from the perspectives of both intentional and unintentional learning (Eraut,

2004; Tynjälä, 2008; Bronkhorst, 2013). Professional competence and teacher learning are generally divided into learning within an educational system and learning at the workplace. The latter is to be understood from a sociocultural perspective on learning (Billett, 2002) in which, simultaneously, educational learning and workplace learning can take place as participants engage in deliberate learning through workplace experience and activity. However, these processes have raised questions about the implications in relation to experienced teacher educators because most studies on professional development are primarily focused on improving student outcomes (Avalos, 2011). This focus has presented two potential problems: the marginalized role of the experienced teacher educator as a subject of research with respect to the goals of professional development, and the lack of a clearly defined authentic context in teaching practice.

The specific ways in which contextual factors interact with the needs of teacher educators vary in studies depending on traditions, cultures, policy environments, and school conditions of a particular country (Van Veen, Zwart, & Meirink, 2012). Cognitive theory has helped to reveal a number of constant factors such as the role of previous convictions and perceptions of self-efficacy as well as individual factors that support or prevent teacher change. For instance, studies have demonstrated that a combination of tools for learning and reflective experience serve the purpose of professional development. Regular alternation of teaching with forms of consultation with teacher colleagues contributes significantly to teacher development (Darling-Hammond, 2017). For this reason, a shift of attention from forms of co-learning through exchange of opinions to co-learning on the basis of mutual observation, reflection, and language-oriented feedback seems to emerge as most promising for teacher development.

In sociocultural theory, language as being “the most ubiquitous, flexible and creative of the meaning-making tools available” is recognized as an important source of learning (Mercer & Littleton, 2007, p. 2). From this perspective, learning is appropriated through social interaction and mediated by language, as originally claimed by Vygotsky (1978), which should not only be regarded an important tool for learning but also defined as a type of learning by itself (Sfard, 2001). In other words, language in teaching relates not only to tools for acquiring and transferring new knowledge but also to the development of language and thinking itself (see also chapters 3,4). It is this versatility of language that is often overlooked despite the fact that it is one of the key targets in both language and content-based teaching (Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

Sociocultural and dialogic theories of education have identified the need to integrate both pedagogical content and language knowledge into teacher professional development to promote effective classroom interaction on content (Kumpulainen et al., 2014). Teachers and their students in higher education in the Netherlands are expected to have a high level of language proficiency (Council for the Dutch Language, 2015; Herelikka & Verhulst, 2014) because of their involvement in communicatively challenging contexts of knowledge construction, application, and elaboration on both the academic and interpersonal levels. Based on this, colleges and universities are encouraged to pay considerable more attention to the further development of language skills (Council for the Dutch Language, 2015). The relevance to language-oriented professional development for teachers in higher education is therefore high. Hitherto, the presence of such specific knowledge and related practical means is relatively small. While teacher educators are generally recognized as key figures in the development and implementation of high-quality communication and education, they are not always represented in the decision-making process regarding their professional development (Czerniawski, 2013; Lieberman & Mace, 2008). As a consequence, educational improvement often takes place

based on approaches where the teacher responds to developments designed by others (Louws, 2016). For this reason, and to achieve change and improvement, it is important to understand the ways in which teacher educators themselves develop their learning based on their practical experience with language, that is, their personal practical knowledge of language.

#### *Personal practical knowledge of language*

One of the key principles of socially situated conceptualizations of language is that language is the primary source for meaning making and that language development is dependent on practical experience in social interaction (DiCerbo et al., 2014). Practical knowledge (Barrett, 2007) was originally explained by Dewey (1938), who referred to reflection as a form of thinking that was inspired by disorder in directly experienced situations. In his view, experience led to knowledge that was constructed and reconstructed, personally and socially, through enduring and valued experiences in the past, present, and future (Craig, 2009; Craig & Huber, 2006; Golombek, 1998; Olson & Craig, 2005). Dewey's ideas about enduring experience influenced for a large part, educational research on experiential knowledge and was later developed through concepts such as practical knowledge (Elbaz, 1981, 1991) and personal practical knowledge (Clandinin, 1985; Darling-Hammond, 2006; Van Driel, Verloop, & Vos 1997). Personal practical knowledge has also been described as a way to reconsider past experience and future expectation and to address the demands of a present situation (Connelly & Clandinin, 1997). As a result, teachers' personal knowledge, about themselves and their teaching, develops throughout their professional lives (Johnson & Golombek, 2002; Tsang, 2004). Drawing on these concepts of personal practical knowledge and person-centered education (Cornelius-White, 2007), professional development has been increasingly focused on learning from practical experience and interpersonal sensitivity (Knezic, Wubbels, Elbers, & Hajer, 2010). Against this background, teachers' practical knowledge is regarded as the repertoire of knowledge, perceptions, and needs (Meijer, Zanting, & Verloop, 2001) and considered to be the actual driving force behind teachers' thinking and behavior (Borg, 2001). Understanding this practical knowledge is important to obtain a better understanding of the teacher's teaching performance at the intersection of language-oriented teaching and professional development. Drawing on these concepts, this dissertation explores the substantive linkage between personal practical knowledge of language on the one hand and professional development of pedagogical knowledge on the other. It is here where two areas of educational research, come together in the research question of this dissertation: "How do teacher educators develop and improve their language-oriented professional learning and teaching in content-based classroom interaction?"

#### *Teacher educators' language in learning and teaching*

Teacher educators are considered education specialists and can be expected to possess practical knowledge specifically concerned with the communication of subject-related concepts to prospective teachers (Love, 2009). From this context, teacher educators need to help students become more aware of how their language functions in their teaching and learning development. To reach this objective, teacher educators have to understand how language works in both instructional activities and the use of materials that allows students to use forms and ways of expressing themselves. To succeed, we therefore argue that they first need to become aware of their own learning and language development during their teaching in conjunction with the role of language in various modes of

communication across the curriculum. In other words, teacher educators' understanding of their personal practical knowledge of language can help them recognize and estimate the language authenticity of others, based on which their language-oriented pedagogical content knowledge can be developed and improved. In this context, teacher educators' language development can be regarded as a combined process of formal and informal learning, in which learning takes place through a cyclical process of introspection, (re)conceptualization, socialization, evaluation, and internalization. From this perspective, research into how teacher educators develop and improve their language-oriented learning and teaching can be considered a strategy to advance both their own learning and teaching as well as student results. In this dissertation, we propose that teacher educators' awareness of language and learning regarding their students should adhere to their own learning perspectives to increase the efficacy of their language-oriented teaching.

Previous research has demonstrated that teacher educators tend to consider themselves more as sender-oriented and content-based teachers than as experts of communication that actively create and share new knowledge (Louws, van Veen, Meirink, & van Driel, 2017; Van der Veen, de Mey, van Kruistum, & van Oers, 2017). In addition, perspectives between education and policy experts and teacher educators typically appear to differ concerning the approach of teacher professional development within a generally regarded noncommittal approach. Nonetheless, setting up a mandatory program for language-oriented professional development does not provide a solution. Creating support, involvement, and responsibility among the teachers involved may be more effective (Swart, 2013). For this reason, in pursuit of improving the quality of education, there is a challenge for education and policy experts to first understand the learning needs, objectives, and learning preferences regarding teacher educators' language-oriented professional development. The purpose of this dissertation is the implementation of a language-oriented professional development project for teacher educators in content-based teaching as a qualitative impulse for experienced teacher educators in higher education. To clarify, teacher educators' development and involvement are the basis for improving the dynamics, progress, and intended quality of learning and teaching in higher education. The current dissertation aims to make a relevant contribution to advance conceptualization and policy development with respect to the language-oriented professional development of teacher educators.

In this dissertation, we argue that teacher educators who are aware of their personal practical knowledge of language have a better understanding of their students' language and consequently provide better support for "common knowledge construction" (Edwards & Mercer, 2013; Ebenezer, Chacko, Kaya, Koya, & Ebenezer, 2010). Our approach builds on the available literature related to personal theory of classroom practice (Bronkhorst, 2013; Chen, 2014) integrated with Shulman's (1986) knowledge domains, Love's (2009, 2010) language-sensitive teaching, and content-based classroom interaction (e.g., Dalton-Puffer & Smit, 2013). Embedded in these educational constructs, the exploration of language-oriented learning is linked to three aspects of language-oriented teaching: how spoken language is best structured to support effective professional learning and reasoning, the specific language within different subject contents, and the ability to develop and improve learning and teaching strategies needed for literacy in content-based language use.

*Language-oriented professional development of teacher educators*

Schulman (1986) first introduced the concept of pedagogical content knowledge (PCK). According to him, research on teaching and teacher education has ignored questions directly related to the content of teacher lessons. The concept of PCK originally referred to teachers' interpretations of subject-related knowledge, primarily in the context of student learning. These interpretations concerned the knowledge base for teaching. The knowledge base consisted of seven categories, three of which were content related. The other four categories related to learners and their characteristics, contexts, and purposes. According to Schulman (1986), submitting PCK to research presents the opportunity to combine research on teaching with research on learning (Shulman, 1986; Van Driel, Verloop & De Vos, 1998).

The role of language in learning and teaching and associated knowledge about language, could be considered more broadly than the exclusive oral use we focused on in this thesis. This implies the written use of language and subject-specific language such as in content based instruction and language-oriented content teaching. In this context, much evidence has indicated the supporting and substantive potential of language within subject teaching, ranging from various studies of dialogic-oriented pedagogy (Skidmore, 2000) and research (Wells, 2009) to studies of content-based language instruction (Brinton, Snow & Wesche, 2003; Echevarria, Law, Reilly & Snow, 2013; Short & Powers, 2008;). The latter area was formerly drawn from research on class management and based on instructional theories (Hoy & Weinstein, 2006) and interventional studies of language-oriented pedagogy (van Eerde, Hajer, Riteco, & Swank, 2006). The focus on content and language-integrated teaching originated from a dually focused educational approach in which the learning of both language and content was accomplished "with and through a foreign language" (Eurydice, 2006, p. 8; Nikula, Dalton-Puffer, Llinares, & Lorenzo, 2016). Research that examined the overall viability was generally positive, suggesting that teaching that was attentive to both language and content was more effective for learning development than teaching that focused on content exclusively (Lyster, 2007; Swain, 2000), particularly when regulated and subject-specific input was provided together with task-oriented language in conversation and corrective feedback focusing on both content and language (Valeo, 2013).

From studies on communities of practice, we know that learners are more likely to challenge their existing beliefs about concepts during processes of language learning within challenging communicative situations (Lantolf, Thorne, & Poehner, 2015) where, for example, their use of vocabulary is evaluated and compared with that in earlier stages of development (Hong, Hwang, Tai, & Chen, 2014). In a study of conversation analysis of classroom discourse, Foster and Ohta (2005) claimed that when learners work together, the group develops greater expertise than any of the individuals involved. Swain (2000) made similar claims about collaborative dialogue through a process she termed ways of languaging (Swain, 2009). Integrating the "teaching of language and content in the classroom in ways that can bring about the learning of both" is a task that teachers should generally be able to achieve (Hoare & Kong 2008, p. 254). Ongoing language development related to professional learning and teaching of teachers and of teacher educators is therefore essential to stimulate mutual involvement between teachers and students.

This focus has created new challenges for teacher educators' practical knowledge in terms of their professional progress. The specific knowledge of language for classroom communication draws on recent research (Bunch, 2013; Galguera, 2011; Love, 2009; Lucas & Villegas, 2011) with regard to the connection between language, learning, and teaching, including an understanding of spoken registers and disciplinary skills. This dissertation builds on the assumption that teacher educators'

practical knowledge of language calls for an academic and interpersonal communication approach in which meanings, concepts, and connections can be made comprehensible with and through language as both tool and target.

In this thesis, the central topic is exclusively focused on teacher educators' perceptions of their oral language in learning and teaching based on their personal practical knowledge. This means that the perceptions of language have been investigated independently of the model or content of their instruction in order to develop an interdisciplinary framework for language-oriented professional learning and teaching of every teacher educator.

### *Scientific relevance*

This dissertation draws on educational and psychological theories of teacher professional development and teacher education (e.g., Darling-Hammond, 2006; Van Veen et al., 2012) combined with insights and methods from disciplines such as developments in content and language-integrated learning and content-based language education specifically with regard to mapping points and focus areas for teacher perception and teaching performance (e.g., Love, 2009, 2010; Wells, 2009; Skidmore, 2006). The study aims to contribute to the research areas of professional development through language-oriented classroom intervention and, in so doing, promote greater awareness and understanding of these research areas in several ways. First, we aim to contribute to the field conceptually by combining two areas of educational research that are usually addressed separately: professional development and language-oriented intervention. Second, we aim to make a methodological contribution because the dissertation uses an all-inclusive methodological perspective, based on the conceptual needs, preferences, and practical strategies newly developed by and with teacher educators, that is essential to understand the complexity of the connected two research areas (content-based language education and teacher professional development). In the first part of this dissertation (chapters 2 and 3), we aim to make a conceptual contribution by developing a conceptual framework of language-oriented learning that could be used in an exploratory way to theorize and analyze the relation between language-oriented learning and professional development of experienced teacher educators. In the second part (chapters 4 and 5), we use interventionist designs to subsequently gain insight into the complex nature of the identification, application, and evaluation of language-oriented performance in content-based teaching. In this context, the study aims to extend and build on current findings in the field and advance the field by presenting additional evidence on understanding teacher educators' language-oriented professional learning and teaching. Finally, this dissertation aims to contribute to the daily educational practice of teacher educators by developing, describing, and evaluating a comprehensive framework for language-oriented professional development that is readily available to be implemented in their teaching to improve the quality of teacher educators' language-oriented performance in content-based teaching.

## The Present Study

### *The research project*

The dissertation research was conducted as part of a project for language-oriented professional

development that was initiated for this purpose and executed in four stages (Figure 1). Our sample comprised of, in total, 35 experienced teacher educators from seven higher education teacher training departments in the humanities, sciences, and social studies. All of them expressed an interest in developing their knowledge of language in classroom practice and had a minimum of two years of teaching experience.

The first study (chapter 2) was conducted with 35 teacher educators in 7 teacher training institutes of Universities of Applied Sciences in the Netherlands. The second study (chapter 3) was carried out with 29 teacher educators in 4 teacher-training institutes and was based on their voluntary involvement in the previous study. The third study (chapter 4) was conducted with eleven teacher educators from three teacher-training institutes based on their participation in the previous two studies. The fourth and last study (chapter 5) involved three teacher educators based on their voluntary involvement in the previous three studies and 32 of their second- or third-year bachelor students.

The research question we set out to answer was:

“How do teacher educators develop and improve their language-oriented professional learning and teaching in content-based teaching?”

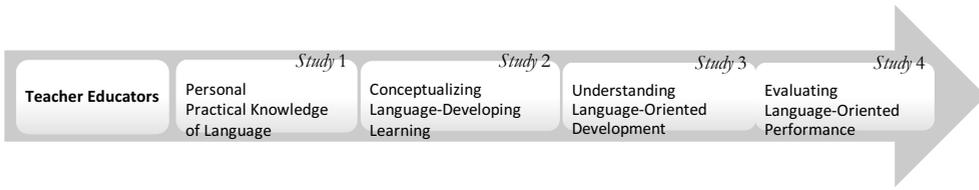
To answer this question, we conducted four studies that each resulted in a chapter of this thesis. These sub-studies were guided by the following four sub-questions: (further below and Table 1)

1. a. “How do teacher educators perceive their personal practical knowledge of language-oriented learning for classroom communication?”  
b. “What preferences do teacher educators state for developing their personal practical knowledge of language-oriented learning for classroom communication?”
2. “How do teacher educators conceptualize language-developing learning for classroom interaction?”
3. “How do teacher educators understand their language-oriented development in content-based classroom interaction?”
4. “How do teacher educators and their students evaluate language-oriented performance in content-based teaching?”

#### *Scope and outline of the dissertation*

The research project was executed as follows: Study 1/Chapter 2: “Personal Practical Knowledge of Language”; Study 2/Chapter 3: “Conceptualizing Language-Developing Learning”; Study 3/Chapter 4: “Understanding Language-Oriented Development”; Study 4/Chapter 5: “Evaluating Language-Oriented Performance” (Figure 1).

**Figure 1.** Research Design of Teacher Educators’ Language-Oriented Professional Learning and Teaching



### *Study 1/Chapter 2*

In the first study, teacher educators' (N=35) understanding of language for classroom communication in higher education is described. In this stage, we argue that teacher educators who are aware of their personal practical knowledge of language have a better understanding of their students' language use and provide better support for common knowledge construction. Personal practical knowledge originates from teacher' professional practice and is based on their past experience, current awareness, and future expectation. Teacher educators' language is defined as language that is used in classroom communication to teach, speak, and interact about content-based topics that, as a consequence, feed into both students' and teachers' own learning process. In this context, the language of teacher educators is used to set up interactions that allow participants to reflect and build personal knowledge of each other and create collective meanings. Data from focus group interviews are used for content analysis. The insights from this study aim to contribute to building a knowledge base of language and communication-oriented teaching.

### *Study 2/Chapter 3*

During the second study, teacher educators' (N=29) conceptualization of ongoing language development (referred to as "language-developing learning" in this study) is described as part of their PCK and based on their practical knowledge of language. To promote effective interaction with students about subject-specific concepts, we argue in this stage the need to integrate content-based and language-oriented teaching into teacher educators' professional development. In this study, we develop a meta-perspective on language to understand how experienced teacher educators conceptualize ongoing language development in professional learning and teaching. The data are examined using content analysis. The insights from this study aim to increase our awareness of teacher educators' practical knowledge of academic and interpersonal language in specific content-based contexts of teacher educators' professional development in higher education.

### *Study 3/Chapter 4*

During the third stage, teacher educators' (N=11) assessment of their teacher-student interactions in subject-specific teaching practice of the use and development of language in the particular context of their initiation and response is described. Recently, there has been a growing recognition of the importance of teacher educators' personal practical knowledge of "language" for student learning development. However, the need for teacher educators to first understand their own language-oriented development, in content-based classroom interaction, persists. This chapter investigates how 11 experienced teacher educators understand their language-oriented development through control of task difficulty, small-group instruction, and directed response questioning. Data are examined using content and constant comparison analyses. The insights from this study aim to contribute to developing a frame for language-oriented professional development.

*Study 4/Chapter 5*

In this final stage, teacher educators' (N=3) and their students' (N=35) evaluation of teacher participants' language-oriented performance in classroom interaction is analyzed. In this study, we argue that the evaluation of language-oriented performance, based on teacher educators' practical knowledge of language, improves the quality of content-based teaching. This chapter reports on a video-enhanced intervention study with three experienced teacher educators and their students. Data are examined using methodological triangulation. The insights from this study aim to provide a structure for evidence-based evaluation of teacher educators' language-oriented performance in content-based teaching, along with recommendations for its application in teacher educators' educational practice.

**Table 1.** Overview of the dissertation

Chapter/ Stage	Title	Aims/Research questions	Central concepts	Designs	Unit of analysis
1 Prologue	Introduction	Presents the theoretical assumptions, the scope, and overview of the dissertation			
2 Exploring	Teacher educators' personal practical knowledge of language	How do teacher educators perceive their personal practical knowledge of language-oriented learning? What preferences do teacher educators have for developing their personal practical knowledge of language-oriented learning for classroom communication?	Language-oriented learning, Personal practical knowledge	Retrospective; in-depth focus group interviews	35 Experienced teacher educators of sciences, social sciences, and humanities
3 Conceptualizing	Teacher educators' conceptualization of ongoing language development in professional learning and teaching	How do teacher educators conceptualize language-developing learning for classroom interaction?	Agent and process of learning and objective of language	Series of three Socratic dialogues with four teacher teams	29 Experienced Teacher educators of sciences, social sciences, and humanities
4 Understanding	Teacher educators' understanding of their language-oriented performance in subject-specific classroom interaction	How do teacher educators understand their language-oriented performance in subject-specific classroom interaction?	Subject, process, and purpose of interactive strategies, Third turn response	Reflective interviews, stimulated recall, and focus group interviews	11 Experienced teacher educators of sciences, social sciences
5 Evaluating	Teacher educators' evaluation of their language-oriented development stages in subject-specific teaching	How do teachers and students evaluate teacher educators' language-oriented development in subject-specific teaching?	Language-oriented focus areas, framework for language-oriented professional development	Video-enhanced teacher reflection, student logs, stimulated recall, and focus group interviews	3 Experienced teacher educators of sciences, social sciences, and 35 students
6 Concluding	Discussion	Presents a meta-perspective on the studies described in this dissertation			



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## **Conceptual Explorations, *part I***

### Chapter 2

#### **Teacher educators' personal practical knowledge of language**

Chapter 2<sup>1</sup>**Teacher Educators' Personal Practical Knowledge of Language***Abstract*

This paper describes teacher educators' understanding of language for classroom communication in higher education. We argue that teacher educators who are aware of their personal practical knowledge of language have a better understanding of their students' language use and provide better support for knowledge construction. Personal practical knowledge originates from teachers' professional practice and is based on their past experience, current awareness and future expectation. Data from focus group interviews with teacher educators (N = 35) were used for content analysis. Findings demonstrate an emerging conceptualization resulting in two language modalities of personal practical knowledge, specified as: 'language-sensitive and interpersonally oriented' and 'language-focused and pedagogically oriented.' The insights contribute to building a professional practical knowledge base of language and communication-oriented teaching

## Introduction

This study concerns teacher educators' practical knowledge and awareness of language in their teaching and professional learning. This specific kind of awareness is still relatively unexplored and underdeveloped in educators' professional learning and does not play a substantive role in their subject-oriented classrooms. From this perspective, integrating language awareness in teacher educators' personal practical knowledge is relevant in order to interact with students about subject content. Teachers and students in higher education are expected to have an elaborated level of language proficiency as they are involved in communication in academically and linguistically challenging educational settings (Smit & Dafouz, 2012). Generally, language is essential for teaching and learning at all levels (Cazden, 2001). Teacher educators' specific practical knowledge of their own language use adds an interdisciplinary and communicative expertise that is essential for the learning process and professional development of their students as future teachers.

One of the key principles of socially situated conceptualizations of language is that language is the primary source for making meaning, and that language development is dependent on practical experience in social interaction (DiCerbo, Anstrom, Baker, & Rivera, 2014). This practical experience, leading to forms of experiential knowledge (Barrett, 2007), was originally explained by Dewey (1938) who referred to reflection as a form of thinking that was inspired by disorder in directly experienced situations. In his view, experience led to knowledge that was constructed and reconstructed, personally and socially, through enduring and valued experiences in the past, present,

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and future (Craig, 2004, 2009; Golombek, 1998; Olson & Craig, 2005). Dewey's ideas about enduring experience determined for a large part educational research on experiential knowledge and was later developed through concepts such as practical knowledge (Elbaz, 1981, 1991) and personal practical knowledge (Clandinin, 1985; Connelly, Clandinin, & He, 1997; Darling-Hammond, 2006; Van Driel, Verloop, & De Vos, 1997). Personal practical knowledge has also been described as a way to reconsider past experience and future expectation, and to address the demands of a present situation (Connelly et al., 1997). As a result, teachers' personal knowledge, about themselves and their teaching, develops throughout their professional lives (Johnson & Golombek, 2002; Tsang, 2004). Drawing on these concepts of personal practical knowledge and 'person-centered education' (Cornelius-White, 2007), professional development has been increasingly focused on learning from practical experience and interpersonal sensitivity (Knezic, Wubbels, Elbers, & Hajer, 2010). Against this background, teachers' practical knowledge has been argued to be the actual driving force behind teachers' thinking and behavior (Borg, 2001). To date several studies have collected relevant data in order to investigate the comprehension and capacities of language use in a wide range of classroom settings (Schleppegrell & O'Hallaron, 2011). A recurrent observation in these studies appears to be that communication focused on (the transfer of subject) content is embedded in and facilitated by instructional and regulative registers (Christie, 1995, 2000), which set the conditions in which subject-specific learning can take place. Bailey and Heritage (2008) identified two varieties of informal and formal classroom communication: 'school navigational language' and 'curriculum content language' as in the communication of teachers with peers, and the communication of teachers during teaching. Drawing on Bailey and Heritage (2008), Scarcella (2008) added that notions of 'foundational knowledge of language' and 'essential academic language' are important for both the communication and transfer of knowledge. Recently, it has been argued that both registers of language are more complex than the above-implied distinction between formal language forms of 'content' and informal language forms of 'context' (DiCerbo et al., 2014), and that classroom communication for learning occurs in both registers (Dalton-Puffer & Nikula, 2006). Teacher educators are considered education specialists, both as an expert and as a role model, and can be expected to possess practical knowledge specifically concerned with the communication of subject-related concepts to prospective teachers (Love, 2009). This focus has placed new challenges on teacher educators in terms of their professional progress (Knezic et al., 2010). In this study, we define teacher educators' language as that which is used in classroom communication to teach, speak, and interact about their professional topics, which as a consequence feeds into both student-teachers' and teachers educators' own learning process. In this context, teacher educators' language is used to set up interactions that allow participants to reflect and build personal knowledge of each other and create collective meanings (Barton & Tusting, 2005). This specific knowledge of language for classroom communication draws on recent research (Bunch, 2013; Galguera, 2011; Love, 2009; Lucas & Villegas, 2011; Schleppegrell & O'Hallaron, 2011) on the relationships between communication, content, and learning, including an understanding of spoken registers and disciplinary skills. We aimed at gaining insight into teacher educators' personal practical knowledge of language for classroom communication, and at exploring ways in which this knowledge development could be stimulated and improved. Our research questions were:

1. *How do teacher educators perceive their personal practical knowledge of language-oriented learning for classroom communication?*
2. *What preferences do teacher educators state for developing their personal practical knowledge of language-oriented learning for classroom communication?*

## Method

### *Context and participants*

The current study was conducted with 35 teacher educators in 7 teacher training institutes of Universities of Applied Sciences in the Netherlands concerning the first phase of an educational program of professional development on language and communication. The practical knowledge of teachers, integrated with pedagogical and subject knowledge, is considered the personal theory of classroom practice (Bronkhorst, Meijer, Koster, Akkerman, & Vermunt, 2013; De Vries, Jansen, & van de Grift, 2013; Hen & Sharabi-Nov, 2014). Based on this definition, our sample of convenience was comprised of teacher educators ( $N = 35$ ) who expressed an interest in participating in a language-oriented professional development process to increase their personal practical knowledge of language in classroom practice. The type of sampling used was purposeful and non-probabilistic (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007): we selected seven higher education teacher training departments in Humanities (H), Sciences (S), and Social Studies (SS) to participate in the study with a minimum of two years of working experience (see Table 1). Participants were considered informants, i.e. sources of data, and not as representatives of the entire population of teacher educators. In cases of purposeful, non-probabilistic sampling, a sample of 35 is regarded adequate to reach conceptual saturation (Bronkhorst, Koster, Meijer, Woldman, & Vermunt, 2014; Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006).

**Table 1.** Participants

Team	Departments	Female	Male	Participants	Work experience group average/years
1	sciences (s)	2	4	6	19
2	sciences (s)	2	4	6	22
3	humanities (h)	4	0	4	15
4	humanities (h)	3	2	5	20
5	humanities (h)	4	0	4	12
6	social sciences (ss)	1	5	6	23
7	Mixed (h,s, ss)	3	1	4	17
Total		19	16	35	18

### *Instruments*

During focus group interviews participants were asked to respond to four sub-topics: (1) 'Participants' recent and inspiring experiences with language in the classroom,' such as: 'What can you tell us about experience(s) with language you have had recently during class interaction that inspired you? And were intended to open up the interviews. Based on these experiences, participants were asked about their levels, perceptions and preferences, (2) 'level of personal language awareness,' such as: 'To what extent were you aware of your own language use during this experience?' (3) 'perceptions of meaning and relevance regarding personal practical knowledge of language,' such as: 'What meaning does language have in your example?'; and 'What is the relevance of this meaning to your practical knowledge of language?' and (4) 'preferences for development and improvement regarding this knowledge,' such as: 'How would you like to further develop your personal, practical knowledge of language?'; and 'What do you need to deepen and extend this knowledge of language?' Topics 1–3 were discussed in order to address the first research question ('perceptions about practical knowledge of language'). The last topic (4) was discussed to address the second research question ('preferences for development').

### *Procedure*

The researcher in this study acted as a moderator of the focus groups. The role of the moderator was to introduce the topics and focus the process in a neutral capacity (Reiskin, 1992). Direct involvement in this project served the purpose of required sensitivity to the topics and the need for methodological precision (Breakwell & Millward, 1995). Purpose, ground rules and topics regarding the interviews were explained to participants in writing prior to and at the beginning of the interviews. The ground rules addressed agreements of confidentiality, i.e. privacy in gathering and handling data (McLafferty, 2004; White & Thomson, 1995). All interviews began with an introduction of the central topic, including the working definitions. The central topics concerned 'teacher educators' personal Practical Knowledge of Language.' The first part of the topic, 'personal practical knowledge,' was explained as 'knowledge based on classroom practice as a result of past experience, present awareness and future expectation.' The second part, 'language,' was explained as 'the verbal use of language for classroom communication.' Participants were asked to speak individually and not to confuse or contradict each other. Each participant was asked to address all subjects and at the end of the discussion to select the key points for the summary. The nature of the questions posed by the moderator was open and questions clarified to encourage participants to speak and substantiate their statements. The questions differed slightly depending on the response of the individual groups. In other words, they were modified to suit the groups, in order to generate as much input as possible. Each group interview lasted 1.5 h.

### *Analysis*

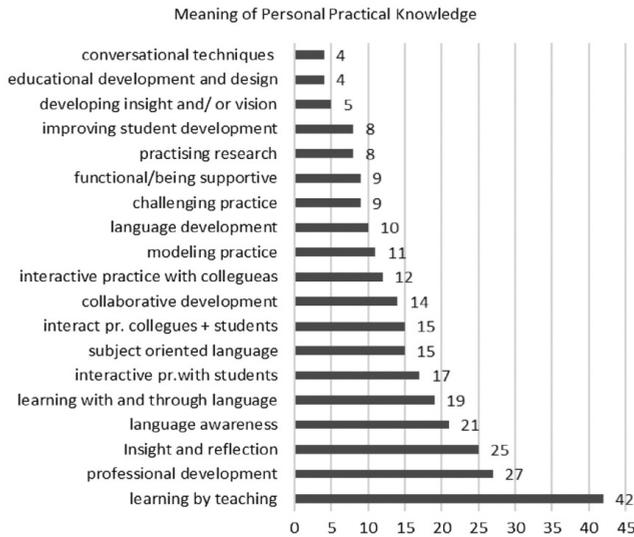
Focus group interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim. The data resulting from the focus group interviews were analyzed using Atlas ti. Content analysis was used to gain descriptive

information. According to Cohen et al. (2007) 'content analysis' can be considered an alternative to the statistical approach of qualitative data and be used to obtain numerical data from word-based data, to open the possibility to describe the relative occurrence and significance of certain topics (Miles & Huberman, 1994). We applied content analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994) to identify participants' understanding, i.e. meaning and relevance, of their Practical Knowledge of Language and their preferences for improvement. This was performed by a systematic comparison of the categories and using participants' perceptions as a frame of reference (Boeije, 2002). The final summation of data allowed us to identify the main categories for analysis (Atkinson & Hammersley, 1994) (Figures 1–3). From each category a top four (of personal practical knowledge of language) was established (Tables 1–7). The first author identified all steps of data gathering and analysis. One of the co-authors conducted a formative audit at the beginning of code allocation, in which all codes were checked and discussed until agreement was found. After finishing all code allocation, the process was repeated by a third and independent researcher. In order to ensure the validity, transferability and relevance of all steps, respondent validation, reflexivity and attention to negative cases were evaluated and an audit trail was kept to monitor the process (Cohen et al., 2007).

## Results

Based on the results of the topics of 'personal experience' (1) 'awareness' (2) and connected 'meaning and relevance' (3) we addressed the first research question: 'perceptions of personal practical knowledge of language-oriented learning.' The results were converted into an outline of 'meaning' (Figure 1, Tables 2 and 3) and an outline of 'relevance' (Figure 2, Tables 4 and 5). The results of the last topic 'development and improvement' (4) were used to address the second research question; 'preferences for improving personal practical knowledge of language' (Figure 3, Tables 6–8).

**Figure 1.** Meaning of personal practical knowledge of language, outline



**Table 2.** Meaning of personal practical knowledge of language, four key categories

Key categories	Perceptions
1 Teaching	developing teacher knowledge and skills by doing and experience during teaching practice
2 Professional development	Forms of formal and informal professional development activities in the workplace
3 Insight and reflection	reflecting on the job in retrospect and developing insights as a result
4 Awareness	developing language awareness during and after class

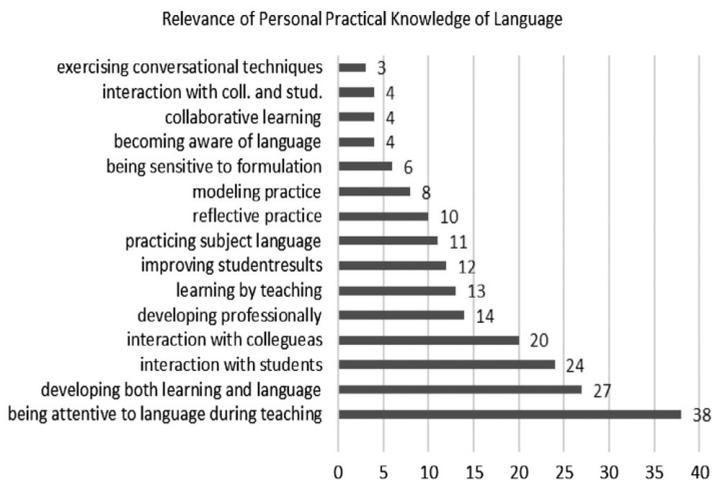
**Table 3.** Meaning of personal practical knowledge of language, individual frequencies of the focus groups

Meaning of personal practical knowledge of language MPKL								
	P1: S	P2: S	P3: SS	P4: H	P5: H	P6: H	P7: MX	Total
1. MpKlt*	6	4	4	8	5	10	5	42
2. MpKLpr	6	3	3	4	2	6	3	27
3. MpKLir	2	3	4	5	3	5	3	25
4. MpKLaw	2	2	3	4	5	3	2	21
Totals	16	12	14	21	15	24	13	115

Meaning of personal practical knowledge of language:

Teaching (1. MpKlt); Professional development (2. MpKLpr); Insight and reflection (3. MpKLir); Awareness (4. MpKLaw).

**Figure 2.** Relevance of personal practical knowledge of language for classroom communication, outline



**Table 4.** Relevance of personal practical knowledge of language for classroom communication, key categories

Key categories	Perceptions
1 being attentive to language during teaching	concentrating on language-oriented teaching
2 language development being part of learning development and vice versa	interacting between content knowledge of language and language knowledge of content
3 interactive practice with students	Understanding language-oriented student learning
4 interactive practice with colleagues	Understanding language-oriented and conceptual teacher (learning?)

**Table 5.** Relevance of personal practical knowledge of language for individual groups, individual frequencies

Relevance of personal practical knowledge of language RPKL								
	P1: S	P2: S	P3: SS	P4: H	P5: H	P6: H	P7: MX	TOTALS:
1. MpKLal*	8	5	8	5	2	6	4	38
2. MpKLladled	5	6	3	4	1	3	5	27
3. MpKLlips	5	3	5	3	4	1	3	24
4, MpKLipc	2	2	3	4	3	2	4	20
Totals	20	16	18	16	12	10	17	109

\*relevance of personal practical Knowledge of Language rpkL: being attentive to language during teaching (1. MpKLal); language development being part of learning development and vice versa (2. MpKLladled); interactive practice with students (3. MpKLlips); interactive practice with colleagues (4, MpKLipc).

