





### Academic language workshops for nonnative speakers at Ghent University: *implementation and effects*







- I. Facts
- 2. Research
- 3. Concept
- 4. Effects
- 5. Conclusion



Flanders: enrolment at universities

language tuition: Dutch to enrol: degree secondary school + B2 CEF for L2 speakers



#### 2010 – 2015 Evolution of enrolment minorities

40.000 students

%	'10 - '11	'11 - '12	'12 - '13	'13 - '14	'14 – '15
Migration background	6,9 %	7,5 %	10,4 %	10,8 %	11 %
Migration background (non-European)	3,2 %	3,1 %	3,9 %	4,4 %	4,8 %





# First year pass rateTotal population:56%Ethnic minority:20%

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# Long term: relation between academic literacy and academic success

(De Wachter & Heeren, 2014)

Schellekens, 2006; Berckmoes & Rombouts, 2009; De Wachter & Heeren, 2010; Tahon, 2013

+ own research Ghent University, 2009

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Language policy: since 2009:

Non-native speakers : workshops

- Personal feedback on writing (now: at-risk students)
- Plenary sessions in different faculties
- Writing clinics
- Website on academic writing
- Academic language skills test without binding effect







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Tasks stimulate language learning & processing skills Bygate 1999

By instructional scaffolding, learners can function beyond their level Alexander 2012

Authentic academic tasks are integrated Cumming 2013 Interaction Study success & hypothesis network are linked Gass 1997, Long 1996, De Bruyn 2006 Swain 2005, Gass 2005 Academic skills shouldn't be taught LAP courses without content should adopt Bee Tin 2003 a unique LSP is about pedagogy manipulating language Alexander 2012

Good TBLT blends subjective and objective needs

Van Avermaet 2006

in different ways Davies 2001



Needs-based:

Task-based:

Interactive:

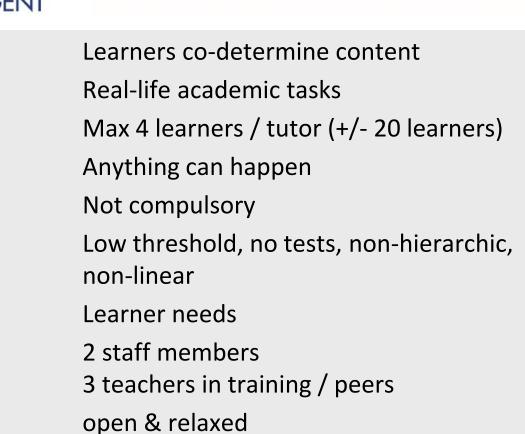
Focus:

Tutors:

Atmosphere:

Open structure:









- Non-native speakers of Dutch B2
- Weekly
- Evening
- 1 teacher + 3/ 4 trainee teachers
- Small groups
- Task-based approach







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What is the effect of the task-based workshops on the abilities of the L2 students?

- self-confidence
- attitudes
- receptive and expressive language skills



#### Methodology & Sources

- in-depth interviews: Oct, Nov, Dec 2012
- focus groups: 2012 (Steunpunt Diversiteit & Leren)
- pre- and post-questionnaires: Oct, Dec 2015



#### Effect on L2 Students

#### How do they feel about the workshops?

What did you like and dislike about the workshops?

Like		Dislike	
Feedback, coaching & interaction	8	Not enough grammar 1	
Atmosphere	6	Not enough variety 1	
Tasks / content	6		
Applicability	1		
Variety	1		
Everything	1		
		15 Res Interview October & Decem)	pondents ber 2012)



#### Effect on L2 Students

#### How do they feel about the workshops?

#### What did you like and dislike about the workshops?

... we can practice. It'd be useless if we'd get a few definitions to learn by heart in five minutes and then, pff I don't know. Practice is extremely important to me, because us students, well most of the time we're quietly behind our books and such. Here we get the opportunity to talk and to practice.

F - L1 Arabic Student (Belgium), December 2012



#### Effect on L2 Students

#### How do they feel about the workshops?

What did you like and dislike about the workshops?

If you talk to people, maybe they won't give you feedback, because they are with friends, family or acquaintances and they will not always pay attention to you. But here in the workshops you will support us, you will [...] give feedback.

J - L1 French Student (Congo), December 2012



#### RQ – Effect on L2 Students

#### How do they feel about the workshops?

#### What did you like and dislike about the workshops?

These workshops are better than anything I've learned in any other course. [...] Well the rules, the grammar that's no problem. The problem is applying the rules in reality. And we don't do that in class. In class for example, the present perfect. And then you do 10 or 20 exercises on the present perfect. And when I'm studying the present perfect I can do it perfectly for 20 or 100 times, that's no problem. But the problem is when I have to [...] use language in different ways in a context.

S - L1 Spanish Student (Colombia), December 2012



#### RQ – Effect on L2 Students

#### What did they gain from the workshops?

## What is the main thing these workshops have taught you?

Self confidence / willingness to talk	5
Presentation skills	5
Writing skills	3
Vocabulary	2
Pronunciation	2

9 respondents (Interview December 2012)



#### RQ – Effect on L2 Students

#### What did they gain from the workshops?

What is the main thing these workshops have taught you?

I think that after these workshop [...] I dare to speak to other people and talk about my problem to them and that is a good thing

A – L1 Dari Student (Afghanistan), December 2012



#### Discussion

- declining numbers
- registration data
- perception
- preparatory program  $\rightarrow$  Voortraject Hoger Onderwijs







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#### Conclusion

The Task-Based workshops:

- offer a rare chance to actively use Academic Dutch
- are a safe context to experiment and receive feedback
- Iead to increased self-confidence & enhance productive skills







## Thank you

#### **Questions?**

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