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# Lingua Franca English as a Way to Intercultural and Transcultural Competence
## Basic Global English (BGE) and Other Concepts of English as a Lingua Franca[*]

Abstract

This contribution argues that, in a globalized world, one of the elementary skills to be acquired is global and cross-cultural competence characterized by tolerance and empathy. Taking into account current policies and juxtaposing different models of "simplified" English, the article votes for Basic Global English (BGE) and "Advanced Global English" as a new alternative. The article illustrates how BGE focusses on the acquisition of a globally relevant vocabulary and globally effective communicative strategies and offers empirical results from on-going projects.

Sommaire

Cette contribution affirme que dans un monde globalisé, l'une des compétences élémentaires à acquérir, c'est la compétence globale et cross-culturelle, caractérisée par la tolérance et par l'empathie. Etant basé sur des méthodes actuelles et juxtaposant des modèles différents d'un anglais « simplifié », l'article se prononce pour *Basic Global English* (*BGE*) et pour *Advanced Global English* comme nouvelle alternative. L'article montre comment *BGE* focalise sur l'acquisition d'un vocabulaire d'intérêt global et de stratégies de communication effectives et fournit des résultats empiriques de projets en voie de réalisation.

Zusammenfassung

Dieser Beitrag legt dar, dass in einer globalisierten Welt eine der zu erwerbenden Grundkompetenzen eine von Toleranz und Empathie geprägte globale und kulturübergreifende Kompetenz ist. Unter Berücksichtigung gegenwärtiger Politiken und Gegenüberstellung verschiedener Modelle von "vereinfachtem" Englisch spricht sich der Artikel für *Basic Global English (BGE)* und "Advanced Global English" als neue Alternativen aus. Der Beitrag zeigt auf, wie BGE einen Schwerpunkt auf den Erwerb eines global relevanten Wortschatzes und global effektiver Kommunikationsstrategien legt, und bietet empirische Ergebnisse aus laufenden Projekten.

## 1. Introduction: Communicative Needs and Desires in a Globalized World

Futurologists and economists (e.g. Nefiodow 1996, Pincas 2001, Händeler 2003, Rifkin 2004, Spiegel 2005, and the contributions in Harrison/Huntington 2000) claim that with the transition into an information society education has turned out to be a global problem equally as serious as global ecological problems. According to some of them the biggest economic problem is to channel the flood of information, to separate out relevant knowledge and to apply it productively—all within sensible financial limits. With respect to so-called developed countries, they say that new well paid jobs are only created when people collect, analyze, present and give information and that today companies no longer need to optimize the flow of information between man and machine, but rather between and among humans. In brief, we need to learn to communicate with colleagues, customers, providers and partners in an atmosphere of trust and efficiency in order to make information flow without obstacles. And

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in a globalized world this also requires a global means of communication.

If we look at some of the objectives promoted by the UN we realize, too, that these can only be achieved with a common means of communication, e.g. if we look at the following policies, or objectives, taken from three fundamental UN documents:

- UN Millennium Goal # 2 ("achieve universal primary education")
- UN Millennium Declaration ("to promote greater harmony and tolerance in all societies", "allowing genuine participation by all citizens in all our countries", "the right of the public to have access to information")
- UN Declaration of Human Rights Art. 26 ("the right to education", "Education ... shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations") and Art. 27 ("the right freely ... to share in scientific advancement and its benefits")

## 2. Ways to Fulfill These Needs

In articles on socioeconomic linguistics (Grzega 2005a & 2005b) I have suggested the following formula of global trilingualism as a minimum requirement of linguistic skills for global peace and global economic growth: "the global lingua franca + one's mother tongue + a third language of choice". The function of the lingua franca will be to make the global exchange of information and ideas easier and faster and thus offer everyone a fair share in the world's knowledge.

Ultimately, the communicative need and desire for all world citizens is to acquire, as quickly as possible, a level of **global and cross-cultural communicative competence characterized by tolerance and empathy**. Thanks to its current role English seems the best natural and most widely accepted candidate as a global lingua franca—but not the standard varieties of American English or British English: looking at the history of other linguae francae in the past, it is advisable that English is not bound to an individual, native culture if we want it to enjoy world-wide and continual acceptance. On the other hand, proposals of creators of "artifial", culture-unbound auxiliary languages such as Esperanto have, unfortunately, not yet managed—in the case of Esperanto not even 120 years after its birth—to attract larger portions of the world's citizens and those responsable for language policies. Didactically and linguistically, Esperanto, a strictly agglutinating language, seems to be easier for learners—this is what some studies going on since the 1970's have suggested (cf., e.g., Lobin/Frank 1998), and it can be shown that Esperanto is not just a grammatical and lexical system, but also has its pragmatic rules (cf. Fischer 2008). A concept of "natural" Global English might therefore be helpful as a compromise. "If English is to be considered a world language, it should not be restricted to any single culture. English as an international language should be able to accomodate different cultural elements and thoughts" (Poon 2006: 25ff.). As a first step toward such "natural" Global English I suggest the relatively new concept of Basic Global English (BGE).

## 3. Why We Need a New Concept of English as a Foreign Language

Several analyses of non-native/non-native discourse have shown that non-native forms are actually sometimes quite intelligible and do not impede communicative success, while other non-native forms may cause communicative breakdown. With all these valuable empirical observations on English Lingua Franca, time seemed ripe to me to think about fruitful ways of making use of these findings with respect to language teaching—particularly since the following observations corroborate this search for a new way of Teaching English as a Foreign Language for both socioeconomic and didactic reasons.

(1)    From personal interviews with employers in Germany and interviews with employers

and trainees in the German press we know that people looking for a job, especially, but not excusively older people, do often not have a sufficient command of English. And this is seen by German employers as one of today's key competences, even though a certain job may at first sight not even require skills in English and even though older people may surpass younger ones in valuable job experience.

(2) Surveys initiated by the European Council (TNS Opinion & Social 2006) have revealed that the majority of the citizens in the following European countries do not feel that they have sufficient knowledge of English for participating in a conversation in English: the Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia and Spain as well as the immigrant population in Ireland and the UK.

(3) In many textbooks for TEFL (for compulsory schools, for adult courses, for self-teaching), interactions/conversations in English as a Global Lingua Franca are entirely marginal. Three examples from the German bookmarket: (a) the widely used school textbook *Highlight* picks out English as a lingua franca as a theme only in Unit 5 of Volume 5 [= Year 5]; (b) in Digital Publishing's *komplettkurs english* for self-taught English situations only USA, (c) in *PONS Sprachkurs Interaktiv English* situations mainly in the UK, some in the US and a few in Canada).

(4) Not reflecting the role of English as a global lingua franca in the selection of contents seems a general policy for European school-life. In 2007, in one of my Eurolinguistics seminars, I had my students contact applied linguists from almost all European countries to check to what degree forms of English as a lingua franca are integrated into or discussed in actual Teaching English as a Foreign Language. Unfortunately, we have not received answers for all countries, but we can safely say that from a European perspective Lingua Franca English plays no role in actual teaching; if at all, it is rather an academic issue at university, and at best marginal at school. In European schools, students get to know British and American English, sometimes also examples of the New Englishes (e.g. India, South Africa). In Germany, where each federal state (*Bundesland*) has its own curriculum, not a single federal state reflects the role of English in their primary school curriculum beyond the mere statement that English is a world language. The Bavarian primary school curriculum, for instance, does not even include any aspects/topics on Ireland, Canada, Australia, India, South Africa, let alone countries where English has no (co-)official status. And also the selection of linguistic forms show that it is not the goal of these curricula to provide globally effective communicative strategies for the most basic and frequent communicative situations. Two examples: Short answers like *Yes, it is/No, it isn't* are given a prominent place in the Bavarian curriculum, but how important are they for lingua-franca situations? Metaphorical/idiomatic expressions are included already at a low level, but how helpful and successful are expressions that cannot be interpreted word-for-word in lingua-franca communication? Some curricula do not mention communicative, or politeness, strategies at all, e.g. the curriculum for Bavarian Hauptschulen.

(5) From observations we know that many teachers evaluate "mistakes" not with respect to their effect and their efficiency in lingua-franca discourses. German teachers penalize *Sursday* instead of *Thursday* and *sink* instead of *think*, but not *veggies* instead of *wedges*, *chop* instead of *job*, or *chess* instead of *jazz*, although the discrimination of voiced and voiceless consonants has empirically been proven to be more vital than the substitution of [θ] by [s] (cf. below). Similar things can be observed in the field of grammar.

(6) In the German curricula the communicative aspect is not prominent before the second year of learning English (e.g. the speech acts "explaining games", "giving information about oneself, one's hobbies, one's school", "writing a profile", "asking about one's family" in the Bavarian curriculum's second year of English), while the first year is characterized by a lot of fossilized phrases in games, rhymes and songs.

(7) Despite published empirical results on lingua franca English, Nerrière/Dufresne/Bourgon (2005) did not respect any of these in their creation of "Globish". They adhere to standard native English grammar (with quite a few mispresentations of standard English in the Globish manual); in principle, the Globish sound system also takes standard English pronunciation as a model, but allows a few deviations—unfortunately, they are based on intuition and are done rather inconsistently and sometimes even wrongly. Nowhere do the authors explain their principles for selecting their 1,500 Globish words. (On concrete examples to be criticized cf. my review on Globish [Grzega 2006b]).