### *Meaning of personal practical knowledge of language*

Based on the summary of data from the focus groups, assigned to the ‘meaning’ of practical knowledge, we specified 22 categories (Figure 1). A top four (Table 2:1–4) was compiled of the most often indicated (key) concepts during the focus interviews. The corresponding underlying frequencies (Table 3) provided insight into the main concepts and the relationships between these concepts and the different groups as discussed in the group interviews.

Participants explained ‘meaning’ as: ‘undergoing the experience of teaching’ and ‘being a teacher’ (Table 2:1). This knowledge was, according to participants, based on practical experience with either ‘student improvement,’ ‘student-related involvement,’ or a combination of the two.

I am particularly concerned with the development of students. In recent years I have become more aware of the added possibility that teachers can also learn from this experience (Teacher 3, Team 2)

Participants further identified this knowledge to be a ‘method of professional development’ (Table 2:2), followed by ‘insight and reflection’ (Table 2:3) through contemplation on the job and emerging insights, and developing ‘language awareness’ as a result, (Table 2:4) during and after classroom practice. Overall, the total number of indications was relatively consistent over all focus groups, with an average of 16.4: Humanities (H) 21, 24, and 15; Sciences (S) 16 and 12; Social Sciences (SS) 14; Mixed (Mx) 13 (Table 3).

### *Relevance of personal practical knowledge of language*

Based on the summary of data from the focus groups assigned to the ‘relevance’ of practical knowledge, 15 categories were formulated (Figure 2) providing an overview of the indicated importance of personal practical knowledge of language. A top four (Table 4:1–4) was compiled of the most relevant and often indicated key concepts. The corresponding underlying frequencies (Table 5) provided insight into the main concepts and the relationships between these concepts and the different groups.

The relevance of personal practical knowledge of language was attributed to the attitude of teachers during practice: ‘being attentive to language while teaching’ (Table 4:1), resulting in a cycle of learning: ‘by language development based on learning development’ and vice versa (Table 4:2).

I’ve seen it going wrong very often, even in higher education, because, for example, when a long and boring explanation was given on features of terminology, students fell asleep and thus it yielded little personal knowledge of language. But anything you would try to teach people this way, would fail. So this is not unique to my knowledge of language. What is unique is that you teach and, by paying attention to language, develop language competence in order to provide students with a view of content-related language (Teacher 3/Team 7)

In this view, content and language were considered inseparable in teacher pedagogy (Table 4:2). Relevance was also attributed to certain practices of teachers, such as ‘interactive practice with students’ (Table 4:3) and ‘interactive practice with colleagues’ (Table 4:4) specifically when involved with forms of reflective practice, such as investigative pedagogy, collegial consultation and professional check-ups. Overall, participants’ past experiences emerged as the primary focus and means to understand the meaning and relevance of personal practical knowledge. The underlying frequencies for the four key

categories (Table 5) were relatively consistent in the individual department groups with an average of 15.5: Humanities (H): 10, 16, and 13; Sciences (S): 20 and 16; Social Sciences (SS): 18; and Mixed (MX): 17. Because of this inequality in individual frequencies, potential qualitative differences were not transparent (Table 5).

With regard to participants' awareness of language during teaching practice, 28 participants (80%) responded (with their impressions?) about their present extent of self-perceived language awareness (Table 2:4; Table 3:1) when the topic was raised. Most participants recognized the importance of awareness regarding practical knowledge of language but only a few were aware of the effects thereof during teaching practice.

Trying to create more language awareness; there is still a lot that is unknown among teachers, [and] too little thinking about the role language plays in whether or not the teacher will be able to obtain results, or being able to convey your message and the core of what you want to get across. (Teacher 5/ Team 1)

I am not always so aware of my non-verbal communication, for example, that I talk too loud or with hidden intent in my message; then students get dissatisfied with my verbal feedback. (Teacher 4/ Team 2)

From this group of 28 participants, 64% indicated forms of unawareness of their practical knowledge of language, and 36% indicated forms of awareness in various degrees. In the former, forms of greater 'unawareness,' participants questioned either the need to know about their personal practical knowledge: 'It seems to me the question is whether this is desirable. I think that if I became aware of my personal practical knowledge of language during my teaching, it would be counterproductive,' or expressed little or no awareness of their personal practical knowledge: 'I never take into account whether I am aware or not of my own language learning,' 'Maybe I am even more unaware than I thought I was.'

Those who indicated forms of greater 'awareness' expressed either the will to know about their personal practical knowledge: 'I'm always learning language while I am teaching, or else I would not be a good teacher. I also tell this to my students,' or showed forms of increasing awareness:

I was not so aware of parts of my own personal practical knowledge of language when I had to think about theory. I sometimes repeated things three times in one sentence. I see that I still do this, but I am more aware of it. It is a process.

Other participants indicated awareness without a preconceived plan: 'I am probably aware of my language but I do not think about it,' and 'I think that I learn of my language by interacting with colleagues about how they are in the classroom by talking and developing ideas or sharing new techniques of teaching practice.'

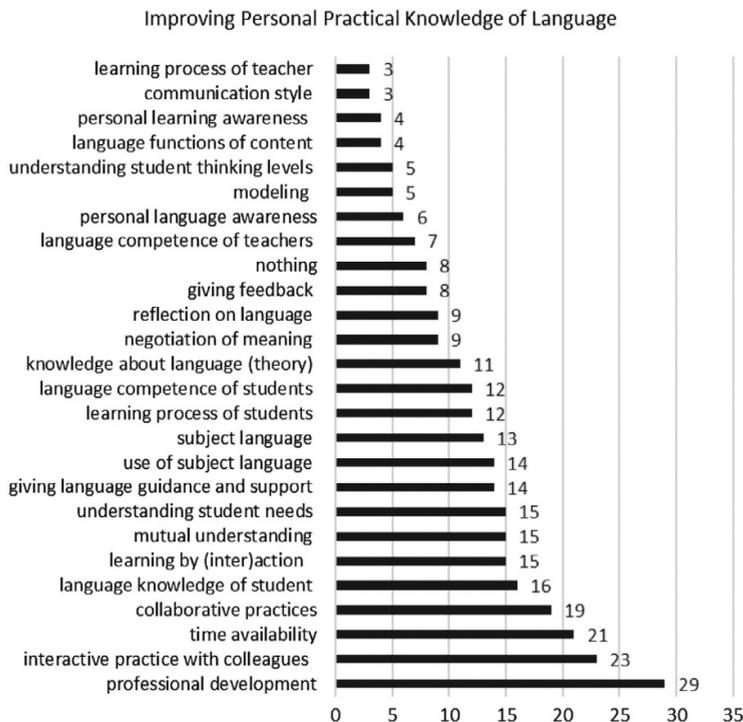
From the contributions of this group (of greater awareness), 'language sensitive' and 'language focused' practical knowledge were identified. Language sensitive was related to forms of being and attitude, such as *preparedness*, *language awareness*, and *attentiveness*, within a predominant receiver-focused mode, e.g. *listening*, *thinking*, *reflecting*. Language focused referred to forms of activity, such as *talking*, *instructing*, *explaining*, *structuring*, *referring*, *feedback* and *student checks*, *directing*, *regulating*, *guiding*, and *pointing*, within a mostly sender-focused mode, e.g. forms of direct and strategic instruction (Table 6).

Noticeable in this context was the relatively limited focus on a combined sender and receiver-focused mode, such as interactive practice and related listening skills, e.g. *investigative questioning, reflecting, mirroring, paraphrasing, summarizing*.

### *Improving personal practical knowledge of language for classroom communication*

Based on the summary of data from the last topic assigned, ‘improving’ practical knowledge of the teacher educator, 26 categories were formulated (Figure 3) to provide an overview of indicated means to develop and improve personal practical knowledge of language. From the 26 categories, a top four was compiled (Table 7:1–4) of the most often indicated key concepts. Corresponding subcategories: key incentives and key objectives were listed separately (Tables 8 and 9).

**Figure 3.** Improving personal practical knowledge of language, an overview



Preferences for improvement appeared to be based on future expectation and were focused on 'language-oriented training and development' (Table 7:1). When expressing a preference for more time (Table 7:3) for future 'professional development,' participants also expressed a need for 'interactive practices with colleagues' (Table 7:2) to generate inspiration and motivation for 'making more time' and invest in 'collaborative practice with colleagues' (Table 7:4). In this context, a number of specific areas for language-oriented training and professional development was reported: (i) 'developing ways to transfer new techniques and instructional techniques in teaching practice'; (ii) 'developing ways for interactive practice during verbal instruction'; (iii) 'developing ways for collaborative practice with students'; (iv) 'developing knowledge of meta-language'; and (v) 'developing knowledge of subject-based literacy.'

**Table 6.** Examples of two language modalities: language-sensitive and language-focused oriented learning

Language-sensitive and interpersonally oriented related to forms of teachers' attitude within a predominant receiver-focused mode	Language-focused and pedagogically oriented related to forms of teachers' activity; within a predominant sender-focused mode
Subject-oriented teacher educators are usually not very concerned with language, but tend to focus solely on their knowledge of the subject. although knowledge transmission can only take place in class if a relationship is established. i believe that this side of understanding language is still underexposed (Teacher 1, team 2)	I do not only see this in terms of phraseology but rather as an entire teaching approach, so for instance how you are explaining terms and synonyms while teaching. students said, hey, I've never really understood this, but now we'll manage, and i think that is language motivated pedagogy, so in that sense i think it can make a big difference (Teacher 1, team 7)
Always reflecting on what I say during instruction, do I understand, do you understand, is it clear? (Teacher 2, team 3)	By teaching and explaining the same thing over again in different words (Teacher 5, team 1)
By listening carefully to responses during my instruction, what is said and how, i can adapt myself and create conditions to improve my practice (Teacher 6, team 2)	Developing theoretical depth as well as transformation into the classroom by becoming more of an expert in transmitting content knowledge (Teacher 2, team 3).
In order to communicate something, your attitude is very important and how you pay attention to language forms and manners, i think we are only at the beginning of that piece (Teacher 3, team 6)	By instructing how to deal with language competence at all levels as a means to advance student learning of subject matter (Teacher 5, team 2)
When students recognize their own struggle with language, it can make a tremendous appeal on your own experiences with the matter. recognizing and understanding the same struggles with language are important tools to collect ways of language-aware learning (Teacher 3, team 5)	By teaching students, during class, to express themselves better and to direct them how to use language to further develop both their ideas and communication (Teacher 2, team 6)

**Table 7.** Improving personal practical knowledge of language for classroom communication, key categories

Key categories	Preferences
1 Language-oriented training and development	developing teacher knowledge and skills through a combination of formal and informal learning
2 Interactive practices with colleagues	developing communication skills through interactive practice via inter-vision, self-reflection and peer feedback
3 More time	developing professional development on a structural basis into the curriculum
4 Working together	developing and designing collaborative practice and skills

Objectives for improving personal practical knowledge of language for classroom communication (Table 8:1–4) were considered to be of interest for ‘developing understanding of teacher educators’ language competence’ (Table 8:1) followed by ‘student learning and improvement’ (Table 8:2–4). Addressing this student-focused orientation, participants differentiated between ‘mastering’ and ‘applying’ language-oriented learning in order to improve both students’ reasoning and communication skills.

Ultimately, we want students to learn how to reason in a professional way. The way in which we practice interaction, as teacher trainers, should contribute to this. Teachers themselves must develop the awareness that language is very important for the learning of their pupils so they pay more attention to their own language as well as that of their pupils. (Teacher 1, Team 6)

Students should be taught the discourse of the teaching profession [to] make them [an] apprentice to our discourse. This requires that teachers talk in different ways about the same subject, and they can help students to express themselves better in relation to their subject. Therefore, you also have to give a lot of feedback, not only on what they say but also how they say it. (Teacher 3, Team 1)

Potential incentives for improving personal practical knowledge of language for classroom communication (Table 8:1–4) were: ‘integrating methods for effective language pedagogy’ (Table 8:1), followed by ‘improving language competence and communicative pedagogy’ (Table 8:2) (i.e. learning to listen, learning how to interpret what students say), and ‘improving language guidance’ (Table 8:3) (i.e. learning to supervise students in the field of language and learning skills), and by doing so ‘increasing teacher educators’ ‘understanding of students’ (Table 8:4) as a result. Overall, participants indicated a need for developing ‘language focused pedagogy’ in which language competence and communicative pedagogy were integrated (Table 9:1; Table 8: 1,2). This was accompanied by the need for the development of a ‘language sensitivity’ in order to foster mutual understanding between teachers and students (Table 9:4; Table 8:4). Based on the combination of these two modalities, participants expected to develop an understanding of students’ competency of communication and knowledge construction (Table 9:2,3). Our findings demonstrated a preference for a combined approach of these two related modalities of language.

**Table 8.** Key incentives for improvement of personal practical knowledge of language for classroom communication

Key incentives	
1	integrating methods for effective language pedagogy
2	integrating teacher educators' language competence and communicative pedagogy
3	increasing teacher educators' language guidance
4	increasing teacher educators' understanding of students

**Table 9.** Key objectives for improvement of personal practical knowledge of language for classroom communication.

Key objectives	
1	developing understanding of teacher educators' language competence
2	developing comprehension of students' knowledge of learning and communication
3	developing comprehension of students' competency of learning and communication
4	developing comprehension of developing mutual understanding between teacher educator and students

## Discussion and conclusion

Based on the available literature we argued that student learning in classroom interaction depends on the quality of teacher educators' use of language, and the awareness of their personal practical knowledge of language for classroom communication. In terms of concrete and practical activities and ways to develop this, however, evidence appeared to be scarce. We set out to explore the topics by interviewing teacher educators in order to obtain concrete indications of their understanding and motivation to improve personal practical knowledge. We examined their views through the following central question: 'How do teacher educators perceive their personal practical knowledge of language for classroom communication, and what preferences do they have for developing their personal practical knowledge of language for classroom communication?' Based on our findings, we identified a primary focus and understanding of personal practical knowledge of language based on past experiences and less on 'current awareness' and 'future anticipation,' as will be discussed below. We also found an emergent conceptualization of the practical knowledge of language for classroom communication; i.e. variations in degrees of language awareness and language attitudes, leading us toward two related language modalities: 'language-sensitive and interpersonally oriented' and 'language-focused and pedagogically oriented' practical knowledge of teacher educators. We will discuss these approaches below with specific consideration of the research questions.

*How do teacher educators perceive their personal practical knowledge of language for classroom communication?*

Participants characterized their awareness of ‘personal practical knowledge of language’ during classroom communication in a variety of ways. This outcome corresponded to research on professional development and ‘meaning-oriented learning’ of experienced teacher educators, defined as ‘deliberate teaching to enhance learning of the expert teacher educator’; and as a result learning to teach by developing an informed, personal theory of practice (Bronkhorst et al., 2013). Teachers’ practical knowledge of language was considered to be most relevant to participants’ comprehension of language competence in general and students’ learning more specifically. Notable was participants’ predominant attention to student learning and knowledge, when talking about the importance of classroom communication for teacher educators’ personal practical knowledge. Nonetheless, when addressing classroom communication related to student learning, an interesting distinction was made between ‘mastering language’ to improve students’ reasoning and the ‘application of language’ to improve teacher–student communication. Although this was related to student learning, our findings suggest a language-oriented knowledge base for teacher educators in which two key aspects (reasoning and communication) are combined. This is a similar concept to ‘academic interaction’ and ‘interpersonal language’ previously described by Schleppegrell (2004) and Cummins (2008). In terms of pedagogical skill for teaching in teacher education, these outcomes appear in line with previous results of effective practices for support and scaffolding techniques and the use of teacher talk, as an instrument for improving reasoning and understanding (Aalto & Tarnanen, 2015; Cummins, 2008; Lee, Quinn, & Valdés, 2013).

Primary focus and understanding of personal practical knowledge appeared to be particularly based on past experience. (Our findings demonstrate personal knowledge of language to be relatively distinctive and available when based on past experience but less so when related to present awareness and future intention. This finding is in accordance with results from previous research (Tsang, 2004) in which teachers indicated difficulties in anticipating decisions due to limited access to their personal practical knowledge during classroom teaching. Starting from ‘personal practical knowledge’ as a way of reconsidering past experience and future goals in order to deal with the demands of a present situation (Connelly et al., 1997), we further identified personal practical knowledge to be both personal and collective. This outcome indicates a sequential development in which collective knowledge emerged from shared personal knowledge. Our findings are a continuation of previous studies in the context of sociocultural approaches to learning such as ‘common construction of knowledge’ (Mercer, 1995) and, more recently, ‘common concept formation’ (Knezic et al., 2010). Our study emphasized the collective aspect as a form of communication in which participants made a conscious group effort to learn with and from each other in order to deepen both their personal and mutual understanding. Our findings add to the previous research of Christie (2000), Bunch (2006) and Bailey and Heritage (2008) by merging two previously considered, independently functioning registers (instructional and regulative) into a new language modality combining personal and collective practical knowledge.

*What preferences do teacher educators have for developing their personal practical knowledge of language for classroom communication?*

With respect to preferences for improvement, participants indicated a preference for evaluative and reflective forms of interaction with peers. This practice was considered an occasional work form

rather than a means through which language-oriented practical knowledge was conceived in an integrated and systematic manner. This outcome was interesting in that it exposed participants' partial engagement within a context of relative unawareness of their own language use. According to Hoffman-Kipp, Artiles, and López Torres (2003), reflective practice is only possible when based on one's awareness of self (as a teacher) which is achieved through self-examination built on personal experience and understanding. The combined results of relatively low language awareness among the majority of participants and a preference for reflective practice with colleagues, appeared to indicate a need to strengthen their professional identity. Following Connelly et al. definition (1997) and in continuation of Tsang (2004), our results substantiated the relevance of personal practical knowledge of language as it relates to classroom communication, and the anticipation of future classroom situations and interventions.

In summary, the concept of practical knowledge provided a unified perspective on how understand personal practical knowledge for classroom communication. Our results indicate that classroom communication in general is not fully integrated into teacher educators' practical knowledge. Teacher educators' professional language development should therefore focus on promoting practical knowledge of language both personally and collectively, including cognitive, social, and interpersonal aspects. Our results support an approach that is both interpersonal and pedagogical, aimed at a more detailed level in order to reduce the gap between theoretical and practical implications of language for classroom discourse. We conclude that, in order to improve the concurrent development of both teacher educators' and student-teachers' knowledge construction and their language usage during classroom communication, it is essential to understand teachers' personal practical knowledge of their 'language-sensitive and interpersonal,' and 'language-focused and pedagogical' aptitudes.

#### *Limitations and implications for further research*

With reference to the limitations, we note a few procedural and methodological issues that are relevant for future research. Regarding the procedural issues, there were two matters.

First, using focus groups as a research method implies that the researcher met the participants personally. This may raise questions concerning the ethical accountability and the potential influence that the researcher had on the data collected. Much research has been done to the role of the researcher in conducting qualitative research (Chavez, 2008; Dwyer & Buckle, 2009; Patton, 2002). In our study, we learned that the involvement of the researcher in this setting was about intending to balance between 'understanding the setting as an insider' and 'describing it to and for outsiders' (Patton, 2002, p. 268) and thus to question the extent to which our personal involvement and beliefs may have affected the findings and interpretations. The ongoing and recurring discussions between the researchers inspired further critical thinking and increased our understanding of the qualitative research as also to be a process of self-reflection.

Second, to be a moderator and researcher at the same time was experienced to be challenging because of the necessity to possess interpersonal and active listening skills and be neutral and non-judgmental at the same time. With years of experience as a teacher of communication in higher education, it was possible to deploy this expertise to promote participants' trust in both the moderator and researcher roles, as well as to increase the possibility of an open and interactive dialog with the different teacher groups.

With regard to the methodological issues, we cannot be sure if teachers' perceptions were

always in accordance with their practices. Perceptions and practices have multifaceted relationships and are not always consistent (Boulton-Lewis, Smith, McCrindle, Burnett, & Campbell, 2001; Calderhead, 1996; Fang, 1996). Secondly, as a result of this, the analysis in the current study was effective to delineate the understanding of the sample but did not reveal enough to also formulate individual teacher targets and tools, as a consequence of treating the data from a more quantitative analytical framework. In order to understand these issues more thoroughly in the larger professional lives and learning of the teacher educators, qualitative detail analysis should be an important part of follow-up research in order to, for example, illustrate how shared knowledge appears and can be applied in teaching practice.

Based on this research, we have elaborated the recommendation to advance the disclosure and development of teacher educators' practical knowledge of language at both individual and collective levels. We also advise an interventional approach consisting of individual class visits and group dialogs. Such an approach may stimulate teacher educators to share their pedagogical and interpersonally oriented language (as developed in teaching practice) with colleagues. In current study, we assessed teacher educators' practical knowledge by means of what they reported in groups. To gain more insight into the collective practical knowledge, using more data sources such as classroom observations and reflective writings is recommended in order to increase our understanding of this extension of practical knowledge. It would be interesting to study how practical knowledge of language and the actual teaching action are related, both on a personal and a collective basis. Following up on indicated preferences for improvement through reflective interaction with peers, building upon shared practical knowledge calls for a method in which participants make a deliberate effort to learn with and from each other. The conceptual framework for a practical knowledge base of language for teacher educators, along with the potential for improvement through the advancement of shared practical knowledge, sets the stage for future research.

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## Chapter 3

### **Teacher educators' conceptualization of ongoing language development in Professional Learning and Teaching**

## Chapter 3<sup>2</sup>

### **Teacher Educators' Conceptualization of Ongoing Language Development in Professional Learning and Teaching**

#### *Abstract*

Sociocultural and dialogic theories of education have identified the need to integrate both pedagogical content and language knowledge into teachers' professional development to promote effective interaction with students about subject content. In this intervention study, a meta-perspective on language was developed to understand how experienced teacher educators (N = 29) conceptualize ongoing language development in professional learning and teaching (referred to as language-developing learning in this study) as part of their pedagogical content knowledge. The data were analyzed using content analysis. Language-developing learning was mainly conceived as teacher-oriented professional development. In this process, the language aspect was regarded not only as a tool that applies regulatory and explanatory language but also as a target that connects academic knowledge and interpersonally oriented language. The results increase our awareness of teacher educators' practical knowledge of academic and interpersonal language in specific disciplinary contexts of teacher professional development in higher education.

#### Introduction

In sociocultural theory, language is an important source of learning, as it is 'the most ubiquitous, flexible and creative of the meaning-making tools available' (Mercer and Littleton 2007, p. 2). Following Vygotsky (1978), learning is appropriated through social interaction and mediated by language. From this perspective, classroom interaction is of great importance. Within this context, participation in interaction is not only regarded as an important tool for learning but also defined as a type of learning by itself (Sfard 2001). In socio-constructive theories that consider language as a cultural tool, only limited evidence of knowledge development has been produced (Mercer and Howe 2012). Studies have indicated that knowledge development becomes more actively constructed and exchanged through sociocultural interactions involving learners within specific social settings (Kumpulainen et al. 2014). In studies of conceptual change, Mason (2007) explained how research has been mainly based on a constructivist and cognitive theory of learning and development. Only recently has sociocultural theory become more influential. Greeno and van De Sande (2007) used both cognitive and sociocultural concepts, such as 'information and participation structures' and 'perspectival understanding', respectively. From the perspective that concept development can be analyzed only through common knowledge activity, Greeno and van De Sande (2007) identified conceptual change with conversational change and regarded knowledge as a shared attribute based on communities of practice. From recent studies of communities of practice, we know that learners are more likely to challenge their existing

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beliefs about concepts during processes of language learning within challenging communicative situations (Lantolf et al. 2015) where, for example, their use of language vocabulary is evaluated and compared with that in earlier stages of development. In a study of conversation analysis of classroom discourse, Ohta (2001) claimed that when learners work together, the group develops greater expertise than any of the individuals involved (p. 76). Swain (2000) made similar claims about ‘collaborative dialogue’ through the process that she termed ‘*languageing*’ (Swain 2009). Integrating the ‘teaching of language and content in the classroom in ways that can bring about the learning of both’ is a task that teachers should generally be able to achieve (Hoare et al. 2008, p. 254). Ongoing language development in the professional learning and teaching of teachers and of teacher educators is therefore essential to generate classroom interaction and subsequently stimulate mutual involvement between teacher and students.

Exploring ongoing language development in content-specific contexts is not new. Studies of language-oriented approaches of content learning were originally based on second- and foreign-language teaching (Snow and Brinton 1997, Echevarria et al. 2004) and aimed to support learners’ subject-specific vocabulary (Den Brok et al. 2010). This emphasis led to language-based pedagogies for teaching content in primary, secondary and vocational education (Echevarria and Vogt 2010, Love 2009, Mercer 2010, Gibbons 2009), defined as a way of teaching in which explicit language goals were established along with content-specific learning goals (Hajer et al. 2000). As a result of the preliminary positive learning outcomes, this language-oriented trend was further developed in teacher education whereby forms of language-based professional education were incorporated into the curriculum. In response to this development, there was a growing consensus regarding the importance of integrating language with content-specific content (Lyster and Ballinger 2011), based on the view that when content-specific meaning was constructed through participation in interaction, everyday language would progressively transform into forms of academic language (Gibbons 2009).

Nonetheless, from a broader perspective, with regard to the workability in everyday classroom practice, the practicality of such an integrated approach for teacher educators largely remained unknown. Teacher education has been considered a discipline with its own specific knowledge base concerning how students understand disciplinary concepts (Wenglinsky 2002, Darling-Hammond and Bransford 2005, Darling-Hammond 2006). This knowledge base has been called ‘*pedagogical content knowledge*’ (PCK) (Shulman 1986) and has been conceived from teacher educators’ interpersonal and academic practice and the use of dialogue as an integral part of their practical knowledge. This practical knowledge has also been characterized as teacher educators’ personal theory of classroom practice (Hen and Sharabi-Nov 2014) and described as interpretive and situational (Freeman and Richards 1996) based on their theoretical and experiential knowledge in classroom practice. Love (2009) argued that teacher educators need to develop an understanding of language and literacy in learning as part of their PCK. At the same time, a study found that teacher educators often appear unable to address the specific language and literacy demands of their disciplinary teaching in a conscious and explicit manner (May 2007).

These developments have prompted calls to meet the needs of both prospective teachers and experienced teacher educators (Darling-Hammond 2006) by making changes to teacher education programmes and providing more opportunities for the language-oriented professional development of experienced teacher educators (Moats 2009). Teacher educators can play a key role in refocusing teaching towards an understanding of language development for learning, i.e. in using the professional skills of academic and interpersonal language to enhance interactive and subject-specific classroom practice. For this purpose, it was necessary to understand how teacher educators conceptualize language-developing learning and teaching. We proposed that for teacher educators to develop this conceptualization, they must become aware of their practical

knowledge of language before they can facilitate student learning. Accordingly, we needed a meta-perspective on how teacher educators conceptualize their own language-developing learning for interactive classroom practice. With this consideration in mind, we aimed to explore the following question: *How do teacher educators conceptualize language-developing learning for classroom interaction?*

The current study was based on teacher educators' practical knowledge of language, necessary for integrating content- and language-oriented pedagogies. In this context, teacher educators' conceptualization of ongoing language development in professional learning and teaching was considered from three perspectives – the 'agent' and 'process' of learning and the 'objective' of language – guided by Love's (2009) language approach in literacy pedagogical content knowledge (LPCK) and Sfar's (1998) metaphors of learning. According to Sfar (1998), the acquisition metaphor (AM) represents learning as the acquisition and development of knowledge, whereas the participation metaphor (PM) signifies learning as an activity and interaction as an integral part of the community. In this context, the PM is considered a 'linguistic turn' (Brown 2005) in which learning occurs when the learner participates in various activities through language. In Love's (2009) three-component approach, LPCK focuses on understanding how language can best be structured for effective learning through language strategies and forms to address subject content better for different subject areas. In the current study, three perspectives were used to determine the learning orientations of participants indicated in the definitions: (1) for whom the learning was intended (agent of learning); (2) how learning was achieved (process of learning); and (3) for what purpose language was learned (objective of language learning). With this method, Love's (2009) language approach and Sfar's (1998) metaphors for learning directed our analysis of learning and interaction.

## Method

### *Context and participants*

This study was conducted with 29 teacher educators in four teacher-training institutes at universities of applied sciences in the Netherlands during the second phase of a 3 year professional development programme for language awareness and language-developing teaching. The type of sampling used was purposeful and non-probabilistic (Cohen et al. 2007). We selected four higher education teacher-training departments from a larger number that had been involved in previous research on this topic (Swart et al. 2016). This sampling resulted in four groups of volunteer teacher educators with a minimum of 2 years' teaching experience in languages (n = 10), social sciences (n = 14) and sciences (n = 5) (Table 1).

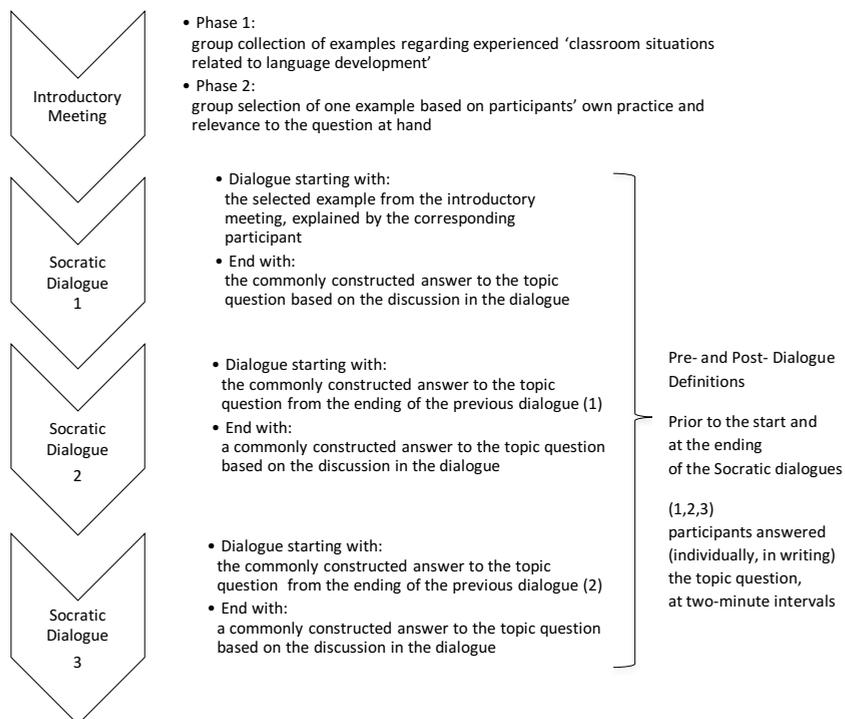
**Table 1.** Study participants

Group	Departments	Subjects	Female	Male	Total participants	Average work experience (years)
1	social sciences (ss)	sociology (8)	4	4	8	14
2	languages (l), social sciences	language (Dutch) (8), economics (1)	9	0	9	12
3	sciences (s), languages (l)	technical studies (4), language (Dutch) (2)	3	3	6	19,3 years
4	sciences (s), social sciences (ss)	mathematics (1), Geography (1), economics (1), History (1), education (1), religion (1)	1	5	6	14
total	4	11	17	12	29	15

### *Intervention*

We conducted a series of three Socratic dialogues with each of the four teacher groups. Previous research showed the Socratic dialogue to be a comprehensive method of generating concepts and connecting teachers' teaching practice with the theoretical concepts that they learn (Knežić et al. 2013). In this study, Socratic dialogues were used in conceptual group discussions in which participants were asked, both as a group and individually, to answer the fundamental key question for the purpose of gaining new insights (Yang et al. 2005, Pihlgren 2008, Knežić et al. 2013) and experiencing the development of the common construction of knowledge (Mercer 1995). The intervention with each of the four groups involved one introductory group conversation and three Socratic dialogues. During the introductory group conversation, the purpose and procedure of the Socratic dialogues were explained. The dialogues focused on the question 'What is language-developing learning?' and were led by the first author as the group facilitator. Each of the Socratic dialogues lasted 1.5 h on average (Table 2).

**Table 2.** Set-up of the intervention



*Instruments and procedure*

The introductory conversations consisted of two phases: (1) a group collection of examples with regard to recently experienced 'classroom situations related to language development', followed by (2) a group selection of one example, based on two recognition criteria: participants' own practice and relevance to the question at hand. The first dialogue started with the selected example. The second and third dialogues started with the commonly constructed answers from the previous dialogue. Before and towards the end of each dialogue, participants were asked (individually and in writing) to answer the same topic question: 'What is language-developing learning?' at 2 min intervals. The responses collected at this stage were called the pre- and post-dialogue definitions. In the remaining 10 min, the participants jointly constructed an answer to the topic question (referred to as 'commonly constructed answers' in this study) based on what had been discussed in the dialogue. The dialogues were conducted by a facilitator based on agreed-upon rules about the use of listening comprehension techniques, such as taking short breaks between each speaker and paraphrasing before speaking to slow down the conversation and optimize listening to each other. The individually written pre- and post-dialogue definitions were collected by the researcher, and the commonly constructed answers were noted on flipcharts in view of the entire group (Table 2).

### *Analysis*

The units of analysis, consisting of 174 pre- and post-definitions (29 ‘participants’ × 2 ‘pre and post’ × 3 ‘Socratic dialogues’) and 12 commonly constructed answers (4 ‘teacher groups’ × 3 ‘Socratic dialogues’) related to the topic question, were examined using content analysis (Boschhuizen 1982, Novak and Cañas 2008) with the aid of ATLAS.ti 7 (Scientific Software Development, Berlin, Germany). The analysis was based on a coding scheme consisting of the three key aspects of language-developing learning: ‘agent’, ‘process’ and ‘objective’ (Table 3). The agent consisted of three sub-codes: (1) teacher (T), i.e. teachers’ own learning/(self-)awareness of learning; (2) student (S), i.e. the learning of the student(s) or other(s); and (3) teacher and students or others (TS), i.e. the learning of both the teacher and the student(s) and/or other(s) (colleagues or undefined). The process consisted of: (1) acquisition (A), focusing on knowledge development and enrichment through the acquisition of specific knowledge; (2) participation (P), focusing on knowing and learning by participating in various communities; and (3) acquisition and participation (AP), focusing on the combined form of both the development of knowledge and knowing as an integral part of the community. The objectives consisted of: (1) language-oriented learning (LL), meaning language as a target with a focus on academic and basic interpersonal communication; (2) subject-oriented language learning (SL), meaning language as a tool to transmit subject content with a focus on the manner in which interaction and communication occur with regard to the subject content; and (3) the combined orientation (LLSL), meaning language as both a tool and a target (Table 3). We first analysed the emphasis on learning in all individual pre- and post-dialogue definitions. Subsequently, we analysed the commonly constructed answers to the topic question compared to each group’s selected practical examples. Three of the authors independently coded four rounds of both randomly selected (each one coded approximately 20%) pre- and post-dialogue definitions and the selected practical examples to determine inter-rater reliability (Cohen’s kappa). The units of analysis concerned the definitions for each session for each participant. The coding showed a sufficient level of inter-rater reliability, with Cohen’s kappa ranging from 0.64 to 0.82. Between the first and second rounds, the formulations of numerous criteria were refined to increase inter-rater agreement.

