



Language Skills for University Study: What do Students Need and What Do Their Teachers Need?

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Abstract

What skills does a student need to follow a university course delivered in a foreign language? And what skills does the teacher need to deliver it? Increased student mobility, the demands of the Bologna Process and the prestige of certain postgraduate courses have all contributed to a rise in students following courses, and teachers delivering courses, in a language which is not their mother tongue. And the trend is set to continue for the foreseeable future. The Common European Framework level required by most universities in the US and the UK is C1 and various English language exams exist to assess this level but is it sufficient for prospective students to have general English language skills or should we be training and testing them in more academic study skills? How can the descriptors in the CEF help us to identify these skills and how can we test them to ensure students are able to follow and succeed in courses held in any L2? How can we help their teachers to be as effective in a second language as they are in their mother tongue? This talk will give an overview of these issues and look at some solutions.