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LANGUAGE AND ACADEMIC SUCCESS OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS.
A LONGITUDINAL RESEARCH PROJECT
1 BACKGROUND

- increasing number of international students at German higher educational institutions (in 2009: 239.143, in 2016: 340.305, DZHW/DAAD 2017: 3)
- dropout rates for BA students high (41% vs 28%, Heublein et al. 2014)
- reasons mostly unknown
- common assumptions:
  - insufficient language abilities,
  - new study culture in Germany,
  - and lack of social integration (Heublein 2015; Heublein et al. 2017)
- int. students claiming to have considerable language problems: 32% (2012; 2003: 19% BMBF 2013)
- insufficient knowledge of German (sem.1) according to universities: 40% (GATE Germany 2010; Heublein/Richter 2011)
Understand role of language, amongst other factors of influence, for academic success in order to be able to better support international students in the future.
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2 DESIGN

- longitudinal study (06/2017-10/2020)
- Universities of Leipzig (Herder Institute for German as a Foreign Language) & Würzburg (Department of Psychology)
- appr. 300 international students (in 2-3 cohorts; cross-lagged panel design)
- use of L1 control groups where it makes sense
- financed by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF)
3 PROJECT BUILDING BLOCKS

- Self-regulation
- Other factors
- Language ability
- Academic language

Academic success
3 BLOCK I: LANGUAGE ABILITY

- self-regulation
- other factors
- language ability
- academic language

academic success
### BLOCK I: LANGUAGE ABILITY

#### OVERVIEW OF LANGUAGE TESTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>tool</th>
<th>source</th>
<th>results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C-test (onSET)</td>
<td>g.a.s.t.</td>
<td>CEFR levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>listening Test</td>
<td>LTI</td>
<td>CEFR/ACTFL + raw scores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reading Test</td>
<td>LTI</td>
<td>CEFR/ACTFL + raw scores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>receptive vocabulary test</td>
<td>ITT Leipzig</td>
<td>frequency bands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>productive vocabulary test</td>
<td>ITT Leipzig</td>
<td>frequency bands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>writing task (from TestDaF)</td>
<td>g.a.s.t.</td>
<td>CEFR/TDN + analytical ratings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>university admission language tests</td>
<td>g.a.s.t. &amp; Studien-kollegs</td>
<td>CEFR/TDN levels + ratings for writing+ texts + raw scores</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
BLOCK I: LANGUAGE ABILITY
WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS: CORPUS DATA

UAT* | TestDaF writing task


N~80 | N=130

*individual university admission test writing parts (DSH & TestDaF)
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**BLOCK II: ACADEMIC LANGUAGE**

self-regulation \(\leftrightarrow\) other factors

language ability \(\leftrightarrow\) academic language

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LANGUAGE USED FOR ACADEMIC PURPOSES
QUALITATIVE ANALYSES; „CORE“ SAMPLE (SELECTED SUBJECTS)

• challenging and study-relevant language-based activities (needs analysis, Bärenfänger et al. 2016, Marks 2016)

1. written exams (in a minute)

2. lecture notes
• strategy for encoding, memorization, reproduction, further processing of lecture contents
• „secondary“ text type („Teiltextsorte“) ➔ analysis of lectures needed
• no „standard“ form ➔ can be understood only if individual purpose is taken into consideration
• analysis is complex ➔ has to focus on selected (linguistic) aspects
ANALYSIS OF NOTE-TAKING
PROVISIONAL SCHEME

N = 8

interviews

notes

content

structure

language

purpose

questionnaire

N = 140 (L1 & L2)

N = 4 * 3 sessions * 60-90min

language ability

self-regulation

exam results

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indus meeting - Tübingen, February 27 - March 1st, 2018
BLOCK III: SELF-REGULATION

self-regulation ↔ other factors

language ability ↔ academic language

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SELF-REGULATION
A VERY COARSE OVERVIEW

Continuum of instruments targeting **metacognitive strategy knowledge**:

1. *general* learning strategies (frequency of use, measured with LIST scales)

2. knowledge about the appropriateness of the use of specific strategies in study-relevant, language-based *scenarios*