## Results

This section discusses the outcomes of the analysis of the definitions and of each group’s commonly constructed answers. Selected examples were used both to compare the focus in the beginning situations (examples) with the focus in the final situations (commonly constructed answers) and to contextualize the obtained results.

**Table 3.** Coding Aspects in Language-Developing Learning

Categories	Codes	Subcategories and explanation
Key Aspects		Learning (1), Process (2) and Language (3) orientation focused on
1 (Agent of learning)	T	T (teacher) teacher / (his) own learning / (self) awareness of his learning
	S	S (student) learning of the student(s) / of (the) other(s)
	TS	TS (teacher and colleagues or teacher and student(s)) learning of both the teacher and the student(s) and/or the other(s) (colleagues or undefined)
2 Process orientation (Process of learning)	A	A (acquisition) Focused on knowledge and enrichment through the acquisition of something. Emphasized in the acquisition metaphor (AM) Sfard (1998)
	P	P (participation) Focused on knowing and community building by participatory learning via social processes and activities and emphasized in the participation metaphor (PM) Sfard (1998).
	AP	AP (acquisition and participation) Focus on individual and personal practical knowledge and collective knowing and development.
3 Language orientation (Objective of language)	LL	LL (language-oriented learning) Language as target. Focus on academic and basic interpersonal language, based on language-oriented learning (Swart <i>et al.</i> 2016) and emphasized in LPCK of Love (2009)
	SL	SL (Subject-oriented language learning) Language as a tool. Focus on the manner in which something is communicated with regard to the subject content, based on language-oriented learning (Swart <i>et al.</i> 2016) and emphasized in LPCK of Love (2009)
	LLSL	LLSL (language and subject oriented learning) Language as a tool and target. Focus on both language as a target and tool.

*‘Key aspects of language-developing learning’*

The key aspects of language-developing learning were determined by examining the explicitly or implicitly stated ‘agent’ and ‘process’ of learning and indications about the ‘objective’ of language. Below, we discuss each of these aspects as they emerged from the analysis of all pre- and post-dialogue definitions (Table 4).

*‘Agent of learning’*

To determine learning orientation, we examined the ‘agent of learning’ that was indicated in the definitions. Table 5 shows a summary of the mean frequencies (M) based on the series of three Socratic dialogues (SD1, SD2 and SD3) per group (G1, G2, G3 and G4), together with the total frequencies and standard deviation (STd) with respect to learning orientation. The results show that for the agent of learning, the main focus was on the learning of the teacher educator and colleagues (TS 81), for example, as indicated by a participant 1preST1 during the first round of questions before the first SD (1preST):

Complementing knowledge of language through interaction with different people who express and share their views on language with me. There is little or no mention of students’ learning process in the definitions.

**Table 4.** Key Categories and Abbreviations in Language-Developing Learning

Key Categories	Abbreviations and Explanation	
1 Agent	T	Teacher
	S	Student(s)
	TS	Teacher and colleagues or teacher and Student(s)
2 Process	A	Acquisition
	P	Participation
	AP	Acquisition and participation
3 Objective	LL	Language-oriented learning
	SL	Subject-oriented language learning)
	LLSL	Language- and subject-oriented Learning

**Table 5.** Agent of Learning Across the Four Groups in Three Socratic Dialogues

	G1	G2	G3	G4	TOTALS	M	Std
S	2	2	0	0	4	1.00	1.00
TS	27	18	22	14	81	20.2	4.81
T	8	8	14	20	50	12.5	4.79
TOTALS:	37	28	36	34	135	33.7	3.49

*'The process of learning'*

To determine process orientation, we examined the 'way of learning' as it was described in the definitions. Table 6 shows a mixed image that, with respect to the process of learning, shows a combination of 'individual improvement and participatory learning' (AP: 55) through 'awareness and reflection' (A: 45) and, to a lesser extent, via 'participatory learning' only (P: 36). For example, as stated by a participant: A cyclical interactive process aimed at improving my teaching. This calls for awareness, becoming aware, openness and reflection with others. (3poDD)

*'Objective of language'*

To determine language orientation, we considered the 'objective of language' indicated in the definitions. Table 7 shows that the primary focus is language-oriented learning (LL: 54), which involves pedagogically oriented target language and the combined form (LLSL: 48) of language as both a target and a tool. To answer the research question from the perspective of the objective of language, language orientation was further considered within the three subcategories of 'language-oriented learning' (LL), 'subject-oriented language learning' (SL) and 'language-oriented learning and subject-oriented language learning' (LLSL) (Table 8). 'Language-oriented learning' (LL) was considered a target to organize 'language-developing forms of interaction' (2poAR) as a

'purposeful process of interaction' (2poST). In this manner, learning was directed by 'personal and language-oriented differentiation' (3poJK). In 'subject-oriented language learning' (SL), language was considered a tool and used to communicate subject matter. The teachers are aware of their linguistic repertoire during the communication of the subject matter through a continuous monitoring of students' interpretation of the message: 'active listening and opening up remains very difficult' (1poBM), and 'you very quickly misunderstand each other. Real understanding is much more difficult to establish' (1poRB). The teacher develops language awareness by attention to the meaning of words, the use and interpretation of language, reflection and feedback, interaction and communication, and attention to formulating and understanding, as stated by a participant who applies active listening by 'tuning his language to the learning needs of the students and thus enhancing his teaching' (3preJK). In 'language-oriented learning and subject-oriented language learning' (LLSL), language was considered both a tool and a target. According to the participants, the use of language as a tool and a target occurred in activities such as language-oriented support, learning and action (Table 8). In providing language-oriented support, teachers' language is committed to 'supporting students' learning and reasoning during transfer of the subject matter' (3poDD). Language-developing learning and acting is 'a form of learning plus teaching that contributes both to language development (functional language) and to the learning of concepts and meanings' (3poAK). The first contributes to one's language, and the second contributes to one's knowledge. These contributions include the following: 'paying attention to the way in which words and phrases are understood and used in discussions on the subject matter' and 'explicating thoughts and forming logical strings of ideas' (1preAP). The process involves 'learning something (for example, counting or teaching) and while you are doing this, you are increasing your functional language skills' (2poIK).

**Table 6.** Process of Learning Across the Four Groups in Three Socratic Dialogues

	G1	G2	G3	G4	TOTALS:	M	Std
A	7	14	9	15	45	11.3	3.34
AP	14	13	19	9	55	13.3	3.56
P	16	2	8	10	36	9.00	5.00
TOTALS:	37	29	36	34	136	34.0	3.08

**Table 7.** Objective of Language Across the Four Groups in Three Socratic Dialogues

	G1	G2	G3	G4	TOTALS:	M	Std
LL	11	10	14	19	54	13.5	3.50
LLSL	12	17	10	9	48	12.0	3.10
SL	13	4	9	5	31	7.60	3.60
TOTALS:	36	31	33	33	133	33.2	1.80

**Table 8.** Objectives of Language in Language-Developing Learning

Subcategories	Objective of language	Examples of features & actions	Description
Language-oriented learning (LL)	language as target	Applying meta conversation; Organizing language-developing conversation about the interaction Identifying key words and the use of jargon; Organizing language-oriented support	The teacher works with various (meta) talk types in which is also spoken about interaction during discussions on subject content The teacher provides language support by naming relevant linguistic aspects in subject content and learning matters
Subject-oriented language learning (SL)	language as a tool	Applying active listening; Organizing listening comprehension techniques	The teacher is aware of his own communicative repertoire during the transfer of subject matter and checks how students receive and interpret his message. He is acting as a role model
Language-oriented Learning and Subject-oriented Language Learning (LLSL)	language as a tool and target	Applying language-oriented learning and acting; Organizing knowledge regarding language goals and content goals	The teacher focuses on both communicating content matter and the development of language and knowledge during interaction

### *Language-developing learning as conceptualized per group*

This section discusses the results of the commonly constructed answers (three times per group) in the context of the selected example of practice per group (1, 2, 3 and 4) and across all groups.

#### Group 1

The starting question, as part of the chosen example from practice (Figure 1), focused on how the teacher (T) can better connect to students' prior knowledge via individual and collective knowledge development (AP) and language as a tool (SL). When we examine the listed commonly constructed answers below, we can observe that conceptualization proceeds from general to specific: 'understanding what you mean' and 'empathizing with one another' (AP, SL; commonly constructed answer 1) to 'awareness of one's own language use and focused communication' (A, LLSL) and 'refinement repertoire (P, LLSL) (commonly constructed answers 2 and 3). The difference in focus primarily occurs within process orientation.

- (1) Language-developing learning (LDL) is meant to ensure that someone else understands what you mean, where 'ensuring' means you empathize with one another, taking into account the possible interpretation of your consciousness. (T, AP, SL)
- (2) LDL is awareness of one's own language use, leading to the expansion of one's repertoire. (T, A, LLSL)
- (3) LDL is learning to communicate more directly and is aimed at the expansion and refinement of your repertoire. (P, LLSL)

#### **Figure 1.** Selected Example From Practice Group 1

In my classes in Social and Political Philosophy and Law, I often use concepts that are absolutely clear to me but not to my students. This problem occurs on two levels: one, students are not familiar with the term or even the description; and two, students are interpreting the terminology differently from the framework of another subject or everyday language use. Learning objective: How can I better tune into students' existing knowledge? How can I avoid terms that cause confusion?

### Group 2

The starting question from practice (Figure 2) focused on how teachers can learn to support their colleagues (TS) both by talking to them and by reflecting on conversations with them, not only via individual and collective knowledge development (AP) but also through language as both a tool and a target (LLSL). The commonly constructed answers listed below show a conceptual development with respect to an overall consistency of orientation and a specification of meaning: 'awareness of teaching behavior' (AP) and 'language sensitivity and thinking' (LLSL) (commonly constructed answer 1) to a specification, i.e. 'a critical look at the impact of your speaking and teaching acting on learning both by yourself and the other person' (AP) (commonly constructed answer 2) and 'deliberate action aimed at thinking and transferring content and language skills' (LLSL) (commonly constructed answer 3).

- (1) Awareness of pedagogical acting aims to support language development in which language and thinking are related. (AP, LLSL, TS)
- (2) LDL involves thinking about support in the field of language and communication when teaching and learning about subject matter; with critical reflection on your own actions, you become aware of your own language and the effect of your linguistic and pedagogical actions upon learning about both yourself and the other person. (AP, LLSL, TS)
- (3) LDL involves acting deliberately as a teacher not only to think about and transfer content but also to develop language skills. (AP, LLSL, T)

### Figure 2. Selected Example From Practice, Group 2

At the request of colleagues, a writing aid should be made for writing an article as an alternative to writing a research report. In conversation, the learning process of the colleagues gained momentum about the content and form of the text type, about boosting colleagues' thought processes and about what students can do with such a writing aid. Learning objective: What did you learn about how to support colleagues when you talked to them about the choice of such an article?

### Group 3

The starting question from practice (Figure 3) focused on how teachers (T) can increase their awareness during interaction to arrive at conceptual alignment via individual and collective knowledge development (AP) through the use of language as a tool (SL). In the commonly constructed answers listed below, the conceptualization shows a similar course with regard to a continuing consistency within language and process orientation and a further specification of connotation: 'the impact of language' (LL) (commonly constructed answer 1) to 'adjustment of language' (LLSL) (commonly constructed answer 2) leading towards 'efficient differentiation in language in interaction' (LLSL) (commonly constructed answer 3).

- (1) LDL is the awareness of opportunities and the impact of language (verbal/non-verbal, content/form) of the teachers within their various roles and the ability to reflect on this issue effectively (so that adjustments can be made). (T, AP, LL)
- (2) LDL raises awareness (and skills) in interaction by reflective practice, leading towards the adjustment of language in practice. (T, AP, LLSL)
- (3) LDL increases awareness in interaction with regard to effective differentiation in language. (T, AP, LLSL)

**Figure 3.** Selected Example From Practice, Group 3

In a one-on-one situation with a student, I try to ask as many questions as possible to give space to the students' own learning. From a social constructivist perspective, I also posit statements or give my opinion in such discussions. Nevertheless, I have doubts about whether this is effective and not overly directed by me. How must I build a relationship with the student, either explicitly in the form of appointments or through directions to conduct this conversation in a productive manner? I notice that with some students, the period of time to get to know one another takes time, which is not always optimal. However, I think it is worthwhile to create a degree of chaos that will stimulate the student to think for himself. Learning objective: How do I determine the balance between demand and supply of information or feedback for the individual student? How can I actively guide this process and how do I stimulate critical thinking?

## Group 4

The starting question from practice (Figure 4) focused on how the teacher (T) can translate theory into practice through collective development and activities (P) from the perspective of language as a tool (SL). In the commonly constructed answers listed below, development primarily moves within a process orientation: AP (commonly constructed answers 1 and 2) to P (commonly constructed answer 3): 'being conscious about (teaching) resources' (commonly constructed answer 1) to 'directing language-oriented learning by a constant explication of the interpretations' (commonly constructed answer 2) into a 'continuous, focused, conscious and systematic perpetration of language teaching interventions' (commonly constructed answer 3).

- (1) LDL is consciously managing your (teaching) resources (what am I doing/what am I not doing) in the learning of your own knowledge and skills through language; forms of communication; verbal/non-verbal and images; and where the use of implicit associative thinking and thinking patterns play an important role in the process of giving feedback. (T, LLSL, AP)
- (2) LDL is the cyclical process of consciously committing educational interventions to direct language-oriented learning (teacher and student) in communication with others, where images are translated into language and language back into images. This process can be performed through constant explication of the interpretations by the receiver. (TS, LLSL, AP)
- (3) LDL is the continuous, focused, conscious and systematic perpetration of linguistic pedagogical teaching interventions. (TS, LLSL, P)

**Figure 4.** Selected Example From Practice, Group 4

Teaching situation: Engineering didactics 3: This is the final course for engineering students, in which they learn how to set up a cursory series of lectures. I wanted to talk for up to 45 minutes but it took me up to 75 minutes. I thought, how can I reduce my instruction by being very specific and accurate, because I wanted to enable students to get to work quickly, and individual interaction would start because each student designs his own context and series. I often work with models, requiring a transfer from model to practice. I felt a little pressure and stress because I poured a cascade of terminology over my students. I feel that I overloaded them with information. Learning objective: How do I translate educational models into targeted action through spoken language so that these students can design their own series of lectures?

*Comparison*

Each group used a language focus during the first dialogue similar to that used in the starting situation of the practical example (G1, G3, G4: focus on language as a tool; G2: focus on language as a tool and a target in both a practical example and the first SD). In three of the four

groups (G1, G3 and G4), the language focus changed during the three interview stages from language as a tool in the example of practice to language as a target in the definitions and, finally, to a perspective on language as a tool and a target in the final definitions and commonly constructed answers. The language orientation of G2, both as a tool and as a target, remained consistent throughout the stages.

## Discussion

Based on sociocultural and dialogic theories of education, we argued that there is a need to integrate both pedagogical content and language knowledge into teacher educators' pedagogical repertoire to facilitate effective interaction with students about subject content (Valdés 2005, Love 2009). In this context, a meta-perspective was developed to understand how teacher educators conceptualize language-developing learning for classroom interaction as part of their PCK. In the Socratic dialogues used in group discussions, the participants were asked, both as a group and individually, the fundamental key question to yield new insights. Based on the results, language-developing learning was primarily conceived as a teacher-oriented developmental process. In this process, language was regarded as not only a tool for applying regulatory and explanatory language but also a target that connects academic knowledge with interpersonally oriented language. To answer the research question, we first discuss how the participants conceptualized language-developing learning and then explore how this conceptualization further progressed.

### *Conceptualizing language-developing learning*

In this research, we deliberately formulated the topic question as an open question that was not particularly focused on either teacher or student learning (What is language-developing learning?). The results show that teacher educators mainly focused on themselves, as opposed to their students or their teaching practice. This finding is notable as previous studies, assessing the importance of classroom communication for teacher educators' personal practical knowledge of language (Swart et al. 2017), showed that teacher educators' attention was predominantly devoted to student learning. This focus can be explained by the guideline of the Socratic dialogues, to try to reach consensus and then collectively construct answers to the starting question. An alternative consideration may involve the influence of the continuing professional development setting on the participants' awareness.

Other similarities concern the language focus and objectives of language-developing learning. All of the groups continued the same language focus with which they began in the practical example (G1, G3 and G4: language as a tool; G2: language as a tool and a target). In three of the four groups (G1, G3 and G4), the language focus changed during the three dialogues. During the first dialogue, language-developing learning was broadly approached as a 'teacher-centred teaching method' for the purpose of acquiring knowledge and understanding and improving language skills. This method was conceived as instruction about subject-specific content, supported by language. This conception of language as an instrument is also prevalent in the literature. According to van de Pol and Elbers (2013), language in communication theory is merely understood as a means to achieve social goals. According to this view, subject-specific knowledge accompanies the acquisition of learning new words, phrases and other symbolic means to articulate that knowledge. This view is related to both generic and academic methods of

reasoning and communicating and to the development of subject-specific terminology and arguments, based on the view of language as a tool and content as a goal. Subsequently, during the second dialogue, language-developing learning was primarily approached as a 'concept' from the perspective of language as a target, based on which the effects of language were examined with the aim of enhancing mutual understanding (both during the intervention and in the classroom) of the content.

During the third dialogue, language-developing learning was defined by comparing the previously discussed formulations and its translations to more abstract theories and generic models. At this stage, language-developing learning was included in the definitions that were also approached as an 'intervention model' for language-oriented education interventions, i.e. didactic actions with the aim of differentiating, in language and focused on the person, during interaction (G1, G3 and G4). At this final stage, language orientation was focused on language both as a tool and as a target. Love (2009) argued that an understanding of language in a learning disciplinary content contributes to the PCK covered in secondary-school teachers' preparation. Drawing on the dual-focused educational approach of Llinares et al. (2012) and continuing the work of van de Pol and Elbers (2013) and Love (2009), our study yielded results substantiating the relevance of participants' focus on themselves, more than their students, alongside the use of conscious and active language as both a tool and a target for interactive classroom teaching and professional learning of the experienced teacher educators. This approach expands their repertoire in addition to their PCK (Darling-Hammond 2006) and LPCK (Love 2009).

To interpret the differences between the groups, we also examined the group composition and subject-specific backgrounds of the participants. We noted a significant difference between G2 and the other groups (G1, G3 and G4). Unlike the other groups, G2 consisted of language teacher educators (and one economics teacher educator). The orientation of G2 to language as both a tool and a target remained consistent throughout the stages. This consistency proved to be different from that in the other groups, in which the orientation alternated as an either/or proposition between language as a tool and language as a target. This difference can be explained by the fact that G2 operated from a certain language-oriented knowledge base that, from the start, focused on two aspects, reasoning and communication, i.e. concepts of academic and interpersonal language as described by Schleppegrell (2012) and Cummins (2008). In the other groups (consisting of sciences, social sciences, languages and the combined group), the language orientation initially focused on language as a tool. These outcomes of language as a tool are in line with recent results of effective practices for support and scaffolding techniques and the use of teacher speech as an instrument for improving reasoning and understanding (Cummins 2008, Lee et al. 2013, Aalto and Tarnanen 2015). According to van de Pol and Elbers (2013), subject teachers believe that attention to language as a target is not part of their job but, rather, is the job of language teachers. Subject teachers' attention is particularly focused on conceptual meaning in content.

In summary, the results show a conceptual development that primarily (in G1, G3 and G4) proceeded from language as a tool in the example of practice (by paying attention to the awareness of learning on language, a clear use of language, and instruments for translation and feedback) towards language as a target in the definitions (through awareness of person-oriented communication and instructional conversations) and, finally, to a perspective on language as both a tool and a target in the final definitions and commonly constructed answers (by improving the management of personal language aimed at the refinement of teachers' repertoire).

#### *Understanding language-developing learning*

The participants considered language-developing learning primarily as teacher-oriented development through a combined approach of individual and collaborative learning activities.

The teacher educators' language-developing learning generally progressed through 'raising awareness–development–use' in different facets of verbal language use. The corresponding learning process in this context was directed towards the gradual development of a 'language-aware', 'language-focused' and 'interpersonal and academic-oriented' process (Table 9). 'Language-aware' was used when language as a tool was activated through 'active listening' to improve social interaction and student learning with regard to the subject content.

This finding is relatively new. Most language research on professional teaching practice in higher education focuses on productive language skills, as in writing and speaking. To a certain degree, listening appears to be a forgotten skill. Nevertheless, in teacher educators' top five most frequently cited communication problems with their students, a lack of interactive listening skills is prominent (Rider and Keefer 2006, Bonne and Vrijders 2015). In addition, recent research shows that a teacher educator's lack of listening skills has a stagnating effect on the communication cycle necessary in classroom practice (Swart et al. 2014). 'Language-focused' was used when language as a target was implemented to communicate effectively and improve student learning and reasoning.

This finding adds to previous research on how speech is used for learners' own learning and thinking (Webb et al. 2006, Mercer and Littleton 2007, Fisher and Larkin 2008). 'Interpersonal and academic-oriented' was activated when language as a tool and a target was used through academic- and interpersonal-oriented interaction to stimulate students' learning and reasoning through attention to language development. This outcome is in line with recent studies of effective teaching practices, of beneficial interactional strategies for students' individual reasoning and understanding of conceptual topics, that support the use of teacher speech as an instrument for improving students' thinking and knowledge (Cummins 2008, Lee et al. 2013, Aalto and Tarnanen 2015).

**Table 9.** Approach and Objectives of Language-Developing Learning

Learning development/ Objectives	Language-aware	Language-focused	Interpersonal and academic-oriented
Language as tool	Developing language-awareness Learning to listen actively		
Language as target		Formalizing language- Developing interaction	
Language as tool and target			Activating language-developing learning Activating language-developing acting

## Conclusion

Language-developing learning is primarily conceived as teacher-oriented professional development to advance teachers' practical knowledge of academic and interpersonal language through language-aware and personalized educational interventions. The results of this study show that teacher educators' conceptualization proceeded in most cases from 'language as a tool' through application of regulatory and explanatory language functions to 'language as a target' via interpersonal-oriented interaction and to 'language as a tool and a target' by connecting explanatory language with academic- and interpersonal-oriented language. We conclude that the teacher educators in this study developed an understanding of the roles of language in teaching and learning, to gain the appropriate language needed for effectively engaging students in activities across content areas. These processes begin by connecting to the students' different language resources and intentions already in place. Such practices support the development of academic and interpersonal language in the deployment of language, both as a tool and as a target, in the various content areas. The results of this study contribute to an increased awareness of teacher educators' practical knowledge of academic and interpersonal language in specific disciplinary contexts of higher professional teacher education.

### *Limitations and implications for future research*

A main task of prospective teachers is to identify effective pedagogical principles that acknowledge and support the classroom as a subject-based and language-oriented environment (Love 2009). Our findings confirm that experienced teacher educators also face a similar challenge, and the results suggest a number of important questions that require more thorough exploration and understanding. First, in light of the outcome that better communication of the subject content potentially results from the language-aware and language-active use of language as both a tool and a target, more research that assesses teacher educators' actions in their interactive classroom practice is needed. Secondly, the differences found between the language teacher educators and the other groups (sciences and social sciences) call for further investigation of subject-specific approaches to language focus and the scope thereof. In continuing the work of the present study involving experienced teacher educators, a more thorough examination is needed to explore how students perceive learning effects of teacher educators' language-developing learning during interactive classroom practice. Along these lines, the similarities and differences between the group responses in different subject-specific domains indicate a need for further research. Finally, there is a potential limitation of the various selected practical examples in the groups and their possible effect on the content and direction of the dialogues and, thus, on the pre- and post-dialogue definitions and commonly constructed answers. In this study, the Socratic dialogues were considered not only a model for a conceptual process but also a developmental and pedagogical tool that participants could use to gain a better understanding of aspects of language-developing learning in the early stages of conceptual formation. One of the insights offered by a sociocultural perspective is that although the development of shared understanding takes time, it can be achieved (Mercer 2008, Nystrand et al. 2003). Sociocultural theory thus provides us with an appropriate frame for the development of a new field of enquiry related to conceptual understanding through dialogue in educational settings. In this frame, categories of learning and language are emphasized as a social and educational tool together with the teacher educators, modelling and scaffolding themselves and each other through self-regulated activity. However, the theoretical framework for understanding the relationship between language development and professional development in educational settings needs more attention. Much attention has been given to the definitions of forms and functions of classroom interaction related to the successful pursuit of educational goals for students in both group and

individual work settings. Based on the current conceptualization of experienced teacher educators, an operational definition of language development is required that is applicable to their everyday classroom practice. Such work will further complement the literature on teachers or teacher educators as co-researchers in the analysis of classroom speech and interaction (Armstrong and Curran 2006, Hennessy and Deane 2009). Intervention designs can be used to measure the differential effects of language focus and language use on language-developing learning and conceptual changes in teacher educators' practice.

*Note 1.*

This code and the others following in the quotes below refer to 1: First Socratic Dialogue; pre: prior to the first dialogue; and ST: the initials of the participant.

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## **Empirical Explorations, *part II***

### **Chapter 4**

#### **Teacher educators' understanding of their language-oriented development in Content-Based Classroom Interaction**

## Chapter 4<sup>3</sup>

### Teacher Educators' Understanding of Their Language-Oriented Development in Content-Based Classroom Interaction

#### *Abstract*

Many studies have suggested that personal practical knowledge is essential for professional development. Recently, there has been growing recognition of the importance of teacher educators' personal practical knowledge of 'language' for student learning development. However, the need for teacher educators to first understand their own language-oriented development in content-based classroom interaction has not received as much emphasis. The current intervention study investigates how eleven experienced teacher educators understand their language-oriented development through the control of task difficulty, small-group instruction and directed response questioning. Data were examined by conducting content and constant comparison analyses. The results showed that the intervention affected the educators' language-oriented development, which in turn affected their awareness and decisions made to improve their methods of initiation and response during classroom interaction. The results call for more concrete ways to expend teacher educators' practical knowledge of language to further develop and enhance their language-oriented teaching performance in content-based classroom interaction.

#### Introduction

Because this study addresses teacher educators' language-oriented development, it must be clarified what is meant by *language*. The concept of 'language' has adopted a range of meanings over the past few decades, varying from a grammar-oriented to a more functional and dynamic view. In the current study, language was conceptualized as 'language-in-use' (Lacombe, 2014) within the social constructionist tradition based on various fundamental developments in socially situated interactions (Vygotski, 1962, 1987, Wertch, 1979; Mercer, 1995, 2008; Wegerif, Boero, Andriessen and Forman, 2009; Hajer, 2000; Panday, Hajer and Beijer, 2007).

From a socio-cultural perspective, starting with Vygotski (1962), 'language' was first referred to as the 'functional dynamics of dialogue'. Ten years later, the term 'language' was replaced by 'speech' (Wertch, 1979) to emphasize the focus on the 'dynamic process of communication'. In this context, more recently, Mercer (2008) argued for the use of 'talk', revisiting sociocultural research on 'classroom talk, interaction, dialogue and discourse'. However, because 'talk' was also associated with unilateral ways to transfer information, rather than the exchange of information through two-way communication, as intended within socially situated interactions, Wegerif (2009) replaced 'talk' with 'dialogic' to emphasize the effectiveness of 'dialogic classroom talk' compared to the monological approaches that still appeared to be dominant in many classrooms (Boyd and Markarian, 2011; Swart et al., 2017 a, b). As a result, along with a changing orientation toward knowledge and language (Wells, 2006), there was a

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growing body of literature on dialogical education and classroom interaction.

In this context, much evidence has indicated the supporting and substantive potential of language within subject teaching, ranging from various studies of ‘dialogic oriented’ pedagogy (Skidmore, 2000) and research (Wells, 2001) to studies of content-based language instruction (Brinton, Snow and Wesche, 2003; Echevarria, Short and Powers, 2008; Law, Reilly and Snow, 2013). The latter area was formerly drawn from research on class management and based on instructional theories (Hoy and Weinstein, 2006) and interventional studies of language-oriented pedagogy (Hajer, 2004). The focus on content- and language-integrated teaching originated from a dually focused educational approach in which the learning of both language and content was accomplished ‘with and through a foreign language’ (Eurydice, 2006, p. 8; Coyle, Hood and Marsh, 2010; Nikula, Dalton-Puffer, Llinares and Lorenzo, 2016). Research that examined overall practicability was generally positive, suggesting that teaching that was attentive to both language and content was more effective than that focused exclusively on content (Lyster, 2007; Norris & Ortega, 2000; Swain, 2000). This effectiveness was particularly true when regulated and subject-specific input was provided alongside task-oriented language in conversation *and* corrective feedback focusing on both content and language (Valeo, 2013).

Recently, language-oriented pedagogies have become a major topic in higher education for several reasons, most importantly because of the socially proposed requirements that teachers should be able to cope with the increasing cultural and linguistic diversity in the classroom (Den Brok, van Eerde and Hajer, 2010). In addition, one study showed that uncertainties surrounding language policy and related pedagogies led not only to an increase in language problems but also to problems with teaching and student learning itself and, thus, problems with students’ academic success (Herelixa & Verhulst, 2014).

From these developments, the need arose for greater language understanding and development among teachers, specific regarding the conceptual and technical demands of their content-based classroom interaction (Dalton-Puffer and Smit, 2013). As a result, more attention was devoted to ongoing language development, including forms of contingent and communicative teaching, alongside the existing regulatory behavioral characteristics of classroom interaction. For example, in a model of classroom interaction and teachers’ self-assessment, teacher strategies such as diagnosis and language contingency were examined (Ruiz-Primo and Furtak, 2006, 2007), referring to the regulated support that a teacher provides through interaction (Broza and Kolikant, 2015). In the research by Ruiz-Primo and Furtak (2006), cycles of contingent teaching, for example, appeared far less frequently than unfinished (non-contingent) cycles. This finding was confirmed by other studies that showed an absence of a common problem definitions or diagnosis initiated by teachers during observed teacher-student interactions (Elbers, Hajer, Jonkers, Koole, and Prenger, 2008; Lockhorst, van Oers, and Wubbels, 2006). Conversely, when teachers stimulated critical thinking and reflection during interactions, supported by language-oriented strategies and adjustments to students’ learning needs, student responses were not only more contextual in nature but also characterized by the use of more complex linguistic formulations (Walsh and Knight, 2011, 2016).

Teachers who were able to identify such types of formulations appeared more motivated to support students in developing higher levels of language comprehension in technical terms and subject-related concepts (Saylag, 2014). More specifically, the teacher’s (third turn) response was contingent upon the student’s (second turn) answer because the teacher’s response demonstrated understanding of the student’s initial question (Lee, 2007) in a substantial, language-oriented fashion. Nassaji and Wells (2000) specified six practical strategies of a teacher’s third turn responses: meta-talk, action, explanation, evaluation, counter-argument and clarification. According to these authors, a teacher who responded from an evaluative mode could assume the role of the ‘all-knowing’ teacher, serving to ‘suppress extended student participation’ (Nassaji and Wells (2000, p. 400). Conversely, if the teacher implemented other strategies, such as requesting explanation or meta-talk, students could be expected to self-select contributions because of a

shift in 'the role of the primary knower' (p. 400–401) in relation to the students. Recent research has offered an understanding of how teachers' questions function in classroom practice. Based on an international range of studies on 'literacy pedagogy', Wolf, Crosson, and Resnick (2006) concluded that when teachers simply check students' understanding by pursuing closed questions and receiving 'yes' or 'no' answers or frame questions in a way that allows students simply to complete the teacher's thoughts, such strategies do not support students' high-level literacy skills. According to these authors, by contrast, when teachers use questions as a tool for reasoning and stimulate students to rephrase content and to elaborate on the concepts, students' literacy comprehension improves. This finding was further confirmed in the study by Kyriacou and Issitt (2008), who reviewed fifteen studies of talk in mathematics classrooms and found that student results improve when teachers use questions not only to seek the right answers but also to elicit reasoning and explanations. To obtain the best results, teachers must strategically balance 'authoritative' talk, which is typically the dominant form (Scott, 2008), and 'dialogue', which tends to occur less often (Mercer and Howe 2012). Informed by systemic functional linguistic theory, the literature has identified a variety of teacher talk strategies that allow the teacher to guide his or her students into forms of subject-specific engagement (Sharpe, 2008), i.e., commitment to the content matter. For example, in an analysis of two history lessons that occurred at the beginning and end of a first-year module in an Australian high school, several teacher talk strategies were identified, including repeating, rearranging and re-contextualizing teachers' spoken language, which in turn stimulated students' development of language skills and content applicable to a particular subject (Sharpe, 2008).

Regarding this specific focus on language-oriented pedagogies, the literature indicates four important language proficiencies that a teacher should acquire (den Brok, van Eerde and Hajer, 2010): 'awareness of language differences', 'ability to making content intelligible through language', 'opportunity for language production' and 'developing language skills in the content area'. These proficiencies are intended to support student learning through educational strategies, including language-oriented practices.

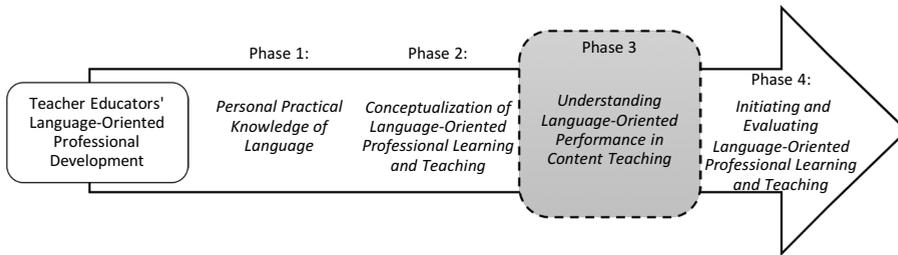
This study adds to the literature because the functional dynamics and the dynamic and developing processes of teacher educators' classroom interaction are both central to the concept of 'language-oriented development in content-based classroom interaction'. Previous studies have also referred to the concept as 'language-sensitive and interpersonal oriented'—referring to a *receptive* means of communication—and 'language-oriented and pedagogical'—referring to a productive and *goal-oriented* means of communication (Swart et al, 2017 a,b); these types of communication can be implemented separately or incorporated into teacher educators' content-based classroom interaction. In other words, teacher educators need to be both sensitive and facilitating to provide accessibility and support (Moy, Renshaw and Davids, 2014). In this context, an important area for study is that the teacher educator is essentially an active listener (Boyd and Markarian, 2011). That is, teacher educators who understand their language-oriented subject teaching better allow themselves to better understand their students by actively listening and encouraging them to articulate what they think and know and thereby to better position themselves as future teachers. Thus, it is reasonable to expect that with the convergence of interpersonal and pedagogically oriented language in subject teaching (Swart et al. 2017, a b), teacher educators may extend their pedagogies to support and guide learning conversation (Boyd and Galda, 2011) and to conduct knowledgeable interaction in an understanding and informative manner.

