Training of Academic Discourse Practices for Exchange Students with E-Material[1]

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Abstract

This paper focuses on a language training and information programme called EUROMOBIL that was (and is) designed with the support of the European Commission to promote student mobility in nine European countries (the Czech Republic, Germany, Great Britain, Finland, France, Hungary, Poland, Portugal, and Romania). One aim of this paper is to present a brief overall view of the multimedia EUROMOBIL programmes developed in Phase one of the project for German, English, Hungarian and Finnish. The second and primary aim is to discuss how academic discourse skills can be practised with the help of e-material. This question will be discussed using the German EUROMOBIL programme as an example. Our main questions in the development of the programme were: 1. Which academic discourse practices are important for exchange students in Germany?, 2. What are the specific genre features of these practices?, and 3. How can activities intended for practising academic discourse skills be designed for e-material? To answer the first question, we conducted a needs analysis survey and applied the findings of a previous case study with focus on culture bound academic discourse practices. The second and third questions are illustrated with the example of an authentic lecture. Restrictions of e-material in terms of productive skills training and individual feedback can be overcome by designing hybrid programmes that include tutorial online components, or by using e-material in blended learning.

Keywords: preparation for studying abroad, exchange students, academic discourse practices, lecture, communicative skills training, e-material for autonomous and blended learning

Introduction

Student mobility has become one of the principles in higher education and is supported by several EU programmes and bilateral contracts between educational institutions. Despite the manifold support offered by exchange programmes and partner institutions, studying abroad may prove to be difficult due to insufficient preparation for communicative practices in the host country.[2] In order to

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[1] Best thanks are due to Helena Mackay for proof reading the article.

[2] A Finnish student expressed her experiences as follows: "Suurin ongelma täällä opiskelemisessa on, että kaikki täytyykin yhtäkkiä tehdä saksaksi ja saksalaisittain. Siksi tulevien opiskelijoiden voisi olla hyvä etukäteen tutustua saksalaiseen opiskelusysteemiin ja alakohtaiseen sanastoon."
"The biggest problem in studying here is that everything has to be suddenly done in German and in the German way. That's why it would be good for future students to get to know the German system of studying and the discipline specific vocabulary in advance." (Ylönen 1994: 100)

offer exchange students an opportunity to efficiently prepare themselves for their stay abroad and to raise awareness for intercultural contacts, EUROMOBIL, a hybrid multimedia language training and information programme for exchange students intending to study in the Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, Portugal, Poland or Romania is designed with the support of the European Commission (Socrates/Lingua2). The programme will cover nine languages in all. The programmes for English, Finnish, German and Hungarian are already available (see www.euro-mobil.org), and the Czech, French, Portuguese, Polish and Romanian programmes will be available in 2007. To meet the needs of each target group, all the programmes are designed on the basis of a needs analysis survey.[3]

In this paper, I will, first, discuss the pedagogical rationale for academic discourse training with e-material. Second, I will present a brief overall view of the EUROMOBIL programmes developed in the first phase of the project for English, German, Hungarian and Finnish. Finally and in more detail, I will focus on the production of e-material to prepare students for academic discourse practices with the German EUROMOBIL programme as an example.

2 Academic discourse training with e-material

E-material for self-learners, i.e. tutorial language learning and training programmes, are often criticised for their particularistic and atomistic orientation that hinder a holistic, activity-oriented approach to language learning (Rüschoff and Wolff 1999:69). Indeed, many programmes are still designed according to behavioristic principles of programmed instruction. Obviously, the advantages of the computer are still seen in its role as a tutor who never grows tired or judgmental and supports the student's individual learning pace, as Warschauer & Healey (1998:57) state it for the early computer-assisted language learning (CALL) from the 1960s on. Grammar and vocabulary exercises that enable right-wrong feedback continue to be popular in many online and offline e-material for language learning because of its edutaining character that seems to further learners' motivation, among other reasons. Another reason is the fact that the development of intelligent software that guides the learner individually is still quite exacting and expensive. Naturally, simple right-wrong grammar exercises do not meet the needs of a constructivist learning approach with its emphasis on language use in context rather than on acquiring language knowledge without context.

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[3] See also the article of Jeannine Gerbault (forthcoming) about „Needs analysis as a tool for supporting student mobility".

However, as computer assisted language learning is of an increasing importance and the need for target group specific material for communicative skills training is obvious, we decided to develop an e-material for the training of academic discourse practices for exchange students. Our aim was to find ways for designing an activity-oriented programme based on a constructivist rather than normative understanding of language and language learning making use of the advantages of new information and communication technologies (ICT). Consequently, we focused on academic discourse practices that are important for our target group of exchange students.