(8) In Threshold Level English (van Ek/Alexander 1980), a system that has also been transferred to other European languages, native standard English pronunciation and native standard grammar is nowhere in question. ELF discourses were not further analyzed for respecting the effects of non-native forms in a "simplified English". The Threshold Level English vocabulary is notion-based. However, it seems that the threshold-level vocabulary comprehends many more words than beginners would generally need. It contains ca. 1,500 words, including the grammatical words. Of these, ca. 1,050 are to be mastered as part of the active vocabulary, ca. 450 words are needed for the receptive command of English. It is laudable that van Ek and Alexander's vocabulary list is notion-based, not language-based and some of the items included in their list and the items in my list are debatable; but are words such as *antique, ashtray, blanket, blue zone, canteen, cloakroom, enquiries* really necessary on a basic level? On the other hand, I have also included words that van Ek and Alexander's list does not show. Under the letter A this would be the words *accuse, action, admit, advise, aim, allergic, angry, appear, attachment, attack, awake*. However, a concept of English as a global language should attempt to respect both the needs regarding active communication and the needs regarding passive understanding.

(9) Nuclear English (Stein 1979, Quirk 1981): In Nuclear English, too, native standard English pronunciation and native standard grammar is nowhere in question. ELF discourses were not further analyzed for respecting the effects of non-native forms in a "simplified English". If we have a look at Nuclear English vocabulary, then we should first underscore that there are also sound reasons to base the development of a vocabulary on structural-semantic principles and to respect pragmatic conventions. Nonetheless, concerning vocabulary and grammar, a number of pragmatically artificial constructions have been proposed, as Quirk argues (1981, 157): "the most frequent items are those that are most to be excluded from Nuclear English since they are the most polysemous". Moreover, Nuclear English still awaits a more concrete and fuller elaboration. Likewise, the project World Language Process, started in 1993, aims at elaborating a form of simplified English for international purposes, or rather English-based International Auxiliary Language (cf. http://www.worldlanguageprocess.org). But, here too, many things are not yet ready for the broad audience, and it is unclear when this will be the case.

(10) BASIC English (developed by Ogden (e.g. 1934) and recently re-promoted by Templer (e.g. 2005)): BASIC English, too, accepts standard native English grammar and standard native (British/American?) pronunciation. Ogden's vocabulary selection was notion-based. The BASIC English vocabulary items were selected by his 10-year long teaching experience. His aim was to chose 850 words: this would enable one to learn 30 words in one hour per day and learn the entire vocabulary in less than a month.

(11) Hogben's (1963) hardly quoted concept of Essential World English does not question standard grammar either, but his 1,300 lexical items, called "essential semantic units", are based on a set of principles respecting aspects of semantic structure, morphological structure, and morphosemantic structure. Frequency does not play a role.

With these observations, I have attempted to create an alternative concept of (teaching) English to beginners that enables students to acquire communicative competence in a comparatively fast way: Basic Global English (BGE). BGE can be seen as

- a time-saving first phase for learners of English, open for developing larger skills of all kinds or levels of Englishes afterwards (according to the learners' individual needs)
- reduced but natural, not artificial English (it should be noted, though, that *natural* in my concept does not mean *native standard*; as a matter of fact, several elements allowed are non-standard or standard in the outer circle)
- English for international contexts (consisting of forms that empirical studies have proven to be internationally intelligible).

A full description of BGE and information on current projects with BGE can be freely accessed in the Internet (http://www.basicglobalenglish.com, cf. also the first illustration of the model in Grzega 2005b). Didactic aspects are also elaborated in Grzega (2008) and Grzega/Schöner (2007).

## 4. Basic Global English

Observations on non-native/non-native communication have shown that the use of non-standard or non-native grammatical forms only very rarely impedes communicative success; communicative breakdowns are rather triggered by lexical or phonetic obstacles; as far as pragmatic misinterpretations are concerned studies have not yielded any clear results (cf. James [1998], Jenkins [2003] and Seidlhofer [2004] for states of the art). Therefore, the main target of BGE are an essential pronunciation of phonemes and the command of a generally useful vocabulary plus vocabulary-extension tools. In addition, learners should acquire a few general pragmatic skills for international communication.

### 4.1. Grammar

BGE respects that empirical analyses (cf., e.g., Seidlhofer 2004, Meierkord 2004) have illustrated that violations against standard English grammar rarely lead to misunderstandings —the lexicogrammatical context or the semantic-extralinguistic context normally suffice to interpret the string of morphological forms correctly. Nevertheless, learners need guidelines. BGE therefore includes forms that are not standard native English, but can, very often, be heard in English non-standard varieties from the Inner Circle or standard varieties from the Outer Circle, too. Such non-standard forms are predominantly levelled-out irregularities (e.g. irregular verbs). This will accelerate the learning process, as experiments with Esperanto classes in elementary school have revealed that students learn a language faster (and also further languages that they will study in their later life) if their first foreign language is regular (cf., e.g., Frank/Lobin 1998). Of course, the consistent regularity of Esperanto cannot be offered in BGE, as BGE does not ban native variants. But the regular forms are particularly dwelled on in the grammar chapter. BGE learners are nonetheless encouraged to memorize very prominent exceptions to a "regular grammatical pattern". In general, BGE offers the most elementary, most functional and most frequent grammatical patterns of English (just as a "reduced" or "simplified" grammar also works in telegraphs and headlines). Here is an example of BGE grammar rule (Rule #8):

> To describe something in the past, a frequent possibility is to write an *ed* attached to the basic form. This *ed* is pronounced [ɪd] after an *d* and *t* (e.g. *he painted*), [d] after any other voiced sound (e.g. *he lived, died* [lɪvd daɪd]), [t] after any other voiceless sound (e.g. *he walked* [wɔːkt]). An alternative for describing something in the past is to use the present form of *have* (*have* or *has*) and the past participle, which is also frequently formed by attaching *ed* to the stem (e.g. *I have painted, he has lived*). This latter solution is preferred by native speakers when the past action has some connection with the present. However, if the wrong past form is used, there will hardly occur any misunderstandings. Unfortunately, there are a

number of frequent irregularities in the forms. Here the past form comes before the dash, the past participle after it: *be > was* (with *I/he/she/it* or a singular noun) or *were* (with *you/they* or a plural noun) – *been, have > had – had, do > did – done, go > went – gone, make > made – made, come > came – come, become > became – become, get > got – got, tell > told – told, say > said – said, give > gave – given, take > took – taken, eat > ate – eaten, put > put – put, think > thought – thought* and other verbs from the BGE Vocabulary. The forms of the first four verbs should definitely be memorized. If you cannot memorize the others, adding *ed* to the basic form will mostly be understood by other people. N.B.: The first past tense form is called "simple past", the second "present perfect".

Some may argue that grammar should be normative and not allow variation, but we have to keep in mind that every standard variety also allows for (quasi-)synonymy in grammar. Possessive constructions in native standard English, for example, can be expressed by the *s*-construction or by the *of*-construction (*my best friend's wedding = the wedding of my best friend*). The denotation is the same although the stylistic and the pragmatic, or connotative, meaning may be different. Deviations from standard morphology are certainly most easily spotted. However, native speakers regard these deviations often as "less serious errors" than non-native speakers (cf., e.g., Hecht/Green [1983], especially 66-70).

## 4.2. Pronunciation

Jennifer Jenkins (e.g. 2003) was the first to stress the need to define "lingua franca core" features as they result from empirical studies. Concerning sounds, which she had dwelled on, these include the following items:
- consonant sounds except for substitutions of /θ/ and /ð/ and of dark 'l' [ɫ]
- vowel quantity (but not quality except for /ɜ:/)
- aspiration after initial /p/, /t/, and /k/
- word initial and medial consonant clusters
- nuclear (tonic) stress
- rhoticity (like AmE rather than BrE)
- /t/ should always stay /t/ (no lenition like in AmE)
- allophonic variation permissible as long as there is no overlap onto another phoneme (e.g. Spanish [β] for [v] is often perceived as [b] by other non-native speakers; non-aspirated [p, t, k] in word-initial position instead of [pʰ, tʰ, kʰ] is often perceived as [b, d, g])
- simplification of consonant clusters only in mid- and final position according to native English rules of syllable structure (e.g. for *factsheet* [-kʃ-] is permissible, but not [-tʃ-] or [-kt-].

BGE's sound chapter is rooted in these observations and describes the production of the individual sounds in everyday terms. Depending on a learner's mother tongue some sounds will be particularly difficult to master and will thus also need a contrastive description. For some sounds, empirical studies reveal better and worse phonetic surrogates. For instance, if [θ] cannot be pronounced correctly (e.g. by German and French learners), it is, on a global level, better to use [t] than to use [s]. This must also be taught to the learners.

## 4.3. Vocabulary and Vocabulary-Extension Techniques

Vocabulary is the most essential element for communication. On the one hand, learners should be aware that they already know a lot of internationalisms that are of English origin or of different origin but also known in English. These words are international because they refer to international concepts or because they are the names of internationally known things or because we have got familiar with them from international media. Of course, the amount of words common with English will depend on the learners' mother tongue. On the other hand, there are three major problematic lexical areas: (a) lexical gaps, (b) "serious false friends", (c) metaphorical expressions (that cannot be interpreted word-for-word or are not very obvious).