Against this background—and consistent with the claim that, in addition to teaching content, the process and functional dynamics also matter and thus influence learning development (Vygotsky, 1962; Wertsch; 1979; Mercer, 2008, 2016)—the present study aims to contribute to the development and empirical validation of teacher educators' *language-oriented* subject teaching. Based on teacher educators' reflections of their own, regular lessons in response to previously conducted group conversations with peers to conceptualize continuous language

development in professional learning and teaching (Swart et al., 2017, b), we established the following research question: *How do teacher educators understand their language-oriented development in content-based classroom interaction?*

Recently, several studies have indicated that it is of additional value for teacher educators learn to assess their classroom experiences through reflective conversations with others (Putnam & Borko, 2000). For example, a ‘Lesson Study’, which was based essentially on merging many premises found within the broader literature on teachers’ learning (Bakkenes, Vermunt and Wubbels, 2010) and specifically grounded in intervention research, involved collaborative planning and interaction within professional communities via the *self-assessment* of lessons (Lieberman and Miller, 2008; McLaughlin and Talbert, 2006). In this context, ‘self-assessment’ means reflection on one’s own lessons to understand what occurred, i.e., what the teacher did and said and how the students responded. Although teaching has generally been considered an action-oriented practice, in the current study, teacher educators were stimulated to develop reflective skills to support their observations of ‘what occurred’ in their language-oriented actions during class interaction and thereby ‘learning to understand’ their language-oriented development in pedagogical decisions for future lessons; thus, the approach encourages teacher educators to be flexible in their educational plans while teaching.

**Figure 1.** Research Design of Teacher Educators’ Language-Oriented Professional Development with the Highlighted Phase (3) of the Current Study



## Method

### *Context and Participants*

The current study was conducted as part of a three-year project of language-oriented professional development with participants from several teacher trainer institutes in the Netherlands (Figure 1, phase 1/4). The focus aimed at the language-oriented development of eleven teacher educators experienced in the sciences and social sciences; these teacher educators received training from three teacher-training institutes and volunteered to participate in stage 3 of the project (Figure 1, stage 3). Convenience sampling was used to select teacher educators based on their participation in the previous two phases (Table 1)

**Table 1.** Participants

Group	Participants	Subject	Female	Male	Average work experience/ years
1	3; P1, 2, 3	Social Studies (3)	0	3	16
2	3; P4, 5, 6	Technical studies (3)	0	3	18
3	5; P7, 8, 9, 10, 11	Mathematics (1) Geography (1) History (1) Education (1) Religion (1)	1	4	12
Totals	11				

*Research Design*

We examined teacher educators' understanding through a reflective teacher practice approach in a small-scale intervention study. Because we were initially interested in how teacher educators' practical knowledge of language was related to their language-oriented professional learning goals, we previously reported how teacher educators conceptualized and operationalized these objectives (Swart et al., a,b). In the current study, we examined teacher educators' understanding of their language-oriented development in response to recordings of their regular classes without accompanying instructions. To facilitate the process of 'reflective teacher practice', we used three critical factors for 'improved learning outcomes' (Swanson, Hoskyn and Lee, 1999; Vaughn, Gersten and Chard, 2000): control of task difficulty, small-group instruction and directed response questioning. These factors were previously identified to have the greatest effect on students' learning development, regardless of the model or content of instruction (Swanson et al., 1999). Given the potential of these aspects 'to work in concert' (Vaughn, Gersten and Chard, 2000, p.101), i.e., to collectively reinforce one another, the three factors were applied in the current intervention study to stimulate the reflective practice of the teacher educators, regardless of their subject domain.

*Intervention*

An important objective of professional development is to assess class experiences through reflective practice with others (Putnam & Borko, 2000). To this end, the intervention consisted of six phases: 1) an introductory meeting focusing on the practical and logistical implementation of the intervention; 2) a video recording of lesson 1 for each participant and the selection of subject-specific interaction excerpts by the participant him/herself; 3) individual reflective interviews about participants' language-oriented development during the just-completed lesson 1; 4) individually stimulated recall interviews while participants viewed selected subject-specific interaction excerpts from lesson 1; 5) a video recording of lesson 2 for each participant and the selection of subject-specific interaction excerpts by the participant him/herself; and 6) focus group interviews about the selected excerpts from lesson 2 (see more details in the 'Instruments and Procedure' section). During the third, fourth and sixth phases, participants were asked to evaluate their language-oriented development and substantiate their evaluations with practical examples according to the three-factor structure for 'improved learning outcomes' (Swanson, et al., 1999). This step was based on the expectation that the interviews and evaluations could affect

lesson 2 relative to lesson 1 because of a potential increased awareness and understanding of their responses (Table 2).

**Table 2.** Intervention Set-Up

Data Collection and Stages; (I) a,b,c Intervention Phases: (S)1/4	la. Reflective	lb. Stimulated Recall	lc. Focus Groups
S1 Introductory meeting			
S2 Regular class performance, video recording and selection of interaction excerpts, lesson 1			
S3 Reflective interviews	based on lesson 1		
S4 Stimulated recall interviews while viewing selected material; the interaction excerpts on video of lesson 1		based on selected and viewed excerpts of lesson 1	
S5 Class performance, video recording and selection of interaction excerpts, lesson 2			
S6 Focus group interviews			based on selected and viewed excerpts of lesson 2

### *Instruments and Procedure*

Participants' understanding was examined with three instruments based on the three-factor structure for 'improved learning outcomes' (Swanson et al., 1999) and existing methods for collecting information about teacher educators' practical knowledge of language (Swart et al., 2017 a), related conceptualizations (Swart et al., 2017b) and validated observation instruments. This approach was based on the works of Rimm-Kaufman, Storm, Sawyer, Pianta and LaParo (2006): 1) Semi-structured reflective interviews were conducted to determine participants' understanding and evaluations of their language-oriented development in terms of *subject*, *purpose* and *process*, followed by their selection of noted interactive encounters and their evaluation of the entire interactive performance immediately after lesson 1. 2) Stimulated recall interviews were conducted to stimulate participants to think aloud and to explore their views on aspects of their language-oriented process while viewing the selected video excerpts one week after lesson 1. The following aspects (Swart et al., 2017b) were related to process: the 'starting and finishing point', 'contingency on student language', 'language-oriented feedback and support', 'use of question types', 'use of subject-specific key concepts', 'use of verbal and nonverbal modeling' and 'potential for improvement'. 3) Focus group interviews were conducted to encourage participants to share with professional colleagues their understanding of language-oriented development in terms of *subject*, *purpose* and *process* and their evaluation of the entire interactive performance after lesson 2.

The selection of video excerpts and the interviews after lessons 1 and 2 were deliberately used for data collection and intervention but were not presented as such to the participants; prior to lesson 2, participants were given no instruction to act or respond in a language-oriented manner, but attention was paid to whether they deliberately acted or did not act according to their insights from the interviews.

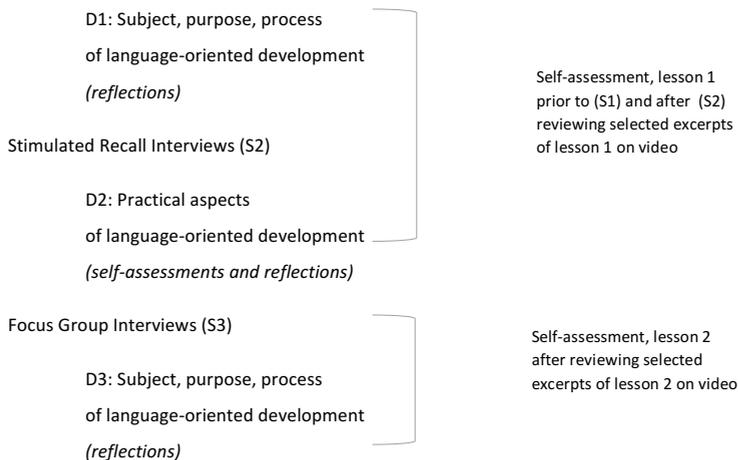
Triangulation of methods was sought by combining the results gathered using different instruments (Smaling, 1994). In this manner, triangulation was not a matter of determining

whether data analysis from each of the three instruments would lead to similar outcomes; rather, the data were combined to develop a comprehensive view of teachers' practical knowledge (Meijer, Verloop and Beijaard, 2002) with regard to their language-oriented development in classroom interaction.

In recording classroom observations and the subsequent selection of excerpts, a combination of dual-view technology and recording was applied within the video-based professional learning platform 'IRIS Connect LTD' (WEE/AA1796TU, Brighton). Each participant received a personal password-protected account that allowed him or her to record, control and share his or her teaching practice and learning experiences from a secure cloud-based platform. During the intervention, participants' classes were recorded by two small iPads directed at the teacher and students. Participants were given a neck strap featuring a magnet and a microphone. Thus, all their movements and classroom interactions were tracked in a discrete and silent manner and recorded from dual points of view (Figure 2).

**Figure 2.** Data Collection, Stages (S1, 2, 3) and Datasets (D1, 2, 3)

Reflective Interviews (S1):



*Analysis*

The datasets, which consisted of the reports and transcriptions of the reflective (1), stimulated recall (2) and focus group interviews (3), were first examined using constant comparison analysis (Glaser, 1965; Ryan and Bernard, 2000). This type of analysis was used to search for indications and clarifications of behavior during the selected excerpts over time, giving rise to descriptive categories (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The accumulated categories were subsequently analyzed with the aid of Atlas Ti, using content analysis to gain explanatory information (Miles and Huberman, 1994). In this study, content analysis was considered an alternative to the statistical approach to qualitative data to obtain numerical data from word-based data. As such, we were able to describe the qualified occurrence and importance of topics. This analysis was performed by systematically comparing the categories and by using participants' perceptions as a frame of reference (Malterud, 2001). The final summation of data allowed us to identify the main categories for

analysis (Atkinson & Hammersley, 1994) (Table 4-7).

The datasets (D1, 2, 3) were each analyzed separately after all rounds (S1, 2, 3) were completed (Figure 2). The analysis was performed deductively (Leech and Onwuegbuzie, 2007). That is, the main codes and sub-codes were identified prior to analysis based on the topic structure used in the intervention (Figure 2). The following main codes were used: subject (SU), purpose (PU), process (PR), assessment (AS), and evaluation (EV) (Ruiz-Primo and Furtak, 2006, 2007). The sub-codes were as follows: starting point and completion (sc), contingency on student language (cl), language-oriented feedback and support (fs), conscious use of question types (qt), use of subject-specific key concepts (ss), use of verbal and nonverbal modeling (mo), and potential for improvement (im) (Swart et al., 2017b; Rimm-Kaufman et al., 2006) (Table 3). The reports and transcriptions of the reflective interviews were then analyzed by assigning the pre-selected codes to each comment made (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). A second researcher repeated the process to cross-check the allocation process, which was then discussed until agreement was reached. Through constant comparison, which involved exploring the connections between codes and performance, categories of reflection and self-assessment were further refined by analyzing the remaining reports and transcripts of the stimulated recall and focus group interviews using the agreed-upon procedure. Variation was examined by considering the differences and similarities among individual participants in each dataset. This analytical approach aimed to guarantee a basis for a comprehensive description of the group and the individual participants. To determine the validity and accuracy of the descriptions and to explain the themes generated from the data, the resulting themes were clustered based on similarity and presented to participants for a member check (Maxwell, 1992).

**Table 3.** Instrumental Phases, Codes and Topics

Codes; Main and Sub and (Analysis) Instrumental Stages (S); Reflective (S1), Stimulated Recall (S2) and Focus Group (S3) Interviews			
Instrument/S	Codes	Sub-codes	Topics
1, 2, 3	SU		SUBJECT
1, 2, 3	PU		PURPOSE
1, 2, 3	PR		PROCESS
2		sc	starting point and completion
2		cl	contingency on student language
2		qt	conscious use of question types
2		ss	subject-specific key concepts
2		fs	language-oriented feedback and support
2		mo	role model verbally/nonverbally
2		im	potential for improving LOP
1, 2, 3	EV		EVALUATION

## Results

We aimed to explore the understanding of teacher educators' language-oriented development, given that the simultaneous development of language and content involves reflection on the use and evaluation of language in interactions during subject-specific teaching. To that end, by analyzing participants' self-selected excerpts of video-recorded language-oriented responses through self-assessment by the individual and the group, we explored the qualitatively different ways in which these educators taught. Based on this exploration, we identified the subject, purpose and process of teacher educators' language-oriented development, in addition to their evaluation of their entire performance in lessons 1 and 2. In this section, the results are presented (Tables 4 and 5) as follows: 1. reflective interviews; 2. stimulated recall interviews; 3. comparison of reflective and stimulated recall interviews; and 4. focus groups.

[Table 4 near here]

### 1 Reflective Interviews

#### *Subject and Purpose of Participants' Language-Oriented Development, Lesson 1*

The results of the reflective interviews directly after lesson 1 (Table 4, first column) showed that the subject and purpose were generally intended to promote student understanding (8 out of 11 cases) through the clarification of subject-specific content (11 of 11) in response to questions that arose during a teacher's instructional explanation or clarification (10 of 11): *'learning to make connections between the content of different chapters'* (P1)<sup>4</sup> and *'[checking] whether students understand the material and are able to explain it'* (P4). In this context, a distinction was made between teachers' and students' purposes: *'providing clarification'* and *'paying attention, understanding and articulation of the issues at stake'*, respectively.

From me, it is expected that I ensure clarity. Students are expected to try to understand the question, to put their thoughts into words, to pay attention when I explain, to try to understand the issues and to eventually ask questions for clarification (P11).

#### *Process of Participants' Language-Oriented Development, Lesson 1*

The process was, according to the participants, regarded mainly (10 out of 11 participants, Table 4, first column) as a form of question-answer learning conversation. In this context, a language-oriented response began with a teacher-generated demand, preceded by the introduction of theory and followed by students' response: *'through my questions, I expect students to explain the idea of variability in science'* (P3). Conversely, in certain situations, the demand was generated by the students and followed by the teachers' response: *'The theoretical definitions raise questions from students; the teacher answers. I provide the space and help them to refine their understanding'* (P2). In both cases, language-oriented development was generally not considered a deliberate activity (9 of 11) but was rather regarded as occurring after and resulting from teacher-initiated instructions or explanations (Table 4, first column).

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<sup>4</sup> A list of the codes used for participants is included in Table 1.

**Table 4.** Results of the Reflective and Stimulated Recall Interviews

Topics	Results (Most Frequently Mentioned out of 11 Participants)			
	Reflective Interviews		Stimulated Recall Interviews	
	LESSON 1		LESSON 1	
SUBJECT	Subject-specific content	9	Subject-specific content	10
PURPOSE	Clarification of subject-specific content	11	Explanation of key terms	11
	Promoting student understanding	8	Achieving subject matter targets	6
			Promoting student understanding	6
PROCESS	Question-answer-oriented	10	Instruction, explanation, clarification	9
	Language-oriented development generally not deliberate	9	Language-oriented development generally not deliberate	9

## 2 Stimulated Recall Interviews

### *'Process Aspects of Participants' Language-Oriented Development, Lesson 1'*

The results of the stimulated recall interviews one week after lesson 1 showed that language-oriented development was generally (9 out of 11) not regarded as a deliberate and autonomous activity (also indicated in the reflective interviews) (Table 4, first column).

**Table 5.** Results of the Process Aspects of Language-Oriented Development, Lesson 1

Self-Assessments of Process Aspects	S/	P	NS/N	P
Sufficient (S)/Deliberate (D)	D		D	
Not Sufficient (NS)/Not Deliberate (ND)				
1. Starting and ending point	D	2	ND	9
2. Contingency on student language	S	4	NS	7
3. Deliberate use of question types	S	0	NS	11
4. Subject-specific key words and concepts	S	8	NS	3
5. Language-oriented feedback and support	S	4	NS	7
6. Language-oriented role model	S	5	NS	6
	nonverbally	S	3	NS
verbally	S	3	NS	8
7. Potential for improving LOP	S	4	Ns	7

*Starting and Ending Points and Degree of Contingency* (Table 5: 1, 2)

Nine out of 11 participants indicated not deliberately starting or finishing, and 2 of 11 noted that they finished only in a deliberate manner. With regard to whether teachers' instruction was contingent on student language, i.e., if it was responsive to the current level of the student, 7 out of 11 reported no sufficient contingency because of the regularly occurring confusion about interpretation and questions; 4 of 11 indicated a sufficient contingency, which was attributed to structuring factors such as the tempo used, sentence construction and word choice.

Examples of not deliberately beginning or ending language-oriented development are as follows: *'not preparing for specific forms of interactive practice'* (P1) and *'being guided by what emerges'* (P11). Participants also mentioned *'forgetting to summarize or evaluate at the end'* (P6) or having a loss of focus or concentration due to other requirements during class:

The moment of interaction is diluted at the classroom level because I'm busy at an individual level with a student who asks me something that is not reproducible or comprehensible for everyone else (P7).

Examples of the conduct of non-contingent interaction concerned *'not listening carefully enough'* (P6), resulting in situations in which student questions were interpreted incorrectly, and *'impatience'*, resulting in situations in which *'student responses were truncated'* (P4). According to these participants, such situations could lead to a *'loss of control'* (P2) or a *'temporary deadlock that may occur in lieu of an exchange'* (P2). Others in the group (5 out of 11) attributed a sufficient degree of the contingency to factors such as the tempo used, sentence structure and word choice: *'Pauses between sentences'* (P11); *'being concrete and using easy words'* (P1); and *'answering questions in different ways, adapted to the comprehension level of the students'* (P7).

*Deliberate Use of Question Types* (Table 5: 3)

All participants (11 out of 11) indicated that they either intentionally or unintentionally used a variety of question types as presented during the interviews, such as open and closed questions, leading questions, rhetorical questions or other questions that promoted higher-thinking skills, including reproduction, analysis or interpretation questions. Among this group, 7 participants noted that they use mainly open and closed questions, 2 suggested applying different types of listening skills during interaction, 1 reported intentionally limiting himself to open and functional questions to avoid wasting time, and 1 indicated that he does not ask any questions himself but allows the students to ask questions.

The examples given for the failure to use a variety of questions (10 out of 11) were attributed to a perceived lack of time and little or no awareness of different question types and how to apply them. Among this group, 8 participants reported using mainly open and closed questions: *'as far as I handle questions, because there are too few of them, I use open and closed questions'* (P10) and *'Mainly open questions, such as asking for personal examples so that they know what it is about'* (P7). Two participants suggested that they apply different types of listening skills during interactions: *'Yes, summarizing, ongoing questioning, confirming'* (P8) and *'I probably should do more with paraphrasing and so on, and in doing so, give the ball back to the students or ask another student to continue what a former student said'* (P2). One of the participants noted that he intentionally limits himself to open and functional questions to avoid wasting time: *'especially open questions, because I need the results for the rest of the explanation, not wanting to lose any more time, having to figure it out myself on my calculator and allowing the momentum to disappear'* (P11). The participant who said that he did not ask any questions himself but left it to the students explained as follows: *'No, not usually, and in this fragment certainly not. The only questions are asked by the students; I do not encourage it myself'* (P5).

*Subject-Specific Key Words and Concepts (Table 5: 4)*

Eight out of 11 participants indicated that they sufficiently address subject-specific key words and concepts. One of these participants emphasized his interest in frequent use, whereas 7 of the participants expressed some doubt about using this approach too often.

Participants were generally satisfied with their method of employing subject-specific key words and concepts. Their views ranged from one participant emphasizing interest in frequent use—*‘because it was explicitly intended to verify what students understood of the concepts, such as identity’* (P11) and *‘Yes, such as soil areas, chemical and physical fertility, nutrients versus workability’* (P10)—to another participant expressing doubt about using subject-specific key words and concepts too often: *‘maybe even too much. Her question was much more concrete than my answer. They just wanted to know if what they said was good, and then I come with some abstract answer about how certain things should be’* (P9). Participants’ examples of employing subject-specific key words and concepts in a sufficient manner indicated their different ways of following students’ experience, as indicated in the following excerpts:

Start from simple examples, and maybe then, slightly earlier, use even more words actually and check through audit questions for whether or not the concepts are clear to the students (P1).

Using questions from students to determine the level of knowledge and clarify concepts. I go deeply into these questions and use them to clarify other aspects of trigonometry (P8).

*Language-Oriented Feedback and Support (Table 5: 5)*

Seven out of 11 participants indicated that they do not efficiently provide feedback or guide students with linguistic expressions and formulations to encourage them in their language-oriented learning and formulation.

The explanation for not providing sufficient language-oriented feedback and support was, according to the participants, that this practice largely fell outside the area of their language-specific knowledge, as they were subject-specific teachers rather than language teachers:

What hinders me are two things: a) It is not in the field of my interest area, and b) I focus on the main goal of my class, which is transferring mathematical knowledge, understanding and skills in a short time (P11).

In this context, implicit and explicit forms of feedback were distinguished. Implicit forms included providing time for students to talk (P1, P3, P10, P7); thinking aloud along with students while they are thinking (P4, P9, P8); repeating students’ statements in the teacher’s own, and more appropriate, words (P11, P2, P6); and adjusting and simplifying the teacher’s own choice of words and sentence structures *‘down to a level where the concept can perhaps be understood’* (P5). Explicit forms included providing language-oriented feedback on how students formulate and, when problems arise, correcting and supporting them, for example, by creating *‘a word web so given comments become more visible’* (P9).

*Verbal and Nonverbal Language-Oriented Role Models (Table 5: 6)*

Eight out of 11 participants noted that they do not act as a role model verbally, and 6 of 11 noted that they do not serve as nonverbal role models. Regarding the majority (8 of 11) who reported not sufficiently acting as a role model verbally, the examples given concerned ways of using listening skills for repeating, asking questions, paraphrasing, summarizing and responding in the affirmative: *‘whenever a student says something or asks in this excerpt, I repeat what he says, so the rest of the class can follow it’* (P8); *‘I see that I am affirmative in words. I put her at ease, and eventually, she talks openly’* (P11); and questioning and summarizing what was said by a student (P10). Those who do not sufficiently act as a role model nonverbally reported that they did not deliberately and explicitly address regulatory skills in appropriate ways: *‘I drop silences, so there is some space for thinking’* (P10);

*'When I ask the class for a recent example and there is no reaction coming, I bend forward and show visible interest in what is said' (P7); 'I am standing and I am walking almost constantly back and forth with my face to the classroom. I believe my posture exudes openness: openness for input of the students' (P8); and 'I do my best to show empathy for their situation' (P6). Regarding the other, smaller group of participants who reported that they do sufficiently act as a role model verbally, the participants mainly referred to their own mode as being largely dominant and sender-oriented: 'listening but also responding too quickly' (P1); 'constantly talking too much myself' (P4); 'cutting off comments too quickly and not letting them reply' (P3); and 'providing the answers and solutions myself instead of asking them and having the students thinking themselves' (P9). With respect to serving as a role model nonverbally, participants referred mainly to using body language and gestures in an unaware or ineffective manner: 'Sometimes my body radiates passivity, bending slightly forward, expectantly, expressing something like "is there yet any reaction or not?"' (P1); 'The truncation of student responses is largely non-verbal through a stop sign with my hands and a raised voice, going over their head' (P2); and 'I was not well prepared and therefore radiated some anxiety or uncertainty. This is not a good example for future teachers' (P5).*

#### *Potential for Improvement (Table 5: 7)*

Seven out of 11 participants reported not being actively engaged in their own language-oriented development. Most examples showed unused potential regarding language-oriented and reflective means of formulation in response to students' reactions. Specifically, concerning their needs, expectations or knowledge, two participants indicated that they had no room because of time or a lack of desire to address the issue: *'speed ensures that I literally do not stop at the thought' (P1). The other four participants referred to the ability to switch, in a flexible and creative way, between content-oriented pedagogy and the related language approach and, by doing so, adjusting the formulation or interaction accordingly depending on the present need: 'when you show interest, you engage students more easily, and you can jointly create anything' (P7) and '[you need] to listen carefully and to determine which subject matter and language-oriented targets you want to achieve' (P9).*

### 3 Comparing Reflective and Stimulated Recall Interviews

#### *Participants' Evaluation of Their Language-Oriented Development, Lesson 1*

Based on the results of participants' evaluation during both reflective interviews, directly after the first lesson—before the selection and consultation of participants' selected excerpts on video and the stimulated recall interviews—and one week later, while reviewing the selected excerpts on film, the general level of contentment with language-oriented development was adjusted.

Based on the results of the reflective interviews, 8 out of 11 participants indicated that they were satisfied with their overall performance during lesson 1. This statement concerned their first reaction before consulting the selected recordings. The three participants who were not satisfied indicated that their teaching was *'going too fast' (P1)* and that the *'pace was too high' (P2)*. Regarding their own lack of verbal and non-verbal communication, the following comment was offered: *'I am busy using too many stopgaps such as, yes, yes. I also repeat too many questions' (P4)*. In the first group, one participant reported being very satisfied because *'there was a lot of interaction with and between the students. I gave time and space to let them express themselves' (P8)*. The other seven also indicated that they were generally pleased with the *'opportunity for interaction' generated in their classrooms, but they considered the actual entry into and engagement in an interaction too limited: 'In general, I am talking too much' (P3) and 'it would have been better to sometimes ask a counter-question' (P4).*

Based on the results of the stimulated recall interviews, 9 out 11 participants reported *not* being satisfied, and two reported being satisfied. For the first group, the negative assessment was based largely on recordings that showed, according to the participants, a lack of an adequate response, i.e., not using *'targeted and structuring' methods in combination with 'interpersonal*

aspects in an appropriate manner' to invite students into subject-specific conversations in some cases. In this context, a predominantly sender-oriented teacher mode was considered one of the main reasons: *'not only talking too much but to also coming up with answers too quickly to my own questions without sufficient attention to what students say or do'* (P4) (Table 6).

#### 4 Focus Group Interviews

##### *Subject and Purpose of Participants' Language-Oriented Development, Lesson 2*

Based on the results of the focus group interviews after lesson 2, the conversation content generally concerned 'subject-specific concepts' with the aim of having 'interaction and dialogue on subject-specific concepts and knowledge exchange from an interpersonal perspective to achieve subject matter and language-oriented targets': *'by your attitude, when you show interest, you engage students more easily, and you can jointly create anything'* (P7). In this context, it is important for teachers *'to listen carefully and to determine which subject matter and language-oriented targets you want to achieve in advance'* (P9) and to name *'content, form and process aspects or else the what, how and when'* (P10) (Table 7).

##### *Process of Participants' Language-Oriented Development, Lesson 2*

The process was, according to participants, generally driven by 'deliberate and targeted action' based on a changing perspective on teaching (Table 4): *'as a teacher, you have to be an example and show a focus for direction in substance as well as in technical form because you do not have to be the know-it-all. That's a common misconception'* (P3). According to this view, knowledge develops because of collective engagement in conversations instead of the all-knowing teaching of the teacher (Table 7).

Maybe it was a fixed idea to think that students have to understand it first, so I do the explaining part and then offer them all concepts before we can enter an interaction, if there is still time, and not vice versa. The interaction is saved for last because of that view, the time constraints and perhaps also because of the fixed idea that the main task of a teacher is to literally deliver something rather than to collectively and actively engage in conversation through which knowledge is acquired (P5).

The examples that participants gave of subject-specific teaching contexts in which students were invited to interactively engage were built on their identification with the subject to be addressed: *'the presence of a wooden bike that I posted in front of the classroom immediately caused more interactivity'* (P4) and *'By asking for their idols, such as John Travolta, I used an example from their context in order to achieve higher thinking and abstraction levels'* (P11). This approach, aimed at the active and joint creation of knowledge through language-oriented dialogue and debate, was, according to participants, a result of changing perceptions about teaching, whereby interaction was not left as the last activity but was used actively as a means to achieve common knowledge.

##### *Evaluation of Language-Oriented Development, Lesson 2*

Seven out of 11 participants indicated being positive about their language-oriented development based on structural, educational, verbal and relational aspects. Because of an expanded degree of self-awareness, aspects that were assessed less positively were related primarily to nonverbal aspects such as gestures and presence and other related manifestations.

Verbally, I am doing fine, an open attitude with humor. Non-verbal is not good, not completing sentences, searching for words, and then it fades away. While talking. I am too aware of what I want to say, because of which I'm always doubting and nothing runs smoothly. When I'm thinking about my language use and what I want to say, I sometimes lose my words, especially when I start thinking about using difficult words. Then, my sentence stagnates because I'm thinking. I notice this even more when watching the film, so this probably happens even more often than I thought (P5).

I recognize in your snippet that you begin a sentence and do not exactly know how that ends. I also did see this with XX; he stops abruptly in the middle of a sentence and then goes on to another topic. With me, I usually go down in volume and start to mumble something. You know it, but you do not know how to let it come out naturally, let alone how to formulate it in a reasonable sense (P4).

The following reasons for positive assessment were indicated: better preparation regarding preferred language-oriented goals and methods for the exchange of key concepts, as well as the adaptation and cultivation of language levels through the development of mutual understanding (Table 6). Participants distinguished between professional learning and teaching when evaluating their own responses. Participants who reported not being satisfied with language-oriented learning characterized this form of learning as *'limited, still in an unconscious and initial phase'* (P6). Participants who indicated that they were satisfied related this perception to the development of sensitivity and intuition toward language, aiming to promote understanding between themselves and students regarding concepts and terminology through which *'ideas are clarified and more systematically considered'* (P7). Two participants who reported being satisfied attributed this result to their more targeted focus on student contributions and the clarification of the concepts and the thread of the argument. The three participants who expressed that they were fairly satisfied with their own language-oriented actions indicated that they did not explore actions focused on developing linguistic interaction with students because of their primarily content-oriented educational vision. In addition, a lack of confidence and time constraints affected their own language skills, which therefore resulted in a *'monotonous, boring, not interactive, subdued performance'* (P5). Participants who reported being satisfied characterized their language-oriented development as a new awareness of questioning techniques and consulting opportunities in relation to the subject matter and, hence, being better able to act on what a *'full interaction requires'* (P10). The interaction skills were identified as follows: *'intervene occasionally'*, more *'consideration of when to address issues and when not'* (P7) and *'sharing one's own experiences on the impact of language and language use'* (P6).

**Table 6.** Results of the Assessments of Language-Oriented Development, Lessons 1 and 2

Analysis of Interviews (Most Frequently Mentioned out of 11 Participants)					
Reflective		Stimulated Recall		Focus Group	
LESSON 1		LESSON 1		LESSON 2	
<i>Satisfied</i>	8	<i>Satisfied</i>	2	<i>Satisfied</i>	7
<i>Not Satisfied</i>	3	<i>Not</i>	9	<i>Not Satisfied</i>	4
		<i>Satisfied</i>			
General lack of awareness with regard to one's own verbal and nonverbal communication; Counter and verifying questions too little; Unilaterally focused and teacher-sender oriented		Perceived lack of structuring skills and opportunities to shape targeted interaction; Focus on content at the expense of interpersonal attention and relational aspects		Preparation of preferred language-oriented goals and methods; adaptation to language level through the development of mutual understanding; Change in teaching perspective where language-oriented development is not left until the end but used as a means to achieve common knowledge	

**Table 7.** Results of the Focus Groups

Topics	Results (Most Frequently Mentioned out of 11 Participants)	
	LESSON 2	
SUBJECT	Subject-specific concepts	8
	Subject-specific content	3
PURPOS	Content and concept explanation and clarification	9
E	Interaction and dialogue on subject-specific concepts	8
	Knowledge exchange from an interpersonal perspective	6
	Achieving subject matter and language-oriented targets	6
PROCESS	Teaching through language-oriented dialogue and debate	7
	Creation of knowledge, actively and jointly	6
	Language performance mainly deliberate and autonomous	6

## Discussion and Conclusion

In this section, by reflecting on participants' self-evaluation during the three interview stages, teacher educators' understanding of their language-oriented development is discussed.

### *Evaluating Language-Oriented Development*

The results of the reflective interviews showed that a large majority of the participants were satisfied with the general approach of their language-oriented development. However, the results of the stimulated recall interviews showed that, one week later, they usually assessed their language-oriented development as 'not satisfied'. The first assessment, which occurred during the reflective interviews, was based on participants' immediate recall of relatively frequently occurring situations of academic dialogue. This outcome was based on an alleged situation of interaction. In this phase, language-oriented development was thus subjectively linked directly to interactive practice. Participants mentioned many opportunities for interaction and, thus, for language-oriented responses. The participants' examples showed that in this phase of assessment, a degree of uncertainty about the equivalence of input arose between the teacher and students because the situation was controlled, according to participants, by a teacher-as-sender-oriented mode. This outcome corresponds to the results of a recent study on the practical knowledge of language (Swart et al. 2017), in which sender-oriented teacher educators appeared to have more difficulty accepting the importance of student-teacher interaction. Other studies have shown that cycles of contingent interaction appear less frequently than unfinished, non-contingent cycles (Ruiz-Primo and Furtak, 2006, 2007) because of the lack of a common problem or diagnosis initiated by the teacher during observed teacher-student interactions (Elbers, Hajer, Jonkers, Koole, and Prenger, 2008; Lockhorst, van Oers, and Wubbels, 2006).

The second assessment, which occurred during the stimulated recall interviews, was based on the observed cases of interaction. Based on their direct observations, participants reported less interaction than they had previously reported during the reflective interviews. In addition, the interaction that occurred was generally more regulatory in nature than subject-specific. In this phase, language-oriented development was not directly linked to the presence or absence of interactive practice but was more strongly regarded as a spin-off of instruction and, in that capacity, as a precondition for generating interactive practice—for example, by asking different types of questions or by giving space for students' language-oriented reactions. These findings build on specified practical strategies for teachers' third turn responses (Nassaji and Wells, 2000). According to these authors, if a teacher implements further efforts beyond a solely evaluative mode, such as requesting explanation or meta-talk, students can be expected to self-select contributions because of a shift in the teacher role from the knowing sender to an initiating and evaluating role through which knowledge is developed in consultation with students. Furthermore, we found that participants' indicated interactions appeared to stimulate unfamiliar language-oriented methods for improving their own teaching, although the actual interaction occurred for different and often coincidental reasons. In addition, studies have claimed that students need learning experiences in which academic concepts are not only explained but also represented, communicated and validated by the teacher through argumentative stimulated interaction (Sampson & Blanchard, 2012). For this reason, teacher educators must be more aware of the significance of the evaluation and the construction of knowledge (Suh and Park, 2017) and therefore create openings for interactive practice to build rationalizations and to exchange the intersubjectivity of each explanation at the same time. This approach also pertains to the means by which, according to participants, the interactive processes within their lessons interacted with their individual language-oriented development. For example, reflecting on student learning through interaction enabled the participants to move beyond their preconceived views about their own practice.

The process of language-oriented development during lesson 1 was regarded primarily as a question-answer dynamic that was initiated either by the teacher or by the students and typically not considered a well-prepared, autonomous and purposeful activity. Most examples illustrated common confusion in class about student interpretations of teachers' formulations because of untapped potential regarding teacher strategies for collaborating in a language-oriented and reflective manner in response to student comments and questions. This perception was the result of a self-perceived lack of contingent teaching, including little or no awareness of the basic conditions and capabilities, such as beginning and ending points, the potential for various question types and other reactive strategies. This outcome is in line with recent empirical studies showing that teachers are unable to act contingently (Van de Pol, Volman and Beishuizen, 2010) despite their typical position of understanding a student's request (Lee, 2007) using a variety of appropriate reactive strategies (Nassaji and Wells, 2000). Most participants indicated a desire to present themselves as good role models in language-oriented processes but had little idea of how to behave as such. A minority (four) of the participants mentioned that language-oriented potential referred to the ability to switch between content-oriented pedagogy and a related language approach and, thus, to adjust their language-oriented development depending on students' needs.

