TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS ABOUT THEIR BELIEFS CONCERNING LANGUAGE TEACHING

© Loch Ágnes
lochagnes@yahoo.com

It seems to be quite obvious that teachers' instruction and decision-making in the classroom are rooted in their knowledge, and their assumptions or beliefs about the nature of language learning and language teaching. However, there has been little research conducted into this area and even the concepts of knowledge and beliefs – being so intertwined - are not clearly defined in the literature. In the present study five teachers of English were interviewed in an attempt to investigate how teachers perceive the sources of their beliefs and knowledge concerning language teaching with special regard to the role of teacher training in their professional development.

Rationale

It seems to be quite obvious that teachers' instruction and decision-making in the classroom are rooted in their knowledge, and their assumptions or beliefs about the nature of language learning and language teaching. For teacher educators it is essential to gain insights into how teachers' knowledge and belief systems are built up and to investigate how it is possible to intervene in order to contribute to teachers' professional development. Thus to investigate and analyse belief systems and to identify beliefs that are likely to induce efficient language teaching may be beneficial for the language teaching community.

Beliefs and knowledge

Literature often uses the terms knowledge and beliefs inconsistently. *Abelson* (1979) and *Woods* (1996) cannot see any qualitative difference between knowledge systems and belief systems. Beliefs are a sort of personal knowledge whereas components of knowledge might become part of a belief system, too. *Pajares* (1992), who surveys literature to see the different interpretations of the two constructs, also says that the differences are rather in degree and not kind. In *Rokeach's* (*1968, in Pajares. 1992, p. 314*) view "beliefs have a cognitive, an affective, and a behavioural component. The cognitive component represents knowledge, the affective component is capable of arousing emotions, and the behavioural component is activated when action is required". This definition lacks values and evaluation which *Ajzen* (1991) and *Kontra* (1997) consider important components. Many researchers (*Nespar, 1987, Roehler, Duffy, Herrmann, Conley & Johnson, 1988*) agree that belief systems are static, inflexible, eclectic, and very often inconsistent. The earlier a belief is built up, the less probably it will ever change. The reason for this is that beliefs are connected

to other beliefs and assumptions so changing a belief might have serious consequences for a whole system of beliefs. That is why reasoning, logic, or even scientific evidence might not be able to abolish a belief. Beliefs are developed in the course of enculturation. New information might be either incorporated into the already existing system, which is called assimilation, or it might replace or modify existing beliefs, which is called accommodation (*Piaget, 1978; Sparks-Langer & Colton, 1991*). The literature cannot explain why some beliefs can be challenged or even replaced by other beliefs whereas others cannot.

Beliefs and values constitute the background to human behaviour, and according to *Nespar* (1987), they are the strongest indicators of teacher behaviour. Beliefs which define behaviour "consist of an individual's view of the likely consequences or outcome of an action, together with a positive or negative evaluation of those outcomes" (*Ajzen, 1991, in Kennedy & Kennedy, 1996, p. 355*). If beliefs play such a dominant role in decision making, it is crucial for teacher educators and teacher trainers to gain insights into teachers' underlying beliefs and to understand how belief systems are built up so that they can intrvene in order to contribute to teachers' professional development. A special feature of teacher education is that, contrary to other professions where students start their studies with relatively few preconceptions, teacher trainees are familiar with the teaching situation and have accumulated much experience through observing teachers at work. They have well-established assumptions and ideas and even theories, with associated values, about the learner and the teaching-learning processes. Thus the main concern of a good teacher training programme should be to question, to challenge the trainees' belief systems. *Kontra* (1997, p. 243) says "I want trainees to think, to reflect, and to come up with questions, not just answers." She also claims that "the key to the success or failure of training lies in finding ways through the […] circle of values and beliefs which surround, sometimes like a protective wall, the trainee teacher's practice" (p. 247). *Horwitz* (1985) and *Kontra* (1997) agree that in teacher training courses it is essential for trainees to discover their own belief systems. However, awareness is the first step only. An efficient training programme involves assisting the application of the teaching craft within the framework of each trainee's belief systems and inducing a process of thinking, challenging, and changing.