To enable learners to overcome lexical gaps BGE aims at developing a basic vocabulary with word-formation and paraphrasing techniques and an individual word-stock at the same time.

I have already described the guiding principles for selecting the words for my BGE vocabulary in my fundamental BGE article (Grzega 2005b: 80f.). Since BGE tries to offer a rapid acquisition of both active and passive communication skills, the word selection is not grounded in a purely notion-based and morphosemantic approach. The aspect of passive communication required that word frequencies be taken into account, too. As Bauman and Culligan's General Service List was, at the time when I first thought about creating BGE, the most recent frequency list (1995), I first extracted all types with more than 500 tokens in their corpus—unfortunately only words, not designations. This resulted in 208 words (including pronouns, conjunctions and prepositions). I then crossed out the grammatical words and put these into the grammar section where they are treated as grammatical morphemes. The remaining stock was then supplemented by words that seemed necessary for active conversation: I used Wierzbicka's list of semantic primes (cf. http://www.une.edu.au/bcss/linguistics/nsm/semantics-in-brief.php) and checked "basic vocabulary" books for learners of English of different mother tongues as well as the basic word list of the DCE and accepted those words that were destitute of clear bonds with any specific, individual nation or culture. Then I had my students comment on this list in class and on the *EuroLinguistiX* discussion forum. Eventually, I could reduce the list to 750 words. For the words from Bauman and Culligan's list I only accepted salient meanings (based on my check of "basic vocabulary" dictionaries). The "meaning column" of the BGE word-list should and does not list all senses of a word; it lists the ones relevant for the central conceptual fields for basic intercultural communication. Thus, *court* is only glossed with 'courthouse', but not with 'royal home', *list* as a verb is only given as 'writing a record of short pieces of information', but not as 'leaning', *juice* is only the designation for 'drink out of fruits', but not for 'electric power', *game* is only used for 'play', but not for 'deer', *plate* only refers to 'dish', but not to 'flat piece', *sex* only denotes 'gender', but not 'sexual intercourse' (the latter meaning rather falling into the field of internationalisms). Metaphors should only be used if objectively obvious and should be marked (*this is **like**...*). Also of note, learners need to be aware that different nations or social groups categorize the world in different ways. It should not surprise that the word *family*, for example, is interpreted by Americans as 'parents + children', by Europeans as 'grandparents + parents + children' and by Arabs as 'everyone that is only remotely related to him/her'. Likewise, *old* will have positive connotation in Chinese and other Asian cultures (due to their orientation toward ancient authorities), while it will have mostly negative connotation among North Americans and Europeans (due to their orientation toward innovation). With some words even the exact denotation or reference might be difficult due to cultural divergence in prototypicality. Thus *football* in Europe differs from *football* in North America and *football* in Australia. And the term *theater* will also encompass the movie theater in many North Americans' speech. Such peculiarities should be pointed out to the learner. A didactic-lexicographical problem in the BGE vocabulary list is the treatment of homonymy and polysemy. There were seven words that made me reflect a lot on this problem: (1) *arm* as 'weapon' and as 'body-part', (2) *present* as 'now' and as 'gift', (3) *set* as 'put', as 'collection', as 'group', as 'ready', and as 'fixed', (4) *mean* as 'evil', as 'not generous' and as 'signify', (5) *state* as 'country', as 'situation, condition' and as 'claim', (6) *ring* as 'circle' and as 'sound', (7) *lie* as 'be in horizontal position' and as 'not tell the truth'. I have eventually decided to treat every case as one word, since the meanings for (1), although historically not related, are often thought of as belonging together (informal tests with students have shown that the senses are seen in metonymic relation, the weapon is carried with the arm), in cases (2) and (3) the single senses are clearly felt as being dependent from one another, and cases (4) and (5) are actually cases of polysemy in a diachronic definition. (6) and (7) are indeed instances—the only ones—that

are neither from a synchronic nor from a diachronic viewpoint classifiable as polysemies (although from a synchronic viewpoint hardly anybody would see a connection—also with (4) and (5)—, putting together these senses might even make sense from a didactic perspective, as such a strange semantic range might even facilitate the memorization of the words).

In addition, BGE encourages learners to use patterns to enlarge their word-stock, just with the words from the basic vocabulary if they do not have the proper word at hand. Here are two examples of BGE word-formation methods:
- by combining two words (sequence: in English the first word determines the second), e.g. *main street*, *birthday*, *home country, front door, computer program, mother tongue* [already listed in the Basic Vocabulary] (the elements are sometimes written as separated words, sometimes as one word, sometimes with a hyphen—however, this is irrelevant for successful communication)
- by adding prefixes and suffixes, e.g. *ment* attached to a verb expresses the action in the form of a noun or the result of the action, e.g. *judgement, development, payment*

Finally, the vocabulary section includes techniques of paraphrasing to overcome lexical gaps, e.g. "In paraphrases and explanations the sequence "superordinate term – particular feature" may be helpful, e.g. *a cat is an animal that eats mice; a piano is an instrument with white and black keys; a piano is the instrument that Duke Ellington and Arthur Rubenstein played.*" Moreover, learners must be familiarized with the use of hedges such as *kind of* and *somehow*. I have already stated that metaphorical expressions are often problematic. This not only holds true for syntagmas, but also for single words.

There may be an automatic competence for such strategies, but in BGE they are seen as successful techniques, not negatively as signs of a lack of lexical knowledge.

BGE also requires that each learner create an individual stock of 250 words for talking about himself or herself or things he, or she, is interested in. This may include work (or school), hobbies, family, one's home, and customs of one's own culture. This concept guarantees learners a comparatively high degree of autonomy. The teacher just recommends a good (bilingual) dictionary to the learners (a collection of links to on-line dictionaries is provided at http://www.onomasiology.de under "Helpful Internet Sources").

## 4.4. Politeness Strategies and Further Conversational Strategies

In actual communication, speakers will quickly find out that knowledge of linguistic forms alone does not insure successful communication, it is also crucial to know *when* to use which form, i.e. it is also crucial to be familiar with politeness strategies, since politeness strategies can vary significantly from civilization to civilization. None of the other simplified Englishes really addresses this aspect, but "over-politeness" can be as confusing for the interlocutor as "under-politeness". Therefore, BGE attempts a compromise. Based on own experiences and on others' studies and views (e.g. Berns 1990, Bromme et al. 2001, Clark 1996, Hall 1976, Hofstede 2000, House 1999, Hunfeld 2004, Lesznyák 2004, Meierkord/Knapp 2002, Pincas 2001, Rosenberg 2003, Smith/Rafiqzad 1983, Sneyd 2001, Thomas 1983, Varonis/Gass 1985, Yule 1990) the following conversational strategies were developed for BGE:

(1) The first fundamental principle is: Mindful and respectful listening, mindful and respectful speaking.
(2) As a "saver", a sentence like *That's how we say (in my country)* can be inserted or added. This signals the interlocutor that the speaker is just transferring his or her own conventions into Global English. Another way is to say directly: *I think there is a misunderstanding*.
(3) A positive atmosphere is created if positive words are used. This holds even true for complaints. If you want to stay polite, then it is advisable that you use the positive element of antonymic word-

pairs. Instead of *good—bad* it is better to use *good—not good* or (still more polite) *good—not so good*.

(4) Terms of address: In the field of personal pronouns, English (in contrast to many other languages in the world) only has *you*, both as a formal and as an informal pronoun, both for one addressee and for several addressees. Apart from this, there are a number of "neutral titles", e.g. *sir*, *Mr.* (when addressing male adults), *madam* or *mam*, *Ms.* (when addressing female adults). *Mr.* and *Ms.* can also be used in connection with the family names. Besides, there are professional titles like *President* and academic titles like *Professor*. If you introduce yourself for the first time you should say your full given and family name as well as your title and then say (indirectly or directly) if the interlocutor can or should neglect the title (e.g. "I am the president. My name is Dr. Paul Miller. You can call me Paul." in contrast to "I am President Dr. Paul Miller."; in the latter instance the interlocutor will use a very formal term of address like "President"). If you are not sure about how to address someone else you can ask this person: "So what would be the right way to call you?". A neutral greeting term is *Hello* (informally also *Hi*), a neutral leave-taking term is *Good-bye* (informally also *Bye*). After *Hello* it would be polite to ask the other person *How are you?*; but in general you just expect the answer *Fine* and not an extended "honest" account. Letters can be opened with *Dear* + name (or + *madam/sir*, if the name is not known). Informal letters can also be opened with *Hi* + name. A letter can be closed with *Best wishes* or, if the letter is formal, with *Yours truly,* + signature.