The participants generally assessed the process of language-oriented development during lesson 2 as deliberate, autonomous and purposeful through the use of language-oriented dialogue and debate. In terms of educational, structural, verbal and relational aspects, a majority of participants provided positive responses based on a modified conception of teaching. Aspects that were assessed less positively were related primarily to nonverbal aspects because of increasing forms of self-awareness, together with a lack of confidence in alternative language-oriented values and related education tools. From the participants' altered perspective on teaching, subject-specific knowledge develops because of collective engagement in dialogue. The

mutual understanding emerging from this engagement can be subsequently achieved through the improved preparation of preferred language-oriented goals and methods adapted to students' comprehension levels. Earlier research (Keys, Hand, Prain, & Collins, 1999) demonstrated that for teachers to change their fundamental principles and teaching strategies, they first need to shift their epistemological orientations toward student-centered views (Hand, 2008). This finding confirms Guskey's (2002) argument that teachers must observe the positive effect of new teaching strategies in order to make and sustain changes. Noticing a positive effect on student learning can, according to Suh and Park (2017), reinforce these changes in the orientation and acceptance of a new approach.

These results confirm our hypothesis that awareness of the importance of language-oriented development in content-based classroom interaction leads to a conceptual change in teacher educators and, thus, to reflection, new knowledge and new behavior, which may in turn lead to further awareness and to improved language-oriented teacher performance.

#### *How Do Teacher Educators Understand Their Language-Oriented Development in Content-Based Classroom Interaction?*

The purpose of language-oriented development after lesson 1 was generally perceived as teacher instruction and the transmission of subject-specific content to promote students' understanding of subject matter. After lesson 2, the purpose was regarded largely as a form of common knowledge exchange of subject-specific concepts from an interpersonal perspective to achieve both subject matter and language-oriented goals. The differences in purposes between lessons 1 and 2 can be explained by the three factors used to improve teacher learning: task control, stimulated recall and interaction in small groups. When beginning lesson 1, participants were instructed to teach a regular class without specific preparation or assignments related to their language-oriented responses. Between lessons 1 and 2, they actively participated in reflective activities through task control, stimulated recall and interaction in small groups. Thus, participants were more informed and more specifically involved in framing language-oriented aspects. In this context, two points can be made: lesson 1 aimed mainly at instructing the subject-specific content and directly related terminology of the profession. Lesson 2 was directed at the exchange of subject-specific concepts to learn the subject matter, achieve language-oriented goals and develop common knowledge simultaneously. In the first lesson, language-oriented development was thus primarily considered a means of talking (instead of interacting, which occurred in lesson 2) about subject matter through the use of language itself. These outcomes are in line with previous research, where participant-oriented engagement in subject-specific classrooms included interactions among students to not only promote students' learning of content but also to advance their use of language and their direct involvement. Consequently, developing learning and language becomes synchronized (Larsen-Freeman, 2013). In this context, language-oriented development can be considered not only a strategy that involves applying regulatory and explanatory language but also a pedagogy that connects academic and subject-specific knowledge with interpersonal-oriented language.

Finally, regarding the normativity that characterized the participants' professional practice, the premise that institutional forms and processes of teacher education generally frame how professionals should respond to the essential sociocultural processes of learning and teaching development is crucial to the outcomes of participants' language-oriented understanding in professional practice. As such, current teacher education practices establish our definition of what teacher professionalization entails. In this study, we argue that the core of a new language-oriented knowledge base must focus on the experience of teaching itself, i.e., it should center on the teacher educator who teaches, the contexts in which teaching occurs, and the pedagogy by which teaching is accomplished. Additionally, this knowledge base should include forms of knowledge representation that report teacher educators' professional learning development

within the social and cultural contexts in which it occurs (Freeman and Johnson, 1998). In conclusion, we argue that the knowledge base of language-oriented teacher education must account for the experienced teacher educator as a participant in a continuous professional development process of teaching within the social context of training in which teacher-learning and teaching occurs alongside the learning activities of both language-oriented and content-based teaching. Such a framework for language-oriented professional development in content-based teaching and interaction requires a wider epistemological view of experienced teacher educators, namely, one that accounts for teaching as it was applied and developed in professional learning. We propose that this approach will eventually lead to redefining how experienced teacher educators develop their continuous language-oriented professional learning in content-based teaching and classroom interaction.

### Limitations and Directions for Future Research

Because the findings of this study were drawn from the data acquired from eleven participating teacher educators, their generalizability is limited, but their transferability and application to different teacher educators and teachers in other contexts are certainly possible. We strived to provide a rich and full description of teachers' language performance that can be transferred to other similar teacher educators in similar content-related interaction contexts. Involvement in theorizing about the interaction of language and subject-specific content is currently receiving greater focus in teacher-training institutes. A goal is to conceptualize language and subject-specific content as separate entities rather than allowing them to be part of the same process in teacher educators' teaching. In addition to this concern about theory, there is a clear need for empirical research on teacher educators' practical language abilities by identifying their use of subject-specific language during interaction, particularly their strategy and intervention in various subject areas. This research should aid in clarifying what language-oriented and developing skills consist of and how they can be specified within specific subject areas. On a theoretical level, this type of work should lead to a deeper understanding of teacher educators' language-oriented pedagogical subject knowledge and strategies. In particular, this strategy applies to teacher educators based on the following argument: when they are able to assess themselves and provide contingent and language-oriented feedback on student work, teacher educators act as role models for their students, who aim to be future teachers. Some teacher educators may find this strategy difficult to implement because they lack confidence in their students or because they habitually work from a teacher-sender mode (Nicol, 2010). This issue can be addressed by linking this contingent and language-oriented strategy directly at the beginning of interactive practice. For example, this link could involve including and inviting students to participate in structured forms of language-oriented feedback on the responses of both the teacher and each other. In this manner, the teacher educator gives feedback not only on the subject-specific content but also on the observations made by the students, allowing for a more equal and mutual appreciation of each other's linguistic and professional contributions.

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## Chapter 5

### **Evaluating and improving teacher educators' language-oriented performance in content-based teaching**

## Chapter 5<sup>5</sup>

### **Evaluating and Improving Teacher Educators' Language-Oriented Performance in Content-based Teaching**

#### *Abstract*

Professional development of teacher educators is considered essential to the quality of their teaching. However, very little is known about the quality and influence of their communicative and interactive professional development. In this study, we argue that teacher educators' evaluation of language-oriented performance enhances the quality of their content-based teaching. This paper reports a video-enhanced intervention study with three experienced teacher educators and their students (N=32). The findings show that there is a relationship between the order of the application of focus areas as noticed by the students, and teachers' ability to apply these in accordance with their objectives regarding their content-based teaching.

#### Introduction

Reflection and evaluation are important tools in the context of teacher educators' professional development and improvement. Prior research has shown that experienced teacher educators can deliberately engage in these kind of practices (Bronkhorst et al., 2013). Furthermore, teacher educators also have to develop reflective activities as it relates to their specific 'language-oriented' performance in the context of their content-based teaching. While we previously engaged in exploring teacher educators' practical knowledge of language (Swart et al., 2017 a), innovation in teacher education demands more language-oriented approaches within a world that is becoming more inclusive and interconnected (Conley and Ah Yun, 2017) in dealing with cultural and linguistic diversity (den Brok, van Eerde and Hajer, 2010). Research on language, specifically with regard to applications and expected consequences as well as the role it plays in the joint development of content and meaning during learning processes in classroom interaction, is therefore of great importance.

While numerous professional development studies have recently made efforts to gain insight into dialogic teaching experience through reflection (Soto Gómez, Serván Núñez and Pérez Gómez, 2015; Amador and Weiland, 2015; Cajkler and Wood, 2016), so far the impact on 'language-sensitive' (Swank, 2005; Swart et al., 2017a) approaches in content-based teaching for experienced teacher educators has been limited. As a result, professional development studies in teacher education focusing on language-oriented teacher performance during content-based teaching are rare. In order to encourage an empirical and language-oriented approach, teacher educators have to develop their personal practical knowledge of language (Swart, et al., 2017a) along with their pedagogical content knowledge (Gudmundsdottir and Shulman, 1987).

In this context, personal practical knowledge of language can be described as interpretive and situationally based on experiential modalities; i.e., 'language-sensitive' and 'language-focused' (Swart et al., 2017 a, b). Contemporary understandings of classroom communication are generally built on the theory that most teachers' cognitive and linguistic knowledge is subject to extensive participation in sociocultural activities (Hall and Walsh, 2002), also referred to as a dynamic sequence of interrelated settings (Heikonen, Pietarinen, Pyhältö, Toom and Soini, 2017). This generally includes the use of language as a means of communication. Nevertheless, language in

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general does not only relate to tools for acquiring and transferring new substantive knowledge, but also to the development of language and thinking itself. This versatility of language is often overlooked while it is one of the key targets in both language *and* content-based teaching (Richards and Rodgers, 2014; Swart et al., 2017). From this distinction between regulated 'language' and 'content' registers, different studies have taken a more widespread approach (DiCerbo et al., 2014) in which dialogic teaching is also considered an approach of 'negotiating' (Pica, 1994; Cobb, Gresalfi and Hodge 2008), 'constructing' (Mercer, 2010), and 're-conceptualizing' meaning (Swart et al., 2017b).

Participation in 'research-based professional development' provides, according to Mouza (2009), new lenses for examining teacher development in ways where the classroom experience inspires continual learning and change. At the same time, difficulties have been reported in the actual implementation of effective professional development in practice (Bakkenes et al., 2010; Morris and Hiebert, 2011) due to a focus on sub-areas, such as collaboration aspects, instead of key issues such as the teaching and learning of subject matter (Bausmith and Barry, 2011). For this reason it is crucial, according to Van Driel and Berry (2012), to focus on practical effectiveness and the development and understanding of how teacher educators are learning while teaching and subsequently of how they teach their students to learn and teach about certain subject matter. Translated to the current study, the development of teacher educators' 'knowledge of language-oriented content-based teaching' should be related to their 'personal practical knowledge of language.'

Drawing on these studies, and in particular with regard to 'literacy pedagogical content knowledge' (Love, 2009, 2010) and 'language-sensitive teaching' (Swank, 2005), in this paper 'language-oriented performance' is considered a communicative enrichment of teacher educators' pedagogical arsenal and approached from the perspective of teacher educators' personal practical knowledge of language (Swart et al., 2017a). Against this background, the current study can thus be considered a language-oriented approach into the communicative and interactive professional development of subject teacher educators in higher education.

A previous study of teacher educators' personal practical knowledge of language (Swart et al., 2017a) showed that the occurrence of classroom interaction was, according to the teachers, predominantly considered a derivative of instruction and in that capacity a precondition for generating learning conversation. In such cases, teachers indicated that they mainly make use of contingent strategies such as 'active listening' and 'metatalk' in supporting the language-oriented thinking and formulation of students. Based on these outcomes and building on language elements from content-based instruction and language-sensitive education (Elbers, Hajer, Jonkers, & Prenger, 2005; Swank, 2005), three continual teacher language modalities, i.e., intentions and means, were identified (Swart et al., 2017c). The modalities were then arranged in order of anticipated professional development, referred to as 'language-sensitive and interpersonal oriented' and 'language-focused and pedagogical,' i.e., in a correspondingly 'receptive oriented' or 'productive and goal oriented way' of communication (Swart et al., 2017 a, b, c). This was to be implemented in teachers' content-based teaching, either separately or combined. In the latter, the combination modality and registers of interpersonal and academic language (Schleppegrell & de Oliveira, 2006), formerly used separately, were combined (Swart et al., 2017b).

Based on this analysis, we developed a framework for language-oriented professional development that will be explored in more depth with three teacher cases in the current study. The framework, as shown in Table 1 and further discussed in the method section, distinguished five interrelated 'language focus areas' (further referred to as *focus areas*) consisting of: 'language awareness,' 'active listening,' 'formalizing interaction,' 'language support,' and 'language and learning development and improvement.' These focus areas, employed as starting points in the current study, should be seen as neither fixed nor complete but as empirically relevant aspects that were considered *points for attention* rather than 'major areas of concern.' From this angle, we

argued that the applied and evaluated language focus areas in content-based teaching lead to language-oriented reflection which will lead in turn to a broader pedagogical arsenal and, consequently, to improved quality of teaching performance. As a result, language conditions could be set in which enhanced subject teaching can be made more effective (Bunch, 2013; Love, 2009; Schleppegrell & O'Hallaron, 2011). We designed a video-enhanced intervention study to examine this, titled '*How teacher educators and their students evaluate language-oriented performance in content-based teaching.*' The language-oriented performance was evaluated by reflective activities of both the individual teachers and their students after the lessons, directed by two sub questions: 'How do teacher educators reflect on their language-oriented performance?' and 'How do students reflect on their teacher educators' language-oriented performance?'

The current study made use of a definition by Nijveldt, Beijaard, Brekelmans, Verloop, and Wubbels (2005) described as the capability of teachers to deal with the requirements of the teaching profession as manifested in both their performance (i.e., practical knowledge, skills, and attitudes) and their reflection. This integrated approach of 'performance' is presumed to come closest to the complexity of the actual teaching process (den Brok, van Eerde and Hajer, 2010). In order to understand this complexity, a teacher's performance should be measured in the actual practice of teaching. In this so-called 'context embeddedness' (Darling-Hammond and Snyder, 2000; den Brok et al., p. 725), teachers' performance has to be addressed over a period of time. In addition, teachers' intentions and thinking processes should be considered as well as a student's behavior and reflection to generate 'interdependence and specificity' (den Brok et al., p. 726-727). To further understand this multi-layered character of teachers' performance in teaching, 'multiple instruments' are required to evaluate, and in doing so, generate 'variability' (p.726). With this study, we intended to contribute to the formulation of teacher educators' professional development in classroom interaction by examining their evaluated language-oriented performance within content-based teaching over a period of time, focusing on the reflections of experienced teacher educators and their students.

## Method

### *Research design*

We explored how teacher educators' language-oriented performance was evaluated by individual teacher educators and their students in a small-scale intervention study. As we were interested in how the practical knowledge of language was related to teacher educators'<sup>6</sup> language-oriented professional learning goals, we first reported how they conceptualized and operationalized these objectives (Swart et al., 2017a, b). We then examined their understanding of language-oriented performance in response to recordings of their regular classes without prior instruction (Swart et al., 2017c). Based on these outcomes, we developed a framework for language-oriented professional development consisting of modalities and focus areas (Table 1). In the current study, this framework was used to examine language-oriented performance in content-based teaching in more detail with three cases.

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<sup>6</sup> Different subject teacher educators from a larger group in Sciences, Social Sciences, and Humanities (Swart et al., a,b).

**Table 1.** Framework For Language-Oriented Professional Development (based on Swart et al., 2017c)

Language Modalities: Intention and <i>Means</i>	Focus Areas	Description
Language-sensitive and interpersonal <i>Language as a tool</i>	1 Language-awareness	Differentiating on content and language level by verifying students' interpretations
	2 Active listening	Applying active listening skills through questioning, paraphrasing, reflection, repetition, and summation of students' wording;
Language-focused and pedagogical <i>language as a means</i>	3 Formalizing interaction	Applying different interactive forms aimed at the transfer of content and development of language proficiency
	4 Organizing language support	Paying attention to relevant language aspects in students' subject learning development
Language-sensitive and language-focused <i>Language as a tool and means</i>	5 Improving both language and learning development	Paying equal and simultaneous attention to students' linguistic, conceptual and communicative development

### *Framework*

The framework contained five empirically relevant aspects, underpinning teacher educators' language-oriented professional development as identified in the previous study, namely that 'awareness of the meaning of language-oriented performance during subject-specific academic dialogue leads to conceptual change in teacher educators and thus to reflection, new knowledge, and new behavior, which may in turn lead to further awareness and improved language-oriented teacher performance' (Swart et al., 2017 c). These aspects, i.e., 'language focus areas' in the current study, were deployed as a reference framework for the evaluation of teachers' language-oriented performance. In this way, the focus areas followed on previously identified teacher modalities and was intended as a structure for the applied and evaluated data. As shown in Table 1, the following focus areas were connected to the first, second, and third modalities respectively: 'language-awareness' and 'active listening;' 'formalizing interaction' and 'language support;' and 'improving language and learning development.'

### *Context of the study and participants*

The current study involved three experienced teacher educators in Social Sciences subjects, namely Religious studies, Geography, and Educational Science, and their second or third year bachelor student teachers (N=32) at a university of applied sciences. This institute for teacher education offers a certificate that allows graduates to teach students in lower levels of secondary education. Convenient sampling was used to select participants, based on their voluntary involvement in the previous three phases of the language-oriented professional development study (Swart et al., 2017a, b, c). In addition, all of their students were invited to voluntarily sign up for participation in the evaluation of their teacher educators' language-oriented teaching. All students present agreed to participate. Since the number of students and thus the composition of the groups differed per lesson, only data of the students present in all the lessons were used (Table 2).

**Table 2.** Participants

Group	Participants	Male	Female	Age	Years of Teaching experience	Subject	Total Participants
Teacher educators	1 Mariam**		1	61	29	Religious Studies Educational Sciences Geography	3
	2 Alex	1		34	7		
	3 Willy	1		57	26		
Total T							
Students* of T1	15	6	9			Religion S. Education. S Geography	32
	of T2 10	3	7				
	of T3 7	4	3				
Total S							
Total T & S							35

\* Notes: T Students: first row under participants contains the total number of students that was present in all three classes.

\*\*All used names are pseudonyms.

### Intervention

In order for the teacher educators to evaluate their language-oriented performance in content-based teaching, we engaged in three parallel courses over a twelve-week period. Prior to each lesson, all three teachers were asked individually to select two language focus areas out of the framework of five (Table 1). Next, they were asked to evaluate their applied (in class) and perceived (after class) focus areas using self-selected video excerpts. During the same period, their students were asked to complete and keep a log at the end of each lesson. After completion of all the lessons, teachers were asked to evaluate their own language-oriented performance through a plenary group session (Table 3).

**Table 3.** Intervention Phases, Instruments and Objectives

Intervention Rounds	Phase 1 (1 week)	Phase 2/3 (10 weeks)			Phase 4 (2 weeks)
Instruments	Individual Introductory meeting	Individual Stimulated Recall Interviews (T) Students logs (S)			Plenary group session
Objectives	Selection of focus areas (T)	Reflection 1 of applied focus areas (T/S) and reselection of focus areas (T)	Reflection 2	Reflection 3	Final Evaluation of best language-oriented practice
Participants					
T Teachers	T	T	T	T	T
S Students		S	S	S	

### Instruments

The instruments available to answer the first sub question with regard to *teacher educators'* reflection, were the following: individual interviews for the purpose of selection, stimulated recall interviews for the purpose of reflection, and one group interview for the purpose of final evaluation. The instruments available to answer the second sub question with regard to *students'*

reflection were individually completed logbooks. All instruments for teachers and students were accompanied by a pre-structured format based on the framework for language-oriented professional development (Table 1). A more detailed description of this instrument, as it was provided to the students, is presented below.

#### *Student Evaluation tool*

The evaluation tool for students was developed to measure the frequency of each of the five focus areas used by their teacher educator. The form consisted of three pages. On the first page, the main points were briefly introduced: the subject being ‘a teaching intervention in the context of research,’ the ‘request for voluntary participation,’ and the objective of ‘evaluating language-oriented professional learning and teaching.’ The second page contained the five focus areas including a description and examples in terms of teacher actions as described per focus area. Based on this, students could indicate ‘how often’ each one of the described focus areas was observed during the entire lesson by means of a three point frequency scale, i.e., ‘not,’ ‘occasionally,’ and ‘frequently.’ On the last page students were asked to substantiate the evaluations by way of examples.

#### *Procedure*

The framework was designed to guide students’ and teachers’ evaluation process. The students based their evaluation on the lessons they attended, while the teachers did this through the video recorded lessons within a professional online learning platform of Iris Connect (WEE/AA1796TU, Brighton). This online platform allowed them to individually collect and select video data of their teaching performance and to record their responses, individually and in the groups.

In order to follow teachers’ intended language strategies prior to each lesson, the teachers were asked to make a *selection* of two out of five language focus areas from the framework. For this purpose, individual interviews were held three times: one week prior to the first lesson (initial), one week prior to the second (selection two), and one week prior to the third lesson (selection three). For the purpose of teachers’ *reflection* on their applied language focus areas, individual stimulated recall interviews were held three times, directly after their first, second, and third lesson on the basis of self-selected video excerpts. In this way all individual pre-post interviews consisted of a selection (looking ahead) and reflection part (looking back) in addition to the initial and final interviews, prior to the first and after the last lesson. Subsequently, for the purpose of teachers’ *final evaluation*, all three teachers were asked to reflect on their best language-oriented practice through a plenary group session based on their selected video excerpts after completion of the lesson series. All individual and group interviews were semi-structured to collect specific, reliable, and comparable qualitative data with regard to the focus areas including the ability to follow side trajectories that differ from the framework when appropriate. For the purpose of students’ *evaluation* of their teacher educators’ applied language focus areas, logs were kept at the end of each class in a standardized form after they were first explained and distributed at the beginning of each lesson and checked for understanding. All students present in the lessons agreed to participate due to, according to them, the user-friendly and pre-structured approach and therefore the relatively low amount of time involved, along with the ease of participation at the end of each lesson. In order to avoid bias in the reflections and assessments stages, teachers were not shown student reflections nor did they receive feedback from the researcher until after completion of the intervention (Cohen et al., 2007).

#### *Analysis*

The following datasets were analyzed: three transcripts from the initial interviews with regard to teachers’ selections (referred to as initial); twelve transcripts from the pre-post lesson interviews and one report from a plenary session with regard to teachers’ evaluation of best practice, together with 96 completed evaluation logs with regard to students’ assessment and reflection.

To analyze the data, first teacher selections and reflections were separately examined. Next, student logs including the frequency scales were sorted per student group and then converted to numbers (not - 0, occasionally - 1, frequently - 2). To examine individual groups for differences between lessons, percentages were computed based on the final total per group per lesson. To describe teacher reflections, the data obtained from the stimulated recall interviews were analyzed using the coding scheme for Language-Oriented Professional Development (Table 1), i.e., 'language-awareness' (Focus area 1, *further* F1), 'listening actively' (F2), 'formalizing interaction' (F3), 'language support' (F4), and 'improving' (F5). To identify levels of reflection in teachers' thinking and formulation, the practical examples obtained prior to their initial cycle of three lessons and three times after (referred to as final 2, 3, 4) were analyzed using a framework for Reflective Pedagogical Thinking (Sparks-Langer et al., 1990). The framework consisted of three levels: 1 = descriptive experience; 2 = 1 plus reflective observation; and 3 = 2 plus conceptual reflection (Table 4). For example, if the fragment seemed to express an explanation of what happened during teaching with literal, generic, and or descriptive language use, we assigned the entire fragment '1,' whereas if the fragment expressed an explanation including skills and tasks labeled with appropriate terms including personal preference and conceptual principle given as rationale, such as in, for example, *Focus groups help me to get out of the instructional mode and develop a better focus on my goals for professional development,* we assigned a level '3.' In this way all fragments were coded with numbers, counted, and per each of the four interviews, averaged and rounded to a half or whole number (Table 12). To determine inter-rater reliability (Cohen's kappa), two of the authors independently coded three rounds of approximately 20% randomly selected examples. The coding showed a moderate level of inter-rater reliability, with Cohen's kappa of .76. To increase accuracy and reliability of all steps, both data and methods triangulation was applied, i.e., multiple ways were used to collect and analyze the data using quantitative and qualitative data methods (Jack and Raturi, 2006). Furthermore, member checks were integrated (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In this process, the teachers were provided with interview reports directly after each interview and invited to comment on its accuracy.

**Table 4.** Framework for Reflective Pedagogical Thinking (based on Sparks-Langer et al.,1990)

Categories	Definition	Examples
A = Descriptive experience	Literal, generic and or descriptive language use	I teach and I explain the content
B = A plus Reflective observation	Reflective language included skills, tasks, events labeled with appropriate terms and or personal preference given as rationale	I interact with my peers in a focus group about language
C = B plus Conceptual reflection and or normative reflection	Reflective language included skills, tasks, events labeled with appropriate terms and or personal preference and principle or considerations of context such as moral issues;	Focus groups help me to get out of the instructional mode and are also useful for my students because they are not used to working together in groups, and I want to teach them how to do this

## Results

First, the presentation of the results pertaining to teacher selections and reflections, adopts a case-by-case approach (Tsang, 2004) and profiles the three teachers individually. Each profile begins with a brief sketch of the participating teacher and their current language themes in the data pertaining to their anticipated language ability. Next, the results are described pertaining to the teacher's intended 'language strategies' in anticipation of their upcoming performance, followed by their selection for 'best practice' based on the reflections obtained from the stimulated recall interviews and the final evaluation. Last, the outcomes of 'student evaluation' are described based on their logs. The paragraph ends with the findings about teachers' 'levels of reflective language.'

### *Teacher 1. Mariam*

Mariam, who is 61 years old and has 29 years of teaching experience, works as a teacher educator of Religious Studies. With regard to her field of study in relation to the function of language, she said, *'My field of study has everything to do with language so I am already language sensitive in nature.'* With this she referred to her ability to *'state and summarize the essence'* in order to *'make the connection and put it in the context of history and culture.'* According to Mariam, her ability consists of a combination of content and language proficiency: *'This is the discussion between content and language which is the source of all thought.'* Mariam also indicated, as a general language strategy, her intention to work from *'abstraction to concretion by way of comprehensible language and making the right emphasis.'*

### *Language Strategies*

An overview of teachers' selections is presented in Table 5. Mariam's adjusted language strategy, based on her selections prior to lesson one, consisted of the need to exercise 'active ways of listening' (F2) and developing ways of stimulating students' awareness of language through 'language support' (F4). The former strategy was chosen because, according to Mariam, she was *'talking too much and listens too little'* due to her enthusiasm but also her *'impatience and wanting to rush.'* The latter she indicated *'allows her students access to the subject.'* In addition, she indicated that she was generally 'language aware' (F1) and familiar with 'improving language-oriented learning and teaching' (F5). This was, according to her, about *'thoroughness and differentiation'* and about *'subject jargon.'* 'Organizing interaction' (F3) was, according to her, *'too laborious'* and *'from a practical point of view'* not useful for the intervention although necessary because she also indicated that she realized that she delivered *'too many monologues.'*

Mariam's adjusted language strategy, prior to lesson two, was directed at 'language-awareness' (F1) and 'listening actively' (F2). According to her it was important to go *'back to the essence'* by paying attention to what they say and how they say it through 'language awareness' (F1) in order to *'pass it on to students by having them looking at words and allowing them to associate'* accordingly. According to Mariam, her potential pitfall was *'not to lapse in monologues,'* and thus 'learning to listen' (F2).

Her adjusted language strategy, based on her reflection of lesson two and selection prior to lesson three, was directed at 'formalizing interaction' (F3) and 'organizing language support' (F4). According to Mariam, in class there was an ongoing interactive process where the students *'were busy with each other about a subject that everyone liked'* even though the content was *'at stake,'* i.e., not at the required level. She therefore considered 'formalizing interaction' (F3) as a prerequisite for 'language support' (F4). After reflection, she realized that this selection (F3, F4) was not dependent on whether or not the students had been prepared because *'you can create this as a teacher yourself by paying more attention to effective instruction and working forms.'* Associated key attitudes and working forms she added here were *'self-regulation'* and *'interactive and collaborative-learning.'*

**Table 5.** Teachers' Language Selection

Focus Area (F)	L1			L2			L3		
	Mariam	Alex	Willy	Mariam	Alex	Willy	Mariam	Alex	Willy
F1 Language-awareness				M	A	W			
F2 Active listening	M	A	W	M					W
F3 Formalizing interaction					A	W	M		
F4 Language support	M		W				M	A	
F5 Improving		A						A	W

*Mariam's Best Practice*

Mariam's motivation for selection, as shown below, was that the students *'visibly experienced a lot of pleasure in taking the floor.'* This was because she realized that when the students were actively engaged in conversation, her additional instruction and explanation worked better *'in clear language the actual content was delivered in after their presentation, and was well understood'* than when delivered in monologue form because of its direct connection with students' experience (Figure 1).

The students present their summary of the literature with their own questions and comments. Afterwards, I thank and compliment them. Because the content was not quite clear, I also gave my own summary. Through my more substantive explanation, I added a new dimension and placed it in a historical perspective to broaden the meaning of the words. They thus learned that the meaning of words is very contextually oriented. (TP1) *(Mariam's description of her self-selection excerpt)*

With regard to the focus areas, the first 'language awareness' (F1) came up, according to Mariam, through reflective feedback on what students said and how they did this, using repetition and the correct terminology: *'It is about being distinctive in content and opinion, by reiterating what they say with new terminology and by showing them how they can understand and use these technical terms.'* In this context, 'active listening' (F2) was about *'developing a basic attitude'* from where she was able to operate in supporting both students' learning process as well as their process of appropriation regarding new material. *'Not just talking but listening leads to students being stimulated to think for themselves and to participate more actively in conversations by listening to each other and thereby enriching the content.'* 'Formalizing interaction' (F3) involved, according to Mariam, an approach where she organized forms of meta conversation by talking to students about the interaction that just had taken place through questions about both their findings of the content as well of the conversation itself. 'Language support' (F4) was, according to her, about identifying relevant language aspects in learning, especially *'when discussing and explaining key words or thoughts.'* 'Improving' (F5) happened when she focused on both the transfer of content as well as the language of instruction along with the development of language during interaction:

Certain familiar words are loaded with symbolic meaning and that is often the reason for misunderstanding. I spend time developing sensitivity to the fact that words within a belief have an emotional meaning in combination with a certain absoluteness for the person concerned.

Key aspects for improvement were, according to Mariam, the need for a more equitable and clear distribution of tasks between teacher and students in order to provide students with more space to experience collective ways of formulating as well as to follow different means to express themselves in more explicit and effective ways:

It would be better to stimulate the students to question each other. Then, as a teacher, I can add some necessary content clarification instead of still delivering a monologue after a meaningful discussion. That way I would have given them the chance to go through the entire process themselves and we would collectively generate more of the newly developed knowledge.

#### *Student reflections on Mariam's Language-Oriented Performance*

The results of the student reflections on Mariam (T1) are shown in Table 6. With regard to Mariam's performed language focus areas, the first two, 'language awareness' (F1) and 'active listening' (F2), were most regularly pointed out by the students during all three lessons: 'language awareness' was perceived 'occasionally,' followed by 'active listening' that was 'not' perceived in lesson one and subsequently 'frequently' perceived in the latter two lessons. This was fairly in line with Mariam's applied language strategies. Although she applied 'active listening' in lesson one, this was not noticed by the students. When repeated by Mariam in lesson two, it was noticed by students. In the last lesson she replaced it with other areas based on a sense of control regarding 'active listening' which corresponded with students' reflections. A similar agreement applied to 'formalizing interaction' (F3), which according to the students was not observed in lesson two and only occasionally in lesson three, which corresponded with Mariam's strategy to not use it in lesson two but to deliberately commit to it in lesson three. A more implicit kind of agreement was seen with respect to the first and last focus areas: according to students, 'language awareness' (F1) and 'improving' (F5) were perceived 'occasionally' while Mariam indicated that she would not apply these areas as a strategy nor indicated in her reflection that she attached great importance to it other than an assumed and self-evident presence, such as a more equitable and clear distribution of tasks between teacher and students, as a result of the deployment of the other focus areas.

#### *Levels of Reflection in Mariam's Formulation*

As shown in Table 10, initially Mariam's formulation was mainly characterized by generic language use and sometimes supplemented with reflective observation (1-2) such as for example: '*Language awareness I have not selected because I am language aware. But perhaps that is something else than being language-fluent.*' In the final interviews 2 and 3, her formulations contained explanations as well as skills and tasks supplemented with labels such as 'personal preference' and 'principle' as a basis for her statements (2-3). In final 4, her formulations consisted of generic statements as well as more specific skills and tasks, labeled with appropriate terms including personal preference, principle, and conceptual reflection (3) such as: 'The meaning of words is very context-bound, time-bound, and personal, because for me it means something completely different than for them. So you have to know and propagate this as a teacher without making it absolute.'

**Table 6.** Students' Reflections on Mariam's Teaching. T1 in Lessons (L) 1,2,3

Focus Area (F)	L 1		L 2		L3	
	Prevailing Frequency	%	Prevailing Frequency	%	Prevailing Frequency	%
1 Language-awareness	Occasionally	60	Occasionally	60	Occasionally	70
2 Active listening	Not	60	Frequently	60	Frequently	60
3 Formalizing interaction	Occasionally/ Not	50	Not	60	Occasionally	70
4 Language support	Occasionally	50	Frequently	40	Occasionally	50
5 Improving	Frequently/ Occasionally	40	Occasionally	70	Frequently/ Occasionally	50

*Teacher 2. Alex*

Alex, who is 34 years old with seven years of teaching experience, works as a teacher educator of Educational Science. With reference to his field of study in relation to language, he indicated, *'In my field, I'm always looking for ways to use language to help them think, and for ways to explain this in order to stimulate them.'* With this he referred to his ability to *'search for a mixture of being directive and less directive in language.'* Alex indicated, for example, to generally use the word *'must'* too much based on his desire to be convincing. However, he also noticed that this was counterproductive: *'I do the work and the students take a pending attitude.'* According to Alex, his ability consisted of an *'awareness of how language plays a role in learning and how to use language to make the students think.'* As a general language strategy, Alex indicated the desire to experiment more with teaching methods *'by being less directive and less present and paying more attention to my verbal and non-verbal presentation.'* In addition, he suggested to try and adjust his teaching *'to tell less and do more'* by *'group work forms or games,'* and in doing so *'working together on group assignments.'*

*Language Strategies*

An overview of Alex's selections is presented in Table 7. His adjusted language strategy, based on his selection prior to lesson one, is focused on 'active listening' (F2) and 'improving' (F5). Alex substantiated this by granting a hierarchical order to the presented focus areas: *'the first two concern the pre-phase; a diagnostic and problem phase.'* 'Learning to listen' (F2) meant, according to him, *'one hundred percent of a listening ear and contact with students'* and 'improving' (F5) his *'methods of teaching and interaction forms.'* The last area (F5) was, according to Alex, his *'ultimate goal,'* *'ensuring that the application of your teaching and language methods, form the double loop.'* With regard to the other focus areas, he recognized 'language awareness' (F1) as a key point and to already working with processes of formalizing interaction (F3). 'Language support' (F4) was, according to him, too technical: *'It's too much about language, while it should be in service of the interaction.'*

Alex's adjusted language strategy, based on his reflection on lesson one and selection prior to lesson two, was directed at 'language awareness' (F1) and 'formalizing interaction' (F3). According to Alex, there was a degree of turbulence in the classroom, so he had to *'shift to communication at a meta level'* and a more appropriate interaction form: *'I had to quickly make a complex decision about a substantive follow-up, a technical approach, and whether I would do it with this one student or with the group.'* As a result, Alex realized that he was *'not fluent enough'* in the interaction *'by letting students speak more and through forms of differentiation at certain times.'* He therefore indicated to select 'awareness' and 'formalizing interaction,' which he motivated: *'It is my pitfall'*

*to do well in general terms, but there is less awareness of the details and technical effects.'*

Based on his reflection on lesson two and selection prior to lesson three, his adjusted strategy was directed at 'language support' (F4) and 'improving' (F5). According to Alex, there was a lot of opportunity to not only organize group interaction and provide language support but also to use *'language as a tool and target.'* Examples included his reactions during group interactions: *'Can you say this differently?'* and *'I think you told a good story, can you now choose the key words?'* About his technical language approach (F4) he expressed less satisfaction: *'I was afraid to lose the thread if I focused on language-related aspects.'* For this reason, Alex thinks that formalizing interaction could be added by means of *'various forms or alternating'* interaction in order to *'hold the attention span.'* In continuation, based on his reflection on lesson three, the essence should be to *'interact much more and speak less.'* According to Alex, the results showed that he thought more about what he said and how, and then, in that order, to what the students said: *'By seeking more connection from verification and listening, rather than only responding intuitively and in a directive manner.'*

#### *Best Practice of Language-Oriented Performance*

Alex's motivation for selection, as shown below, was based on the fact that there was *'a great deal of interaction among the students'* stimulated by the way he guided them in the role of facilitator: *'I asked several times explicitly for clarification of words or gave an explanation. Because of this the interaction between the students continued well and relevant things were said'* (Figure 2).