Aim

An exploratory study was carried out to find out if teachers are aware of the sources of knowledge and beliefs they rely on in their teaching work, to find some evidence for change in their belief systems, and to find out if training can contribute to changes in beliefs and in practice. The following research questions were formulated:

- To what extent do teachers perceive the different sources of their beliefs and knowledge?
- Do teachers perceive changes in their beliefs during their careers?
- How important do they think teacher training (both initial and in-service) is in their development?
- Can the teachers provide any examples for changes in their beliefs, knowledge, or teaching routine which are directly related to in-service teacher training?

The participants

The participants were five Hungarian teachers of English (all females, aged 35-50) with teaching experience of 12-30 years including several years of teaching ESP, either business English or medical English. They had all taken part in the Service English Project (SEP)[*], which was an in-service training programme for ESP teachers in tertiary education organised by the British Council from 1992 to 2000.

The instrument

The instrument to collect information was a semi-structured interview with 11 questions. In constructing and validating the interview questions *Alderson and Banerjee's* (1996) and *Kvale's* (1996) guidelines were followed. The questions were as follows:

1. Describe the pre-service teacher training course you participated in at the university?
2. Define the ratio of the three components (L2 learner's experience, pre-service training and trainee teaching) in forming your ideas about teaching at the beginning of your career?
3. Can you identify any items in the questionnaires that you would have answered in a different way at the beginning of your career?
4. What types of in-service teacher training have you participated in since graduation?
5. How often do you attend teacher training courses or workshops?
6. Could you mention a course that you found effective?
7. Did you find the SEP course useful and effective? Why? Why not?
8. Has there been any change in your thinking which you think is related to this course?
9. Has there been any change in your actual teaching practice or in your professional activities which you think is related to this course?
10. Do you think your participation in the project has had any effect on the teaching community you are working in?
11. Define the ratio of the three components (L2 learner's experience, in-service teacher training and teaching practice) in forming your ideas about teaching at the moment?

Before the interviews the participants were asked to complete two questionnaires: the shortened version of *De Garcia, Reynolds and Savignon's* (1976) Foreign Language Attitude Survey (FLAS) and *Horwitz's* (1985) Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI). Both questionnaires (Appendices A and B) contained statements and an agreement-disagreement Likert-scale. The purpose of the questionnaires was to enable the participants to spot possible changes in their own thinking in the course of their professional development.

---

[*] SEP included a 12 weeks' training course in Edinburgh provided by the Edinburgh Consortium (The Institute for Applied Language Studies - University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh Language Foundation and Stevenson College) and a series of follow-up workshops based in Budapest. The aim of the Project was "to equip teachers with the skills and knowledge needed to cope with the new demand for specialist English in tertiary sector and […] to support the development of a network of ESP teachers and institutions so that ESP body can maintain its role within the ELT profession as a whole" (Service English, Publicity Materials, 1995).

Collecting and processing the data

The interviews were conducted in Hungarian and were recorded on tape. The data from the questionnaires were not processed since the questionnaires were used only to tune in the participants and to help them reflect on the interview questions. Information from the interviews was grouped according to the questions, and patterns were searched for.

Findings

1. Describe the teacher training course you participated in at the university?

The participants have a rather low opinion about the teacher training component of their university education. Teacher training included some theoretical subjects, such as introduction to psychology or the history of education. Even the few methodology classes in the fifth year provided little or no help for actual teaching work. They all consider the three weeks' teaching practice they were expected to do in a secondary school in their final year as a real learning experience in teaching.

2. Define the ratio of the three components (L2 learner's experience, pre-service teacher training, and trainee teaching) in forming your ideas about teaching at the beginning of your career?