(5) Especially with critical topics you need to make sure that you have understood an utterance by your interlocutor. This may be done with the following phrases: *So do I understand you correctly that you want me to do the following: ...* or *So do I understand you correctly that we should do the following: ....* With criticals topics you also want to make sure that your interlocutor has understood your utterance. This can be done the following way: *I am not sure if my explanation was good enough. Could you tell me in your words what you think I wanted to say?* If you use words that are unknown to your interlocutor, be ready to paraphrase words with the techniques given in the Vocabulary section under point 5 (2). Normally you should not use figurative language, because some cultures may not understand your images. However, if you want to use figurative language for explanation, say: *This is like...* or *This is similar to ...*

(6) Questions and requests should not just be formed as simple interrogative or imperative sentences. The word *please* should always be added at the end. Moreover, a request should be formulated as an interrogative, not as an imperative sentence. Example: Instead of *Open the window!* it is more polite to say *Could you open the window, please?*. If need be, you have to state explicitly that you're not uttering an order, but a request: *I wanted to say a request, not an order*. Besides, a conversation that is started in order to ask something from the other person should be started with the words *Excuse me, ....* The same holds true if you want to complain or express that you disagree. In the former case, you can say: *When you do this, I feel sad, because my need for autonomy/health/beauty/leisure is not satisfied. Would you be ready to do the following?*. In the latter case, this can be done with the words *I don't think so* or *I don't agree* (instead of *don't* the form *do not* is also possible).

(7) With the words *Sorry* or *I am sorry* you apologize for a small and big "offense" you have committed. It is already a small offense if you come too close to somebody. You respond to the phrase *(I am) sorry* with the words *That is* [or *That's*] *OK* or *No problem*. If you feel that there was a true offense, then you may want to ask: *Please tell me if I have hurt you in any way. This was not what I wanted. I am sorry that this has hurt you.*

(8) Offers should be accepted with *Yes, please. (Thank you.)* or refused with *No, thank you*. For all positive things that others do to you you should say *Thank you* or—for relatively big positive things—*Thank you very much*.

(9) In a case of emergency you should shout *Help!* or *Fire!*.

(10) Small Talk: Safe topics for international small talk are the weather, (positive) travel experiences and sports. You should avoid religion, politics, sexuality and questions that are too private (asking for the professional position is okay, though). You should also avoid jokes. Humor differs a lot between countries. If you have made a joke or a funny remark, you can add the phrase *as we say in my country* or *as we could say in my country* as a "saver". You should also watch out when paying compliments: you can compliment a gift or the meal of your host; other things should only be complimented if you know that this is common in the host country. For international settings, you should say thank you for a compliment (and give back a similar one). (But in general, reactions to compliments vary from culture to culture.)

(11) You should seek that you and your interlocutor's share of talking should be roughly equal. If the interlocutor says too little, this may be due to the fact that you've given him/her not enough chances, e.g. because the pauses after your contribution was too short (in some cultures pauses after a conversational turn can be comparatively long).

(12) Finally, a remark on non-verbal conversational elements: Rules for body distance and eye contact

can differ very much from culture to culture. Trained "international" speakers should make sure that the interlocutor does not feel uneasy.

Also of note, speakers must make sure that metaphorical politeness expressions are not misunderstood. Not everybody understands a Zambian's *I see you've put on weight* as a phrase expressing 'You're looking well' (cf. Berns 1990). Further research in europragmatics will help finetune these "rules" and offer more advice for intercultural communication at a more advanced level.

In addition to these rules, learners should also remember some general rules for intercultural communication (cf. Grzega 2005a: 35f., 2006a: 202-204):
1. The only generalization one can make: "Don't generalize."
2. Language not only serves for transporting information, but also for creating interpersonal bonds.
3. Formulate questions in a way that the addressee cannot answer with "yes" or "no", but that the addressee has to make explicit statements or explicitly choose an option.
4. Listen and watch others and yourself attentively and consciously. There might be hidden misunderstandings.
5. Respect other cultures' values as equally valuable and in the entire context of the other culture.
6. Use standard speech or general colloquial speech. Speak slowly and distinctly. Your sentences shouldn't be too complex. You may support your utterance with body language.
7. Don't make unexplained utterances that require "insider" knowledge.
8. Be aware that linguistic politeness rules may be different from situation to situation.
9. If you feel that there is a misunderstanding, you should verbalize this in a circumspect manner.
10. Feel friendly toward the other. Smile!

Finally, there are also communicative strategies that native speakers and non-native speakers on a more advanced level of English can pursue to improve conversation with speakers with a lower command of English (cf. also Grzega 2005b: 68):
• accept BGE variants as rightful variants in international contexts, but without switching into "foreigner talk" such as generally uninflected verbs, simplified and preposed negation patterns, confusion of subject and object pronouns, loss of prepositions and general elimination of articles (cf., e.g., Ferguson 1975)
• use a pronunciation that exhibits full vowels instead of schwa in unstressed syllables (this has proven to be more successful in lingua-franca communication)
• abstain from metaphorical expressions that cannot be interpreted word-for-word (these have proven to be problematic in lingua-franca communication).

## 4.5. Summary on the BGE System

To sum up, the following points distinguish BGE from the other simplified Englishes (cf. also Grzega 2005b: 67, 2006b, Grzega/Schöner 2007):
• BGE does not take native standard English as a model but accepts the variants of successful lingua franca communication, also called the "lingua franca core", as partly suggested by other linguists. This does not mean that BGE is artificial: the variants are not invented, but are already in use and can be found in native and/or non-native English dialects. The acceptability of forms is based not on the question "correct or incorrect with respect to standard English?", but it is not based on an "anything goes" policy either; it is based on the question "communicatively successful or unsuccessful?".
• BGE allows variation as do natural varieties of language(s).

- Not only vocabulary and phonology are simplified, but also grammar.
- BGE not only gives systemic but also pragmatic rules.
- BGE takes into consideration needs for active communication as well as needs for passive communication. This means, for example, that synonyms or synonymic structures are included in BGE if frequent in real-life communication.
- Internationally successful non-standard variants are often regularized forms. BGE's acceptance and offer of such forms takes into account experiences with learners of Esperanto as a first foreign language, which have shown that a regular linguistic system as a first foreign language accelerates the acquisition of any linguistic structures in more advanced stages of the learning process and the acquisition of any additional language.
- BGE promotes a "core knowledge" of the language plus "individual linguistic expansion" from the very start of the learning process.
- BGE is not just a reduced language system like Ogden's BASIC English, it is a system that includes linguistic, methodological and social competence for global communication. *BGE is for the beginner's level*; it is an open system that allows variation and later fine-tuning of learners' command of an English according to their own desires.

The idea behind BGE is not to claim that intercultural dialog becomes unproblematic, it rather enables a first start of intercultural dialog and raises the awareness for potential misunderstandings. BGE may even raise people's interest in other languages. The concept of BGE does not pursue the aim to extinguish other languages, but is part of a model promoting global trilingualism: one's native language + Global English + a third national language of one's choice. For instance, some of the children in the BGE classes at our COMENIUS partner school in Goldkronach, Germany, tried out their BGE skills with Italian kids when they were on a school trip in Italy and came back with the wish to attend an Italian language course in addition to Basic Global English.

## 5. Beyond *Basic* Global English

Once the level of Basic Global English is mastered, learners can fine-tune their skills toward the level they wish to. This can be a near-native level or a focus on the development of the skills for international contexts. We can therefore design concepts of Advanced Global English, particularly the following concepts: (1) Global English for Academic Contexts (GE-A), (2) Global English for Business Contexts (GE-B), (3) Global English for Casual Contexts (GE-C). For this advanced level the same basic pronunciation and grammar requirements may be accepted as long as the focus is on spoken language; for written contexts, grammar needs to get a stronger focus since everyone knows by experience that people's aesthetic demand of native standard language is more salient then. The main focus for Advanced Global English, though, should continue to be on the elaboration of a larger general and individual vocabulary and also of communicative strategies for a larger set of situations.

Rules for GE-A may thus look like this:
- As an instructor be as concrete as possible when referring to requirements (precise date of handing in paper etc.: the more precise your information, the more literal students will take the information). Make sure that everybody understands when assignments are due; state the specific place, day and time, e.g. *Please give this to my secretary, Maria Colo, by February 12, 11 o'clock in the morning*). Abstain from saying *by the end of the week* (students may wonder: does this mean Friday, Saturday, Sunday, or Monday, or at some time in the near future?) or saying *in five days* (does this mean calendar or business days?).
- Keep in mind that different cultures may use different conversational patterns for the same context. And keep in mind that different cultures may use the same conversational pattern for different contexts. (Example 1: In Germany and France a positive interrogative "Could you do this?" is a more polite request than a negative interrogative "Couldn't you do this?"; in Russia it's the other way around. Example 2: In Europe, an apology is an expression of regret and a sign of taking

responsibility for an action; in Japan, the second function is not necessarily present).

- For technical terms, use multi-part definitions with rephrasing of the same content. Concerning definitions, we can, in principle, distinguish between the following types[1]:

| (a) Aristotelian definitions | i.e. genus proximum plus differentia specifica (= generic term + differentiating specification) | e.g. "A blend is a type of word-formation that is the result of crossing two words." |
|---|---|---|
| (b) explicatory definition | i.e. enumeration of [stereo-]typical features | e.g. "Blends are crossings of words; they are a modern type of word-formation often used for modern phenomena." |
| (c) exemplary definition | i.e. enumeration of particularly typical examples | e.g. "Blends are, for example, *smog* (< *smoke + fog*) and *brunch* (< *breakfast + lunch*)." |
| (d) synonymic definition | i.e. giving synonyms | e.g. "Blends are also known as *word contaminations*." |
| (e) operational/ genetic definition | i.e. description of the process of how the definiendum can be produced or found out | e.g. "You create a blend by sticking the initial section of one word and the final section of another word together." |

As for definition type (c) we may especially think of prototypical members; actually, however, there is a better understanding of a category if peripheral members are included as well (provided they are marked as such). Thus, an exemplary definition of *bird* could read: "Typical examples of birds, in North America and Europe, are the robin and the sparrow; a less typical example is the penguin." Such aspects can also be integrated in explicatory definition, e.g. "Birds lay eggs and they normally fly (although this is not a necessary feature)."