According to Fairclough (2000), social practices as practices of production bring together different elements or moments of life, such as physical activities, social organisations, procedures, psychological elements, and discourse, for example. Discourse (in singular) on this level of social practices is understood as text in a broad sense, including spoken, written and other combinations of language with other forms of semiosis and multimodal components. Discourses (in plural) are conceived of as ways in which people represent the world, including themselves and their productive activities in texts. Genres are perceived as devices for framing these discourses, i.e., as means for controlling work in a textual mode. In contrast to Swales (1990:58) who sees discourse communities as inheritors and producers of genres, Fairclough as well as Mauranen emphasise the constraints for the members of discourse communities: "On the contrary, in reality the reverse of Swales's suggestion seems to be true: it is the genre which defines or selects its user group rather than the other way round." (Mauranen 1993:15). Even though many genre definitions are meant to cover spoken, written and other combinations of language, they seem to have been developed with written texts in mind. Especially genre definitions that are based on formal criteria, such as text patterns and linguistic features, aim to describe genres as classes of texts with statistically significant similarities of these features on the surface of (written) texts (Hoffmann 1987). Other genre definitions favour a functional approach (Göpferich 1995) or combine functional and formal criteria (Sandig 1975), often also aiming at quantitative analysis of features on the surface level of the texts (Gläser 1990). For a more qualitative approach of discourse analysis, a pragmatic-communicative or "unspecific" genre definition (Spillner 1983, Adamzik 1995) is, in our opinion, more suitable because the same linguistic means may have different functions. In the following, we are going to apply a pragmatic-communicative genre definition, using the following basic framing parameters: purpose of communication, partners involved, medium (written, spoken, etc.), interactive character (monologue, dialogue, etc.), and location (public, private). This type of definition allows, in general, focussing on the interdependency of activity, form and cognition in discourses, and is particularly suitable for the analysis of spoken language in which dynamics,

processuality and interactivity are constitutive (Fiehler 1994, Fiehler et al. 2004). Conversations are constructed in collaboration with the participants, and meanings are negotiated (Bergmann 1981: 26). Schwitalla (1992:83) also uses the concept of the "collective speaker". However, there are also monologue-type communicative practices in academic discourse with a less interactive character, such as a lecture or a paper presentation.

Academic discourse is a broad concept for different communicative practices within a whole range of different academic practices. In this paper, the focus is on academic practices relevant to exchange students, in particular on discourse practices of certain study situations within the framework of certain genres, and these discourse practices are referred to as academic discourse. In general, academic discourse is institutionalised. According to Ehlich and Rehbein (1977:37), institutional practice is „organized power, a societal machinery" within which the members, also called actants, have certain roles. The knowledge held by the actants is not identical for both groups; agents usually have greater knowledge and more rights than clients. In LSP research this has been called asymmetric communication (Techtmeier 1998:518). These roles have a legal basis that differs from country to country. However, not only legal rules but also communicative conventions are bound to the culture of the institution (see Chapter 4.2). Knowledge about culture bound rules for communicative practices is an important part of the actants' knowledge.

In order to design a holistic, activity-oriented material for academic discourse training, we decided to adopt a pragmatic-communicative genre-based approach. This meant for us to base material development on a needs analysis amongst exchange students (see Chapter 4.1) and on the specification of genre features important for this target group (see Chapter 4.2). It also meant the use of authentic recordings for the training of oral academic discourse practices. Thanks to the developments in ICT, videos and sounds of good quality can today be included into programmed software. The way in which academic discourse skills can be practised with the help of e-material will be discussed using the German EUROMOBIL programme as an example (see Chapter 4). Prior to this, a brief overall view of the EUROMOBIL programmes developed in the first phase of the project will be given in Chapter 3.

3 EUROMOBIL: E-material to support student mobility

EUROMOBIL is a multimedia language training and information programme that aims at preparing students for their studies abroad. It is a **hybrid e-material**, i. e., it contains interactive and

informative programme components both offline (on CD-ROMs) and online (on the project website). Originally designed for autonomous language learners, it can also be used in contact teaching. Programmes for German, English, Hungarian and Finnish were developed in the first phase of the EUROMOBIL project. In the following, a brief overview of these four programmes will be given.

The levels, contents and target skills of the material were planned on the basis of a **needs analysis survey** (see the results of the analysis at www.euro-mobil.org > project). As exchange students in Germany and Great Britain have to follow university courses in the language of the country, the German and English programmes were designed for advanced levels. In Finland and Hungary, knowledge of the local language is not expected but experience has shown that the majority of foreign exchange students are very interested in learning at least "survival skills", and attend language classes at beginners' level. The Finnish and Hungarian language programmes were aimed at this target group. (See Table 1) The programmes for advanced learners are designed unilingual whereas those for beginners are bilingual and use English as a supportive language.