The participants agree that the three componenets are interrelated: learning experience, for example, might be reassured by teaching experience and it is difficult to separate the different factors. However, all of them tried to define the ratio of the three components in percentages (*Table 1*).

Table 1: The ratio of components contributing to teachers' beliefs about language learning/teaching at the beginning of their careers.

Respondents	L2 learner's experience (models) (%)	Pre-service teacher training (%)	Teaching practice (trainee teaching + novice teaching)%
Participant 1	60	10	30
Participant 2	50	20	30
Participant 3	25	25	50
Participant 4	70	20	10
Participant 5	60	10 (or less)	30

Table 1 shows that models, whether they are followed or rejected, are of major importance at the beginning of a teacher's career. Learner's experience, however is very soon modified by the experience of actual teaching. Teacher training has far the least role in forming a teacher's ideas or knowledge about teaching. If we note that two of the teachers allotted 10% for the 'teacher training' category only to round up the numbers, the figures will get even worse. However, they all agree that teacher education has developed a lot since they graduated.

Three participants mentioned that there might be other categories, too. One participant emphasized the importance of the personality in developing a system of beliefs and a teaching style, which she did not see represented by any of the categories. Another participant said observing fellow teachers' classes at school was another source of knowledge for her, and this source of knowledge she included in 'the teacher training' category. A third participant referred to current trends at the time she started her teaching career which she had read about or heard of from her colleagues. These remarks indicate that there might be a sub-category within 'teacher training' including observations, talks with colleagues or consulting literature. All these reflect a kind of self-study approach to professional development.

3. Can you identify any items in the questionnaires that you would have answered in a different way at the beginning of your career?

In general, respondents agree that they had very clear, unambigous, and undisputable ideas and opinions about teaching when they were novice teachers. It seems that as novice teachers they were less hesitant and they would have given more definite answers to many of the questions. Now they see basic concepts, such as the concept of knowledge, language, or motivation in a very different way, and they are more aware that statements and their opposites might just as well be valid or relevant in certain teaching-learning situations. They agree that some questions are very difficult or even impossible to answer (e.g., FLAS 22) since what is important in a particular teaching situation depends to a great extent on the learners' needs, the requirements, the classroom situation, the teaching context, and on the focus of a particular language task.

All the participants reflected on questions FLAS 6-7 and BALLI 15 about grammar rules and accuracy. They paid more attention to teaching grammar when they were novice teachers because they thought knowing a language meant grammatical correctness. Now they all think communicating the message is more important than accuracy. They all insisted on their students' answering with complete sentences (qustion FLAS 21) because they thought it was another way of practising the language. Two participants insist that answering with complete sentences is particularly important in a beginners' group. They admit that their answer now is probably influenced by the fact that they have not taught beginners for a while. Another common issue was error correction (questions FLAS 23 and BALLI 14). One participant says that most teachers used to search for mistakes, and mistakes determined the grades. Now she thinks whether a mistake is serious or not depends on the extent to which it disturbes understanding.

Three respondents admit that they insisted on a lot of pattern practice (FLAS question 13), and though they have not rejected it altogether, they use it much less in the classroom. On the other hand, however, one of them claims that she has always considered imitating real life situations, i. e., simulations (FLAS question 19) very important as well.

Current trends are also important in forming a teacher's beliefs and practice. Two respondents say that as novice teachers they were very enthusiastic about audio-visuals (question FLAS 5) or language labs (question BALLI 16). Now they both think they have a more balanced view about the role of teaching aids.

Three participants mention that as experienced teachers they can show more tolerance and openess to new ideas and to learners than earlier. They are more aware of the role of the personality and personal differences in

learning than when they were young teachers (question FLAS 25). For example, they thought learning a language was easy and enjoyable as it was not hard for them, but later they realised that it might be really hard work for some people (questions FLAS 1 and BALLI 1).