- Be aware that there might be culture-specific concepts and associations behind certain words (e.g. the word *democracy* might be differently conceived in different countries). This is particularly true of names, dates, political/historical events, and terms for political systems. But this might also be true of technical terms (especially if the same terms occur in everyday language, such as *dialect*, which for linguists is a neutral term that can also cover—as a synonym to *variety*—the *standard dialect*, while in everyday speech *dialect* has rather negative connotations.
- When using examples and illustrations, don't use intracultural/local insider knowledge. At best, use cases from different cultural contexts.

Rules for GE-B may thus look like this:

- If you are asked for your opinion on something during small talk, do not formulate any concrete opinion or an opinion that clearly deviates from your partner's.
- In group discussions where you finally have to make decisions use an integrative style, i.e. a style where group members clearly value objects higher than personal objectives, where group members eliminate personal tensions, and where all group members are allowed to have their ideas and opinions discussed and respected.
- Make everybody aware at the beginning of the meeting that this is an intercultural meeting that would require more explicit ways of communication.
- Before writing a job application make sure (a) you include the elements this commonly consists of in your target country, (b) you use a form for these elements that is common in your target country, (c) you present the elements in the correct order.

## 6. Does Teaching (Basic) Global English Work?

Even if a number of books argue for a reflection of observations on English as a Lingua Franca in English teaching and learning (cf., e.g., McKay 2002, Holliday 2005), this has not yet been done so on an overall practical level. Instructors and curricula of English as a Foreign Language are still geared to a native model of English, mostly British English or American English, and the corresponding national culture behind it for their teaching, although there have been some proposals of "global textbooks" in Britain (cf., e.g, Kubanek 1999, Crawford 2001).

Together with my assistant Marion Schöner, a teacher and a student I have composed and

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[1] Cf. Grzega 2006c.

tested teaching material for different target groups: (a) BGE for elementary school classes, (b) BGE for adult learner groups (for weekly evening courses and for intensive courses), (c) BGE for self-teaching, (d) Global English for Business Contexts for teenagers. Different groups require to respect different principles, but some principles are generally valid. In the following sections, I will describe the important didactic, psycholinguistic and neurolinguistic aspects and then give examples of how Teaching Global English works concretely and what the results are.

## 6.1. Didactic, Psycholinguistic and Neurolinguistic Remarks

Edmondson/House (2006), in their comprehensive introduction into language teaching, illustrate that most of the results of empirical research can only be generalized to a limited extent and that despite the many decades on language learning there are still more questions than answers. Keeping this in mind, we can nevertheless begin this section with a few didactic-psycholinguistic-neurolinguistic remarks.

Since Selinker (1972) introduced the notion of "interlanguage", errors and mistakes have been seen as something useful rather than something that has to be penalized by the teacher at once. But still today, there is the myth that errors/mistakes might never be levelled out again if the learner grows too much accustomed to them. BGE critics may thus claim that learners will not be able to replace the non-standard forms of English allowed in BGE if they want to achieve a native-like level in later years. This concern runs counter experiences that instructors have with many advanced university students and learners who spend a lengthy time in an English-speaking country. If learners have been provided with a sufficient metalinguistic knowledge, this knowledge will allow them to spot differences between variants of the target country and their own variants.

It is also a pedagogic myth that the younger the learners the better they will learn a foreign language. Quite a number of studies have demonstrated that this is only the case when the learner is constantly and naturally confronted with the foreign language (e.g. when learning the language in the foreign country itself); as a matter of fact, for the average classroom situation "older" seems "better" (cf., e.g., Cohen/Dörnyei [2002: 171], or Fröhlich-Ward [2003]). It has also been demonstrated that advanced age can have negative effects mainly on learning the foreign sound system, but even here learners can acquire native-like pronunciation if they have gained good metalinguistic knowledge (cf., e.g., Cohen/Dörnyei 2002: 171). It thus becomes obvious that it is recommendable to compare the target language with the learners' native language (and other idioms they might already be acquainted with) very consciously and to have learners train their metalinguistic, cognitive skills.

Wolfgang Butzkamm (e.g. 2002) even sees it as essential for efficient language learning that the learners' mother tongue be integrated very consciously for specific functions ("functional bilingualism"): the learners' native language can be used to illustrate another language system and it is something that learners will automatically try to connect new information with anyway. Butzkamm encourages teachers to use a double system of paraphrasing in English first and of giving equivalences in the learners' native language secondarily. In a message-oriented phase, when a learner wants to say something and lacks a word, s/he may use the native language. The teacher can decide, based on the learner's knowledge, whether (a) the learner should be encouraged to use a paraphrasing technique (create a word that may render the meaning, paraphrase the word or use a non-verbal technique) and then give the actual English word or (b) give the English word for the native word immediately. In a message-oriented phase, when the learners do not understand the teacher, the teacher should first try to paraphrase the word and use gestures and, if need be, give the native word secondarily. In

form-oriented phases, explanations are given in the native language in the first lessons, while more English explanations are interspersed in latter lessons.

Another issue is grammar progression. According to studies by Pienemann (e.g. 2005) learners acquire grammatical rules in certain levels (rules necessary for communicative success are acquired prior to those with a more aesthetic value, i.e. of "good" standard grammar), and these levels are not necessarily reflected in the sequence of grammar units many textbooks use. For example, learners will be ready to use *-ed* to form the past tense, while the *-s* for 3rd person singular is consistently used only at the last of these learning levels. The materials that my team and I have created respect these findings—not only by the chosen progress in grammar lessons, but also by embedding grammar into vocabulary and communicative strategies (similar to what is done in the "Lexical Approach" method by Lewis [1997]). The acceptability of forms is based not on the question "correct or incorrect with respect to standard English?", but on the question "communicatively successful or unsuccessful?". As a consequence, classroom texts should consist of diverse input and authentic material from native and near-native, but also from (successful) non-native speakers (e.g. penpals from other European countries).

From what we know about language learning and communication learning, we can also say that instructors should prefer a didactic model that is (inter)activity-focussed, respects learner autonomy, gives learners opportunities to enjoy the successful completion of tasks, and makes learners view what they do as giving sense in life (cf., e.g., Csikszentmihalyi 1990, Legenhausen/Dam 1999, Mißler/Multhaup 1999, Ryan/Deci 2000, Spitzer 2002, Teuchert-Noodt et al. 2003). Here, Jean-Pol Martin's model *LdL* is particularly appropriate. *LdL* stands for the German expression *Lernen durch Lehren*, in English *Learning by Teaching*). Its basic idea is to hand over as much teaching responsibility to the learner, as "mini-teacher" or student-expert, as possible (even if it is just for short periods of time through rapid teacher-role rotations) and to encourage as many students as possible to engage in the highest possible degree of activity (cf. Martin 1994, Grzega 2006d, Grzega/Schöner 2008, or the Wikipedia entry "Learning by Teaching"). This means that learners should very early be encouraged to perform creative activities (task-based learning), such as presenting one's family, participating in a discussion forum, introducing or having their peers elaborate a BGE word-field, BGE grammar rules or BGE politeness rules. And it also includes that if students want to know something they are given the requested information. Even more generally, it is also important that learners have a share in the selection of topics they deal with in class. For BGE, this includes not only the selection of words, but also the selection of countries.

While many curricula aim at reaching homogeneous skills or a homogeneous level among their learners, we accept the heterogeneity of learner groups, not only concerning the gift for language learning, but also concerning interests and biographies. It is precisely this that should be reflected in the elaboration of an "individual/private" vocabulary and in the inclusion of specific country examples.

## 6.2. Projects: Empirical Results

### 6.2.1. BGE for Children at a COMENIUS Elementary School

Since the principal of an elementary school (Goldkronach, Germany), Wolfgang Fischer, who had initiated a European school project, was the first to show interest in BGE, my team and I began to create a specific version for elementary school classes (age group 7 to 8, i.e. 2nd grade). We first created 12 lessons (30 to 45 min. each) based on the findings from learning

psychology, biology and education for that age group[2]. We had one course given by a teacher in Goldkronach, a second one was held by myself in Eichstätt. The type of research frame we chose was action research—a term coined by Lewin (1946)—, i.e. we did not want to just keep strictly to our lessons, but tried to solve any problem whenever it occurred in reality; this is also required by the didactic meta-model that we chose: *LdL*. Despite some problems due to the size of the Eichstätt group (38 children) and the malfunctioning equipment of the classroom, the optional character of the course, we could achieve the following results (cf. Grzega/Schöner 2007 for a more in-depth treatment): Most of our learners have proven (as attested by the videos available at http://www.eurolinguistix.com and http://www.basicglobalenglish.com) to be able, after only 12 lessons, to

- answer questions regarding their name, age, birthday, favorite food, favorite drink, favorite sport, hobby, phone number
- ask questions regarding addressee's name, age, birthday, favorite food, favorite drink, favorite sport, hobby, phone number
- count from 1 to 31
- denote things they carry in their school bag
- denote things in their classroom

We were particularly delighted when one mother told us that her son had immediately tried out his English skills with the son of a hotel director when they were on vacation in Egypt.