Table 1 Components, levels and contents of the EUROMOBIL programmes for German, English, Hungarian and Finnish

	GERMAN	ENGLISH	HUNGARIAN	FINNISH
Level	Advanced (Unilingual)		Beginner (English as supportive language)	
Language course Needs analysis ⬇ contents	Authentic videos with interactive activities • Study Advice • Lecture • Seminar • Exam	• Study Advice • Exam • Lecture • Seminar	Information, interactive activities, quiz • Study • Travel Book • Services • Leisure	• Study • Library • Services • Leisure
Good to know Needs analysis ⬇ contents	Information on • German language • German culture	Information & interactive tasks on • English language • British culture	Information on • Hungarian language • Hungarian culture	• Finnish language • Finnish culture
Glossary	Unilingual		HU - EN	FI - EN
Internet access	EUROMOBIL website & forum			

On the CD-ROMs, interactive activities with immediate feedback are found in the **Language course** whereas the **Good to know** section contains mainly information on the language and culture of the host country. The German and English programmes are based on situations the students will encounter at the university. The **Language course** in these programmes contains modules based on videos recorded in the following study situations: *study advice, lecture, seminar,* and *oral exams.* In the Finnish and Hungarian programmes everyday situations, such as *services, leisure* and, in the Hungarian programme, a *travel book,* were also included. (cf. Table 1) **Glossaries** contain vocabulary used in the Language course modules and are unilingual in the German and English programmes and bilingual for Hungarian and Finnish (providing English translations). On the project **website**, a link list can be used to gather information about the target universities, countries and cultures. The website forum is an interactive tool for exchanging opinions and experiences about student mobility as well as for performing the evaluation and discussion activities given on the CD-ROMs. (cf. Table 1)

The target skills emphasised in the programmes are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2 Target skills of the EUROMOBIL programmes

Beginner level (FI, HU)	Advanced level (EN, DE)
■ Basic vocabulary	■ Oral skills for academic purposes
■ Some genre specific phrases	■ Genre specific interaction strategies
■ Listening & speaking	■ Cultural awareness
■ Reading & writing	■ Vocabulary & abbreviations
■ Cultural awareness	■ Reading & writing
■ Basic grammar	■ Knowledge about spoken language

At beginners' level, the training of basic vocabulary and phrases plays an important role. Audio-visual material has a complementing role here: planned and semi-authentic recordings are used. Planned recordings include, for example, audio files for vocabulary, phrases and short dialogues illustrated by pictures and text; so-called semi-authentic are video recordings of particular situations, such as "borrowing a book from the university library". These recordings are produced for the programme but the dialogues have not been planned in advance in the form of a storyboard.[4]

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[4] In these videos, the participants were acting in authentic and potentially authentic roles. In the Finnish programme, for example, the librarian is a real person but the student addresses her for the purpose of recording a situation to be used for language training purposes. Participants in these recordings follow conventionalized discourse practices and use

At advanced level, we decided to focus on academic discourse practices (see Table 1). Audio-visual material plays a basic role here: activities are based on authentic and semi-authentic video recordings. We concentrated on oral study situations because, on the one hand, students mentioned they mainly participated in oral events, and on the other, e-material provides an added value compared to traditional textbooks, especially by integrating different media. The advantage of multimedia e-material lies in the opportunity it offers to focus on the multimodal character of spoken language. In the following, I am going to show how the target skills for advanced learner level listed in Table 2 can be trained. I will illustrate this by using the German EUROMOBIL programme as an example.

4 Developing e-material for academic discourse training: The example of the German EUROMOBIL programme

Before starting to develop the material, the following question had first to be solved: Which academic discourse practices are important for exchange students in Germany? Our second question was: What are the special genre features of these practices that are important for exchange students? The third question, finally, was how to design activities for e-material intended for practising oral skills for studying purposes.

4.1 Academic discourse practices with relevance to exchange students in Germany

All EUROMOBIL programmes were developed on the basis of a needs analysis. In Germany, the survey was carried out during the academic years 2000/2001 and 2001/2002. We received 81 answers from exchange students at three Universities (Technische Universität Dresden, Friedrich-Schiller-Universität Jena and Freie Universität Berlin).[5] 74 % of the respondents came from Europe, 19 % from Asia, 5 % from the Americas and 2 % from Africa. The majority (67 %) were 21 – 24 years old and 57 % were female. German philology or German as a foreign language were

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normal forms of spoken language. The label "semi", thus, refers to the situation, whereas the spoken language is authentic containing all the special features such as back-channel expressions, repairs, typical spoken lexis, contractions, fillers, and so on.