Students are interviewed in response to an example I have provided. It's a fruitful conversation, the students respond to each other. First, I keep my silent let them go their way. Sometimes I support the conversation by asking for clarification and additional arguments. At one point they stop and start asking questions. To avoid losing the overview, I formulate some generic clues. Eventually I interrupt the interaction to keep the input relevant and clear and thereby being able to move forward in their learning process. *(Alex's description of his self-selected excerpt of best practice)*

With regard to the related focus areas, 'language awareness' (F1) was, according to Alex, all about an *'ongoing discussion of content and assignments'* by him continually asking questions instead of *'being the main supplier'* of all conversation and answers: *'Now I actually answer the questions to the students myself by formulating immediate follow-up questions in the absence of reaction.'* 'Active listening' (F2) was, according to Alex, merely about the timely use of silence: *'I do not listen to the students enough when there is no answer immediately. By inserting silences, time is created to search for the connection and from there making the transition needed.'* 'Formalizing interaction' (F3) was necessary to create more variation and innovation during those moments that generally, according to Alex, seemed to exist in more unilateral ways of providing information: *'It may be useful to select more practical forms, for example, by collecting the input on the white board and do the ordering together.'* In order to make this work, Alex indicated the need for additional language assignments in order to be able to 'support language' (F4): *'Making a glossary or a mind map of matters that are important for displaying results during the lectures or let them think in writing and support them.'* 'Improving' (F5) was related to more of a substantive focus on language through 'repetition and analysis.' With reference to language as a tool and target *'as the essential part of improving,'* Alex indicated that this involves: *'both asking for explanation and clarification of content so it can also be used as an effective tool to keep the interaction smooth and productive.'* Key aspects for improvement were related to developing a better understanding of students' language experience and in so doing, choosing the right moments for interference in a more accurate way. This was, according to Alex, essential for supporting language and learning development.

**Table 7.** Students' Reflections on Alex's Teaching, T2 in Lesson (L) 1,2,3

Focus Area (F)	L1		L2		L3	
	Prevailing Frequency	%	Prevailing Frequency	%	Prevailing Frequency	
1 Language-awareness	Occasionally	40	Frequently	50	Occasionally	70
2 Active listening	Occasionally	70	Frequently	70	Frequently	70
3 Formalizing interaction	Not	70	Frequently	80	Occasionally	50
4 Language support	Not	40	Occasionally	70	Occasionally	70
5 Improving	Occasionally/ Not	40	Occasionally	70	Occasionally	70

*Students' reflections on Alex's Language-Oriented Performance*

The results of the student reflections on Alex (T2) are shown in Table 7. With regard to Alex's performed language focus areas, 'active listening' was pointed out most consistently, from 'occasionally' in lesson one to 'frequently' in both lessons two and three. This evaluation was not in agreement with Alex's selection but matched his reflection after the lesson. Alex only selected this area in lesson one 'to have this under control.' There was also understanding with regard to formalizing interaction (F3), i.e., Alex indicated the intention to work on this in lesson two. According to the students there was a development in lessons one and two from 'occasionally' to 'frequently.' Lastly, both Alex and the students shifted attention to the latter two focus points, 'language support' (F4) and 'improving' (F5), which according to Alex were not fully controlled but still 'in the making' or, as indicated by the students, 'occasionally' as a result of the occurrence, or otherwise, because of his performance in class. Finally, a less overt congruence was related to 'language awareness' which was selected once by Alex in lesson one and not regarded by students as noticeable.

*Levels of Reflection in Alex's Formulation*

As shown in Table 10, in the initial round, Alex's formulation was generally characterized by generic and descriptive experience, supplemented with reflective observation (2) such as for example: 'It still is too much about language and it should be about interaction. It is also not interesting because it is too technical. With me, language must be at the service of the interaction.' In final 2, his formulations mainly contained generic descriptions as well as some reflective observation (1-2). In final 3 and 4, his formulations generally consisted of reflective observation supplemented with conceptual reflection (3):

I think it has to do with my old thoughts about teaching, you do that by telling and presenting an impressive story, so the more you start thinking, the more important language becomes and the quest of finding a shared language.

*Teacher 3. Willy*

Willy, who is 57 years old with 26 years of teaching experience, works as a teacher educator of Geography. With regard to his field of study and the function of language, he indicated to usually communicate in *'fairly interactive ways.'* Listening appeared to be his key word in reference to *'wanting to intervene too hastily'* and his tendency *'to comment on everything.'* According to Willy, his ability consisted of *'daring to be vulnerable by not knowing everything'* and providing his students space to reflect. As a general language strategy, he indicated that it was merely about *'listening, connecting, vulnerability, and providing space.'* According to him, this should never become a routine: *'A safe learning environment is kind of a condition, otherwise you would have to enforce it.'*

*Language Strategies*

Based on Willy's selection prior to lesson one, his language strategy was directed at 'active listening' (F2) and 'language support' (F4): *'To invite students more to explain content in their own words'* or by *'having them explain it to each other.'* In this way, *'it becomes more their learning process and I disappear to the background.'* Also *'working with silence'* was, according to him, *'very effective; especially in situations where students know that they get a turn.'* In addition, according to Willy, *'advancing their knowledge by responding in exemplary language on student input'* instead of *'correcting when it is wrong'* was important to him.

Willy's adjusted language strategy, based on his reflection on lesson one and selection prior to lesson two, was directed at *'the same things as last time and more'* on 'language awareness' (F1) by repetition and summarizing content during 'formalized interaction' (F3). Also by *'separating the main issues.'* According to Willy, the attention that he now received from the students was *'extraordinary,'* because of *'always asking and summarizing what has just been said.'*

In continuation, based on his reflection on lesson two and selection prior to lesson three, Willy's language strategy was directed at 'actively listening' (F2) and 'improving' (F5). He explained: *'Despite the stupendous start of this third lesson, I learned to act more intensely than at any time before, by asking, reflecting, repeating, and by summarizing.'* In that sense, according to Willy, language could also be used to *'encourage students to think and formulate rather than by using monologues and defining only the concepts.'*

*Best Practice of Language-Oriented Performance*

Willy's motivation for selection was, as shown below, that during this part, the students realized that they also could play a role during teacher instruction. This perception was a new experience to him that occurred from the silence and space that he, as the teacher, was willing to provide: *'That story in the beginning about the peat formation, and slowly people start complementing each other. I left a lot more to them and did not give the right answer.'*

I ask the questions classically and not personally. And when this does not work out, I ask someone who was not paying attention. That way I try to involve everyone. I wait for responses by being silent at times. A lady reads out loud from the book in response to my question. Some students immediately search things online to check or correct something. There is a variation between instruction and interaction. *(Willy's description of his self-selected excerpt of best practice)*

According to Willy, there was a greater self-awareness of language (F1) than before *'without putting the emphasis on language'* but *'by using listening skills'* in deliberate ways: *'I have used many different linguistic aspects in various ways and moments, such as questioning, paraphrasing, and concluding certain things.'* However 'active listening' (F2) turned out to be more difficult than he thought:

Apparently listening is more than just using listening skills or providing space and silent time to reflect. I could say that this is my strong point, but I did not always seek the connection to what they actually said. It also has to do with interchanges in between listening and responding.

'Formalizing interaction' (F3) mainly took place prior to the actual starting point of his lessons. Here he referred to his ability to 'socially connect' with the students 'apart from the content:' *'It can also be about someone's personal experiences. I'm looking for a connection, in word and gesture, just before I get started.'* In this context, 'language support' (F4) was, according to Willy, less relevant: *'It does not fit well in geography, I do not understand grammatical things and it would also distract too much from the content.'* Regarding aspects for 'improving' (F5), the combined approach, using language as a tool and target, could both take place but not necessarily at the same time:

Language as a target ultimately that is the most difficult question for me. I got the impression that it was happening though. For example, by explaining and understanding how things actually connect, so you are basically also teaching people how to think, and you can only do that by using language as a goal.

Key aspects for improvement were primarily aimed at stimulating language-developing interaction by repeating what students said, instead of continuing to follow his '*fixed and predetermined*' thoughts about how to continue the course: *'You should hear one's thoughts by repetition rather than talking about what you intended to discuss via their response.'*

**Table 8:** Students' Reflections on Willy's Teaching. T3 in Lessons (L) 1,2,3

Focus Area (F)	L1		L2		L3	
	Prevailing Frequency	%	Prevailing Frequency	%	Prevailing Frequency	
1 Language-awareness	Frequently	60	Occasionally	60	Not	60
2 Active listening	Frequently	90	Not	60	Occasionally	40
3 Formalizing interaction	Frequently	50	Occasionally	60	Occasionally	30
4 Language support	Occasionally/ Frequently	40	Occasionally	60	Frequently	40
5 Improving	Frequently/ Occasionally	50	Not	40	Occasionally	90

#### *Students' reflections on Willy's Language-Oriented Performance*

As shown in Table 8, 'language awareness' (F1) was most regularly pointed out by the students, which changed from 'frequently' in lesson one to 'occasionally' in lesson two and 'not' in lesson three, followed by 'active listening' (F2). This reflection was implicitly in agreement with Willy's reflection as he mainly committed to 'active listening' and therefore, according to himself, forgot to be aware of his own language. For this reason, he selected 'language awareness' in lesson two after which he again focused on 'active listening' (F2) and 'improving' (F5) to '*encourage students' thinking and formulation.*' The latter (F5) was equally noticed by students in the last lesson. 'Active listening' (F2) however, was explicitly noticed in lesson one but, contrary to Willy's applied language strategy, changed to 'not' in lesson two and nothing in lesson three, i.e., it was not noticed by the majority.

#### *Levels of Reflection in Willy's Formulation*

As shown in Table 10, Willy's formulation was initially merely characterized by descriptive experience (1) such as, '*I liked the interaction between the students better than normal, I also really liked that they continuously complemented each other.*' In final 2, his formulations contained both descriptive

experience and reflective observation (2) such as, *'I have never done this before and was able to explain something in such a way that they never forget it just by constantly asking what does he mean and what does she mean?'* In final 3, Willy's formulation was mainly characterized by generic language use and sometimes supplemented with reflective observation (1-2). In final 4, his formulations contained reflective explanations using labels such as personal preference and conceptual principle (2-3): *'Having a Socratic kind of conversation about the content is like a challenge to me. I would like to try this more when geopolitics are discussed so I can improve my listening and observation skills.'*

**Table 9.** Students' Evaluation of Their Teacher's Language-Oriented Performance

Status; i.e. frequently (F), occasionally (O), not (N) and Prevailing Percentages (<60%) of focus areas as perceived by the students in Lessons (L) 1,2, 3

Focus Areas (F)	Mariam			Alex			Willy											
	L1	%	L2	%	L3	%	L1	%	L2	%	L3	%	L1	%	L2	%	L3	%
F1 Language-awareness	O	60	O	60	O	70					O	70	F	60	O	60	N	60
F2 Active listening	N	60	F	60	F	60	O	70	F	70	F	70	F	90	N	60		
F3 Formalizing interaction			N	60	O	70	N	70	F	80					O	60		
F4 Language support									O	70	O	70			O	60		
F5 Improving			O	70					O	70	O	70					O	90

**Table 10.** Levels of Reflection In Teacher Educators' Thinking and Formulation

Interviews	1	2	3	4	Central tendency
	Initial	Final	Final	Final	
Teacher					
Mariam	1-2	2-3	2-3	3	2-3
Alex	2	1-2	3	3	2-3
Willy	1	2	1-2	2-3	1.2
Tendency	1-2	2	2-3	2-3	2-3

1 = Descriptive experience; 2 = 1 plus Reflective observation; 3 = 2 plus Conceptual reflection;

## Discussion and conclusion

The current research aimed to contribute by clarifying what language-oriented performance essentially consists of according to the teacher educators and their students, and how it can be identified within subject teaching based on the research question:

*'How do teacher educators and their students evaluate language-oriented performance in content-based teaching?'*

Teachers' initial language-oriented ability, based on their self-assessment prior to the intervention, generally contained an understanding of their language competence in content-based teaching. Mariam and Alex both indicated an attentiveness to learning and thinking development from a combined interpersonal and pedagogical perspective, while Willy emphasized his awareness of empathically oriented communication with students from a predominantly interpersonal perspective. The indicated abilities were all based on the teachers' initial language strategy to explore ways of reducing their speaking time in favor of more speaking opportunity for students. They attempted to do so by 'setting a good example' (Mariam), by 'being less directive and more verbally present' (Alex), and by 'seeking connection, offering space, and listening' (Willy). Overall language intentions, based on the teachers' subject backgrounds, were similarly related and mostly directed at developing and improving language-oriented teaching strategies including a focus on 'personal language development' and 'improving social interpersonal relationships with students.' During the course of the intervention, varying language strategies were explored, starting from an initial preference for the middle focus areas from a directing pedagogical language orientation, i.e., 'active listening' and 'language support.' The only exception was Alex who also selected 'improving' (F5). A preference gradually developed towards a more exclusive inclination for the first three focus areas, i.e., 'language awareness' by all the teachers from a leading interpersonal language orientation, followed by 'active listening' (Mariam), and 'organizing interaction' (Alex and Willy). Their final language strategies were merely aimed at the last three focus areas, i.e., 'formalizing interaction' (Mariam) and 'language support' (both Mariam and Alex), supplemented with 'improving' (both Alex and Willy) by using language from a combined interpersonal and pedagogical language orientation. One teacher (Willy) decided to partially maintain his starting strategy from an exclusive interpersonal focus by selecting 'active listening' once more. Their indicated '*key aspects for improvement*' mainly focused, in line with their final language strategies, on the joint orientation in which language was considered to be both a means and purpose in itself. Language (as a means) to make interaction 'smooth and productive' (Alex), aimed at using language (as a purpose) to deepen content through a continual approach of 'reiteration and analysis' (Mariam, Alex, and Willy).

These results confirm previously identified language skills that a teacher should fundamentally attain including 'awareness of language variances,' 'ability to make content comprehensible through language,' and the 'possibility of language production' (den Brok, van Eerde and Hajer, 2010). In addition, the outcomes appear to confirm a previously assumed hierarchy in the language framework (Swart et al., 2017c). In the current study, the first two focus areas of 'language awareness' and 'active listening' were considered by participants as the preparatory phase for diagnosis and problematization. This was followed by the 'organization of interaction' and 'language support' in the main phase and concluded with the application and evaluation of language and learning improvement in the final phase.

According to all teachers, in this way students would be more encouraged to think about the application of knowledge and the subsequent formulation thereof. Moreover, apart from the intended treatment of content, the handling and elaboration of students' experience and their thinking process was considered most important for language and learning development. In conclusion, all three teachers agree that the joint connection of language orientation was essentially about an amenable approach of prolonging, pausing, and providing space (language-sensitive and interpersonal) in order to be able to intervene purposefully (language-oriented and pedagogical). This enables them to create the optimal opportunity for students to express

themselves more explicitly and effectively, based on empathic capacity and substantive pedagogical decisiveness. These findings are a language-specific addition to the merely pedagogical stance of Renshaw (2004) who claimed that teacher educators need to be simultaneously receptive and facilitating to induce availability and distinctiveness (Renshaw 2004, p. 7). An imperative part of this language-specific context was that the teachers became aware of the fact that they, in line with Boyd and Markarian (2011), had to fundamentally become an active listener. To summarize, the teachers who indicated that they understood and propagated their content in a language-oriented fashion, were able to better understand their students by actively listening and encouraging them to articulate their thoughts and knowledge. Based on this, their students were better able to present and position themselves as future teachers. On this basis, it can be expected that through the convergence of interpersonal and pedagogically-oriented language in content teaching (Swart et al., 2017c), teacher educators can extend their pedagogy to support and coach learning conversations (Boyd and Galda, 2011) as well as to facilitate well-informed interaction in an understanding and informative way.

In this study, teacher educators were also stimulated to develop reflective language skills to support their observations regarding ‘what happened’ in their language-oriented actions during their class interaction, and in due course ‘learning to understand’ their language-oriented development in pedagogical decisions. They were thus encouraged to be flexible in their formulations. In teachers’ levels of language-oriented reflection, we determined a moderately similar development based on the difference between the average of all the teachers in the first and final four reflections (Table 10). All teachers initially appeared to use a rather general or literal description of their teaching experience, sometimes supplemented with an explanation, in reflecting on what they observed. During the two latter rounds (final 3 and 4), teachers appeared more able to provide explanations for what they saw using principles and theory as well as context. For example, during the final interview, Alex said, *‘And now that I am better articulated and understandable, it also has an educational and interpersonal effect namely that it is entirely your concern that you understand them because it is about the students. They witness that you try to formulate carefully. For that reason, the example function is not primarily the goal, but it also becomes a consequence.’* This means that while the teachers first engaged in self-reflection, they generally had a superficial understanding of what they did and what occurred. During the intervention, they gradually learned to observe and develop both their behavior and their use of language more critically in a series of continuous and intensive reflections, in which personal preferences were combined with pedagogical principles and conceptual information.

These outcomes can be explained in a number of ways. One reason for the initial lesser reflective attention being given to conceptual aspects of language-oriented teaching is related to their individual language-oriented ability based on which they first selected excerpts to be discussed in the interviews. For example, Alex, who selected to focus on the language-oriented effects of group work, may more promptly have comprehended the link to social and conceptual values than Willy, who first focused on the use of language in becoming more receptive. Moreover, because of the new experience of language-oriented teaching, the teachers were initially preoccupied with the mechanical side of language that mainly concentrated on ‘how to do it.’ In addition, it is possible that the teachers’ content did not actively invite the critical and conceptual reflection of language-oriented teaching strategies, as indicated by Willy. Thus, this was only activated after a period of time due to the recurring critical questions during the interviews. In light of this, the effects of the professional training that resulted from the series of continuous and intensive reflection may have been cumulative, i.e., it may have taken time for changes to become apparent in a teacher’s instructional thinking about language. In line with Fuller’s theory of teacher development (2003) and other literature suggesting that reflective narratives support teachers to simultaneously develop and analyze what they do (Colton & Sparks-Langer, 1993; Pedro, 2005), the discussion and analysis of their language-oriented teaching subsequently improved their reflective thinking and their language-oriented formulation.

Research into the effects of teacher reflection on the transfer of professional training has indicated that teachers learn to assess their class experiences through reflective conversations with others and hence develop themselves over time (Putnam & Borko, 2000). This type of research involves collaborative planning and interaction via the self-assessment of lessons (Lieberman and Miller, 2008; McLaughlin and Talbert, 2006) with the aim to understand what the teacher did and said and how their students responded to this.

According to the students, as shown in Table 9, the teachers initially appeared to focus on the first three focus areas from a largely interpersonal orientation: language-awareness, active listening, formalizing interaction, and particularly on 'active listening.' Subsequently, in lesson two, they gradually diverged towards a wider repertoire of multiple focus areas grouped around the middle of the frame from a pedagogical emphasis. Finally, in lesson three, teachers appeared to converge again but from a generally unchanged pedagogical orientation (Mariam, Alex) or a diverging orientation (Willy). Most notable here is not only the explicit and sometimes implicit agreement with regard to the teachers' application and adjusted language strategies, but also with regard to the indicated fluctuation and development of the focus areas. There seems to be an apparently opposing development between what the teachers indicated (Table 5) in their adjusted language strategies through the varying selections for focus areas, and what was noticed by the students in the lessons (Table 9). With regard to the teachers, there is development that begins from a mainly pedagogical orientation centered on the middle three focus areas (2, 3, 4) and gradually shifts to a more interpersonal orientation with an emphasis on the first three focus areas (1, 2, 3). This subsequently changes towards both a pedagogical and combined orientation of interpersonal and pedagogical approaches with the implementation of the last three focus areas (3, 4, 5). An explanation for this is that there is essentially an implicit agreement between the teachers and the students. Teachers' development, as shown in Table 5, is based on their intentions and language strategies, whereas teachers' development, as shown in Table 9, is based on what the students experience. In addition, the teachers initially indicated to prefer the middle categories because they were assumed 'to have the first one under control,' referring to 'language awareness.' After completion of lesson one however, they realize that this seemingly self-evident first category turns out to be less self-evident than expected. For example, this explains their unanimous choice for the first focus area, 'language-awareness' in lesson two. In the student evaluation results, this element seems to be supported by their observations with regard to a lack of the first three focus areas in lesson one (Mariam, Alex). According to the students, the teachers seem less aware of their language and may listen badly, as evidenced by a comment from a student example: *'It is good that the teacher seems to know a lot but unfortunately he makes very little contact'* (one of Alex's students). This shows that, according to the student, the teacher does appear to have cognitive academic skills but exhibits less basic interpersonal competence. Willy appears to be making a reverse shift here from an interpersonal orientation that also gradually shifts upwards but remains limited to a focus on the two ends of the language framework, i.e., focus areas one and five. These outcomes appear to be in accordance with Ward and McCotter (2004) who claimed that teacher educators must be able to (re)formulate reflection in a way that makes the qualities they teach visible. In that sense, the development of a language framework that includes practical dimensions for processes and emphasizes the broadening of critical reflection is a means of doing so. Incorporating student reflection is a way of recognizing the specific importance of student perception with regard to teacher intentions and implementation in this process.

## Conclusion

Engagement from research in theorizing about the collaboration between language and subject-specific content is presently receiving greater focus in teacher education (DiCerbo et al., 2014; Sedova, 2017; Swart et al., 2017c). One of the goals is to transcend the conceptualization of language and subject-specific content as unrelated entities and allowing them to be part of the same process in the educational performance of teacher educators. Furthermore, there is a clear need for empirical research on practical knowledge of language, specifically with regard to teachers' teaching strategies in various subject areas. The findings show that there is a connection between the direction of the application of focus areas as noticed by the students, and teachers' ability to apply these in accordance with their intentions regarding both their subject and language skills. Based on evaluations of teachers and students, the outcomes of this study resonate with Fullers' (1969) theory about the stages that describe teacher development. The outcomes with regard to understanding new tasks and skills confirm the fact that achieving new findings of transformation levels is not typical and often difficult for the participants. The findings indicate that the evaluation of teachers generally developed through their ability to first personalize new language concepts and to subsequently link them to their personal values and educational theories while experimenting in classroom practice. These findings confirm the literature that teachers develop new skills and other perspectives on their teaching through existing views and acquired theoretical knowledge in combination with practical experiences by embedding it in the context of teaching (Darling-Hammond and Snyder, 2000, den Brok et al., 2010). The results therefore appear to meet at the intersection of theory and practice (Putnam & Borko, 2000) and have, in that capacity, the potential to improve the personal practical knowledge of language in the professional context of the experienced teacher educator. Based on this, the framework for language-oriented professional development can provide a structure for more empirically-based evaluation of teacher educators' language-oriented performance in content-based teaching.

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## Chapter 6

### **General discussion and conclusion**

## Chapter 6

### General discussion and conclusion

*“Noticing language, even when it appears to be transparent, is essential for teachers committed to supporting the general intellectual and specific subject matter competencies of students at all levels”*

(Valdez, Bunch, Snow, Lee, & Matos, 2005, p. 127)

#### *Summary and contributions of this dissertation*

This dissertation investigated the language-oriented learning and teaching of experienced teacher educators through a three-year professional development project. The objectives of the project were aimed at having the teacher educators successively conceptualize, operationalize and evaluate the research topic through conceptual (part 1, chapter 2, 3) and empirical explorations (part 2, chapter 4, 5) in their content-based teaching practice.

Part 1 and part 2 were combined to advance the field of research on language-oriented professional development and to contribute to the improvement of teacher educators' language-oriented teaching. For this purpose, a total of consecutively 35, 29, eleven and three experienced teacher educators and 32 students volunteered to participate in the project. Results show that the teacher educators who indicated that they were able to understand and propagate their subject-specific content in a language-sensitive and language-focused manner were able to better understand and support their students by active listening and encouraging them to articulate and share their thoughts and knowledge. As a result of this, according to these teacher educators, their students were better able to present and position themselves as future teachers.

Based on these results, we argue that through the convergence of interpersonal and pedagogically-oriented language in content-based teaching, teacher educators enrich and deepen their pedagogical content knowledge with practical knowledge of language in order to support and facilitate a well-informed interaction in an understanding and knowledgeable manner.

#### *Overview of the studies*

In **chapter 1**, we presented the theoretical framework that was used together with a brief description of the methodological context in which our research was conducted. Additionally, the outline of this dissertation was presented.

The following sections below provide an overview of the structure and findings from each chapter in part 1 and 2. Next, the general conclusions that connected the individual chapters are presented. Last, the research findings are discussed in light of the literature on language-oriented learning and teacher professional development. The final sections address the limitations, discuss practical implications, and make suggestions for further research.

#### *Part 1*

In the first part: Conceptual explorations of language-oriented professional learning and teaching, we presented two studies. We first examined, in *chapter 2*, teacher educators' professional learning needs and preferences in conjunction with their perceptions of teaching experience with language. We continued on in *chapter 3*, with their conceptualization of language-oriented learning and ongoing language-development in teaching with professional colleagues.

**Chapter 2** was guided by two research questions: “How do teacher educators perceive their personal practical knowledge of language for classroom communication?” and “What preferences do teacher educators have for developing their personal practical knowledge of

language for classroom communication?” Drawing on the literature of teacher personal theory of classroom practice (Bronkhorst, 2013; Connelly, Clandinin, & He, 1997) integrated with Shulman’s (1986) knowledge domains and content-based classroom interaction (e.g., Dalton-Puffer & Smit, 2013) as a starting point, we argued that teacher educators whom are aware of their personal practical knowledge of language have a better understanding of their students’ language use and provide better support for knowledge construction. In terms of concrete and practical activities and ways to develop this, however, evidence appeared to be scarce. The first part of the central topic: personal practical knowledge was defined as “knowledge based on classroom practice as a result of past experience, present awareness and future expectation.” The second part, language was defined as “teachers’ verbal use of language for classroom communication.” To answer the research questions, focus groups with a total of 35 experienced teacher educators from seven teacher education institutes were set up to obtain concrete indications of their understanding and motivation to develop their personal practical knowledge of language. The results showed a primary focus and understanding of personal practical knowledge of language based on past experience and less focus on current awareness and future anticipation. We also found an emergent conceptualization of practical knowledge of language for classroom communication (i.e., variations in degrees of language awareness and language attitudes) leading towards two interrelated language modalities: the language-sensitive and interpersonal modality and the language-focused and pedagogical oriented modality.

In order to understand the language modalities and their practical implications in classroom practice, we felt it was necessary, following teachers’ indicated preferences for improvement, to first elaborate a conceptual framework. Based on this framework, compiled by the teacher educators’ collective analysis, the modalities could then be operationalized in a deliberate and individual manner for teaching practice.

**Chapter 3** was guided by the research question: “How do experienced teacher educators conceptualize ongoing language development for classroom interaction as part of their practical knowledge of language?” and referred to this as “language-developing learning.” To answer this question, a meta-perspective on language was developed during a series of three group dialogues with each of the four groups of, in total, 29 teacher educators from four different teacher-training institutes. Research showed the Socratic dialogue to be a comprehensive method of generating concepts and connecting teaching practices with theoretical concepts (Knežić, Elbers, Wubbels, & Hajer, 2013). In this study, Socratic dialogues were used in group discussions for the purpose of developing a “common construction of knowledge” (Mercer, 1995) and gaining new insights (Pihlgren, 2008). The dialogues were considered a model for conceptual practice and a pedagogical tool that the teacher educators could use to gain a better understanding of the aspects of language-developing learning in the early stages of conceptual formation. In this way, categories of learning and language were emphasized as social and educational tools together with the teacher educators, by modelling and scaffolding themselves and each other, through self-regulated activity. The dialogues were guided by the fundamental key question: “What is language-developing learning?” Teacher educators’ conceptualization was considered from three perspectives: the *agent* and *process* of learning and the *objective* of language, guided by Love’s (2009, 2010) language approach in literacy pedagogical content knowledge (LPCK) and Sfard’s (1998) metaphors of learning. Love’s (2009) LPCK was aimed at understanding how language can best be structured for effective learning. Sfard’s (1998) metaphors were focused on the “acquisition metaphor” (AM) representing learning as the acquisition and development of knowledge, and the “participation metaphor” (PM) which codified learning as a social activity. In this context, the three perspectives; agent, and process of learning, and objective of language were explained as “for whom the learning was intended” (agent); “how the learning was achieved” (process); and

“for what purpose the language was learned” (objective). The intention was to derive the learning and language orientation of the teacher educators.

The results showed that language-developing learning was primarily conceived as a teacher-oriented developmental process. In this process, a conceptual development was noted that primarily proceeded from *language as a tool* in their selected example of practice, by paying attention to awareness of learning in language, a clear use of language, and instruments for translation and feedback, towards *language as a target*, in the collective formulated definitions through awareness of person-oriented communication and instructional conversations, and lastly to *language as both a tool and target* in the final definitions and commonly constructed answers by improving the management of personal language aimed at the refinement of the teachers’ repertoire. In this context, language was regarded not only as a tool for applying regulatory and explanatory language, but also as a target that connects academic knowledge with interpersonally oriented language.

In order to convert the teacher educators’ conceptualization into a practical framework, we considered that targeted classroom interventions were needed in order to first gain insight into what teacher educators do and how they identify their agency and processes in professional learning in conjunction with their language-oriented and professional goals.

### *Part 2*

In the second part: Empirical explorations of language-oriented professional learning and teaching, the following two studies were presented. First, teacher educators’ “understanding of their language-oriented development in content-based teaching” was examined followed by teacher educators’ and their students’ “evaluation of language-oriented performance” as set out in chapters 4 and 5.

**Chapter 4** was guided by the research question: “How do teacher educators understand their language-oriented development in content-based classroom interaction?” This came about from following the recommendation in the previous study for targeted classroom intervention research. To answer this question, a classroom intervention study was carried out with 11 experienced teacher educators based on three critical factors for improved learning outcomes (Swanson, Hoskyn, & Lee, 1999): “control of task difficulty,” “small group instruction,” and “directed response questioning.” These factors were previously identified to have the greatest effect on learning development regardless of the model or content of instruction (Swanson et al., 1999). Given the potential of these aspects “to work in concert” (Vaughn et al., 2000, p.101) (i.e., to complement and reinforce each other); the three factors were applied as a means to stimulate the teacher educators’ reflective practice and understand their language-oriented development in regards to content-based classroom interaction, irrespective their field of study.

In order to reach this objective, we designed a targeted strategy using Swanson’s et al. (1999) three critical factors combined with the validated observation instruments from Rimm-Kaufman, Storm, Sawyer, Pianta, & LaParo (2006), involving semi-structured reflective and stimulated recall interviews during the intervention followed by focus groups after completion of the intervention. The first two (reflective and stimulated recall interviews) were intended to determine the teacher educators’ understanding by stimulating them to think aloud in terms of subject, purpose, and process. The latter (focus groups) was used as a vehicle to promote better understanding and share knowledge between professional colleagues and to further explore their views on “aspects” of their language-oriented process, i.e., “starting and finishing point,” “contingency on student language,” “language-oriented feedback and support,” “use of question types,” “use of subject-specific key concepts,” “use of verbal and nonverbal modeling,” and “potential for improving.” These views were ascertained from the previous results (chapters 2, 3,

4) and related teacher language proficiencies (Den Brok, van Eerde, & Hajer, 2010) In this manner, the teacher educators were stimulated to develop reflective skills to support their observations regarding what occurred in their language-oriented actions during class interaction and, in due course, learning to understand their language-oriented development in pedagogical decisions for the lessons to come, while encouraging them to be flexible in their educational plans while teaching.

The results showed that the intervention changed the language-oriented development, which in turn affected the awareness of teacher educators and their decisions to improve language-oriented methods for initiation and response during class interaction. Based on the literature and our previous studies (chapter 2, 3), we assumed that teacher educators should be both language-sensitive and language-facilitating in order to provide accessibility and support through the convergence of interpersonal and pedagogically oriented language in content-oriented education. The results confirmed our assumption that the combined approach should be both language-sensitive and language-facilitating in order to develop a range of well-informed interactions in both an insightful and informative manner. For example, the teacher educators' identification process with regard to the subject, purpose, and process of their language increased both their language awareness and their pedagogical decisions about supporting and guiding learning conversations. In order to further develop and improve the practical language knowledge of the teacher educators in content-based education, we considered that a framework was needed for language-oriented professional development consisting of the main focus areas as indicated by teacher educators themselves, that then could be implemented and evaluated in their teaching practice.

**Chapter 5** was guided by the research question: "How do teacher educators and their students evaluate language-oriented performance in content-based education?" Beyond the results of the previous study (chapter 4), this involved the search for more concrete and practical ways to improve the personal practical knowledge of the teacher in order to implement and evaluate their language-oriented teaching performance. This chapter aimed to contribute to the literature by adding clarity as to what constitutes essential elements of language-oriented teaching achievement, according to both teacher educators and their students, and how this can be identified for evaluation purposes. To achieve this, we conducted a video-enhanced intervention study with 3 experienced teacher educators in social science subjects based on their voluntary involvement in the previous three studies, and 32 of their second or third year bachelor students.

This study builds on the main results of the previous three studies. This is to say, in the first study we examined how practical knowledge of language was related to language-oriented professional learning goals to arrive at a working definition. Although several definitions emerged, we found two overarching key modalities of language, namely, language intentions and means, that were used as a working definition: "language-sensitive" and "language-focused" oriented teacher learning. From here we reported in the second study how teacher educators collectively conceptualized this definition and subsequently, in the third study, how they operationalized this individually in their teaching practice. Based on these studies, we concluded that teacher educators needed to be both language understanding and language facilitating in order to provide accessibility and support through the convergence of interpersonal and pedagogically oriented language in content-based teaching.

In this fourth study, we compiled a framework for language-oriented professional development prior to the intervention. The framework was used both for the purpose of reference and selection of language-oriented performance of teacher educators as well as for the evaluation of this by teacher educators and students alike. The framework contained five empirically relevant focus areas which underpin the teacher educators' language-oriented

professional development as identified in the previous studies. The five focus areas were ranked in order of anticipated professional development based on our findings regarding the previously indicated intentions and resources for teacher educators. That is, teacher educators' awareness of their personal practical knowledge of language can lead to reflection, new knowledge, and new behavior, which in turn may lead to greater awareness and change of language-oriented educational performance in content-based education.

The results showed that there was a relationship between the order of the applied focus areas as noticed by the students and teachers' ability to apply these in accordance with their learning objectives regarding their content-based teaching. For example, the first two focus areas of "language awareness" and "active listening" were generally considered as the preparatory phase for diagnosis and problematization. This was followed by "organization of interaction" and "language support" in the main phase and concluded with the application and evaluation of "language and learning improvement" in the final phase. Teachers generally agreed that the combined language orientation was essentially about an amenable approach of prolonging, pausing, and providing space (language-sensitive and interpersonal) in order to be able to intervene purposefully (language-focused and pedagogical). In this way, according to teachers and students, based on both empathic language capacity and decisiveness, the teacher educators were enabled to create optimal opportunities for students to be encouraged to reason about the application of knowledge and the subsequent formulation thereof.