3. perceived actual strategy use in high-stake *authentic tasks* (exams)…
Aims of analysis

(1) **aspects of linguistic difficulty** of exam tasks

(2) **methodological quality** of exams

(3) **test-taking strategies** used in exams

(4) test **preparation** strategies & test **results**

(5) **goals** (achievement/performance…), expected results, text anxiety & exam **results**
## SELF-REGULATION

**FOCUS WRITTEN EXAMS: INSTRUMENTS**

| (a) | exam tasks | (provided by teachers | N=5) |
| (b) | exam solutions | (provided by students | N=40 | L1 & L2) |
| (c) | exam results & evaluations | (provided by teachers | N~ 40) |
| (d) | stimulated recalls | (students | test-taking strategies & perceived difficulty | N=8 | L2) |
| (e) | questionnaire | (students | test-taking strategies, perceived difficulty, test preparation, expected results … | N~ 40 | L1 & L2) |
| (f) | interviews | (teachers | N=8 | test construction methodology; language awareness; expected solution and strategies) |
BLOCK IV: OTHER FACTORS OF INFLUENCE

- self-regulation
- language ability
- academic language
- other factors

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OTHER FACTORS OF INFLUENCE

Background questionnaire:
- motivation for choice of study; language (learning) background; prior knowledge..

Main questionnaire:
- **institutional, individual, social factors**, e.g.: academic & social integration; motivation; academic self-concept; financial situation ... (Heublein et al. 2010, Schiefele et al. 2002, Nationales Bildungspanel...)
- **language-related factors**: language contact (McManus et al. 2014), willingness to communicate (McIntyre et al. 2001), development of language ability, L2 aptitude beliefs (Lou & Noels 2017)

**Academic success**
- academic achievement (grades)
- satisfaction (Schiefele et al., 2002)
- loyalty

(York, Gibson & Rankin 2015; Kuh, Kinzie, Buckley, Bridges, & Hayek 2006)
WHAT’S IN IT IN TERMS OF LANGUAGE DATA?
SOME REMARKS ON DATA PROCESSING (WORK IN PROGRESS!)

- Sprastu is not a corpus project – however, language data we have will be made **publicly available**, data protection allowing
- **constraints:** no large numbers; but dense information; **rich metadata, longitudinal**
- **some quirky data** (notes – exams) → **not all** language data will come in a **machine-readable** format

Ideas…
- **written texts** (L1-L2) & **lectures** (L1) → corpus
- one **tool** for all (probably Exmaralda/Dulko)
- **minimal to no manual annotations** - L2 data planned to have **target hypothesis**
- **visualization via ANNIS** is planned and would be great
OUTLOOK
WHAT WE HOPE TO WORK TOWARDS

Main aim:
- factors of influence on academic success of international students – role of language

But also:
- insights on profile & development of language abilities during course of study,
- understand predictive power of university admission language tests
- further research on empirical correlates of CEFR levels by (preparing) analyses of highly contextualized longitudinal learner data
- challenges caused by language used in typical academic situations,
- research into (development of) self-regulation/strategy knowledge,
- …
THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION
ANNEX
Wovon hängt die Bewegung in einem Gelenk noch ab?

> Knocheneigung  
  (→ man kann Ellenbogen nicht überstrecken)

> Weichteilhemmung  
  (→ man kann Oberarm nicht genauso strecken)

> Bandhemmung  
  z. B. Lig. coracoacromiale des Schultergelenks  
  (Ann. nur bis 30°, danach beginnt der Band sich zu dehnen)

> Art. subacromialis als Beispiel für eine Anplexarthrose  
  (→ eher unter Gelenkflächen, Schaffer Bandapparat)

→ geringe Beweglichkeit

Wo liegt man dieses Gelenk?  
Am Hals  
→ unregelmäßige Gelenkflächen, starker Bandapparat

→ geringe Beweglichkeit

Herz der Lordose  
→ geringe Beweglichkeit

> Neutral-Null-Methode  
  → diert standardisierte Messung der Gelenkbeweglichkeit

1) Seitwärtsneigung  
   40° 0° 40°
2) Beugung/Streckung  
   85° 0° 60°
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EXAMPLE TESTDAF WRITING TASK