[5] The questionnaire and detailed results of the needs analysis can be found on the project website at www.euro-mobil.org > project > needs analysis. In addition to partners from EUROMOBIL I, several other colleagues were involved in developing the questionnaire as well as conducting and analysing the survey. Special thanks are due to Johanna Saario, Martin Hahn, Jeannette Morbitzer, the Erasmus Bureau of the TU Berlin, Riitta Sassali, Arja Vester, Heli Partanen and Paula Haavisto.

the most common fields of study (32 %) but all kinds of other subjects within Arts and Humanities, Physical Sciences and Engineering, and Social Sciences were represented as well (cf. http://www.euro-mobil.org/deutsch/germany/needsDa.php). 38 % of all respondents mentioned that they had not received enough information in advance on studying. Almost 80 % of them would have liked to be given more information on studying (multiple answers, cf. Figure 1).
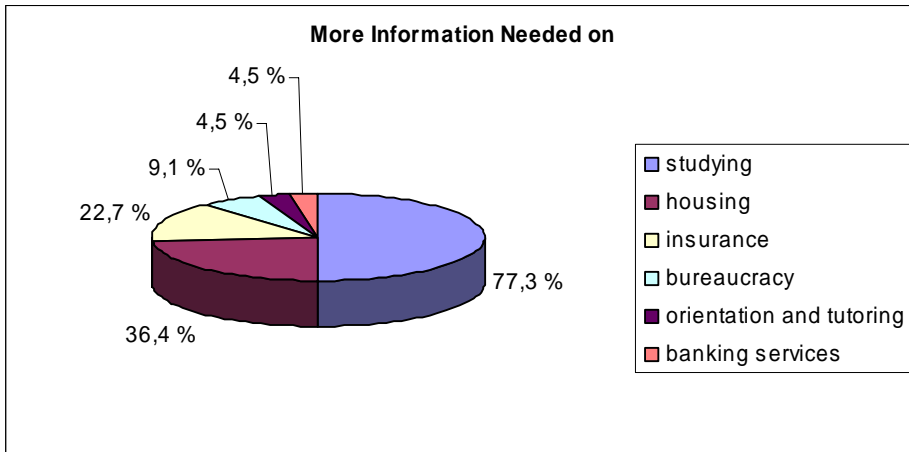
More Information Needed on

☐	studying
☐	housing
☐	insurance
☐	bureaucracy
☐	orientation and tutoring
☐	banking services

4,5 %
4,5 %
9,1 %
22,7 %
36,4 %
77,3 %

Figure 1. German needs analysis, question C4: If you did not get all the information you needed, what extra information would you have liked to be given?

Attendance in Different Modes of Studying

☐	lectures
☐	seminars
☐	workshops
☐	laboratory work
☐	written examinations
☐	oral examinations
☐	German courses
☐	other (excursion)
☐	empty

80,6 69,4 27,4 14,5 53,2 32,3 54,8 1,6 3,2
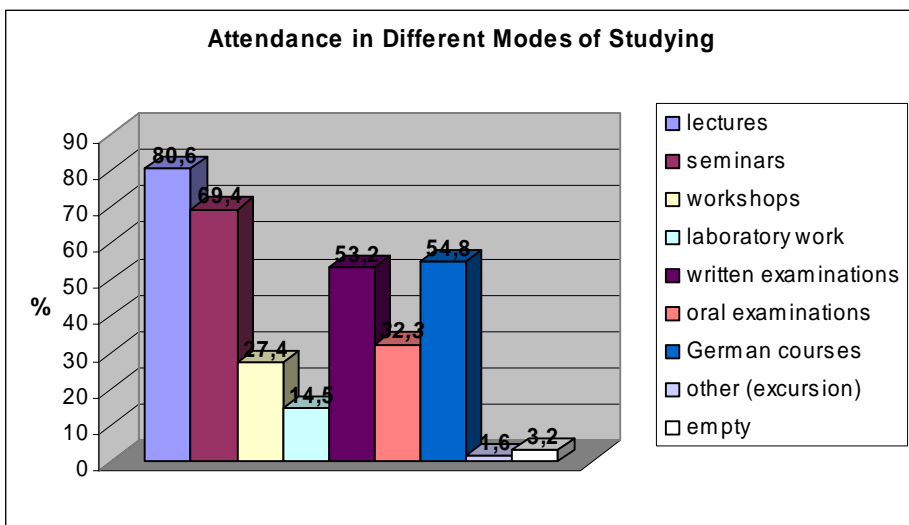
Figure 2. German needs analysis, question C5: What forms of teaching do you attend?

The majority of the respondents attended lectures and seminars. Also, German language courses and written and oral examinations were frequently attended. (cf. Figure 2)

In our needs analysis, 74 % of the respondents mentioned that they were used to a different form of studying at their home university. In a previous case study on academic mobility, study situations in biology were compared in Finland and Germany. Observation of study situations and interviews

with students and staff showed that the same labels of certain academic practices did not necessarily refer to similar practices at all (Ylönen 1994). A **student paper** ("*studentisches Referat*"), for example, is usually in Germany an oral presentation on a specific topic and it is evaluated in terms of the content and oral presentation skills. In this case, no written paper is expected. In Finland, in contrast, a student paper had to be written in the form of a research paper and only the written paper was evaluated while the oral presentation was used only for "motivational" reasons (Ylönen 1994: 102). According to our case study, also **exams** in Germany are often held orally whereas in Finland written exams are preferred.

