Response to the reviewer's questions on the doctoral thesis "Learning across languages: A multilingual awareness-raising project in third language teaching", from Lilla Pilbauer-Horváth

I would like to express my gratitude to Professor Fábián for her insights and suggestions considering coherence, comprehensiveness and consistency of the dissertation which will be considered in future publications of the results. In order to present the literature review in a more systematic way, definitions and concept constructions will be addressed in a more critical manner, along with the inclusion of a detailed timeline for the project procedure in further dissemination of the research.

As insightfully pointed out by the reviewer, the phenomenon of intercomprehension (henceforth IC) has to be clarified. In relevant literature, IC is referred to as "the ability to understand multiple languages on the basis of their interlinguistic transparency or/and previous knowledge of languages of the same linguistic family" (Melo-Pfeifer, 2015: 100). This ability "can be developed in more than one language at the same time or at least in the context of a single teaching program" (Bonvino, 2015:37). Meißner (2008) refers to the term IC as a method "of acquiring receptive skills in various languages" (Meißner, 2008:1). The "IC method" is argued to represent not only "an efficient way of developing multilingual receptive skills, but of getting insight into (one's own) mental processing with new foreign language(s) in interaction with the idioms mentally activated, as well as of sensitising to linguistic questions in general" (Meißner 2008:2).

In reference to the questions the following points need to be highlighted:

1. The aims of the dissertation are on one hand to examine whether multilingual training addressing cognates and similar structures between English and German affect the linguistic development and motivation of 9th grade students and on the other hand, in order to address a research gap exploring the application of multilingual awareness-training in the Hungarian educational context to propose a teaching method that highlights the significance of multilingual awareness-raising in the initial stages of learning German after English in Hungary. It has to be emphasized that both objectives are thoroughly met by the current doctoral thesis.

2. In the current dissertation, adopting the definition of Lengeling (1996) a cognate is regarded as "a word in one language which is very similar in form and the meaning to a word in another language because both languages are related" (Legeling, 1996:2). The cognate list for the teaching project included German-English word pairs with more than 50% similarity according to the Levenshtein distance, which is a string metric for measuring the difference between two sequences (Serva & Petroni, 2008). Since the evaluation of the Levenshtein distance operates on an orthographic basis, word pairs with less than 50% similarity went through a judgement process based on the similarities in pronunciation as stated on page 47 of the thesis. Furthermore, it was considered to be necessary for the learning process to discuss false cognates as well in order to avoid errors and confusion (Lengeling, 1996).

3. Multilingual proficiency is regarded as the consistent result of the user's knowledge on how to use the language, which presupposes the presence of the implicit

knowledge of the languages (Herdina & Jessner, 2002). "The dynamic and unpredictable interaction of several language systems is thought to be one of the main characteristics of multilingual proficiency" (Herdina & Jessner, 2002:57). In this regard, multilingual proficiency is reflected in the L3 writing development of the participants since their L1 Hungarian and L2 English an L3 German represent language systems that are dynamically interacting with each other. The concepts *fluency, lexis,* and *grammatical correctness* addressed in the sub-questions to the main research question (1) specify components of language development, and therefore the development of multilingual proficiency. These components are further specified and defined as variables on page 54. The values for these variables were elicited from the language production task (task 3) of the Multilingual Proficiency Test as described in page 53. and presented in Appendix 2.

4. The decision behind focusing on teaching German as L3 subsequent to learning English was that the recommendation of the *White paper* (EMMI, 2012) cannot always be taken into consideration in secondary schools mainly because of practical reasons such as the workload of teachers, or the organization of language groups. If the learner is introduced to English as L2 and German as L3, the student will experience considerable loss of motivation towards learning the additional language (EMMI, 2012). In my 18 years of teaching practice, I have experienced that teachers of German as L3 often report on their struggles in motivating their students from lesson to lesson. This issue represents a considerable challenge that teachers of English do not have to face. As a teacher of German and English the main aim behind the choices concerning the current research was to find an effective, sustainable, and manageable way to meet this problem that results from the mismatch between the ideal theory and the practice in secondary education.

5. According to Fishbein & Ajzen (1975), attitude is denoted as a "learned predisposition to respond in a consistently favourable or unfavourable manner with respect to the given object" (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975: 10). The Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1988) identified conditions necessary to arouse or modify an attitude and posited that such conditions would vary in accordance with the motivational basis of the attitude. Although a causal relationship was not explicitly proposed by this work, the theory suggested that motivation precedes attitude and the former influences the latter. A person's overall attitude toward and object can be determined by the subjective value of the object's attributes in interaction with the strength of the association between the object and the attributes (Ajzen, 2001).

6. Considering the explanation behind the more intensive development on the multilingual awareness of the control group I would like to refer to the findings of Ringbom (2007), who highlights that students look for similarities between the target language and the language(s) they already know in a conscious or unconscious way to some extent in order to facilitate their learning process. This process was inevitable in the control group as well, however the most striking differences appeared during the first month of the project and are reflected in the multilingual awareness levels of October. Intensity of development was present in both groups, however in different time frames. What the intervention group has achieved in one month, the control group could achieve in four months' time.

Lastly, I would like to express my appreciation for the acknowledgement of the relevance of the research in the Hungarian language teaching context.

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