After these experiences, we created material for an entire school year of an optional course "Basic Global English" in Goldkronach. It was originally planned to teach 2 hours of English per week, but due to the enormous amount of students who signed up for the class, the principal decided to have two groups and, consequently, teach just one hour of BGE per week and group (the COMENIUS business plan did not allow more than 2 lessons per week for this optional course). Both groups were taught by Friederike Höfer. Due to the reduction of the hours taught, the teacher did of course not manage to cover the 35 lessons planned, but "only" Units 1-17 in one group and Units 1-16 and 20 in the other.

All steps of the project have been described on a project website. Our experiment drew the attention of the German press and we got several reports (cf. the press section on http://www.basicglobalenglish.com).

To illustrate that BGE is effective as a means of communication and especially as a means of intercultural communication, we can resort to three different types of evidence:
(1) the oral performance of the learners
(2) the written performance of the learners
(3) reactions of observers (parents and teachers)

We did not want to work with comparison groups taught according to different models for three main reasons:
- To test the efficiency and effectivity of a model, it only makes sense to compare it to a model that pursues the same goals, that aims at the same effects. In the case of BGE, however, nothing comparable exists as illustrated in Section 2 (e.g. the inclusion of countries where English is not official language and the focus on active, creative, communicative use of language).
- Even if a second model pursues the same goals in part, our self-image forbids to force children to sustain another model that we have already experienced as worse.
- Our self-image can also be seen in the philosophy of action research, where something planned is not adhered to with might and main, but where upcoming problems are

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[2] Cf., e.g., Cohen/Dörnyei 2002, Crawford 2001, Fröhlich-Ward 2003, Holliday 2005, Klippel 2000, Kubanek 1999, McKay 2002, Mindt/Schlüter 2003, Schmid-Schönbein 2001.

immediately tried to be solved.

Ad (1):

As already shown in the report of the BGE test group in Eichstätt (cf. Grzega/Schöner 2008 with the accompanying video files, plus the video files on http://www.basicglobalenglish.com) all learners videotaped in the last session (lesson 12) were able, though to varying degrees, to produce utterances that were not just stimulus-response reproductions, but required that the learners understood the stimulus given by the teacher or another student in order to be able to come with an answer that was both relevant and truthful. For checking the performance of the two groups in Goldkronach who enjoyed BGE for a whole school year, I decided to test them after their summer vacation (late July through mid-September) to see how much they would still remember, to see what their competences in comprehending, speaking and writing were. This consisted of a visit of the two groups in the second school week of 2008. I visited both groups and with each of them I did about 15 minutes of an oral "test". The video files are currently transcribed and will be analyzed by March 2009.

Ad (2):

In addition to the oral "testing" in the two Goldkronach groups, I also did a 15-minute written test in which I had the children compose two mini-texts. The first task read (in German) "Choose a foreign country and note down two things that you know about this country."[3], supplemented by two sentences in English, on two separate lines, *What is the country's name?* and *Give information on this country*. The second task read (in German): "An Italian boy named Carlo is new in your Italian partner school and looks for a penpal. Write Carlo a little letter in English. You can write about yourself, about your family, about hour home, about your class or about your school. Also ask Carlo questions."[4]. Since the teacher, Ms. Höfer, convincingly argued that a written test would not yield very positive results as writing was not a skill that was practiced very much, we decided to let one group use the material they had gotten over the year, just as you can consult a dictionary in real life when you have to write a letter[5]. The group that was allowed to do so consisted of 13 girls and 8 boys at the day of our visit (of which one boy showed signs of behavioral problems). If we analyze the texts they produced[6] we can observe the following:

(1)　As to Task 1, content-wise,
- 1 learner did not note down anything at all;
- 2 learners noted down Germany (and added "a sc[h]ool, a kindergarten" as country information);
- 4 learners noted down France, of which 1 gave no further country information and 3 gave 2 pieces of information (information given: baguette and wine [as one entity] 3 times, "Tour de Eiffel" 1 time, riding as a sport 1 time);

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[3]　The German original was: "Such Dir ein fremdes Land aus und schreib zwei Dinge, die du über dieses Land weißt, auf Englisch auf."

[4]　The German original was: "Ein italienischer Junge namens Carlo ist neu in eurer italienischen Partnerschule und sucht einen Brieffreund. Schreib auf Englisch einen kleinen Brief an Carlo. Du kannst über dich, über deine Familie, über dein Zuhause, über deine Klasse oder über deine Schule schreiben. Stell auch Fragen an Carlo."

[5]　Since most students of the second group had forgotten to bring their material any way, it was clear at the day of our visit that the first group should be allowed to use the material in the written test. Since the second group (at the day of our visit 11 girls and 5 boys were present) had been less disciplined throughout the entire school year and showed less group sense than the first group (which may be related to the fact that in the first group all members come from Goldkronach, while the members of the second group come from different villages surrounding Goldkronach), it was not unexpected that they actually showed no big cooperation and did the unannounced test only unwillingly and under protest (and most of them rather drew pictures instead of writing words).

[6]　For the transcription of the texts I would like to thank Bea Klüsener.

- 7 learners noted down Italy, of which 3 gave 1 information, 3 gave 2 pieces of country information and 1 gave 3 pieces of information (information given: pizza 4 times, spaghetti 2 times, Luca Toni 4 times, soccer 1 time, hot 1 time, sea 1 time);
- 2 learners noted down America, of which 1 gave no further country information (information given: "There are Do Ge Viper GTsr Sportwagen" [unintelligible]);
- 4 learners noted down England, of which 3 gave 1 additional information and 1 gave 4 pieces of information (information given: fish and chips 2 times, flag color 2 times ["flag blue, red and whife", "The color is beue reed and white" [succeeded by an illegible word], horseriding 1 time, cricket 1 time, tea 1 time).

So, 16 out of 21 learners could give at least one feature for a foreign country; 9 out of 21 learners could give at least two features of a foreign country (if "baguette and wine" is treated as separate units then 10 out of 21 learners could give at least two country features).

(2) As to Task 1, language-wise,
- 1 learner didn't note down anything at all;
- 1 learner noted down the German spelling *Amerika*;
- 1 learner noted down the German name for Italy (*Italien*) and then gave the code-mixed information: "The best Futbol spieler [= player] is Lukartni [= Luca Toni]" (probably unintelligible for someone who knows English, but not German);
- 1 learner noted down *Ideli* 'Italy', 1 learner *Fraz* 'France' (maybe unintelligible);
- 1 learner noted down *Itali* and then gave the German descriptions *heiß, Meer* 'hot, sea' [unintelligible for someone who knows English, but not German].

(3) As to Task 1, again language-wise,
of the 27 pieces of intelligible country information
- 13 are given as isolated items;
- 14 [i.e. the majority] are embedded in sentences (e.g. "They like baguette and wine", "The like pizza and Spagetti. The best Futtbollplayer is Luca Toni", "They like fish and chips", "The like Baguette and wine. In Paris is the Tour de Eiffel", "They like Pizza / The sport is soccer", "The best Fotbollplayer is Luca Toni", "The like baguette and wine. The sport is riding", "The color is beue reed and white [+ an illegible word]".

(4) As to Task 2,
- on the average, learners wrote 22.5 words (the highest individual performance being 40 words, the lowest performance 7 words) and 6.2 sentences[7] (the highest individual performance being 10 sentences, the lowest performance 3 sentences);
- on the average, learners wrote 18.0 intelligible[8] words (the highest individual performance being 40 intelligible words, the lowest performance 3 intelligible words) and 4.9 intelligible sentences (the highest individual performance being 10 intelligible sentences, the lowest performance 1 intelligible sentence)[9];
- if the discursive and pragma-linguistic competence for such a text shall be proven through the existence of (1) a salutation formula at the beginning, (2) a salutation formula at the end, (3) the information of one's name (either integrated in the leave-taking formula or as a separate sentence) and (4) the existence of both (a)

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[7] By *sentence* I mean a completely verbalized idea (irrespective of punctuation and ellipses, as long as the unit is clear).

[8] The label "intelligible", or rather "presumably intelligible" is based on what we empirically know about successful lingua franca communication.

[9] At least three students seem to have more general language/spelling problems, as they do not even spell names correctly and do not make errors consistently). The best performance in intelligibility and complexity is this text: "Hello Carlo, my name is Valerie. I m 9 yours old. / How old are you? Do you have an animel? / My Hobby is Piano. Wath is yuor phone number? / Wath is your favorite Sport? My favorite Sport is swimming. By By Charle".

information given and (b) information asked for, then 7 out of 21 learners showed full discursive competence for this task, 10 learners forgot 1 element, 3 learners forgot 2 elements, and 1 learner forgot 3 elements; element #2 was omitted by 5 learners, element #3 was omitted by 2 learners, element #4a was omitted by 3 learners, element #4b was omitted by 9 learners. Only 7 learners should complete lack of pragma-linguistic competence in writing.