Concerning BALLI question 5 about the importance of an excellent accent one participant says she would have given a "strongly agree" answer as a novice teacher whereas now she strongly disagrees. She says learners today have the opportunity to hear both native and non-native speakers speak the language, and they can realise that pronounciation and accent are not the most important features especially because English is spoken by so many different people around the world.

Three of the participants explicitly said that it was their teaching experience and their familiarity with new trends in methodology that induced changes in their ways of thinking.

4-5. What types of in-service teacher training have you participated in since graduation? - How often do you attend teacher training courses or workshops?

The respondents listed conferences, one-day methodology courses, publishers' promotional events, British Council summer courses, and other workshops organised in Hungary or in Britain, and CETT's co-trainers course. They all emphasized that teachers who failed to attend language training events for a year or two, would get out of the main stream of the profession or even lose contact with it totally. Therefore, they attend either conferences or methodology days organised by publishers on a yearly basis. Two respondents regularly participate in longer training courses as well every second year.

Most of the courses they attended were provided by the British Council. The Service English Project was the most intensive course for all the teachers. They all agreed that language teachers should take part in immersion programmes every three or four years because even the best programme cannot compensate for the lack of real target language situation.

6-7. Could you mention a course that you found effective? - Did you find the SEP course useful and effective? Why? Why not?

These two questions have to be dealt with together since the participants all mentioned the SEP course in Edinburgh as the most influential course in their lives. One of them even said it was the first real methodology training for her, which was also a very painful experience because all the things she had thought and done for many years were questioned. The respondents agreed that it was a highly successful course, and mentioned several key factors that contributed to its efficiency. These included the following:
- Immersion in the target language culture
- Gaining insights into British higher education
- The course leader's professionalism and personality/personal commitment
- The facilitating approach to teaching
- The systematic overview of methodology and related theories
- Awareness raising in many issues (e. g., course design, material selection, learners' differences)
- The organisers' approach to needs analysis and feedback

101

- The written assignment the participants were expected to submit at the end of the course, which introduced them into academic writing

Though the content of the course covered all the important areas of language teaching from skills development through course design and material development to evaluation, which all the five teachers appreciated, they agree that the most important outcome of the course was that it raised their consciousness of what they were doing in class, and made them develop a professional self-image.

8-9. Has there been any change in your thinking, and in your actual teaching practice which you think is related to this course?

The first reaction to this questions was that teachers usualy ***do*** in the classroom what they ***think*** will work, so it is hardly possible to separate beliefs and action. However, one of them admits that changes in her way of thinking do not always manifest themselves in the classroom directly.

All the five teachers made discoveries in Edinburgh that changed their attitude and that made them more conscious and more self-confident in their roles as teachers. As for new knowledge received in the course, they all mentioned language testing, which has become an important area of the profession recently. They are all involved in developing new evaluation schemes or writing testing matrials in which they rely on the knowledge and the sources received in the SEP course.

One participant says the greatest benefit of the course for her was that she has become more conscious and gained confidence in classroom preparation, material selection, course design, etc. She also got reinforcement in areas where she was rather hesitant or had worked instinctively before. Another teacher says the course made her not only more conscious, but also more demanding in her teaching especially in preparation, classroom rapport, and assessment. Now she focuses more on skills development and less on grammar. She says she no longer pays so much attention to error correction in spoken English, however, she cannot help correcting mistakes in written assignments. A third participant claims that though she rarely heard anything totally new in the course, it was a great step forward. It systematically arranged, evaluated and re-evaluated knowledge. It was reassuring to see that assumptions or instinctive teaching could often find justification in research. It familiarised participants with new approaches, which stimulated her to experiment. She became more tolerant, but at the same time she developed a more critical approach to many aspects of teaching. The most important discovery for her was that even the most solid rules could be challenged. In her professional life and in her teaching practice she also benefited a lot from the course. She has been able to explain or communicate her decisions to the students more easily since then. She dares to design tailor-made courses for students based on needs analysis and students' feedback. She has been working on material development and she insists that her efforts and success in the field of material development are closely related to the SEP course.