#### *General conclusions*

One of the main conclusion to be drawn from the studies presented is that while teacher educators generally showed a reasonable level of personal practical language knowledge, they did not necessarily apply this knowledge in the classroom interactions provided in their content-based teaching. Furthermore, the studies showed that the teacher educators' participation in the project had a considerable impact on their individual awareness of learning and language in the classroom and their ability to conceptualize this coherently with language-oriented themes. This awareness was also reflected in their levels of thinking and formulations which gradually developed from general or literal explanations, to specific and language-oriented examples using personal principles and theories as well as contexts.

Whereas our analyses showed that teacher educators were able to change their thinking and planning and used more diverse language focus areas over the course of the intervention, we could not determine if their perceptions (part 1) were always in accordance with their practices (part 2). For this reason, in order to encourage teachers to apply their personal practical knowledge of language and to move towards a language-inspired educational culture in content-based teaching, we felt it necessary to build a framework for language-oriented professional development. Based on the teacher educators' practical knowledge of language (study 1) and subsequent conceptualization and elaboration of language modalities with their colleagues (study 2), this framework was developed (study 3) and then applied and evaluated (study 4).

An apparent contradiction was found between what the teacher educators initially showed in their language strategies and reflections, and what the students eventually observed in teaching practice. Based on comparisons, we concluded that there was essentially an implicit agreement regarding a mutually experienced lack of interpersonal attention to language. This was evident from the assumptions of the teacher educator with regard to their initial self-assessed presence of listening comprehension, which was considered self-evident, together with a predominantly experienced attention for teacher-initiated language instruction as opposed to a mutually initiated dialogue, according to the students. In conclusion, teacher educators generally agreed that the combined language orientation was a useful approach to be optimally accessible and distinguishing in their language, that is, by both slowing down, pausing, and offering space

alternating with the provision of deliberate language mediation. Based on these results, we concluded that teacher educators need to (re)formulate their learning-oriented perception and reflection in a way that makes the language-oriented focus areas more visible and negotiable. In this context, the developed framework together with the outcomes specific to the practical dimensions, provide concrete indications for the broadening of a critical and language-oriented reflection and application of language focus areas in teaching practice. The results confirmed our expectations with regard to the stages of teachers' language-oriented development in both the framework and in the successive learning stages of the whole project. On this basis, we can conclude that the framework for language-oriented professional development, as described in chapter 5, provides an evidence-based structure for future class interventions to improve the language-oriented dialogue in content-based education, together with recommendations for application.

## Discussion of the findings

In the following paragraphs, the general findings that were addressed across the chapters are combined with and related to the existing research. The first general finding addresses the connection between what teacher educators indicated to understand about language-oriented learning and teaching, based on their joint analysis and formulated working definitions, and what they subsequently specified to understand based on their language strategies and performance in their teaching practices. The second general finding addresses the connection between teacher educators' needs and their preferences for language-oriented professional learning and teaching as indicated at the beginning of the project, and their indications for best language-oriented practices, after the completion of the project.

### *Connecting teacher educators' conceptualization and performance of language-oriented learning and teaching*

One of the key results of our conceptual explorations showed that teacher educators generally conceptualized their understanding of "language for learning and teaching" in various but delineated ways. In other words, their personal practical knowledge of language was generally considered to be most relevant to their comprehension of teaching competence in general and students' learning more in particular. This finding corresponds to some extent to the recent studies on the professional development and "meaning-oriented learning" of experienced teacher educators, defined as "deliberate teaching to enhance learning of the expert teacher educator;" and as a result learning to teach by developing an informed, personal theory of practice (Bronkhorst, 2013). Notable here was their initial and predominant attention to student learning and knowledge when talking about the importance of language-oriented professional learning. When professional learning related to their language was further addressed, an interesting distinction was made between mastering language in order to improve reasoning and the application of language to improve communication within teaching practices. This distinction appears similar to the concept of "academic interaction" and "interpersonal language" previously described by Schleppegrell (2004) and Cummins (2008).

Furthermore, in terms of pedagogical skill for teaching in teacher education, these outcomes appeared in accordance with previous results of effective practices for support and scaffolding techniques and the use of teacher talk as an instrument for improving reasoning and understanding (Aalto & Tarnanen, 2015; Cummins, 2008; Lee, Quinn, & Valdés, 2013). Key findings in the first study concerned the primary focus and understanding of personal practical knowledge of language based on "past experience" and focused less on "current awareness" and

“future anticipation.” This is in accordance with results from earlier research (Tsang, 2004) in which teachers indicated difficulties in anticipating decisions due to limited access to their personal practical knowledge during classroom teaching. This could be indicating, in line with previously described predominant attention to student learning, instead of paying attention to their own learning, an initial limited awareness of both teacher educators’ personal learning and language process.

From teaching expertise studies, we know that experienced teachers have more custom-built teaching behaviors which allows for more conscious ways of processing complex theories (Berliner, 2001). Building on “personal practical knowledge” as a way of reconsidering past experiences and future goals in order to deal with the demands of a present situation (Connelly et al., 1997), we further identified personal practical knowledge to be both personal and collective. This finding indicates a sequential development in which collective knowledge emerges from a shared personal knowledge and is a continuation of studies in the context of sociocultural approaches to learning such as “common construction of knowledge” (Mercer, 1995) and, more recently, “common concept formation” (Knežić et al., 2010). In our studies, we emphasized this collective aspect as a form of communication in which participants make a conscious group effort to learn with and from each other in order to deepen both their personal and mutual understandings. Finally, we identified an emergent conceptualization. That is, variations in degrees of language awareness, intentions, and means, leading towards three working definitions: “language-sensitive and interpersonal” and “language-focused and pedagogical” and the combined orientation, referred to as language modes or modalities. In light of recent developments in research on classroom dialogue, these modes could fill a void in an area where there appears to be a lack of knowledge about the contribution of teacher modes with specific relation to the organizing hereof or as Howe and Abedin (2013) indicated “which are more beneficial than others” (p. 325). These findings complement earlier the research of Christie (2000), Bunch (2006, 2013), and Bailey and Heritage (2008) by merging two previously considered, independent functioning registers; “instructional” and “regulative,” into one combined modality of personal and collective practical knowledge of language.

In the follow up study, teacher educators mutually analyzed the modalities more in depth, displayed as a fundamental question about language-developing learning, and generally comprehended this as a way to advance practical knowledge of language through language-aware and personalized educational interventions. The results of this study showed that teacher educators’ conceptualization proceeded from a perspective of language as a tool, through application of regulatory and explanatory language functions to “language as a target” via interpersonal-oriented interaction and by connecting explanatory language with academic- and interpersonal-oriented language.

One of the key results of our empirical explorations showed that in teacher educators’ selected excerpts (study 3 and 4), there was less interaction and more instruction than they initially indicated during the reflective interviews directly after the lessons, in which an opposite relation was claimed. Furthermore, the interactions that took place appeared to stimulate reflection about subconscious language-oriented strategies although the actual interaction occurred for different and often coincidental reasons. In addition, the interactions that occurred were generally more regulatory in nature than subject-specific. In this context, language-oriented teaching was, according to teacher educators in retrospect, not directly linked to the presence or absence of an interactive practice but was regarded more as a spin-off of instruction and in that capacity considered a precondition for generating interactive practices. In such cases, teachers indicated to meta-talk when supporting the language-oriented thinking and formulation of students. These findings supplement specified practical strategies of teachers, mainly third turn,

responses (Nassaji & Wells, 2000). According to these authors, if a teacher implements efforts that go beyond a solely evaluative mode, such as requesting explanation or meta-talk, students can be expected to self-select contributions because of a shift in the teacher role from the knowing sender towards an initiating and evaluating one through which knowledge is developed in consultation with students.

Furthermore, studies have claimed that students need learning experiences in which academic concepts are not only explained but also represented, communicated and validated by the teacher through argumentative stimulated interactions (Sampson & Blanchard, 2012). For this reason, teacher educators must first become more aware of the significance of evaluation and construction of knowledge (Suh & Park, 2017). This approach also pertains to the means by which, according to the teacher educators, the interactive processes intermingled with their personal language-oriented development. For example, reflecting on student learning through interactive practice enabled the teacher educators to move beyond their preconceived views about their own practice. This finding shows that when teacher educators initially engaged in self-reflection, they generally had a superficial understanding of what they did and what had occurred. During the intervention, they gradually learned to observe and develop both their teaching and their use of language more critically through a series of continuous and intensive reflections, in which personal preferences were combined with pedagogical principles and conceptual information. One reason for the initial lesser reflective attention given to the conceptual aspects of language-oriented teaching, in study 4, appeared to be dependent on personal perception and ability based on which they selected and “colored,” so to speak, their excerpts to be discussed. For example, one teacher educator who selected to focus on using language from a combined orientation; interpersonally and pedagogically, to monitor the language-oriented effects of group work, appeared more promptly to comprehend the link between social and conceptual values than another teacher educator who decided to focus on using language as a means of becoming more receptive during teaching. Moreover, because of the new experience of language-oriented teaching, the teacher educators were initially preoccupied with the mechanical side of language that mainly concentrated on “how to do it” which was sometimes masked by reflections like “subject-content did not actively invite for critical and conceptual reflection of language-oriented strategies.” This is in line with Fuller's theory of teacher development (2003) and other literature suggesting that reflective narratives support to simultaneously develop and analyze what teachers do (Colton & Sparks-Langer, 1993; Louws, 2016), and thus, the discussion and analysis of their language-oriented teaching subsequently improved their reflective thinking and language-oriented formulation.

The most notable contrast between the conceptual and empirical explorations was related to the difference between the group-oriented conceptual performance and the individually-oriented practical performance in teaching. The main difference appeared to be the allocation of an essential degree of awareness related to learning and language during the theoretical group sessions, which, in most cases, was lacking in their individual teaching. Accordingly, this was further confirmed by the previously described focus on past experience, rather than attention to themselves and current awareness. This is related to the fact that the ability of teacher educators to perform is part of the treatment (Crane, Williams, Hastings, Cooper, & Fennell, 2012) to the extent that the approach is carried out by the teacher educator as intended in the group sessions. Most teacher educators indicated a willingness to operate in accordance with the criteria they previously conceptualized during the intervention whereas others showed that they wanted to differentiate consciously and therefore wanted to continue with the language aspects that occurred in the lesson, independent of insights by the group. According to Weck, Bohn, Ginzburg, & Stangier (2011), these variations are closely linked and although our focus was not

directly aimed at the development of language-oriented competency, we briefly discuss the difference between “competence” and “competencies” in order to explain the aforementioned difference. Competencies are demonstrated by acquiring specific knowledge, skills, and attitudes that together form the competence to be able to practice. Competence is, according to Crane et al. (2012), a broader concept with regard to willingness and ability to practice. In this light, the framework for language-oriented professional development can be regarded as a structure that identified and defined the general areas of competence necessary for the individual teacher educators to carry out their newly explored competencies in teaching. In line with this is, for example, the definition given by Epstein and Hundert (2002) about “professional competence.” According to these authors, professional competence is the routine in practice of, not only communication, knowledge, and technical skill, but also emotions and reasoning, values, and reflection for the benefit of both the professionals and the recipients who are being served. This definition is interesting because it emphasizes that competence largely depends on individual habits, including attentiveness, self-awareness, and presence. Rodolfa et al. (2005) go one step further and indicate that it is crucial that competence, in this context related to knowledge, skills, and attitudes, also takes into consideration that any unforeseen actions that may appear must be carried out in accordance with the principles, norms, guidelines, and values of the line of work at that specific time (Rodolfa et al., 2005).

In light of this and the findings described above, we can conclude that language-oriented learning and teaching competence has to be development-oriented, since personal practical knowledge differs individually and is therefore largely dependent on the stage of professional functioning and the specific circumstances in which the teacher educator operates. Despite the fact that our study did not evaluate long term development, the results did match the comprehensive studies of teaching skills where more complicated a teaching skill is mastered, in a non-teaching domain, when teachers have reached a steadiness and grasped the basics (Day, Sammons, Stobart, Kington, & Gu, 2007; Louws, 2016). Furthermore, it takes time to become an experienced teacher educator and even then, not all inevitably become an expert in mastering the critical language aspects of their teaching, and therefore focus less or are less able to further improve their language-oriented instructional strategies and specialized tasks.

#### *Connecting preferences for language-oriented learning with indications for best language-oriented practice*

With respect to their preferences for improvement, teacher educators initially indicated at the beginning of the project a preference for evaluative and reflective forms of interaction with peers. This practice was considered an occasional work form rather than a means through which practical knowledge was conceived in an integrated and systematic manner. This outcome was interesting in that it exposed partial engagement within a context of relative unawareness of their own language use. The combined results of relatively low language awareness among the majority of participants and a preference for reflective practice with colleagues, appeared to indicate a need to strengthen their professional identity. These results substantiated the relevance of practical knowledge of language as it related to classroom communication and to the anticipation on future classroom intervention. In summary, the concept of practical knowledge provided a unified perspective on how to understand this knowledge for classroom communication.

In addition, our results also indicated that classroom communication was not yet integrated into teacher educators’ practical knowledge. Professional language development should therefore focus on promoting the practical knowledge of language both personally and collectively, including cognitive, social, and interpersonal aspects. Our results thus affirmed the practical use of an approach that was both interpersonal and pedagogical, aimed at a more detailed level to reduce the gap between the theoretical and practical implications of language for

classroom dialogue. We concluded that in order to improve the concurrent development of teacher educators' language during teaching, it was essential to understand their "language-sensitive and interpersonal," and "language-focused and pedagogical" aptitudes (study 1).

With regards to the indications for best language-oriented practices, while teacher educators indicated the value of interaction, its actual occurrence in practice appeared to be rare. Based on their indications for best language-oriented practices, the key aspects for improvement were aimed at stimulating more language-oriented interaction by repeating what students said and therefore building on a mutual understanding, instead of following "fixed and predetermined" thoughts about how to continue the course. Therefore, the need existed for a more equitable and clear distribution of tasks between the teacher and the students in order to provide students with more space to experience collective ways of formulating, as well as to follow different means in order to express themselves in more explicit and effective ways. In addition, improvement was also related to developing a better understanding of the students' language experience, and in so doing, choosing the right moments for interference in appropriate ways. From this context and in the context of current developments in classroom studies, these results can be regarded as relevant and applicable. Recent studies have explained the interest of experienced teacher educators in learning about classroom management and relating to students in terms of adapting themselves in order to find mutual respect and develop good relationships in class (Day et al., 2007). In addition, according to Van der Veen, Dobber, and Van Oers (2017), in the majority of classrooms the actual interaction can still be characterized as predominantly teacher-steered and largely focused on the reproduction of knowledge. It is common practice that teachers talk most of the time, giving little chance for reasoning, argument, and collaborative efforts for knowledge construction (Van der Veen et al., 2017).

The results give rise to the conclusion that teacher educators were intrinsically motivated to develop their language-oriented learning and teaching, subject to their readiness to experiment freely based on their actual awareness of the basic pedagogical knowledge of content and language. Our results resonate with research that integrates these perspectives as teacher educators as the owners of their own professional learning in content-based teaching. The general discussion on teacher educators' language-oriented professional development could integrate these angles and emphasize that their teaching performance, based on an internalization of their own and mutually developed practical knowledge of language, can bring about change in their practice (Darling-Hammond & Snyder, 2000; Darling-Hammond, Wei, Andree, Richardson, & Orphanos, 2009; Den Brok et al., 2010; Love, 2010). The results therefore appear to meet at the intersection of theory and practice (Putnam & Borko, 2000), and in that capacity have the potential to improve the personal practical knowledge of language in the professional context of the experienced teacher educator.

#### *Limitations and directions for future research*

The time frame of four years exerted some influence on the process and outcomes of this dissertation to do with the institutional requirements and contracts, such as the possibility to perform PhD research with the help of a temporary teacher's scholarship but also the demand to publish and to complete the study within a set period of four years. At the same time, and as Scribner, Sawyer, Watson, & Myers (2007) emphasized, the development of a critical and inspired attitude is not only tied to one situation but also arises in collaboration with others as we so joyfully experienced through the partnership with the participating teacher educators in this research.

This research was conducted in a Dutch context of seven teacher trainer institutes of

higher education. Education in the Netherlands does not generally have a strong culture of teacher performance evaluation nor is there yet a mandatory system of continuous evaluation (Louws, 2016). On the other hand, Dutch teachers do have a relatively expansive professional autonomy to engage in professional development on a typically voluntary basis. The teacher educators in our study were all given the choice to voluntarily engage in this educational program for professional development, which was not connected to tenure, salary, or other incentives. In this context, we feel it is important to briefly address the teacher educators' professional development and its normativity that characterize their professional practice. As such, the current professional practice established our definition of what teacher professional development actually entails. In this study, we argued that the core of a new language-oriented knowledge base had to focus on the experience of teaching itself, or in other words, it had to be centered on the teacher educator who teaches in the contexts in which the teaching occurs and the pedagogy by which the teaching is accomplished.

In the four sub-studies, all core concepts are distilled from the perceptions of participants which are then quantified. As we only looked at teachers' perceptions, statements about their behavior were made based on the examples given in connection with video and student comments. No independent observations were made about teachers' actual behavior. In follow-up research, further analysis of language-oriented content teaching and the actual behavior of teachers in this context is desirable. Although the interdisciplinary framework for language-oriented professional learning can be helpful here, it is advisable to analyze this on the basis of a clear disciplinary demarcation.

Furthermore, this knowledge base should include forms of knowledge representation that accounts for teacher educators' professional learning development within the social and cultural contexts in which it occurs (Freeman & Johnson, 1998). For this reason, we argued that the knowledge base of language needs to account for the experienced teacher educator as a participant in a continuous professional development process of teaching where teacher-learning and teaching occurs along with activities of both language-oriented and content-based teaching. Such a framework for language-oriented professional development requires a wider epistemological view of experienced teacher educators. One that accounts for teaching as it was applied as well as developed in professional learning. Against this background, our study can also be considered as an effort to draw implications about teacher training institutes as social and learning environments for teacher educators' self-directed learning and teaching. Additionally, we propose that this approach might eventually lead to a redefinition of how experienced teacher educators develop their language-oriented professional learning and teaching.

However, the research also contained limitations which may have influenced the results. Firstly, with regards to methodical issues, we address a number of matters followed by the use of some of the procedures. Regarding the size of our samples, the findings of this study were drawn from data acquired from relatively small groups of teacher educators starting with 35, and then followed by 29, 11, and 3 to end with Due to this fact, the generalizability of this study is limited. Nonetheless their transferability and application to different teacher educators and teachers in other contexts is certainly possible as we strived to provide a rich and full description of teacher educators' language for learning and teaching to be transferred to other teacher educators in similar content-related contexts.

Regarding procedural issues, there are a few matters we would like to address. First, the practice of an insider perspective by using different types of interviews as an important means of collecting data, implies that the researcher met and sat with the teacher educators personally. In addition, to be a moderator and researcher at the same time was noted to be challenging because of the necessity to possess interpersonal and active listening skills and to be neutral and non-

judgmental at the same time. This may raise questions concerning the ethical accountability and the potential influence that the researcher had on the data collected. Many studies have looked at the role of the researcher in conducting qualitative research (Chavez, 2008; Dwyer & Buckle, 2009). In our study, we learned that the involvement of the researcher in these settings was about attempting to balance between “understanding the setting as an insider” and “describing it to and for outsiders” (Patton, 2002, p. 268), and thus to question the extent to which our personal involvement and beliefs affected the findings and interpretations. In retrospect, we experienced that the ongoing and recurring discussions between the researchers increased further critical thinking and thus augmented our understanding of the qualitative research and also served as a catalyst for the process of self-reflection. Furthermore, with more than twenty years of experience as a teacher and teacher educator of language and communication in higher education, we felt it was possible to deploy this expertise in order to promote participants’ trust in both the moderator and researcher roles, as well as to increase the possibility of an open and interactive dialogue with the different teacher groups.

Second, one of the insights offered by a sociocultural perspective is that although the development of shared understanding takes time, it can be achieved (Mercer & Dawes, 2008). Sociocultural theory thus provides us with an appropriate frame for the development of a new field of enquiry related to conceptual understanding through dialogue in educational settings. In this frame, categories of learning and language are emphasized as a social and educational tool together with the teacher educators, modelling and scaffolding themselves and each other through self-regulated activity. However, the theoretical framework for understanding the relationship between language development and professional development in educational settings needs more attention. Much attention has been given to the definitions of forms and functions of classroom interaction related to the successful pursuit of educational goals for students in both group and individual work settings. Based on the current conceptualization and evaluations, an operational definition of language development is required that is applicable to their everyday classroom practice. Such work will further complement the literature on teacher educators as co-researchers in the analysis of classroom speech and interaction (Armstrong & Curran, 2006; Hennessy & Deaney, 2009).

Furthermore, the conceptual and empirical explorations of the study showed that the program stimulated a change in the development of teacher educators’ thinking and discourse but less in their language-oriented teaching practice/performance. Our analyses showed that teacher educators were able to change their thinking and their planning of language-oriented talk, as they used more diverse language focus areas over the course of our intervention. Nonetheless, changing classroom practice and interaction is often challenging (Van der Veen et al., 2017). Therefore, we argued that in order to support teacher educators to move towards a language-oriented culture in content-based teaching, a framework for language-oriented professional development was needed. Based on the results of the analysis of teacher educators’ practical knowledge of language and their subsequent conceptualizations and elaborations on language modalities, this framework was developed and applied. We used video observations as a tool for teacher educators to guide them to reflect on and change their interactions. However, we could not be sure if the teacher educators’ perceptions were in accordance with their practices. This was maybe not surprising, as previous research has shown that behavioral change requires more time than was available. According to Slavin (2008), interventions should have a duration of a minimum of 12 weeks in order to be effective. The length of our twelve-week intervention was limited to examine the teacher educators’ applied and evaluated language-oriented teaching practice, giving them only a few opportunities to practice and evaluate change. A prolonged intervention will provide more opportunities to move towards a language-oriented change in

classroom culture. Furthermore, a longer intervention will also provide time for students to develop a language-oriented understanding, while getting used to the norms and expectations connected to this. Therefore, we suggest that future research should use a longitudinal research design.

In addition, as perceptions and practices have multifaceted relationships and are not always consistent (Boulton-Lewis, Smith, McCrindle, Burnett, & Campbell, 2001; Fang, 1996), the study was effective in delineating the understanding of participants based on their actual experiments in practice. In order to understand these issues more thoroughly in the larger professional lives and learning of the teacher educators, detailed analysis of actual classroom performance should be an important part of follow-up research in order to show how practical knowledge can be applied in teaching practice. On theoretical level, the study aimed to gain a better insight into the teacher educators' understanding of their practical language knowledge and strategies. In a subsequent examination, this issue could be further addressed by linking the understanding of contingent and language-oriented strategies directly at the beginning of interactive practices about subject content. For example, such a link could involve including and inviting students to structured forms of language-oriented feedback. In this way, working from the goal of transcending the conceptualization of language and subject-specific content as separate entities and allowing them to be a part of the same process, the teacher educator can provide feedback on both subject content and the language used.

Finally, research on the use of video for teacher learning and reflection shows that teacher and student reflections on teaching can be unproductive (Star & Strickland, 2008; van Es & Sherin, 2002) unless specific lenses are provided to guide their analyses. However, little is known about what constitutes an effective lens for evaluating language-oriented performance in content-based teaching and what kind of reflections different lenses might afford to improve language-oriented professional development. Our studies reported on the development, application, and evaluation of a framework for language-oriented professional development of teacher educators. For determination of the requirements for content-related and contextual support in follow-up research, focusing on the relationship between subject-specific language and content dimensions would be desired.

In conclusion, we would wish to make one concluding remark. While we would argue for the continuation of small case studies alongside the few existing other types of research and approaches regarding this particular language orientation, there are no simple criteria based on which the quality can be judged. Therefore, assessing the value of small case studies, requires some understanding and careful thinking by the reader. Do the descriptions "make sense" and are they well supported by evidence? What does the study tell us that is of value in some sort of way? These and many other questions can and should be asked, preferably from a position of some prior understanding of the topics being examined, as well as of the strengths and limitations of the methods used. This dissertation attempted to also aid to that latter type of understanding.

#### *Practical Implications for Teacher Educators*

A number of practical implications can be drawn from these studies with regards to teacher educators' language in learning in teaching, based on their personal practical knowledge of language. The practical implications are not only relevant for the teacher educators themselves, but also for the parties involved in their professional development, including management and directors in teacher education institutes as well as for educational developers and policy makers.

As we formulated in the introduction, one of the aims of this thesis was to contribute to the daily educational practice of teacher educators. In schools, teachers usually talk about the learning of their students. Less is being talked, or sometimes not at all, about the learning of the

teachers themselves and their sense of language. Not only due to the attitude some teachers might have (“I am focused on transferring subject knowledge”) or because of a professional view as a result (“transferring” knowledge as opposed to “constructing, developing, and sharing” knowledge with students), but also the culture of a school may contribute to this. From our studies and own experiences, as a teacher educator and as a teacher colleague, we know that an important reason for this is that teachers within a performance-oriented culture do not always feel safe or supported enough to talk about their own learning and language processes. Talking about both your own learning in teaching from a professional development perspective on language, as we did in our studies, can further complicate the process. That is to say, discussing your own learning in teaching and related language development also implies talking about your own flaws in the process of both your learning and language use. In addressing these issues, an important contribution can be made to methods of support and guidance that teacher educators can use to think and reflect on their learning in teaching and ultimately to attune their educational practice. However, the main condition for implementing such lies in the ability of educational institutes to first develop a learning culture in which teachers feel safe, supported, and encouraged. School environments where teacher educators regularly talk about their own learning are therefore not only important for the teachers themselves, but for the general learning climate of all those involved (Horn, 2005; Louws, 2017; Smith & Gillespie, 2007).

Another implication of this research concerns the pedagogical potential that can be derived from our collaboration in various forms of dialogue with teacher educators. Using such formalized processes of dialogical consultation and exchange, such as in the Socratic Dialogues, can be used in response to a frequently heard problem about professional development with regard to a lack of time. Teachers generally have little opportunity and time to actually transform newly developed ways of thinking and working with students into teaching practice. From our studies, formalized professional group dialogues with teacher educators proved to be fairly straightforwardly applicable in all our communications with teacher educators and, later, between them and their students in their teaching practices as a result of this. The language awareness and the metalinguistic possibilities that teacher educators developed during our dialogues, such as regulating conversational techniques in combination with active listening skills, was then often included in their pedagogical repertoires in a way that was real and relevant to them, developing content *and* language together. A possible setting for introducing language-oriented teaching into teacher education could therefore take the form of a professional development trajectory for teacher educators at the beginning and end of a new academic year. At the same time, team managers could subsequently conduct professional dialogues with teams of teacher educators in a comparable language-aware fashion as opposed to the usual individual progress interviews. These group dialogues would allow teacher educators and their students to mutually articulate, analyze, and develop their perceptions and preferences on the essential aspects of teaching and learning or other subject-specific concepts. In addition, reflection and assessment interviews could take place between the teacher educators themselves and in group consultation with their supervisor.

Finally, in order to fully benefit from the pedagogical potential of a language-oriented development approach and to connect teacher educators’ practical knowledge of language with their pedagogical content knowledge, our framework for professional development can be directly implemented into teacher education practice. In this framework, the five language focus areas: “language awareness,” “active listening,” “organizing interaction,” “language support,” and “improving language in learning and teaching” could be considered as a reference and starting point for teacher educators’ professional development. In addition, we recommend using the framework for professional language-oriented teacher development in the context of current trends in teacher education aimed at personalized learning in the classroom. These current

developments require major adjustments in the roles that teachers fulfill. It is here where they are expected to supplement their instructing roles and that of knowledge transfer, with advisory and facilitating functions, combined with personalized ways of teaching. In this development process, our framework offers the language-oriented structure and support that is needed, provided that the framework is directly linked to the learning objectives of the teacher educators themselves.

Finally, this research has thus demonstrated the importance of focusing on the practical knowledge of language as a part of teacher educators' pedagogical content knowledge. We recommend maintaining this focus and to continue putting the spotlight on the language of all teacher educators through language-oriented pedagogy in all curricula of teacher education to increase the language awareness of all students (teachers in training) and ultimately educational practice. This research has shown that the attention put towards language in learning and teaching is still far from self-evident but based on thorough attention, by implementing professional dialogue within the framework for language-oriented professional development, success can be achieved.

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**Summary in Dutch (Nederlandse samenvatting)**

**Acknowledgements (Dankwoord)**

**About the author**

**List of publications**

## Nederlandse samenvatting (Summary in Dutch)

### *De taal van lerarenopleiders in leren en lesgeven*

Taal is belangrijk. Taal is overal. Taal is nodig om te leren en te denken. Zonder taal is er geen denken en ook is er zonder denken geen taal. Taal heeft niet alleen aandacht nodig in het vreemdetalenonderwijs of het vak Nederlands, maar overal in het onderwijs. Dit wil niet zeggen dat elke leraar ook een talendocent moet zijn, maar wel dat iedere leraar een taalbewuste leraar moet zijn, die rekening houdt met zijn eigen taal en die van zijn studenten of leerlingen (de Graaff, 2014)<sup>7</sup>. Het gaat hier om hoe leraren hun taal gebruiken bij leren en lesgeven en ook om wat ze daarover weten, ook wel hun praktische kennis van taal genoemd. Alle leraren, en expliciet de lerarenopleiders als didactisch experts en voorbeeldgevers, spelen een belangrijke rol om deze kennis, die deels al impliciet aanwezig is, explicieter te maken voor aankomende leraren. Om als ervaren lerarenopleider goed te functioneren is het daarom niet alleen belangrijk om te beschikken over vakkennis en didactische vaardigheid, maar is de praktische taalkennis evenzeer van belang om te kunnen omgaan met de communicatie van het vak, en in de omgang met studenten.

In dit proefschrift doen we verslag van een praktijkgericht professionaliseringsonderzoek met ervaren lerarenopleiders. Docentleren en -betrokkenheid zijn hierbij uitgangspunten om de dynamiek, voortgang en beoogde onderwijskwaliteit binnen de lerarenopleiding te verbeteren. Doel van het promotieonderzoek is na te gaan hoe lerarenopleiders hun taalbewuste leren en lesgeven ontwikkelen en verbeteren. Lerarenopleiders participeerden op vrijwillige basis in een professionaliseringsproject gedurende een periode van drie jaar. Het professionaliseringsproject bestond uit vier deelstudies, gericht op achtereenvolgens de conceptualisering (tweede studie), identificering en operationalisering (derde studie) en beoordeling en verbetering (vierde studie) door lerarenopleiders, op basis van hun praktische kennis van taal (eerste studie)(Figuur 1). Het onderzoek laat zien dat aandacht voor taal bij leren en lesgeven van lerarenopleiders nog lang niet vanzelfsprekend is. De studies tonen aan dat bewustwording bij lerarenopleiders van hun praktische kennis van taal leidt tot een verbeterde taalontwikkende en interpersoonlijk gerichte didactiek. Dat leidt vervolgens tot meer consistente lesstrategieën afgestemd op de leerbehoeften van hun studenten. Lerarenopleiders kunnen deze praktische taalkennis gebruiken bij interactie over de lesinhoud. Het bewust inzetten van deze kennis, waarbij taal en inhoud niet als afzonderlijke entiteiten functioneren maar deel uitmaken van hetzelfde proces, leidt tot zowel een verbetering van de inhoudskennis van lerarenopleiders als een uitbreiding van hun didactische handelingsrepertoire. De resultaten van het onderzoek zijn van belang voor zowel de docentprofessionaliseringstheorie als de taalbewuste onderwijspraktijk.

**Figuur 1.** Onderzoeksopzet



<sup>7</sup> de Graaff, R. (2014). *TalenTalent*. Amsterdam/Den Haag: Hogeschool Inholland, lectorale rede.

*Overzicht deelstudies*

Taalgeoriënteerde benaderingen in het hoger onderwijs krijgen recentelijk meer aandacht om een aantal redenen. Vanuit het politieke en maatschappelijke debat worden eisen gesteld aan leraren in het algemeen en lerarenopleiders in het bijzonder, om te kunnen omgaan met een toenemende culturele, linguïstische en academische diversiteit in het klaslokaal. Tegen deze achtergrond en vanuit een steeds meer verbonden wereld, die vraagt om 'new literacies' (Alvermann, 2002: 189), heeft onderzoek aangetoond dat onzekerheden rond taalbeleid en gerelateerde didactische methoden niet alleen leiden tot een toename van taalproblemen, maar ook tot problemen met het lesgeven zelf van leraren en het leren van studenten (Herelixka & Verhulst, 2014). Binnen deze context formuleerden wij de volgende hoofdonderzoeksvraag:

*Hoe ontwikkelen en verbeteren ervaren lerarenopleiders hun taalbewuste leren en lesgeven in hun vakinhoudelijke onderwijspraktijk?*

De eerste studie in hoofdstuk 2, wordt uitgevoerd met 35 lerarenopleiders van zeven lerarenopleidingen. In de tweede studie, in hoofdstuk 3, participeren 29 lerarenopleiders van vier lerarenopleidingen op basis van hun vrijwillige deelname aan de vorige studie. De derde studie, in hoofdstuk 4, wordt uitgevoerd met elf lerarenopleiders van drie lerarenopleidingen, op basis van hun deelname aan de vorige twee studies. Ten slotte de vierde studie, in voorlaatste hoofdstuk 5, vindt plaats met drie lerarenopleiders, op basis van hun vrijwillige betrokkenheid bij de voorgaande drie studies, samen met 32 van hun tweede- en derdejaars bachelor studenten.

*Deel 1, conceptuele verkenningen*

In het eerste deel: 'Conceptuele verkenningen van taalbewust leren en lesgeven' wordt er verslag gedaan van twee studies. Eerst wordt onderzocht wat lerarenopleiders zelf aangeven te willen leren over taalbewust lesgeven en op welke manier, op basis van hun persoonlijke praktische kennis van taal. Vervolgens wordt onderzocht hoe lerarenopleiders deze praktische taalkennis op gezamenlijke wijze analyseren en conceptualiseren.

In *hoofdstuk 1* van dit proefschrift worden de aanleiding en het theoretisch kader geïntroduceerd in combinatie met een korte beschrijving van de methodologische context waarin het onderzoek is uitgevoerd. Vervolgens worden de hoofdlijnen van de deelstudies, per gerelateerd hoofdstuk, gepresenteerd. Daarbij duiden we de verbinding tussen de afzonderlijke hoofdstukken. Ten slotte bespreken we de beoogde praktische implicaties van het onderzoek voor de lerarenopleiding en lerarenopleiders.

In *Hoofdstuk 2* gaan we in op de volgende twee onderzoeksvragen: 'Hoe ervaren lerarenopleiders hun persoonlijke praktische kennis van taal voor klascommunicatie?' En 'Welke voorkeuren hebben lerarenopleiders om hun persoonlijke praktische kennis van taal voor klascommunicatie te ontwikkelen?'