Ad (3):

As far as the reaction of parents is concerned, they were unanimously positive. One mother reported that the girl in our class spoke English better than her brother in his third year of English. I have already mentioned another mother (from the test group in Eichstätt) who reported that her son had immediately tried out his English with the son of a hotel director when in Egypt. I also designed a list of statements (in the form of Likert scales where informants have to say whether they "strongly agree/rather agree/rather disagree/strongly disagree" with a statement—the answers are evaluated as -2/-1/+1/+2 points respectively). These statements include targets of BGE lessons and fears that critics have raised. I distributed the questionnaire to two groups of students who, on the one hand, were familiar with the video clip from the test lesson with the first Goldkronach group after summer vacation and the results here presented in the preceding section "Ad (2)" and who, on the other hand, could also compare with other learner groups of English due to observations during internships at different schools in Bavaria (south-eastern federal state of Germany), in different classes, with different teachers. Here are some of the comparison groups, the statements of the questionnaire and the arithmetic means[10] of the comparisons (which may be based on a low number of comparisons, but can nevertheless give potential critics a first telling impression):

- BGE group: kids after one year of 1 non-compulsory 45-min. lesson of BGE (i.e. no kind of homework was allowed, not even the revision of vocabulary)
- comparison group I: other kids at the end of their 1st year of English (with 2 compulsory 45-min. lessons per week)
- comparison group II: other kids at the beginning of their 3rd year of English (i.e. after two years of 2 compulsory 45-min. per week, and in the first weeks at their secondary school type, in these instances either *Realschule*, with 4 weekly 45-min. lessons, or *Gymnasium*, with 7 weekly 45-min. lessons[11])
- comparison group III: other kids at the end of their 3rd year of English at a *Gymnasium*

| Statement | BGE kids and comparison group I (14 evaluators) | BGE kids and comparison group II (5 evaluators) | BGE kids and comparison group III (7 evaluators) |
|---|---|---|---|
| The BGE kids have a larger vocabulary. | 1.15 (rather agree) | -0.20 (rather disagree) | -1.14 (rather disagree) |
| The BGE kids know words that are closer to their everyday life. | 1.57 (strongly agree) | 1.40 (rather agree) | 1.14 (rather agree) |
| The BGE kids know words with which they can better communicate with kids from other countries. | 1.38 (rather agree) | 1.40 (rather agree) | 1.00 (rather agree) |
| The BGE kids can speak more freely. | 1.43 (rather agree) | 0.80 (rather agree) | 0.17 (rather agree) |
| The BGE kids are better able to speak about themselves. | 1.57 (strongly agree) | 0.20 (rather agree) | 0.50 (rather agree) |

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[10] Some evaluators ticked the category "don't know" with some statements.

[11] Differentiation is likely to be relatively small during the first weeks of the secondary school; this is why I do not further differentiate between *Gymnasium* kids and *Realschule* kids here (in contrast to learners at the end of their third year of English and thus at the end of their first year at secondary school).

| Statement | BGE kids and comparison group I (14 evaluators) | BGE kids and comparison group II (5 evaluators) | BGE kids and comparison group III (7 evaluators) |
|---|---|---|---|
| The BGE kids are better able to interrogate other people. | 1.21 (rather agree) | 1.20 (rather agree) | 0.83 (rather agree) |
| The BGE kids are better able to understand complex sentences. | 0.77 (rather agree) | 0.00 (neutral) | 0.17 (rather agree) |
| The BGE kids know more about other countries. | -0.30 (rather disagree) | -1.00 (rather disagree) | 0.00 (neutral) |
| The BGE kids are more tolerant. | 0.30 (rather agree) | 2.00 (strongly agree) | 1.00 (rather agree) |
| The BGE kids are more empathetic. | 0.10 (rather agree) | - (not evaluated) | 0.50 (rather agree) |
| The BGE kids show more interest for other cultures. | 0.73 (rather agree) | - (not evaluated) | 1.67 (strongly agree) |
| The BGE kids speak less British English. | -0.89 (rather disagree) | -1.00 (rather disagree) | 0.25 (rather agree) |
| The BGE kids speak less American English. | -0.88 (rather disagree) | -1.00 (rather disagree) | -0.75 (rather disagree) |

Some interesting observations that we can make:
(1)  In spite of the non-compulsory nature of the weekly BGE lesson, the average BGE kid seems to possess a larger vocabulary than a kid after one year of 2 compulsory lessons per week.
(2)  The most fascinating comparison is the one with learners after three years of English with 2 lessons of English in the first two years and 7 lessons in the third year. Compared to these kids, BGE kids are on the average
(a)  familiar with a vocabulary more relevant to their life
(b)  able to speak more freely
(c)  able to communicate, i.e. interrogate and carry out dialogs
(d)  able to understand complex sentences
In other words: the BGE kids' speaking and listening skills are better developed. Furthermore, the social skills have also reached a higher level, as BGE kids are viewed as
(e)  more tolerant (a central goal in BGE)
(f)  more empathetic (another central goal in BGE)
(3)  The fear (and point of criticism frequently raised by conference audiences) that the BGE kids would typically be farther away from a native standard of English proved to be unjustified.
(4)  The evaluators did not consider the BGE kids' knowledge on other countries broader than with other kids. This is maybe something that needs to be trained earlier and/or more regularly in BGE lessons. More important, though, the kids were seen as showing more interest in other cultures. And this general attitude is a central goal linked to BGE.

## 6.2.2. BGE for Adults

Thanks to a student in Düsseldorf, Eleni Stefanidou, several small groups have by now tested preliminary materials for adult groups. Again, we have made sure that the approach is adequate with respect to what we know about adult learners of foreign languages[12]. There are a lot of occassions where the learners can interact with each other. As a matter of fact, many (albeit definitely not all) members of the test groups have said that they like especially the realistic role-plays. A number of exercises are telephone exercises, as this is something that adult learners wish to practice. Futhermore, there is a lot of room for learner autonomy, again,

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[12]  Cf., e.g., Eschmann 2005, Pauels 2005, von der Handt 2005.

not only with respect to vocabulary selection, but also with respect to country selection. Participants also wish more reading and pronunciation exercises. An entire intensive course planned for August 2008 had to be cancelled for organizational reasons. A cooperation with the Volkshochschule Unterhaching is planned for February 2009.

## 6.2.3. BGE for Self-Teaching

The creation of material for self-educated BGE is maybe the most challenging task. Since the goal is to enable all people around the world a relatively rapid acquisition of global communicative competence, we think that the material shall consist of (1) an English book as the necessary and sufficient basis and (2) a book with the metalinguistic explanations of the basic book in various the learner's language, an audio CD and an exercise CD-Rom as "luxury equipments". Developping such material is very time-consuming and requires a lot of creativity to enable learner autonomy, the combination of transcultural and cultural information, reasonable pronunciation training, "interactivity" and "feedback".

Marion Schöner and I try to reach the requirement of combining transcultural words and knowledge with cultural examples through offering the BGE words in an isolated way on the one hand plus adding a few cultural, contextualized examples on the other hand. The section on breakfast is therefore introduced by a list of words that looks like this:

This is then followed by a list of examples from various cultures (we consciously do not start with the example from a country where English is official language):



In addition, we were contacted by an entrepreneur whose company produces language courses on cell phones. The entrepreneur's idea is to develop a BGE cell phone course for the German market. We will base the teaching approach on Butzkamm's idea of functional bilingualism and on the theory of the Foreign Talk from Strömstad, Sweden, that learners can actually realize differences between a model pronunciation they hear and a recording of their own pronunciation and post quem fine-tune their pronunciation by themselves. After a pronunciation section, there will be regular chapters. Each one should be able to be completed within 15 to 20 minutes, as it can be observed that learners cannot spend more time typing on cell phones keyboards, reading cell phone displays and listening to cell phone audio files. Each chapter shall consist of (1) a dialog, (2) a list of the individual words and (3) an exercise section. Each English form shall be accompanied by a literal-formal translation and an idiomatic translation [here in German], e.g.

> *Can I help you?*
> "Kann ich helfen dich?"
> 'Kann ich Ihnen helfen?'

A demo version shall be completed and offered to a test group in December.

6.2.4. Global English for Business Contexts: Optional Course for Teenagers

In 2007/08 I gave two optional courses "International Business English" at a German senior high-school (Gymnasium) in Bavaria. Participants came from grades 10 to 13, i.e. they were between 15 and 19 years old. In the first session, each group decided which countries they want to get to know in more detail. Both groups chose the US, Canada, China and Russia; in addition Group A chose Australia and Japan, Group B the UK and India. After four lessons for training basic pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary and politeness items, we started to deal with business-specific issues:
• What is the elementary business vocabulary?
• How do we greet and address people?
• How do we apply for a job?
• Why do we have to know about gestures and other forms of body-language?
• How is small talk done in business situations?
• How is "big talk" done in business situations?
In each lesson we had a look at the conversational patterns in the selected countries and tried to define conversational strategies that may work transculturally. In these summaries, the strategy of raising people's awareness that they are in an intercultural situation and that this may cause some irritations played a salient role.