One of the participants admits that observing the British approach to language teaching generated a lot of thinking in her. Now she is more prepared to accept that language teaching is a market where accountability and quality assurance are important. She thinks she is more aware of the importance of needs analysis and feedback in course design. Changes in thinking take a long time. It is a process, she says, from starting with

observing new things from an outsider's position to slowly becoming an insider, a member of the professional community. She thinks the course and the follow-up workshops generated in her a demand for continuous professional development. In her teaching practice she is more process-oriented and uses more communicative activities, such as simulations or presentations, than before. She has become the active member of several projects since the course.

10. Do you think your participation in the project has had any effect on the teaching community you are working in?

The teachers interviewed worked for two different institutions. Whereas in one of the institutions the course had no impact on departmental work, the respondent from the other institutions report that the training project has had a significant impact on the teaching community and on departmental work. They think that it has generated a lot of thinking and resulted in positive changes in language teaching at the department they work for. The information and knowledge the project participants accumulated and the attitude to the different aspects of language teaching they have developed have been communicated to non-participant colleagues and in some cases even to teachers of languages other than English. Ideas and newly learnt knowledge were disseminated through the follow-up workshops, and most importantly through less organised channels such as professional and personal talks. There are two areas in which the impact of the SEP resulted in tangible outcomes: material writing and testing, which both provide an opportunity to combine theory and practice. Four of the participants are actively involved in developing new evaluation schemes and exam materials. Two participants regularly work as tutors in teacher training and examiners' training courses. It must be noted, however, that the coincidence of the Service English Project and the revisions of the language examinations in higher education created an environment in which people with more up-to date knowledge could also exercise more influence on professional decisions and often became responsible for providing in-service training for their colleagues.

11. Define the ratio of the three components (learner's experience, teacher training with in-service included, and practice) in forming your ideas about teaching at the moment?

The percentages given for the three components differed from the figures at the beginning of their teaching careers (Table 2).

Table 2. The ratio of components contributing to teachers' beliefs about language learning/teaching at the time of the interviews.

Respondents	L2 learner's experience (models) (%)	In-service teacher training (%)	Teaching practice (%)
Participant 1	10	30-40	50-60
Participant 2	25-30%	25-30	40-50
Participant 3	She was unable to separate the three components, saying that experience includes everthing.		
Participant 4	35-40	35-40	30
Participants 5	20	40	40

Statistically it is not relevant to calculate averages when there are so few figures only, however, the tendencies are clear. The table clearly shows that learner's experience seems to be fading whereas in-service teacher training has gained ground. The respondents all think that practice overweighs the other two components.

Conclusions

On the basis of the interviews it is possible to reflect on the original research questions of the study. The teachers are aware of the different factors that have contributed to creating their teacher thinking and their actual teaching routines, and they are able to verbalise both these factors and the changes they have gone through. In fact, they mention more factors than the literature quoted in the study. For example, they all agree that they learn a lot from colleagues either through informal chats or through observation. Such experience might be put into the categories of 'teaching experience' or 'teacher training'. They are also aware of the changes in their views and in their practice. Their answers suggest that whereas at the beginning of their teaching career they were more preoccupied with themselves and their preconceptions about teaching, now they are more reflective and more prepared to focus on the learner. The participants reported three most important changes: (a) a shift from the grammar-translation method to more communicative language teaching; (b) the development of a more reflective attitude to learners' personal differences; and (c) a more pragmatic approach to language teaching on the bases of course requirements, expected future language use, and special needs of the learners.

