



VAASAN AMMATTIKORKEAKOULU
VASA YRKESHÖGSKOLA
UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

Survey on Content Teachers' Experiences of Foreign Language Medium Teaching

at VAMK, University of Applied Sciences

17 March 2010

Sanna-Liisa Koski

Survey for Teachers

- ▶ Informants were teachers at VAMK in the Unit for Technology and Communication who
 - are teaching in English at the moment
 - have been teaching in English previously
- ▶ Conducted in spring 2009
- ▶ Number of informants 9

Purpose of Survey

- ▶ To find out teachers'
 - Attitudes towards teaching in a foreign language
 - Needs for further education in FLM, or in the language
 - Subject-integrated curriculum starting in autumn 2010 -> possibilities to increase FLM /CLIL instruction in Finnish speaking degree programmes

Contents of Survey

- ▶ Why English-medium instruction at VAMK?
- ▶ Teachers' attitude towards teaching in English
- ▶ Teachers' readiness to teach in English
- ▶ Need for further education
- ▶ Their own experiences in teaching in English
 - Language aspect
 - Student perspective (motivation, language skills, etc)

Results

- ▶ Why English-medium instruction?
 - Internationalisation
 - To get students from abroad
 - Improvement of teacher's own English skills

Results, cont.

- ▶ Attitude:
 - Although attitude positive towards FLM-instruction, the majority of informants felt they were "forced" to teach in English
 - Not enough support given initially
 - Some teachers had taken an English course abroad
 - Yet, the majority said: teaching in English OK, even inspiring

Results, cont

► Readiness

- The majority found their own language skills sufficient to teach in English, or felt that there's room for improvement (67%)
- 56% would welcome more training in language
- 56% would be interested in FLM pedagogy

Results, cont.

- ▶ Language aspect:
 - Instruction language is a foreign language : taken into consideration *to some extent* by 45% and *not at all* by 33%
 - Only two said (22%) that they teach in a totally different style in English
 - How:
 - Simplified examples
 - Simplified language
 - More visual material
 - More attention to terminology in English

Results:

- ▶ Language aspect:
 - *Planning* of an FLM course:
 - 56%: differs greatly from that in the mother tongue
 - *Implementation* of an FLM course:
 - 45%: differs greatly
 - 22%: differs somewhat
 - 33%: does not differ that much
 - *Assessment* of an FLM course
 - 56%: differs somewhat
 - 44%: does not differ that much

Results, cont.

- ▶ Language aspect:
 - 100% said that students should get guidance in writing skills
 - The majority (56%) felt that it should be both the content teacher's and the language teacher's responsibility
 - 33% said it is the language teacher's responsibility

Results, cont

▶ Student perspective:

The majority thought that

- FLM instruction is stressing to students (62.5%)
- Students' insufficient language skills can inhibit learning to some extent (56%)
- The language skills of the students improve in FLM instruction (100%)

Results, cont.

- ▶ Teachers felt that they themselves can help students to learn better e.g.
 - By speaking more slowly and using simple language
 - By giving written material that help following the lectures, material could also be in the students' mother tongue
 - By repeating important things and making sure every now and then that the students have understood
- ▶ Motivation seems to vary depending on language skills and origin of the students

Conclusions

- ▶ Contents teachers find FLM instruction useful
- ▶ They are concerned about the language aspect but do not have enough knowledge on FLM pedagogy → further education in FLM pedagogy is necessary (idea for this seminar)
- ▶ Co-operation between content teachers and language teachers → wider introduction of two-teacher model developed at VAMK

Other surveys

- ▶ Rovaniemi University of Applied Sciences autumn 2009:
 - Support needed by the content teachers teaching in English
 - 26 informants from five degree programmes
- ▶ Further education/training needed in:
 - Fluency of speech
 - Terminology in their own field
 - Pronunciation
 - Grammar

Other surveys

- ▶ Also:
 - Cultural knowledge
 - Classroom English (guidance in teaching situations)
 - Short teaching sessions and feedback on them
 - Preferred length of further training 3 cr

Other surveys

- ▶ National survey
 - To be conducted in spring 2010 in Finnish universities of applied sciences
 - Content teachers teaching in English, heads of degree programmes, language teachers and students
 - Views on how FLM instruction should be developed

Thank you!