The importance of oral study skills was also emphasised by the professor who held a tutorial especially for EUROMOBIL. This tutorial was videotaped and used in the Study Advice module to provide an overview to institutionalised and culture-bound practices at German universities. Here, a professor of art history from the Freie Universität Berlin explains the differences between certain forms of university courses and exams. According to him, the practices for earning credit points and the evaluation of students' performances varies at German universities depending on the preferences of the teaching staff. In addition to oral and written exams, oral presentations and essays ("*Hausarbeiten*") are also used, for example. He also mentions that oral exams are often preferred because of the opportunity to prompt students:

> "*We prefer oral exams because in an oral exam you can prompt people very well with mime or a small word. In an oral exam I can, for example, give somebody a hint by looking shocked or encouragingly or, in terms of an alternative, I can say ,Maybe this is better after all.' Like in a quiz, like in a TV quiz.*" (Quotation from EUROMOBIL: Study Advice).

Also in the case of a **lecture,** discourse practices in Germany and Finland may differ because of huge differences in the number of students. In Germany, there are usually much more participants than in Finland. The professor mentioned above states, for example, that in Germany it is usually a mass event with 100 or more participants:

> *A lecture is actually the holiest event at the university because from all people only the professor has the right to give a lecture, in Germany. At the university, a lecture has the lowest status because, in art history, you sit in a dark room, and hear somebody lecturing in the front, mostly with a hundred or more people, and often you catch up with your lack of night sleep. Usually you don't get credits for this. But you can, especially when you come from abroad and need such proof, also attend a small exam. But this is unusual.* (Quotation from EUROMOBIL: Study Advice, translation into English SY)

In such a mass event, the professor does not have much of an alternative to a monologue presentation. In Finland, there are usually much fewer students attending a lecture and thus more opportunities for interactivity. However, the majority of exchange students participate in lectures and preparation may thus support receptive skills that enhance the benefits of their studies abroad. Lectures are an opportunity for students to receive an overview of a subject that they as scientific novices could otherwise achieve only by independent study of the literature with a lot of effort. In a lecture that, in Germany, can only be held by a professor as an expert in his field, theories and claims are evaluated and illustrated with examples in a way that is not yet available to students. In a study on exchange students' comprehension skills, evaluations made by the lecturer were found to be especially demanding and often not recognised as judgements (Schlabach 1997 and 2000). Therefore, language training in preparation for studying abroad could focus, for example, on evaluative expressions. In general, our case studies indicated the importance of oral study skills at German universities.[6]

Consequently, we chose **oral study situations** (lecture, seminar, exams) in addition to the Study Advice module, for our e-material design. The German EUROMOBIL programme aims mainly at raising awareness for genre specific features and mechanisms of interaction in oral academic studying practices that are important for exchange students as well as at preparation for culture bound characteristics of academic discourse practices. This will be discussed in the following chapters.

4.2 Genre specific features of academic discourse practices in Germany with special relevance to exchange students

The use and analysis of authentic AV-material was crucial in answering the second question about the special genre features of academic discourse practices that are important for exchange students. In the case of lectures and exams, we were able to rely on recordings by colleagues[7] who had conducted research on academic discourse practices. The seminar was recorded especially for EUROMOBIL. The recordings were chosen intentionally from different subjects because the target group of EUROMOBIL is students in different fields. The lecture was held by a professor of

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[6] A Finnish exchange student in Bonn/Germany for example summarized "Kirjoittaa ei tartte osata." (*You don't need to know how to write.*, cf. Ylönen 1994: 104).

[7] Thanks are due to Joachim Schlabach (1997 and 2000) and Klaus Munsberg (1994) for placing their recordings at our disposal.

economics (marketing) at the University of Bochum, the seminar took place in a German conversation course at the University of Jena, and the oral exams at the faculty for Chemistry of the University of Bielefeld. Aspects concerning the design of the seminar and exam modules of the programme are discussed in Ylönen 2004 and 2006. In the following, I will focus on the **lecture** module.

Based on a pragmatic-communicative definition of genre, a lecture can be characterised as an oral, public event in higher education, in our case institutionalised within a German university. The aim of a lecture at a German university is to give students an introductory overview of a certain subject, presented by the professor as an expert in the field. Because of the great number of attending students, a lecture held at a German university is mostly a monologue event. The role of the students is to comprehend the content of the lecture and to get inspiration from the topics presented for their own research and learning process. Comprehension of an oral lecture is usual enhanced by various aids used by the professor, such as handouts, use of the blackboard, an overhead or video projector or other illustrative material as well as by notes taken by the students. In general, there is no exam related to a lecture in Germany and no credits are given. For exchange students who need proof of their study performance abroad, exceptions are possible in the form of special exams for this target group.