The teachers think practice follows changes in views but changes of views are usually induced by their actual work experience, which is the most important factor influencing their decisions. However, they also think that teacher training has an important role in familiarising them with new theories and techniques as well as providing opportunity for sharing ideas. The five participants agreed that the pre-service training they received was insufficient and they benefited more from in-service training events. One reason for this might be the inappropriate training itself, but another might be the fact that it is difficult to teach would-be teachers in a vacuum when they might not be aware of the problems they will have to face. The teachers' answers suggest that in-service teacher training is an influential factor (representing 35 % compared to the other factors) and grows in importance in the course of time. The changes induced by teacher training which they report on include personal and professional growth, changes of attitude and focus, gains in confidence, and tangible outcomes such as involvement in material design and language assessment projects.

Reliability and relevance

Concerning the reliability of the findings, it must be noted that the interviews intended to explore teachers' opinions and perceptions, which represent subjective knowledge. The answers are reliable and objective only to the extent opinions and perceptions are part of objective reality for the respondents themselves. It is important to admit that what teachers say, what they think they do, and what they actually do in the classroom may differ sometimes. No comprehensive conclusions can be drawn from the study

since the findings have not been examined against experts' opinion or classroom observation. In spite of these short-comings, the present study might cast some light on teachers' perceptions of changes and development in their thinking and their everyday practice, and whether they think teacher training might generate changes which can make them better teachers. Gaining insights into teachers' thinking about their professional life may be beneficial for teacher trainers and educators in recognising teachers' needs and identifying problem areas, and thus may contribute to developing efficient training programmes both for would-be and practising teachers.

References

ABELSON, R. (1979). Differences between belief systems and knowledge systems. *Cognitive Science, 3*, 355-366.

AJZEN, I. (1991). *Attitudes, personality and behaviour.* Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

ALDERSON, J. C. & BANERJEE, J. (1996). *How might impact study instruments be validated?* A paper commisioned by the University of Cambridge Local Examination Syndicate (UCLES) as part of the IELTS Impact Study.

DE GARCIA, R., REYNOLDS, S. & SAVIGNON, S. J. (1976). *The Canadian Modern Language Review. Vol. 32*, 302-304.

HORWITZ, E. K. (1985). Using student beliefs about language learning and teaching in the foreign language method course. *Foreign Language Annals. 18,* (4). 333-34.

KENNEDY, C. & KENNEDY, J. (1996). Teacher attitudes and change implementation. *System, 24,* (3). 351-360.

KONTRA, E. H. (1997). Reflections on the purpose of methodology training. *ELT Journal, 51,* (3). 242-250

NESPAR, J. (1987). The role of beliefs in the practice of teaching. *Journal of Curriculum Studies, 19*, 317-328.

KVALE, S. (1996). *Interviews. An introduction to qualitative research interviewing.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

PAJARES, M. F. (1992). Teachers' beliefs and educational research: Cleaning up a messy construct. *Review of Educational Research, 62,* (3). 307-332.

PIAGET, J. (1978). *Success and understanding.* Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.

ROEHLER, L. R., DUFFY, G. G., HERRMANN, B. A. CONLEY, M. & JOHNSON, J. (1988). Knowledge structures as evidence of the personal: Bridging the gap from thought to practice. *Journal of Curriculum Studies, 20,.* 159-165.

ROKEAH, M. (1968). *Beliefs, attitudes and values: A theory of organisation and change.* San Fransisco: Jossey-Bass.

SAVIGNON, S. J. (1976). On the other side of the desk: A look at teacher attitude and motivation in second language learning. *The Canadian Modern Language Review 32*, 295-304.

SPARKS-LANGER, G. M. & COLTON, B. (1991). Synthesis of research on teachers' reflective thinking. *Educational Leadership.* 48, (6). 37-44.

WOODS, D. (1996). *Teacher cognition in language teaching.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Appendix A

Adapted from
FOREIGN LANGUAGE ATTITUDE SURVEY (FLAS)

This attitude survey has been developed to serve as a tool for helping teachers explore their own attitudes and assumptions concerning foreign language learning and teaching. React to each of the statements below by circling one of the following responses: 1) strongly agree, 2) agree, 3) neither agree nor disagree, 4) disagree, 5) strongly disagree.

