3-year Cycle Course Evaluation

Fagdidaktikk i Engelsk for Integrert Lærarutdanning - ENGDI201

1. General Description of the Course and Assessment Methods

The ENGDI201 course, Fagdidaktikk i engelsk for integrert lærarutdanning, is composed of six 90-minute lectures and seminars with oral group presentations. The syllabus for the last three years of the course included the following topics: Bildung and intercultural competence, teaching grammar, ICT and the subject of English, learner texts, tasks and activities and writing as a basic skill. In the seminars, students presented a teaching plan and discussed it in the light of English didactic theory. After each presentation, the group received peer feedback and comments from the instructor. Attendance to the seminars was a pre-requisite for taking the final exams.

The form of assessment in the course is a 2500-word home exam. Over the last three years, the topics of the exams encouraged students to critically reflect on the challenges and opportunies related to the teaching of English in the 21st century using as a reference the lectures, classroom discussions and the language didactics literature for the course.

2. Learning Outcomes and Assessment of the Progress and Structure of the Course

The learning outcomes for ENGDI201 (https://www.uib.no/emne/ENGDI201) are reproduced below:

At the end of the course, the student must have the following learning outcomes defined in knowledge, skills and general competence:

Knowledge: The student

- has insight into language, text and genre, and can see these in a cultural perspective
- has insight into English as an education subject and skills subject
- has insight into basic skills and learning processes in the English subject

Skills: The student

- can create teaching arrangements where working methods and content are linked to basic understanding and insight into learning processes in the English subject.
- can describe characteristics of competence in the English subject.

General competence: The student

- can express themselves orally and in writing in English within the field.

2.1 Knowledge

In relation to the topic of "knowledge", the lectures focused on the readings for the course and complemented them with relevant references that contribute to a broader understanding of key concepts in the teaching of English in the 21st century, such as 'language', 'text', 'genre' and 'literacy'. The three models of language description (structuralist, social and postmodern) proposed by Graddol (1994) were used as a starting point to introduce and discuss different conceptualizations of language that have a direct bearing on what is understood by 'text'. The lectures also worked extensively on the notion of 'genre', contrasting traditional definitions of the term based exclusively on written texts with the new forms of expression emerging from the widespread use of digital technologies. Particular emphasis was placed on the role of English as a fundamental linguistic and communicative resource in digital contexts. Also in relation to digital technologies, besides discussing the use of digital tools in writing and corpora in English language teaching, the lectures explored useful concepts for understanding the patterns of text production in the digital era, such as multiliteracies, collective intelligence, 'produsage' and the remix culture.

In addition, the lectures emphasized the role of literature and the importance of developing reading and writing skills among students as a gateway to English-speaking cultures. The status of English as a Global Lingua Franca was also explored as a crucial resource in developing schoolchildren's multilingualism and intercultural competence. The lectures on Bildung and intercultural competence were held by Hild Hoff and focused on the theoretical foundation of the terms as well as practical approaches to interculturality in the English classroom. The students were prompted to discuss

didactic possibilities and challenges related to two cases as well as tasks drawn from an English language textbook.

2.2 Skills

In relation to the topic of "skills", the lectures were designed to integrate the theoretical concepts and approaches presented in class with practical aspects of English language teaching. The distinction between syllabus, method and approach was introduced in the lectures as a framework to make students reflect on the "why", "what" and "how" of English language teaching. The purpose of the framework was to provide students with an overview of the structural components of foreign language teaching and to aid them in preparing and teaching lessons that integrate such components into a coherent whole. For this purpose, the homework assignments encouraged students to reflect on different aspects of the English language curriculum, such as the notions of text, intercultural competence and digital literacy. In a second stage, students were asked to prepare an outline of a project that addressed one of the interdisciplinary topics (Tverrfaglige temaer) proposed in the curriculum and to think about other school subjects they could collaborate with. Finally, students were requested to prepare a lesson plan that addressed one of the topics of their choice, focusing on the choice of teaching materials, development of classroom activities, etc. The homework assignments also served as input for the seminars students presented in groups.

The framework outlined above proved to be effective in integrating different levels of English language teaching (curricular, methodological, pedagogical, didactic, etc.) in the lectures. Throughout the three years, some students manifested the need for more time allocation to practice-based activities in which the theoretical and methodological aspects of English language teaching can be applied. In addition to the practice-based components discussed above, one possible improvement for the future is to assign the first date of the seminars to preparation and group discussion for the oral presentations with the guidance of the course instructor. Since in the last three years most seminars were presented in a single day, this seems to be a viable alternative to increase the practice-based content of the course.

2.3 General Competence

In relation to the topic of general competence, due to the limited number of lectures, the development of students' oral and written skills in English was achieved indirectly, via group discussions, oral presentations and the drafting of homework assignments. Along the three years, some students manifested the need for more guided instruction on the writing of academic papers in English, which is beyond the scope of the course.

3. Approval Rate, Attendance and Assessment of Reading Component

The course had an approval rate of 100% for three consecutive years. The grade results were as follows:

Spring 2019		Spring 2020		Spring 2021	
Grade	# of students	Grade	# of students	Grade	# of students
A	2	A	1	A	--
B	5	B	7	B	4
C	8	C	11	C	8
D	8	D	3	D	5
E	--	E	1	E	--
Total	23	Total	23	Total	17

In the first year I taught the course (Spring, 2019), attendance was erratic, which somehow compromised the performance of the class in relation to the development of the themes covered during the course. In the Spring of 2020, with the introduction of compulsory attendance, the overall participation increased significantly and, as a consequence, the group discussions and classroom reflections were more productive. In the Spring of 2021, with the exception of the last lecture and seminars, the course was taught mostly online. The uncertainty and restrictions caused by the Corona pandemic had an impact on the levels of anxiety among the students. Also, the fact that online instruction was the norm for almost a whole academic year was a decisive factor in contributing for students' online fatigue.

The reading list is appropriate for the topics and has been positively evaluated by most students in the last three years. Some minor updatings are recommended. For example, the text by Nystrand (1990), Sharing Words: The Effects of Readers on Developing Writers, should be replaced by a more updated and contemporary source.