For the session on "big talk", I decided to test the learners' intercultural communicative competence[13] by way of an announced dialog completion task, a type of task unknown to the learners at that time. The following number of students were present that afternoon and participated in the test:
• Group A: 18 persons (2 boys + 16 girls, 3 persons from grade 13, 15 persons from grade 11)
• Group B: 14 persons (9 boys + 5 girls, 3 persons from grade 12, 2 persons from grade 11, 9 persons from grade 10)
The text of the test was as follows:

**Complete the following dialogs in the way that seems most appropriate for you.**

1. You work for a German company that is specialized in language trips for teenagers and is now looking for a Czech language institute for cooperation. Your company has sent you to Prague. The flight was okay and so was the trip from the airport to the hotel. The food in the hotel restaurant was fine and the bed in the hotel room is comfortable, but the water in the shower is only icecold and two of the three lamps don't work. You've told the hotel receptionist, but he didn't fix it neither the evening of your arrival nor during breakfast the next morning. After breakfast, you meet your business partner, Pavel Smetana, in the hotel lobby. You introduce yourselves. Pavel seems to be a very nice guy:
Pavel:   *Nice to meet you. So how was your trip? Are you satisfied with the hotel?*
You:     ...........................................................................................................................

2. You work for a German company that is specialized in language trips for teenagers. You meet in Ingolstadt with representatives from other companies specializing in language trips for teenagers. Your group consists of a boy from Helsinki/Finland, a girl from Madrid/Spain, a boy from Geneva/Switzerland, a girl from Amsterdam/Netherlands and a boy from Rio/Brazil—all about five years older than you. The plan of which all participants were informed is to use the afternoon from 2 to 6 to discuss how the various companies might work together; for the evening you have organized some entertainment for the international guests. When you meet, everybody introduces themselves first. You ask your partners how their trips were; the girls from Madrid and Amsterdam, María and Mareike, as well as the boy from Rio, Paolo, have quite a lot of funny anecdotes to tell from the trip. You see that the boy from Geneva, Pierre, and the boy from Helsinki, Ville, are rather quiet, look very serious or disinterested or feel a little

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[13]   The test also aimed at comparing the effect of LdL and another interactive teaching approach, but this is of no importance for this article. The results of this aspect will be presented in Grzega/Guttenberger/Grupe (in print).

uncomfortable. You want them to get better involved in the conversation and so you address them directly.

You: *So your trips seemed to have been rather without any problems.*
Ville: *Yes.*
Pierre: *Yes. But I think I have some interesting ideas for teenager language trips we may want to discuss.*
María: *Hey, don't get nervous, guys, cheer up!*
You: .......................................................................................................................................

3. You work for a German company that is specialized in language trips for teenagers. Your company is now looking for a cooperation with a Chinese company that has specialized in the same field. You meet your Chinese partner, Lili, in Eichstätt. It seems that you understand each other quite well, but the plans that your Chinese partner describes are not all what your company wants: the Chinese company wants to use your network, but doesn't want to reveal its own network in China; the Chinese company asks for financial support in Germany, but says that it doesn't have the financial means to support you in China. At the end, Lili offers you an exclusive way to get to know Chinese aspects that foreigners normally don't get to know, but still it is clear that you can't make a deal because the potential profit for your company is much too small.

Lili: *So my company thinks that this could be a fair way to start a cooperation.*
You: .......................................................................................................................................

4. You work for Berlitz, the oldest German company that is specialized in language trips for teenagers. You and a colleague, Hans, have to meet with John, the representative of a US company working in the same business, to see how you can start a cooperation. Hans, longer a Berlitz employee than you, does the talking and tries to illustrate John, with many details, the many successful projects in the 1960's, in the 1930's and that Berlitz' success story goes back even to the 19th century.

John: *Oh, only to the nineteenth century?*
You: .......................................................................................................................................

5. You work for a German company that is specialized in language trips for teenagers. You and a colleague, Hans, have to meet with Ivan, the representative of a Russian company working in the same business, to see how you can start a cooperation. Ivan likes your presentation and would be willing to sign a contract with you, but only a very vague one. Hans fears that the Russians will not be willing to fulfil the contract if things are not written down in detail and suggests a few more concrete elements.

Ivan: *So you think these details are necessary for our cooperation contract?*
You: .......................................................................................................................................

For the evaluation of the solutions, violations against standard grammar and standard spelling affect the number of points only when empirical studies have suggested that a specific type of mistake endangers the communicative success. Apart from this, I had determined the followed grid:

Situation 1:
3p. = very good (VG) = (1) meta-cultural comment (2) positive sides as well as negative sides metnioned, but clearly without blaming the host, rather stating that the problems will surely be fixed or meta-cultural comment > gives the host the chance to take the next step himself and you a perspective to see the problem solved;
2p. = good (G) = no negative sides mentioned;
1p. = less good (LG) = (1) positive sides and negative sides mentioned, without blaming host explicitly, but also without seeing the problem being solved (> the blame is on the host implicitly, because he was the one who chose the hotel), (2) positive sides, but also negative sides mentioned, without stating explicitly what the problems are > unclear to host to what degree he is to blame for that, (3) positive sides and negatives sides mentioned explicitly, without taking the blame from the host at all, (4) positive sides and negative sides mentioned, without stating explicitly what the problems are, which leaves it unclear to the host to what degree he is to blame for that;
0p. = not good (G) = unintelligible utterance
Situation 2:
VG = giving a meta-level comment, raising awareness; giving the plan, but allowing alternatives; starting a soft transfer from small talk to big talk;
G = giving a compromise plan; have Pierre make suggestions if in the sense of having Pierre verbalize his problems more concretely;
LG = rejecting one person, although you give alternatives or although you say that the person's uttereance

was interesting/justified, or siding with one person;
B = (1) rejecting one person and siding with the other person, (2) unintelligible utterance
Situation 3:
VG = "thank you" + decision delegated to another person, openness/possibility for a change in conditions;
G = decision delegated to another person; "sorry", "but"; need for further discussion announced;
LG = yes/positive things + "but not this way", yes/positive things + "but we will HAVE TO change this";
NG = "I don't think so", "I disagree"
Situation 4:
VG = meta-cultural explanation of time concepts + talking about recent successes and further ideas for the future;
G = talking about recent successes, future with US company;
LG = (1) saying that future is also important without concrete facts, focussing of the profit over that long period without reference to the present/future, (2) saying that the past is not so important > face-threatening for Hans, (3) focus on the circumstances of past's success;
NG = (1) asking for US company's past, (2) unintelligible utterance
Situation 5:
VG = meta-level comment + putting the blame on the company/law + showing openness for suggestions;
G = putting the blame on oneself or on one's company; showing openness for suggestions; emphasizing that the contract should show the Russians' rights;
LG = it's my boss's wish/the tradition/important – period!;
NG = to avoid problems/to avoid quarrels/past has taught us > indicates the relationship (or a relationship with Russians) can't be trusted; this or that may be left out > face-threatening for colleague

I defined three competence levels:
• high =        15-10 points
• medium =   9-5 points
• low =         4-0 points

Since it was an optional course, I had not been allowed to require any homework from the participants. Nevertheless, I had hoped that due to the interactivity all learners would be able to reach at least a medium level of global communicative competence (i.e. each one would obtain at least one third of the possible points). Unfortunately, one student (= 3.1%) only obtained 4 points and thus showed only low competence. 24 students (= 75.0%) reached the intermediate level (of whom two had been student-experts in the preceding session). 7 students (= 21.9%) reached the upper level (of whom one had been a student-expert in the preceding session). This allows us to conclude that, except for one student, learners have in principle understood to go away from native communication patterns to globally effective strategies.

How adequate were the student answers to the different situations given in the test? This question is particularly interesting with respect to those situations where the students had to deal with people from countries we did not deal with in class, i.e. Situations #1 and #2.

| Situation | total p. | very good (3 p.) | good (2 p.) | less good (1 p.) | not good (0 p.) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| #1 | 55 | 6 | 15 | 7 | 1 |
| #2 | 47 | 9 | 4 | 12 | 7 |
| #3 | 77 | 23 | 2 | 4 | 3 |
| #4 | 26 | 2 | 4 | 12 | 14 |
| #5 | 40 | 4 | 11 | 6 | 10 |

So, on the average, learners reacted best in Situation #3 and worst in Situation #4. In Situation #4, the irony of the American guy was not recognized, which might be due to the fact that non-verbal cues were not available, of course. Consequently, the utterance was often not correctly interpreted at all. Situations #1 and #2 were actually answered quite well. As a group learners reached 57.3% of the potential points in Situation #1 and 49.0% in Situation

#2. In Situation #1, 65.6% of the learners have shown "good" or "very good" results and proven that they have acquired global, transcultural competence that allows them to react adequately with people from cultures they were not specifically prepared for.

## 7. Summary and Outlook

Every teacher of English as a foreign language is invited to try out BGE and my concepts of Advanced Global English, to participate in one of the projects (http://www.basicglobalenglish.com) and to ask questions and discuss experiences on the discussion forum of *EuroLinguistiX* (ELiX) at http://www.eurolinguistix.com.

Kachru (1985: 25 & 29) says that we need "to move from linguistic authoritarianism of the 'native speaker says' variety to a speech fellowship-specific realism" and that we need attitudinal changes in teaching English as a foreign language. With BGE, English in the Expanding Circle would shift from the position of a norm-dependent form of English (cf., e.g. Kachru 1985: 16) in the direction of one of a norm-developing form of English, especially since native forms are often less intelligible for ELF speakers then various ELF forms (cf., e.g., Smith/Rafiqzad 1983, Kachru/Nelson 2001: 20).

The idea of Teaching Global English shows that linguistics can offer something to improve the quality and quantity of the flow of information and the formation of knowledge. That is what I understand by socioeconomic linguistics.

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