Studies on exchange students' ability to understand German lectures show that foreign students have difficulties in recognizing the global structure or the switch of a topic or subtopic, in distinguishing between main and additional information, as well as in understanding explicative and repetitive sequences, special vocabulary (Wiemer et al. 1998) and evaluative expressions (Schlabach 2000 and 1997).

The authentic recordings were analysed with the aim of editing them for language training purposes, i. e., emphasis was on finding special features that are especially relevant for exchange students. This aim was important because video sequences in e-material have to be short. Editing a 90-minute lecture down to a five minutes long sequence, for example, requires decisions about cutting the material while trying, at the same time, to preserve an overall picture of the event as a whole. In the editing phase, following the principle of presenting an overall picture of the event meant for us, in each case, the use of the beginning and end as well as some parts from the middle of the authentic recordings.

For the EUROMOBIL programme we chose a lecture on "Marketing of consumer goods" ("*Konsumgütermarketing*") from the corpus of Joachim Schlabach. We reanalysed his transcript, looking for explications and evaluations of the theories presented by the lecturer (special vocabulary was found in all parts). In addition to the beginning and the end of the lecture, we first chose several sequences that contained such explications and evaluations and asked students to vote for sequences that were especially interesting to them. Finally, we chose a sequence from the middle dealing with one coherent topic: "Well's model measuring the readiness to buy" ("*Wells Modell zum Messen der Kaufbereitschaft*"). Consequently, we produced a five minutes long lecture sequence for our language training programme. The next step was to find a way to design activities for academic discourse training.

4.3 Design of activities for practising oral academic discourse skills with e-material

The German EUROMOBIL programme was designed to improve, above all, the following three global target skills: 1. raising awareness for genre specific features and mechanisms of interaction in spoken language, 2. the acquisition of basic vocabulary and 3. the preparation for intercultural contacts. For students who attend **lectures** mainly oral comprehension skills are important but also note taking.

However, e-material has several restrictions that are especially due to productive skills training as well as to individual feedback which is still very demanding and expensive to programme. Solutions can be found in designing hybrid programmes that include tutorial online components, and in using e-material in blended learning.

On the basis of the authentic lecture video sequence, we designed the following types of activities:
 − Global comprehension (focused on content and structure)
 − Local comprehension (focused on content and vocabulary)
 − Specific genre features (focused on comments and explications)
 − Evaluation & discussion (to be performed in the forum of the project website)
 − Writing (dictation with individual feedback)
 − Speaking (voice recording and comparison to audio examples)

One global comprehension task is, for example, to recognize the global structure of the lecture. In this activity, the learner has to drag and drop the four headings given in the box on the right into the box on the left. Subtopics are given to help finding the right order:

Introduction
– Welcome
– Announcement (written exam for exchange students)
Global topic of the lecture
– Utilization of behavioural theories for marketing
– Literature
Specific topic of the lecture today
– Influence on the phases of the buying process
– Wells' model measuring the readiness to buy
End
– Questions?
– Announcing the topic of the next hour and dismissal (cf. Figure 3)

Figure 3. Screenshot of a global comprehension task in the lecture module of the German EUROMOBIL programme focusing on the global structure of the lecture.

Figure 4. Screenshot of a local comprehension task in the lecture module of the German EUROMOBIL programme focusing on vocabulary.

Short sequences on a specific subtopic of the video are the basis for local comprehension tasks. In Figure 4, a task for vocabulary training is shown. Here, the learner has to find the answer to the question: *What can be measured by Wells' model? (Was kann man mit Wells' Modell messen?)*. On the screen, four compound words with the same modifier (*Kauf-, to buy*) are given (*Kaufprozess – buying process, Kaufbereitschaft – readiness to buy, Kaufentscheidung – decision to buy,* and *Kaufkraft – purchasing power*). Three of these words are mentioned by the professor in the sequence.

Help to answer this question can be found in the glossary that contains explanations to the meaning of these compound words. In this multiple choice activity, audio feedback is given to the right answer (*Kaufbereitschaft – readiness to buy*).

An example of an activity to recognize specific genre features of a lecture is given in Figure 5. In the video sequence, the professor introduces the predispositions of Well's model measuring the readiness to buy and the learner is expected to find the predisposition that is criticised by the professor. "Here I have some problems, so to speak …" should be recognized as a signal for

evaluative criticism and "This is what I would like to at least suggest." as an explicit pointer to his comment. Clicking on the right answer makes the transcript to appear on the screen.
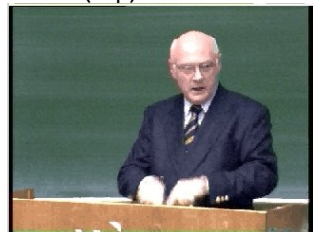
Lecture:	Comments and Explications	1/3 (solution)

Lecture:

In the lecture, the professor does not only lecture but he also evaluates the theories quoted and illustrates them with examples.

Did you notice which predispositions he criticises? Click on them.