Op basis van de literatuur over persoonlijke theorie van docenten over de klaspraktijk (Bronkhorst, 2013; Connelly et al., 1997) geïntegreerd met Shulman's (1986) kennisdomeinen, en op inhoud gebaseerde interactie in de klas (bijv. Dalton-Puffer & Smit, 2013), beargumenteren we dat lerarenopleiders die zich bewust zijn van hun persoonlijke praktische kennis van taal, beter begrip hebben van het taalgebruik van hun studenten en daardoor betere ondersteuning kunnen bieden bij de begeleiding en ontwikkeling van kennis. In termen van concrete en praktische activiteiten en manieren om deze kennis te ontwikkelen, blijkt het bewijs hiervoor echter schaars.

We definiëren *persoonlijke praktische kennis* als kennis gebaseerd op de ervaringspraktijk in de klas die bestaat uit zowel eerdere en huidige ervaringen als toekomstige verwachtingen. Het tweede gedeelte van het onderzoeksthema: *taal* wordt gedefinieerd als alle verbale en non-verbale communicatievormen die lerarenopleiders gebruiken in de klas. Om de onderzoeksvragen te beantwoorden willen we concrete aanwijzingen krijgen over het begrip en de motivatie van lerarenopleiders om hun persoonlijke praktische kennis van taal te ontwikkelen. Daarom hebben we focusgroepen ingericht met in totaal 35 ervaren lerarenopleiders van zeven verschillende lerarenopleidingen.

De resultaten laten zien dat lerarenopleiders hun praktische taalkennis primair baseren op eerdere ervaringen en minder op huidige ervaringen en toekomstige verwachtingen. Naar aanleiding van de praktijkvoorbeelden van de lerarenopleiders kunnen we twee onderling verbonden taaloriëntaties onderscheiden: variaties in taalintenties en taalmiddelen nader benoemd als (1) taalgevoelig en interpersoonlijk en (2) taalontwikkelen en didactisch georiënteerd. Om verder inzicht te krijgen in de praktische implicaties hiervan, beargumenteren wij het belang van een conceptueel fundament om de taaloriëntaties doelgericht en op individuele wijze te kunnen operationaliseren in de onderwijspraktijk.

In *Hoofdstuk 3* gaan we in op de onderzoeksvraag: 'hoe conceptualiseren lerarenopleiders taalontwikkelen leren, als onderdeel van hun praktische kennis van taal, voor interactie in de klaspraktijk?' Om deze vraag te beantwoorden wordt een meta-perspectief op taal ontwikkeld tijdens een reeks van drie groepsdialogen met vier groepen van in totaal 29 lerarenopleiders. Voorgaand onderzoek heeft laten zien dat de Socratische dialoogvorm een geschikte methode is binnen een sociocultureel perspectief van leren (Knezic et al., 2013), waarbij de methode wordt gebruikt om gemeenschappelijke kennisconstructie (Mercer, 1995) te ontwikkelen en nieuwe inzichten te vergaren (Pihlgren, 2008). In dit onderzoek worden Socratische dialogen ingezet als een geformaliseerde interactiemethode met als doel te komen tot nieuwe conceptuele inzichten. Hierbij worden de dialogen gezien als model voor de conceptuele praktijk en als pedagogisch hulpmiddel ingezet in de vroege stadia van conceptuele vorming, om een beter begrip te krijgen van de verschillende aspecten van taalontwikkelen leren. In deze dialogen proberen lerarenopleiders consensus te bereiken over collectief geformuleerde definities op basis van gezamenlijk geconstrueerde antwoorden naar aanleiding van de fundamentele vraag: 'Wat is taalontwikkelen leren?' De dialogen worden gevoerd op basis van een recent voorbeeld uit hun onderwijspraktijk, met inachtneming van een aantal pedagogische gespreksrichtlijnen, en geleid door een gespreksleider.

De conceptualisering van de lerarenopleiders wordt vanuit drie perspectieven benaderd, gebaseerd op Love's (2009, 2010) benadering van taalgerichte didactische kennis (Linguistic Pedagogical Content Knowledge) en Sfard's (1998) metaforen van leren. Love's (2009) methode is bedoeld om te begrijpen hoe taal het beste gestructureerd kan worden voor effectief leren. Sfard's (1998) metaforen zijn gericht op de acquisitiemetafoor, waarbij leren wordt voorgesteld als de verwerving en ontwikkeling van kennis, en de participatiemetafoor, die leren representeert als een sociale activiteit. Vanuit deze context worden binnen ons onderzoek de drie gehanteerde perspectieven *agent* en *proces* van leren en *doel* van taal omschreven als: voor wie het leren is bedoeld (agent); hoe het leren plaatsvindt (proces); en waarvoor de taal wordt geleerd (doel). Deze worden ingezet om de leer- en taaloriëntaties van de lerarenopleiders te kunnen afleiden.

De resultaten uit dit onderzoek laten zien dat taalontwikkelen leren voornamelijk wordt beschouwd als een interactief ontwikkelingsproces. In dit proces identificeren we een conceptuele ontwikkeling bij lerarenopleiders waarbij taalontwikkelen leren in eerste instantie wordt beschouwd als instrument zoals blijkt uit de analyse van de aangedragen onderwijsvoorbeelden. Hierbij wordt er voornamelijk aandacht besteed aan 'bewustzijn van leren

in taal', 'duidelijk taalgebruik' en 'instrumenten voor uitleg en feedback'. Uit analyse van de collectief geformuleerde definities komt naar voren dat taalontwikkelen gaandeweg meer wordt gezien als doel. Dit blijkt uit een gerichtheid op aspecten zoals 'bewustwording van persoonsgesprekken'. Uit de uiteindelijke definities, ofwel de bereikte consensus in de verschillende groepen, blijkt dat taalontwikkelen uiteindelijk vooral wordt gezien als instrument en doel, vanuit een focus op 'de organisatie van persoonlijke taal' en een 'verrijking van het lerarenrepertoire'. In deze context wordt taalontwikkelen dus niet alleen beschouwd als een instrument voor het toepassen van regulerende en instructieve taal, maar ook als doel om academische en didactisch georiënteerde kennis te verbinden aan interpersoonlijk taalgebruik van de lerarenopleider zelf.

Om het denkproces en de conceptualisering van lerarenopleiders over taalontwikkelen om te kunnen zetten in een praktisch kader, beargumenteren we vervolgens het belang van doelgericht interventieonderzoek. Met dit vervolgonderzoek beogen we inzicht te krijgen in wat lerarenopleiders doen, dat wil zeggen hoe ze zich verhouden tot hun taalbewuste agent en proces van leren, en hoe ze dit in hun lespraktijk identificeren in samenhang met hun doelstellingen van taal.

## *Deel 2, empirische verkenningen*

In het tweede deel: 'Empirische verkenningen' worden de volgende twee deelstudies gepresenteerd. Eerst wordt het 'begrip' onderzocht dat lerarenopleiders hebben met betrekking tot hun taalgeoriënteerde ontwikkeling in de vakinhoudelijke lespraktijk, gevolgd door hoe lerarenopleiders en hun studenten 'taalgeoriënteerde lesuitvoering' evalueren en verbeteren.

In *Hoofdstuk 4* gaan we in op de onderzoeksvraag: 'Hoe begrijpen lerarenopleiders hun taalbewuste ontwikkeling in de vakinhoudelijke lespraktijk?' Om deze vraag te beantwoorden wordt een interventiestudie uitgevoerd in de lespraktijk van elf ervaren lerarenopleiders. We doen dit op basis van drie kritische factoren voor verbeterde leerresultaten van Swanson et al. (1999). Deze aanpak wordt door deze auteurs geïdentificeerd als meest effectief voor de leerontwikkeling ongeacht het model of de inhoud van de lesinstructie. Gezien het potentieel van deze aspecten om elkaar aan te vullen en te versterken, worden binnen ons onderzoek de drie factoren toegepast als middel om de reflectieve praktijk van lerarenopleiders te stimuleren en hun taalgeoriënteerde ontwikkeling te begrijpen, los van hun vakinhoudelijke expertise. Om dit doel te bereiken ontwerpen we een strategie op basis van de aanpak van Swanson et al. (1999) in combinatie met gevalideerde observatie-instrumenten van Rimm-Kaufman et al. (2006). Deze aanpak bestaat uit semigestructureerde reflectieve interviews en stimulated recall interviews tijdens de interventie, gevolgd door focusgroepen na afronding van de interventie. Hierbij worden de lerarenopleiders gevraagd lesopnames te bekijken en gestimuleerd om hardop na te denken over hun taalbewuste ontwikkeling in termen van onderwerp, doel en proces. De focusgroepen worden vervolgens gebruikt als middel om de individueel verworven inzichten van lerarenopleiders onderling te delen met hun collega's. In aanvulling verkennen de lerarenopleiders in focusgroepen hun visie op aspecten van hun taalbewuste proces, op basis van de eerdere resultaten (hoofdstuk 2, 3, 4) en gerelateerde vaardigheden (Den Brok et al., 2010). Het gaat hier om de volgende procesaspecten: bewustwording van start- en eindpuntbepaling, mate van consistent handelen, taalontwikkelen feedback en ondersteuning, organisatie van vraagtypen, gebruik van vaktermen en vakspecifieke sleutelbegrippen, gebruik van verbaal en non-verbaal modelleren en potentieel voor verbetering. Lerarenopleiders worden op deze manier aangemoedigd om hun observaties over hun 'taalgeoriënteerde handelingen' te specificeren en

hun ontwikkeling hierbij te leren begrijpen in termen van didactische beslissingen.

Op basis van de literatuur en onze eerdere studies (hoofdstuk 2 en 3) veronderstellen we dat taalbewuste lerarenopleiders zowel taalgevoelig als taalontwikkelen dienen te zijn, om op toegankelijke wijze te kunnen faciliteren in het vakinhoudelijke onderwijsproces. De uitkomsten bevestigden deze aanname. Dat wil zeggen, het identificatieproces van lerarenopleiders laat zien dat hun taalbewustzijn toeneemt en dat hun didactische beslissingen verschuiven richting taalgevoelige en taalontwikkende begeleiding en ondersteuning bij onderwijsleergesprekken. Om deze uitkomsten te kunnen gebruiken voor evaluatiedoeleinden in de lespraktijk, beargumenteren we dat er een taalkader nodig is dat bestaat uit de door lerarenopleiders aangegeven belangrijkste procesaspecten voor taalbewust leren en lesgeven.

In *hoofdstuk 5* gaan we in op de volgende onderzoeksvraag: 'Hoe evalueren lerarenopleiders en hun studenten taalbewuste lesactiviteiten in inhoudsgericht onderwijs?' Deze studie is gericht op het verbeteren van taalbewust lesgeven door evaluatie van zowel de lerarenopleiders zelf als hun studenten. Om dit te bereiken voeren we een interventiestudie uit met drie ervaren lerarenopleiders en 32 van hun tweede- en derdejaars bachelorstudenten. Deze studie bouwt voort op de belangrijkste uitkomsten van de vorige drie studies. In de eerste studie (hoofdstuk 2) onderzochten we hoe praktische kennis van taal gerelateerd was aan taalbewuste leerbehoeften, doelen en voorkeuren om te komen tot een werkdefinitie. Hoewel er verschillende definities naar voren kwamen, vonden we twee overkoepelende sleuteloriëntaties: 'taalgevoelig en interpersoonlijk' en 'taalontwikkelen en didactisch georiënteerd'. Deze oriëntaties werden vervolgens gebruikt als conceptueel uitgangspunt in de volgende studie. Van hieruit deden we verslag, in de tweede studie (hoofdstuk 3), hoe de lerarenopleiders taalontwikkelen leren conceptualiseerden. De uitkomsten toonden aan dat taalontwikkelen werd uitgelegd als een instrument voor het toepassen van organiserende en didactische taal, maar ook als doel om deze didactisch georiënteerde taalkennis te verbinden aan de interpersoonlijke taal van de lerarenopleider zelf. In de derde studie (hoofdstuk 4) rapporteerden we hoe lerarenopleiders hun taalbewuste handelen identificeerden in de lespraktijk. Op basis van lerarenopleiders' didactische beslissingen konden we de belangrijkste procesaspecten voor taalbewust leren en lesgeven vaststellen.

Op basis van deze uitkomsten, gaan we in de vierde studie uit van de veronderstelling dat het bewustzijn van lerarenopleiders' persoonlijke praktische taalkennis kan leiden tot reflectie en nieuwe kennis, wat op zijn beurt kan leiden tot een groter didactisch vermogen en integratie van vormen van taalbewust lesgeven in inhoudsgericht onderwijs. Voorafgaande aan de interventie ontwierpen we, op basis van de belangrijkste procesaspecten voor taalbewust leren en lesgeven, een kader voor taalgeoriënteerde professionele ontwikkeling. In deze studie gebruiken we dit kader voor zowel referentie- en selectiedoeleinden van taalbewuste lesactiviteiten als voor de evaluatie hiervan door de lerarenopleiders en studenten. Het kader bestaat uit: taalbewustzijn, actief luisteren, interactie organiseren, taalondersteuning en taal- en leerverbetering. De aandachtsgebieden worden gerangschikt in volgorde van verwachte professionele ontwikkeling op basis van de eerder beschreven taaloriëntaties (intenties en middelen) van lerarenopleiders.

De resultaten laten zien aan dat er een relatie is tussen de volgorde van benodigde aandachtsgebieden zoals aangegeven en geobserveerd door de studenten, en het vermogen van de lerarenopleiders om deze toe te passen in overeenstemming met de leerdoelen voor hun professionele ontwikkeling. Hoewel de afzonderlijke aandachtsgebieden in wisselende volgorden worden toegepast tijdens de interventie, worden deze na afloop in openvolging, conform het kader, gekwalificeerd. Dat wil zeggen, de eerste twee aandachtsgebieden 'taalbewustzijn' en 'actief luisteren' worden beschouwd als voorbereidende professionaliseringsfase voor diagnose en problematisering. Deze fase wordt gevolgd door 'organisatie van interactie' en 'taalondersteuning'

in de kernfase, en afgesloten met de toepassing en evaluatie van het laatste aandachtgebied: 'taal- en leerverbetering' in de afsluitende fase. Daarnaast zijn de lerarenopleiders het onderling eens over het samenkomen van de twee kernoriëntaties in het laatste aandachtsgebied. Het gaat hierbij in essentie over een taalgevoelige en interpersoonlijke lesbenadering die vooral gekenmerkt wordt door luisteren en het aanbieden van ruimte om op basis daarvan doelgericht en taalontwikkellend te kunnen interveniëren.

### *Algemene conclusies*

Een van de belangrijkste conclusies die naar voren komt, is dat de lerarenopleiders binnen het professionaliseringsproject een bewustzijn ontwikkelen ten aanzien van hun persoonlijke praktische taalkennis, maar deze kennis niet automatisch toepassen in hun vakinhoudelijke lespraktijk. Daarnaast laat het onderzoek zien dat hun deelname niet alleen van invloed was op hun individuele bewustzijn van taal in hun leren en lesgeven maar ook op het vermogen om, in samenspraak met vakcollega's, persoonlijke taaloriëntaties te conceptualiseren binnen hun vakinhoudelijke thematiek. Dit bewustzijn wordt ook weerspiegeld in de niveaus van hun reflectief denken en formuleren over taal. Hierbij zien we een geleidelijke ontwikkeling: het denken en formuleren bestaat in eerste instantie uit letterlijke formuleringen en verklaringen, maar gaandeweg de interventie worden de formuleringen meer specifiek. Daarbij worden concrete en taalgerichte voorbeelden gegeven, die met behulp van persoonlijke principes, onderwijstheorieën en contexten worden onderbouwd. Echter, hoewel ons onderzoek laat zien dat lerarenopleiders in staat waren om taalgeoriënteerde manieren van denken aan te passen en te verbeteren en hierbij ook te variëren in de toepassing van de aandachtsgebieden, hebben we niet kunnen vaststellen in hoeverre hun conceptuele percepties ook in overeenstemming waren met hun handelingen in hun lespraktijk. Daarnaast lijkt er een impliciete overeenkomst te bestaan tussen wat de lerarenopleiders aanvankelijk lieten zien in hun taalbewuste lesstrategieën en reflecties en wat de studenten hiervan opmerkten in het lesgeven van hun lerarenopleider in de klas. Dat wil zeggen, uit de evaluaties komt een wederzijds ervaren gebrek van aandacht naar voren met betrekking tot de interpersoonlijke functie van taal. Dit blijkt bijvoorbeeld uit de veronderstelling van de lerarenopleiders over de vanzelfsprekend geachte aanwezigheid van actieve luistervaardigheden aan het begin van de interventie, die tijdens het terugkijken van de lesopnames minder evident aanwezig blijken te zijn. Daarnaast wordt er door de studenten in diezelfde lessen een grote mate van aandacht opgemerkt voor docent-geïnitieerde instructie en veel minder voor een wederzijds geïnitieerde dialoog.

Op basis van de resultaten bevestigen we onze verwachting over ontwikkelingsfasen van de taalgerichte professionalisering van lerarenopleiders. Daarbij kunnen we vaststellen dat lerarenopleiders hun taalgeoriënteerde percepties en reflecties moeten (her)formuleren, waarbij ze de vijf aandachtsgebieden uit het kader meer zichtbaar en bespreekbaar maken, voor zichzelf en ook voor de studenten. In deze context kan ons kader voor professionele ontwikkeling concrete aanwijzingen bieden voor een verbreding van kritische reflectie, toepassing en evaluatie van taalgeoriënteerde professionele ontwikkeling in de vakinhoudelijke onderwijspraktijk. Op basis van de resultaten biedt het kader een beproefde structuur voor toekomstige klasseninterventies, die ingezet kunnen worden voor taalbewuste professionalisering van leraren en lerarenopleiders.

*Praktische implicaties voor lerarenopleiders*

Uit reviews van professionaliseringsonderzoek en docenteffectiviteit komt naar voren dat succesvol leren van leraren vooral betrekking dient te hebben op het leerproces van studenten, de vakinhoud en het vermogen effectief les te kunnen geven (Day et al., 2007). Binnen ons onderzoek heeft het taalbewuste leren en lesgeven van lerarenopleiders vooral betrekking op de ontwikkeling die lerarenopleiders zelf effectiever maakt in hun werk. Dat wil zeggen, hun taalbewuste leren en lesgeven verbetert, en als gevolg daarvan ontwikkelen zij een beter inzicht in de talige en vakinhoudelijke leerontwikkeling van hun studenten. In deze context kan het taalbewuste leren en lesgeven van ervaren lerarenopleiders een zinvolle bijdrage leveren aan maatschappelijke discussie over de veranderende rol van de docent in het onderwijsproces en de daarmee gepaard gaande discussie over vaardigheden en verantwoordelijkheden van lerarenopleiders in het hoger beroepsonderwijs. De praktische implicaties van dit onderzoek zijn relevant voor de lerarenopleiders zelf, maar ook voor partijen die betrokken zijn bij hun professionele ontwikkeling zoals het management van lerarenopleidingen samen met educatieve beleidsmakers.

Zoals we in de inleiding formuleerden, was een van de doelstellingen van dit proefschrift om bij te dragen aan de dagelijkse onderwijspraktijk van lerarenopleiders. Uit het onderzoek blijkt dat de lerarenopleiders zichzelf vaker zien als uitvoerder en overdrager van kennis en in mindere mate als kennisdeler die studenten stimuleert om in samenspraak actief nieuwe kennis te ontwikkelen. Voor veel lerarenopleiders ligt er bovendien een sterker accent op hun vakmanschap als vakinhoudelijke professional, dan op meesterschap als lerarenopleider en voorbeeldgever voor toekomstige leraren. In het onderwijs praten leraren meestal over het leren van hun studenten. Er wordt minder, of soms helemaal niet, gesproken over het leren en de taal van de leraren zelf. Dit komt niet alleen door de houding die sommige leraren hebben ('ik ben gericht op het overdragen van mijn vakkennis') of door gerelateerde professionele opvatting over kennisoverdracht (in tegenstelling tot het construeren, ontwikkelen en delen van kennis met studenten), maar ook de cultuur van een onderwijsinstelling kan hieraan bijdragen. Uit ons onderzoek en uit eigen ervaring, als onderzoeker, lerarenopleider en collega, weten we dat een belangrijke oorzaak hiervan is dat leraren zich binnen een prestatiegerichte cultuur niet altijd veilig of ondersteund genoeg voelen om te praten over hun eigen ontwikkelbehoeften. Praten over je eigen leren in het lesgeven vanuit een professioneel ontwikkelingsperspectief op taal, zoals we deden in ons onderzoek, kan het proces verder compliceren. Dat wil zeggen, het praten over je eigen taal in leren en lesgeven houdt ook in dat je spreekt over ervaren tekortkomingen in dit proces. Het is daarom van belang om goede ondersteunings- en begeleidingsmethoden te bieden die lerarenopleiders kunnen gebruiken als leidraad om hierover te kunnen praten. Belangrijke voorwaarde hiervoor ligt in het vermogen van een onderwijsinstelling om een leercultuur te ontwikkelen waarin docenten zich veilig voelen, ondersteund en aangemoedigd. Schoolomgevingen waar lerarenopleiders of leraren regelmatig over hun eigen leerproces praten, zijn daarom niet alleen belangrijk voor die lerenden zelf, maar ook voor het algemene leerklimaat van alle betrokkenen (Horn, 2005; Smith & Gillespie, 2007; Louws, 2017).

Een andere implicatie van dit onderzoek betreft het didactisch potentieel dat kan worden afgeleid uit onze samenwerking met lerarenopleiders in verschillende dialoogvormen. Het gebruik van dergelijke geformaliseerde processen van overleg en uitwisseling kan een antwoord bieden op een veelgehoord probleem in professionele ontwikkeling met betrekking tot tijdgebrek. Docenten hebben over het algemeen weinig tijd en gelegenheid om nieuw aangeleerde manieren van denken en werken te transformeren naar hun onderwijspraktijk. Uit ons onderzoek bleek dat geformaliseerde groepsdialogen tamelijk eenvoudig toepasbaar waren in al onze communicatie met lerarenopleiders en daarna eveneens van toepassing waren tussen hen en hun studenten in de

onderwijspraktijk. Het taalbewustzijn en de meta-linguïstische mogelijkheden die lerarenopleiders tijdens onze dialogen ontwikkelden, zoals het reguleren van conversatietechnieken in combinatie met actieve luistervaardigheden, werden daarna met regelmaat opgemerkt in hun didactische repertoire. Dit gebeurde op een manier die relevant was om tegelijkertijd aandacht te kunnen geven aan taal- en inhoudsontwikkeling.

Om ten volle te profiteren van het didactisch potentieel en om de praktische taalkennis van lerarenopleiders te verbinden met hun vakdidactische inhoudskennis, kan het kader voor taalgeoriënteerde professionele ontwikkeling op relatief eenvoudige wijze geïmplementeerd worden in de vakinhoudelijke onderwijspraktijk van de lerarenopleiders. Hierbij kunnen we de vijf aandachtsgebieden: 'taalbewustzijn', 'actief luisteren', 'organiseren van interactie', 'taalondersteuning' en 'verbeteren van taal in leren en lesgeven' als referentie en uitgangspunt nemen voor oriëntatie- en evaluatiedoeleinden van de professionele ontwikkeling van lerarenopleiders. Daarnaast kunnen we lerarenopleidingen aanraden om het kader in te zetten in de context van huidige trends in de lerarenopleiding gericht op vormen van gepersonaliseerd leren in de klas. Deze ontwikkeling vereist grote aanpassingen in de rollen die leraren vervullen. Zo wordt er bijvoorbeeld van hen verwacht dat zij hun rollen gericht op instructie en kennisoverdracht aanvullen met adviserende en faciliterende functies, gecombineerd met gepersonaliseerde manieren van lesgeven. In dit ontwikkelingsproces kan ons kader taalgerichte structuur en ondersteuning bieden. Dit onderzoek toont aan hoe belangrijk het is om te focussen op de praktische taalkennis van lerarenopleiders als essentieel onderdeel van hun didactische inhoudskennis. We raden aan om deze focus aan te houden en op die manier de taalbewuste didactiek van lerarenopleiders te expliciteren. Dit kan plaatsvinden door middel van een taalbewuste didactische aanpak in alle curricula van de lerarenopleiding, om het taalbewustzijn van de studenten (leraren in opleiding) te vergroten en daarmee uiteindelijk ook de onderwijspraktijk te versterken.

Tot slot, binnen het onderwijs is behoefte aan nieuwe didactische aanpakken, waarin binnen de aandacht voor instructie en kennisoverdracht ook de taal steeds meer centraal komt te staan. Essentieel onderdeel hierbij is de taal in leren en lesgeven van alle vakinhoudelijke lerarenopleiders en leraren. Hiervoor is het nodig een goed begrip te ontwikkelen van de gewenste omslag die lerarenopleiders dienen te maken in (leer)opvattingen en werkwijze om tegelijkertijd taalbewust en vakontwikkeland te kunnen werken. De relevantie van dit onderzoek zit in de inhoudelijke koppeling van de problematiek van professionalisering van docenten enerzijds en de inzet van taaldidactische en vakgerichte interventies anderzijds. Hier worden twee gebieden van onderwijskundig onderzoek verbonden die vaak nog los van elkaar staan. Het combineren van deze twee gebieden bevestigt de nauwe relatie tussen taal en leren in onderwijs. Uit dit onderzoek is gebleken dat aandacht voor taal in leren en lesgeven nog lang niet vanzelfsprekend is, maar dat op basis van gedegen en taalbewuste aandacht succes kan worden bereikt.

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te lopen. Daarna hebben we elkaar als het ware nog een paar keer ‘gered’. En ook al ben je mijn paranimf en ik die van jou, in een periode van nog geen maand, laten we ervan uitgaan dat reddend niet meer nodig is. Dank dat je er bent.

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Lieve Cain, bij jou eindig ik waar de reis naar ‘Ithaca’ begon. Ondanks dat je niet altijd begreep waar ik al die tijd mee bezig was en waarom ik daarmee bezig wilde zijn, in plaats van met jou een cafeetje te beginnen met zelfgebakken taart, bleef je geloven dat het ‘af’ zou komen. Ik ben trots op wie je bent en wat je al hebt bereikt. Ik had me geen liever, grappiger en meer taalgevoelig kind kunnen wensen dan jij!

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*En al tref je er niets aan, dan heeft ze je toch niet bedrogen | met alle wijsheid die je vergaard hebt | met zoveel ervaring | begrijp je dan stellig wat Ithaca's zeggens willen.*  
(Kavafis, 1911, rg. 33-35)

**ITHACA**

Konstantinos P. Kaváfis (1911) (vertaald door Cornelis Buddingh)

Wanneer je je reis naar Ithaca aanvangt  
bid dan dat de weg lang mag zijn  
vol avontuur, rijk aan stof tot kennis.  
Wees niet bang voor de Lestrygonen  
en de Cyclopen en de toornige Poseidon.  
Je zult volk van dat soort nooit tegenkomen zolang  
je gedachten verheven blijven en  
fier gevoel je lichaam en geest vervult.  
Je zult de Lestrygonen nooit ontmoeten  
noch de Cyclopen en de grimmige Poseidon  
als je ze niet in je ziel met je meedraagt  
als je ziel ze niet voor je oproept.  
Daarom, bid dat de weg lang mag zijn  
dat het vele zomerochtenden moge geven  
dat je zo vol vreugde, zo vol genot  
nooit eerder geziene havens aandoen mag  
Blijf rondhangen op Phoenicische markten  
en koop er vele schone zaken:  
parelmoer en koralen, amber en ebbenhout  
en zoetgeurende parfums van allerlei soort.  
Koop zoveel zoetgeurende parfums als je kunt.  
Bezoek massa's Egyptische steden  
om er te leren, te leren van hen die kennis bezitten.  
Houd je geestesoog steeds vast op Ithaca gericht  
daar te komen is je uiteindelijke doel  
Maar haast je vooral niet  
je reis kan beter jaren en jaren duren  
Werp er desnoods pas het anker uit wanneer je al oud bent  
rijk aan alles wat je onderweg hebt verworven  
maar zonder nog iets van Ithaca te verwachten  
Ithaca schonk je die heerlijke reis  
maar nu heeft ze je niets meer te geven  
En al tref je er niets aan, dan heeft ze je toch niet bedrogen:  
met alle wijsheid die je vergaard hebt, met zoveel ervaring,  
begrijp je dan stellig wat Ithaca's zeggen willen.

### About the author

Fenna Swart was born in Uithoorn, the Netherlands, 25 Mai 1968. Raised in Heiloo (North Holland), she started her studies in Amsterdam after a year of working and studying in London. In 1992 she obtained her Bachelor of Education in both Dutch and Art at the University of Applied Sciences in Amsterdam (Hogeschool Holland). In that same year, Swart held her first painting exhibitions and acted in a few small-scale theatre plays. In 1993 she studied Autonomous Painting and Art History at the University of Applied Sciences in Utrecht (Hogeschool voor de Kunsten) and started working as a teacher of Dutch in a secondary school (Reigersbos, Amsterdam) and as a teacher of Art in two cultural centers in Amstelveen. During this period, she continued to develop and exhibit her paintings and created a series of art performances in Amsterdam and abroad. From 1996-1998 she continued teaching in a language institute (PACE, Amsterdam) and in a private school for higher education (The New School for Information Services, Amsterdam) as a teacher of Communication, and simultaneously obtained her Master's degree in Education (Dutch). From 1999-2000, Swart, together with the American artist Joseph Scorselo, developed a series of three Art Actions on the Dam Square in Amsterdam (*The Dam Border Projects 1999*) under the flag of 'Scorselo & Swart'. In addition, to make this possible on a larger scale in collaboration with public schools, municipalities, embassies and cultural funds, she co-founded with Scorselo, a foundation for Visual Arts and Media (Stichting Kriteria, Amsterdam) of which she also was the director from 2000 until 2010. From this foundation, Swart developed and supported, together with Scorselo, different Art Actions such as '*Holland Border Walk 2000*', including a 100-day walk along the original Dutch border while collecting and documenting written thoughts in time capsules of residents in border municipalities, about personal and public borders. This was followed by '*Surrender to Indifference? 2002*' (Spui, Amsterdam), '*1000 Chairs, 2003*' (Prins Bernhard Cultuurfonds, Amsterdam), '*Moving the World - The Dam 2004*' (Oostenburgerkerkplein Amsterdam, Antwerp, Ankara, Athens, Casablanca, Cairo, Jakarta and Copenhagen), '*Moving Books 2004*' (Amsterdam and abroad), '*Implantart 2007*' and '*Kidsplantart 2008*' (IJburg, Amsterdam). In that same period, Swart also worked at the University of Applied Sciences (Hogeschool Inholland). First, from 2001-2012 as a teacher of Language and Communications and research instructor in the department of Communication, Media & Music in Haarlem, and from 2012-2017 as a teacher educator, research instructor and researcher in the department of Education, Learning and Innovation in Amstelveen. In 2013, Swart obtained her Master of Education (Learning & Innovation) with a thesis on "Managers' perceptions of teacher educators' professional development" after which she started her PhD research at Utrecht University. This PhD thesis is the result of a study that was conducted from Sept. 2013-Sept. 2017 at University Utrecht in collaboration with the University of Applied Sciences (Hogeschool Inholland), from which she received a scholarship. Swart's research interests include content and language integrated teaching, teacher-learner interaction, dialogic education, the role of language in learning and teaching and teachers' professional development. For Swart the common denominator between language and art is communication through her focus on interactions between personal and collective forms of exchange, in word and imagery, and how this effects the process of conceptualization and subsequent behavior of those involved.

Fenna Swart lives in Amsterdam with her eleven year old son, Cain.

## Publications

### *Academic publications*

- Swart F., Onstenk, J., De Graaff R. & Knezic, D. (in press). Understanding teachers educators' language- oriented development in content-based teaching. *World Journal of Education*. Vol. 8, No. 2
- Swart, F., Knezic, D., Onstenk, J. & De Graaff, R. (submitted). Evaluating and improving teacher educators' language-oriented performance in content-based teaching.
- Swart, F., De Graaff, R., Onstenk, J., & Knezic, D. (2018). Teacher educators' personal practical knowledge of language. *Teachers and Teaching*, 24(2), 166-182. doi: 10.1080/13540602.2017.1368477
- Swart, F., De Graaff, R., Onstenk, J., & Knezic, D. (2017). Teacher Educators' conceptualization of ongoing language development in professional learning and teaching. *Professional Development in Education*, 1-16. doi:10.1080/19415257.2017.1345775

### *Academic presentations*

- Swart, F., Onstenk, J., Knezic, D. & De Graaff, R. (2017). *Understanding and evaluating teacher educators' language-oriented professional development*. Poster presented at the Onderwijs Research Dagen (ORD), Antwerp, Belgium
- Swart, F., Knezic, D., Onstenk, J. & De Graaff, R. (2016). *Language-oriented teacher learning during Socratic dialogues*. Poster presented at Velon 2016 Conference, Brussel.
- Swart, F., De Graaff, R., Onstenk, J., & Knezic, D. (2015). *Language developing teacher learning*. Paper presented at Eapril 2015 Conference. November 21-25, Luxemburg.
- Swart, F., De Graaff, R., Onstenk, J. & Knezic, D. (2014). *Language sensitive teacher learning*. Poster presented at Eapril 2014 Conference. November 25-28 Cyprus, Nicosia.

### *Professional publications*

- Swart, F. (2014). Het taalontwikkellend leren van de hbo-docent. In: De Graaff, R. (2014). *TalenTalent*. 44-46. Amstelveen/Den Haag: Hogeschool Inholland.
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## **Teacher Educators' Perceptions of Language in Learning and Teaching** *Interconnecting language-oriented teaching and professional development*

Language is essential in learning and thinking. It is not only important in mother tongue or foreign language teaching, but everywhere in education. This does not mean that every teacher or teacher educator also must be a language teacher, but that every teacher should be a 'language-sensitive' teacher regardless of their content expertise. That is, someone who takes into account his own language as well as that of the students. This dissertation is about how experienced teacher educators perceive their verbal and non-verbal language in learning and teaching based on their practical experiences, also called their 'personal practical knowledge of language'. In this respect, teacher educators play an important role. Not only because of their position as experts, in content and teaching methods, but especially as role models. As such, they can play a key role in making their 'practical knowledge of language' accessible and applicable to their students and future teachers, while improving their own learning and teaching process.

The present research was conducted in a project for language-oriented professional development that was initiated for this purpose and executed in four stages. Our sample comprised of, in total, 35 experienced teacher educators from seven higher education teacher training departments in the humanities, sciences, and social studies. The first study (chapter 2) was conducted with 35 teacher educators from seven universities, the second study (chapter 3) was carried out with 29 teacher educators from four, the third study (chapter 4) was conducted with eleven teacher educators from three universities, and the fourth and last study (chapter 5) involved three teacher educators from one university of applied sciences based on their voluntary involvement in the previous three studies, and 32 of their second- or third-year bachelor students.

The dissertation aims to contribute to a better understanding of teacher educators' perceptions of their language through the description, development and evaluation of a cross-curricular framework for language-oriented professional development. This framework is available for implementation in the teaching practice of teacher educators to develop and improve their language-oriented performance.

This PhD thesis is the result of a study that was conducted from Sept. 2013-Sept. 2017 at University Utrecht in collaboration with the Inholland University of Applied Sciences from which Fenna Swart received a scholarship. Swart's research interests include content and language integrated teaching, teacher-learner interaction, dialogic education, the role of language in learning and teaching and teachers' professional development.