1. Foreign languages are hard to learn.
2. Language learning should be fun.
3. "Proficiency" means *correct* application of the four skills.
4. The student's motivation to continue language study is directly related to his actually learning to speak the language.
5. A good foreign language teacher does not need audio- visuals to build an effective program.
6. It is important for students to learn rules of grammar.
7. The teacher should always require that responses in the target language be linguistically perfect.
8. The sound system of the foreign language should be taught separately at the beginning of the first sequence of instruction along with phonetic transcription.
9. Taped lessons generally lose student interest.
10. One problem with emphasizing oral competence is that there is no objective means of testing such competence.
11. The inclusion of cultural material in a second language course increases student motivation to learn to speak the language.
12. Learning a second language requires much self discipline.
13. Pattern practice does not provide a meaningful context for learning to use the target language.
14. Today's students won't take foreign languages because they don't want to work.
15. Language learning ability is innate; therefore, everyone should be capable of learning a second language if he is capable of learning a first language.
16. The language laboratory is an indispensable device for teaching and learning a second language.
17. Second-language learning should begin in elementary school.
18. It usually happens that the major part of a student's grade in a foreign language course reflects his performance on written tests.
19. Simulated real-life situations should be used to teach conversation skills.
20. Foreign language teachers need not be fluent themselves in order to teach effectively for communication
21. Students should answer a question posed in the foreign language with a complete sentence.
22. Speaking and listening are the skills which we should stress most in our language classes.
23.When a student makes syntactical errors, this should be regarded as a natural and inevitable part of language acquisition.
24. If L1 teachers taught grammar as they should, it would be easier for us

to teach a second language.
25. The ability to exchange ideas in spontaneous context requires skills far beyond a knowledge of linguistic structures.

Appendix B
Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI)
Teacher Version

Below are beliefs some people have about learning foreign languages. Read each statement and then decide if you: 1) strongly agree, 2) agree, 3) neither agree nor disagree, 4) disagree,
5) strongly disagree.
Questions 4 and 11 are slightly different and you should mark them as indicated. There are no right or wrong answers. We are simply interested in your opinions.

1. It is easier for children than adults to learn a foreign language.
2. Some people are born with a special ability which helps them learn a foreign language.
3. Some languages are easier to learn than others.

4. The language I am planning to teach is:
 1. a very difficult language
     2. a difficult language
     3. a language of medium difficulty
     4. an easy language
     5. a very easy language

5. It's important to speak a foreign language with an excellent accent.
6. It's necessary to know the foreign culture in order to speak a foreign language.
7. You shouldn't say anything in the language until you can say it correctly.
8. It is easier for someone who already speaks a foreign language learn another one.
9. It is better to learn a foreign language in the foreign country.
10. It's ok to guess if you don't know a word in the foreign language.
11. It someone spent one hour a day learning a language, how long would it take him to become fluent? 1. less than a year 2. 1-2 years 3. 3-5 years 4. 5-10 years 5. You can't learn a language in 1 hour a day
12.Learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of learning a lot of new vocabulary words.
13. It's important to repeat and practise a lot.
14. If you are allowed to make mistakes in the beginning it will be hard to get rid of them later on.
15. Learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of learning a lot of grammar rules.
16. It's important to practise in the language laboratory.
17. Women are better than men at learning foreign languages.

18. It is easier to speak than understand a foreign language.
19. Learning a foreign language is different from learning other school subjects.
20. Learning another language is a matter of translating from English.
21. If students learn to speak this language very well, it will help them get a good job.
22. It is easier to read and write a language than to speak and understand it.
23. People who are good at maths and science are not good at learning foreign languages.
24. Americans (Hungarians) think that it is important to speak a foreign language.
25. People who speak more than one language well are very intelligent.
26. Americans (Hungarians) are good at learning foreign languages.
27. Everyone can learn to speak a foreign language.