Comments and Explications 1/3 (solution)

Video (clip)

No transcript

Transcript:
Third: Neutrality. Might buy, might not buy. Here I have some problems, so to speak, in trying to measure such an uncertain predisposition. This is what I would like to at least suggest. (criticism)

Wells' model: Measuring readiness to buy

PRÄDISPOSITIONEN
1. Firm and immediate intent to buy a specific brand.
2. Positive intention without definite buying plans.
3. Neutrality: might buy, might not buy.
4. Inclined not to buy the brand but not definite about it.
5. Firm intention not to buy the brand.
6. Never considered buying.

Figure 5. Storyboard (translated into English) of an activity to recognize specific genre features of a lecture (focus on comments and explications).

In addition to oral comprehension, another important skill for students in **lectures** is note taking. However, it is practically impossible in e-material to programme feedback for productive skills training without restrictions to free learner input. This is why we decided to design dictation tasks for practising writing skills (cf. Figure 6). In this dictation task, feedback is given individually depending on the mistakes made by the learner. Spelling mistakes are marked in red, for example, and the learner is asked to check the number of words. The total number of sentences and words is given in the task instruction. Note taking in a lecture differs, of course, from a dictation task. Students do not write down exactly the same words the professor uses; they reformulate his words, use abbreviations and elliptical expressions. However, computer programmes are not capable of evaluating free learner input in a realistic note taking activity of this type because all possible answers are not predictable. Therefore, we used dictation tasks as a compromise for practising writing skills in connection with listening comprehension.

Figure 6. Screenshot of a writing task (dictation) with individual feedback

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Lecture:	Speaking	1/1

Now practice some phrases for asking questions in a lecture.

Click on the examples to listen to them. Then click on "record" and repeat the phrases. Afterwards compare your own recording with the original.
If you have problems click on "?" and then on "HELP".

Play   Stop   Record

Questions during the lecture
- Are there any handouts left?
- Could you speak up a little, please?
- I'm sorry, could you write this on the blackboard?
- …

Questions before or after the lecture
- When is the last lecture in this semester?
- I am an exchange student and need proof for my home university that I attended the lecture. Is there any possibility to get credits for it?
- …

Questions to other students
- I couldn't make it to the lecture because I overslept. Could I have your notes, please?
- …
- What does it mean he starts "s. t." already next week?

<<< Main menu <<<

Figure 7. Storyboard (translated into English) of a speaking activity (voice recording and students' own comparison to audio examples).

The restrictions of e-material for productive skills training also concern speaking activities. An offline speaking activity of the German EUROMOBIL programme aims at practising the pronunciation of lecture related phrases, such as asking the lecturer to write something onto the blackboard or for information on any lecture related topic. Also possible questions to other students are included here. (cf. Figure 7) The learner can first listen to audio examples and then record his or her own voice. The recording can, finally, be compared to the example again. Individual feedback on phonetically correct pronunciation is, in principle, possible but in reality there are so many acceptable realisation possibilities that the costs for programming them all would be in no relation to the use. In the context of a constructivist learning theory this deficit loses weight because the learner and not an "intelligent" system decides on what to learn and makes decisions about the learning process (Richter 2002: 204).

Consequently, the German EUROMOBIL programme is multimodal also in terms of activity channels (speech and keyboard for input, display and audio for output).

One of our aims in designing the EUROMOBIL programme was to raise students' awareness of culture bound characteristics of academic discourse practices. Using authentic video sequences the learner gets an idea of different study situations at German universities and sees, for example, that a lecture really is a mass event. The EUROMOBIL lecture video sequence is partly quite noisy and it is difficult to understand what the professor says, especially at the beginning and in the end when the students are not yet settled or already preparing to leave. Also, lack of concentration during parts of a 90-minute lecture or reactions to interesting or funny explanations (for example, laughter) may raise the level of noise to an extent that makes it extremely difficult or impossible to follow the lecturer.

4.4 Discussion tasks and preparation for culture bound features of academic discourse

In the EUROMOBIL programme, we also designed discussion and evaluation activities to prepare exchange students for intercultural contacts. In the lecture module, for example, learners are asked to evaluate the presentation of the professor. Another task is to share their own experiences about lectures and to give advice to students who want to attend German lectures (cf. Figure 7). Evaluation and discussion activities can be performed in the forum of the project website (www.euro-mobil.org > Forum). A link to the online forum is provided in the offline programme.

Figure 7. Screenshot of a discussion task in the lecture module of the German programme to be done in the forum of the EUROMOBIL website

Experience shows that autonomous learners make usually no use of this type of discussion and evaluation activities. Obviously, there is too a high barrier for subscribing to and writing in an anonymous forum. We have used EUROMOBIL in blended learning[8] as well and our students liked to use the forum as a tool for discussion. Several students wrote that they had difficulties in understanding the professor because he spoke so fast (1).

