

Article abstracts in English

Petneki, Katalin and Vigh, Tibor: The higher level school leaving examination as the entrance requirement for foreign language philology studies – the experiences of the German exam (pp. 7–15)

In Hungary, passing the higher level school leaving examination is the conventional requirement set by higher education institutions for prospective students to enter their programs. Devoid of an entrance exam, foreign language departments can only grasp the language proficiency of their students in the first semester, which, in turn, frequently is quite inadequate for conducting foreign language philology studies. There had already been signs of this inadequacy when the final examination was being developed and the first analyses of the results supported this observation. The present study aims at uncovering the reasons for the incompatibility of the expectations of the universities and the goals set by the final examination specifications. The present study relies on data from previous studies and on our own analysis of the May 2012 higher level final exam on German.

Doró, Katalin: Academic study skills: the experiences of a language development class with study-related content (pp. 17–27)

On top of our well-prepared student, those with insufficient language proficiency levels, specific learning differences and in lack of adequate learning strategies are growing in number. It is difficult to decide in what form and to what extent we can we, instructors, given our limited options, help them not to get lost in their higher education career. This study discusses the experience of first-year class designed for English studies students that combines language skills development with tasks and topics such as following university classes, note-taking, study group, reflection on classes, self-regulated language learning, time management, collaboration with classmates, seeking help, learning and exam-taking strategies. The uniqueness of the class lies in the fact that it combines language development, academic study skills and reflection on the challenges students face in higher education. In the past year I have had the opportunity to observe, while teaching with parallel groups, how the same class works in a close group of English teacher trainees who study together in other classes and collaborate well and a group randomly selected group of BA English studies students who do not form a close group in other courses. Based on student feedback the paper discusses how different groups can benefit from the class and how the experience in this course can be used when developing this and other classes.

Tukacs, Tamás: The motivation of English Studies students at the College of Nyíregyháza – lessons from a questionnaire study (pp. 29–53)

The survey conducted with the participation of BA students of English and of those who have taken English as their minor wishes to answer the question of why the motivation of students of foreign languages appear to have altered (or whether it has at all) during the course of the structural changes of Hungarian higher education, or whether we are facing the problem of a growing generation that pursues radically different learning strategies which appear as a lack of motivation from the perspective of teachers. The survey, including the answers of 38 students, covers seven different areas, such as (1) family and social background, (2) career orientation, (3) experiences of (language) learning, (4) individual strategies of learning, (5) attitudes to BA studies, (6) experiences in class, (7) future plans. The final conclusion of the survey is that the new phenomena concerning student motivation seem rooted not exclusively in the structural changes of higher education but, among others, in previous learning experiences and the rise of new, digital modes of gaining knowledge. The study also tackles the problem of the possible revision of the literature/civilisation component of BA language teacher education.

Petneki, Katalin: The first experiences of the Bologna-type German teacher training (2012) (pp. 55–61)

In 2010, the Faculty of Arts of the University of Szeged transitioned into the two-tier teacher training model. In this model, a large number of students enter the first tier, the Bachelor's level program and considerably fewer students can continue their studies on the Master's level after passing an entrance examination. Those who want to enter the teacher training program are required to take methodology classes during the first tier. When the first group of students graduated from the new two-tier (a.k.a. Bologna) German language teacher training program, a survey was distributed among them to gauge their opinion about the training they had received. The survey contained 7 questions and the possibility to give feedback freely. The objective of the survey was to collect and register feedback from the newly graduated students even though, by that time, this new program had already been canceled. The answers the students gave contain, however, valuable insight worthy of a wider audience.