

The Future of English at VHS

FORTBILDUNGSANGEBOTE FÜR HPM & ENGLISCH-KL



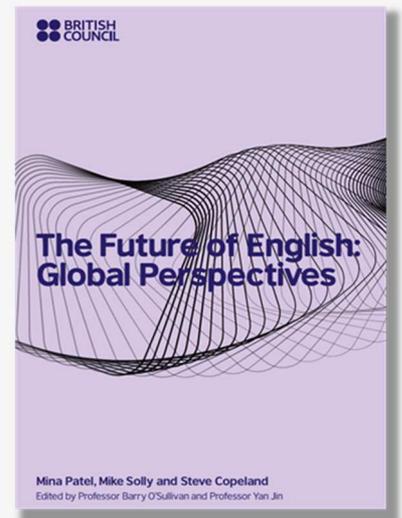
THE DECLINE IS DRAMATIC:

The number of participants in VHS English courses today amounts to approximately 60% of what it was ten years ago. While there may be many reasons, some seem obvious. These are that English is often taught from primary education on, there are many challenges caused by the migration crisis, the years of the pandemic were difficult and, of course, the advance of Artificial Intelligence. So, must we accept this decline as an irreversible fact?

A British Council research study (2023) may help to reverse things. The following workshops address this subject and aim at practical answers.

WORKSHOP I: ARE WE TEACHING THE RIGHT THINGS?

In this half-day ONLINE-WORKSHOP we draw lines from German VHS experience to the position English holds globally today by asking: Are we teaching the right things? Have we perhaps clung to old habits for too long? Should we focus more on the role English holds as the global lingua franca Number One?



The following topics are addressed

- The British Council research study (2023) and why it is relevant for VHS English courses
- Research findings in the field of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF)
- Challenges of teaching ELF: Standards? Pronunciation? Grammar? Lexis? Strategies? Orthography? Pragmatics? Socio-linguistics?
- ELF and intercultural communication: How they interrelate
- A new profile of English language courses at VHS

This workshop is highly interactive.

All participants receive instructional material and practical methods for use in their teaching.

“The paradigm shift away from English as a foreign language will continue, with pedagogies that emphasise global Englishes and multilingual realities gaining more ground.” p. 56

WORKSHOP II:

SAME OLD, SAME OLD – OR NEW PROFILES & TARGET GROUPS?

This half-day ONLINE-WORKSHOP continues from the previous one. Besides asking “Are we teaching the right things?” we will look at who VHS participants are today, have been in the past and who VHS want them to be in the future.

Other questions connecting with these relate to

- the position VHS hold in their communities,
- the VHS’s Unique Selling Points,
- things that sometimes stop them from growing,
- strategies and materials to help both HPM and KL to get going with new concepts,
- argumentation strategies (e.g. for winning the support of local authorities),
- train-the-trainer concepts (e.g. for winning the support of VHS-KL),
- involvement of publishers (e.g. for the joint development of customised material).

This workshop is meant to motivate and inspire and, therefore, is highly interactive.

All participants receive instructional material and practical methods for use in their teaching.

“Changes in proficiency norms have seen the gradual shift away from the Native Speaker as the ideal to a more nuanced and locally or regionally appropriate model.” p. 278

TRAINERS

JUDITH MADER

Judith comes from the North of England and has degrees from the Universities of Sussex and Birmingham. She has lived in Germany for many years and worked in teaching and teacher training and as a professional test developer. Judith published widely on various aspects of the use of English, among them a methodology book on the Testing and Assessment of Business English (Cornelsen 2011), and is an author and co-author of several English course books published by Hueber-Verlag. Until recently she was Head of Languages at the Frankfurt School of Finance and Management, a high-ranking business school in Frankfurt am Main, where she was responsible for language and intercultural communication courses in English and German. Today, her special interest is in questions of intercultural competence and the role of English as a global lingua franca.



DR. RUDI CAMERER

Rudi worked in adult education for over 30 years, e.g. as director of Hamburg's Volkshochschule. As the director of Weiterbildungs-Testsysteme GmbH he represented telc-The European Language Certificates at a European level. In 2005, he established elc-European Language Competence, a private consultancy serving ministries, chambers of commerce, companies, professional and higher education institutions in Germany and abroad. Rudi is the author of several methodology books and academic articles on the training of intercultural competence. He is one of the two official translators of the Council of Europe's new Companion Volume to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (2020) into German.



“Another dimension of communicative competence that has been recently foregrounded in the CEFR – Companion Volume (Council of Europe, 2020) is mediation, a concept and skill that is incredibly relevant in all domains of society today.” p. 275

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