> (1) *„Erstens muss ich sage, dass es war nicht leicht für mich zu verstehen, weil Professor so schnell spricht! Er spricht ziemlich deutlich und Gliederung der Vorlesung war gut, aber Sprachtempo war scheusslich! Das Thema der Vorlesung war ziemlich interessant und die beispielen hilfen mich Vorlesung zu verstehen. Hoffentlich sprechen alle Professorinnen und Professoren nicht so schnell in Deutschland.*

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[8] Blended learning is the combination of multiple approaches to learning. The term "blended" refers to archetypal learning environments (Graham 2005). In our case, we used a combination of technology-enhanced, independent and self-paced work on EUROMOBIL on the one hand and face-to-face sessions in classroom with activities especially focussing on productive skills training on the other.

> *"First, I have to say that it was not easy to understand because the professor speaks so fast. He speaks fairly clearly and the structure of the lecture was good but the pace of the speech was horrible! The topic of the lecture was pretty interesting and the examples helped me to understand the lecture. Hopefully, not all professors speak that fast in Germany."* (Quotation of a Finnish student from the EUROMOBIL forum)

However, one aim of our programme was to prepare the learners for the communicative reality at German universities, and professors do not usually take into account the presence of foreign students with language skills on varying levels.

Other learners gave advice to students who want to attend a lecture, such as to get a seat in front of the lecture theatre (2).

> (2) *„Ich habe keine Erfahrungen mit deutschen Vorlesungen. Nur mit finnischen Vorlesungen ... Da habe ich alles gemacht: von schlafen bis stricken. Vielleicht sollte man da auch zuhören, aber dann wäre es am besten sich nach vorne zu setzen ...“*

> *"I have no experience of German lectures. Only of Finnish lectures ... There I've done everything from sleeping to knitting. Maybe one should listen more carefully but then it would be best to sit in front."* (Quotation of a Finnish student from the EUROMOBIL forum)

Also, reflections on culture bound differences were offered, for example on the distanced relationship between professors and students (3).

> (3) *„Ich denke dass in Deutschland sind die Vorlesungen formeller als in Finnland. Die Professorinnen und Professoren halten mehr Abstand zwishen die Studentinnen und Studenten. In Deutschland muss man auch die Professoren siezen und in Finnland es ist normal zu dutzen. Ich denke dass, es ist gut Respekt für den Professoren lernen aber zu weit vom Studenten darf man nicht gehen. Und wenn wir als Finnen nach Deutschlnad gehen, müssen wir dann der Deutsche Lebensstil lernen zu verstehen.“*

"I think that lectures in Germany are more formal than in Finland. Professors keep more distance to students. In Germany you have to address a professor with the formal you ("Siezen") whereas in Finland it is quite normal to use an informal form of address ("duzen"). I think it is good to learn to respect the professors but one should not go too far from the students. When we go to Germany we have to learn and understand the German way of life." (Quotation of a Finnish student from the EUROMOBIL forum)

The "Good to know" section of the EUROMOBIL programme contains information on German language[9] and culture. Information on addressing practices, i. e. when to use the formal and the informal way of addressing, is presented in the "Language" part. The fact that Germans are aware of the hierarchy at German universities is taken into account by including a collection of jokes about university life in the "Culture" part (4).

(4) *On the wall of a lecture theatre, there are three wardrobe hooks and above them a sign "Only for professors." Next day, a note is taped beneath: "But you can hang up coats there too."*
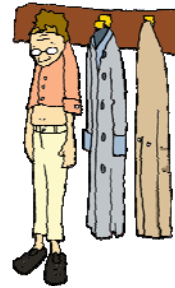
Summary and conclusions

In this paper, an overview to EUROMOBIL, a hybrid multimedia language training and information programme, is presented first followed by an introduction to the German programme that focuses on academic discourse training for advanced language learners. All EUROMOBIL programmes aim at promoting student mobility and are designed on the basis of a needs analysis survey. In the German programme, authentic AV-recordings and their analysis form the basis for preparing exchange students for intercultural contacts and for practising academic discourse skills. Global target skills of the programme are 1. to raise awareness for genre specific features and mechanisms of interaction in spoken language, 2. the acquisition of basic vocabulary, and 3. preparation for

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[9] In the German programme, the Good to know section focuses mainly on spoken German (cf. Ylönen, S. & J. Saario, 2005.)

intercultural contacts. In the "Lecture" module of the German EUROMOBIL programme, the activities focus on listening comprehension, writing, speaking and discussion skills training. E-material can be a useful tool for the development of receptive oral skills, and the use of authentic AV-recordings can provide insights into the culture of the host country. E-material thus provides an added value compared to traditional text books, especially by integrating different media. The advantage of multimedia e-material lies in the opportunity it offers to focus on the multimodal character of spoken language. Restrictions of e-material are particularly due to productive skills training and to individual feedback. They can be balanced by designing hybrid programmes that include tutorial online components, and by using e-material in blended learning.

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