Appendix F. – Classroom research memo

Procedures and content of the classroom research during the U.S. Embassy School Election Project 2012

1. **Videography**
   a. **Which project phases should be recorded?**
   - Project introduction
   - At least two exemplary task cycles during the project participation, especially tasks/lessons including computer use (incl. screen capture using *Camtasia*)
   - Project conclusion or presentation of project outcomes, respectively

   b. **Focus: Which processes should be recorded during these phases?**
   - During plenary phases: The teacher is recorded during the task initiation and instruction; students are recorded with a separate camera; alternatively, the teacher is recorded using audio only, students are recorded using two steady cameras
   - During task phases (with or without the computer): One or two learner groups (pair groups or small collaborative groups, depending on the task) are recorded
   - During task phases at the computer: Task processes of a student pair or group are (frontally) recorded on video (facial expressions, actions), while the activities on the PC (especially on the LMS Moodle) are simultaneously recorded with a screen capture software (*Camtasia*). The focal pair of students to be recorded is drawn by lot (voluntary participation ensured) and informed about the recording of their on-screen activities (and ideally interviewed orally after the lesson, see below).

2. **Oral interviews – teachers**
   a. **Pre-interview**
   - Time: prior to the beginning of the project
   - Procedure: The course teacher is asked about their usual teaching practice, teaching methods and content focus, but also about the students' characteristics, competency levels, working attitude, leisure and school-based use of digital media etc. (see items of the pre-questionnaire for teachers). Possible questions include:
     - Project participation: Why do you participate and what are your expectations for the project? What concerns do you have about

the project implementation, e.g., regarding the students' work, the use of media, the curricular integration? To which extent do you intend to participate (time, materials, topics)?
  - Project class/students: Please describe your English class in terms of competency level, preferred task formats and learning modes, interests etc. How do you estimate the students' interest in the project, e.g., regarding content, project setting, media use? What expectations and concerns about the project do you notice or assume the students have?
  - Classroom culture: Picture a typical English lesson as you teach it in the upper secondary school and describe it: What modes of social interaction, task formats, instructional materials typically occur? How is corrective feedback given? What role does the German language play? What role do communicative learning approaches play? How familiar are you with the concept of task-based language teaching and to what extent do you try to implement it in your lessons?
  - Digital media and Web 2.0: How familiar are you with digital media and Web 2.0 applications (knowledge, use, classroom use)? How familiar do you believe your students are with digital media and Web 2.0? How will the use of these media and applications affect your students' learning in the project? What challenges and pitfalls do you see in general or from the perspective of English language teaching methodology, respectively?
- Medium: The interview is recorded using an audio recording device.

b. **Pre-interviews prior to lessons:**
- Time: prior to the respective lesson
- Procedure and content: The respective lesson content and planned learning activities of the focal lessons are discussed with particular attention to expected student reactions and re-interpretations of tasks, as well as expected problems/challenges during the lesson and in task implementation. Possible questions include:
  - What are your goals for today's lesson?
  - What have you planned (in terms of content) for today's lesson?
  - What student reactions do you anticipate?
  - What do you expect to work exceptionally well? Where do you anticipate challenges?
- Medium: The interview is recorded using an audio recording device.

c. **Informal, self-recorded oral statement on individual lessons**
   - Time: after the respective lesson(s)
   - Procedure and content: Possible questions teachers are supposed to reflect on include (cf. questions for the post-lesson learner interviews, see section 3a below):
     - Which task modifications had to be implemented or emerged in the course of the lesson? *Task-as-workplan vs. Task-in-process* (cf. Breen, 1987)
     - Which problems or challenges emerged during the task implementation from your / the students' perspective?
     - Please estimate the following aspects from your students' perspective: Students' re-interpretations of lesson goals and contents, realization of learning processes by the learners themselves, contextual conditions under which the tasks were implemented.
     - What was the role of learning technology in this lesson?
   - Medium: The teachers self-record their statements using an *Easi-Speak*-microphone (a recording device) based on a written list of prompts and reflection questions.

d. **Focus interview using stimulated recall of selected tasks**
   - Time: during or after concluding the school project
   - Procedure: Teachers are presented a video-recorded task sequence of a lesson along with complementary reflection questions (open and closed questions). Possible questions emerge from the presented video sequence.
   - Medium: The interviews are introduced using video-recorded sequences from the project and recorded using an audio recording device.

3. **Oral interviews – students**
   a. **Short interviews with selected focal students (e.g., a small group of students)**
   - Time: after the respective lesson(s)
   - Procedure: Interview questions emerge from the course of the video-recorded lesson or task sequence. Participation in these interviews is voluntary. Possible questions include:
     - What did you particularly like/dislike about today's lesson?
     - What seemed especially important to you about the tasks you worked on?
     - Did you skip or omit specific steps, or did you complete the task differently from the way your teacher explained it to you? Why?
     - Did you make any recommendations as to how the task could be completed differently or what could be done instead of the proposed task to achieve the lesson goal?
     - How did you use the computer in today's lesson?
   - Medium: The interviews are recorded using a video or audio recording device.

   b. **Concluding semi-structured interviews with focal learners**
   - Time: after the project conclusion
   - Procedure/content: The questions target aspects similar to those addressed by the written reflection task on the project (see below), but are complemented by specific data examples from the project, e.g., lesson artifacts or video recordings
   - Medium: The interviews are recorded using audio or video recording devices

4. **Written survey and data**
   a. **Pre- and post-questionnaire surveys among teachers and students**
   - time: prior to and after the project participation
   - Procedures: Students and teachers participate voluntarily in the survey via the LMS Moodle
   - Medium: Online questionnaire survey in the LMS meta-classroom "Meeting Point"

b. **Project journal by focal students**

- Time: during the project participation, i.e., after the respective lesson(s)
- Procedure: Students write short journal entries (c. half a page) on selected lessons or tasks reflecting on questions they received in advance via a handout; students select their own focal aspects and are free to use German or English
- Medium: e-mail to the researcher

c. **Written classroom artifacts**

- Lesson products in 'raw' form on Moodle, e.g., forum posts, glossary entries, communication with teachers and classmates, final course-work
- Lesson products prepared and annotated by students on the Mahara e-portfolio platform.

Journal on your project participation
Instructions
You are kindly asked to keep a project journal during your participation in the U.S. Embassy School Election Project 2012. In this journal you will comment on your work in the project and on Mood-le. For each English lesson (or for assignments using the PC), write a short, coherent text (approx. ½ page, preferably more, font size 12) in which you describe and evaluate everything that you experienced in class and that seems important to you.

- Please indicate your English teacher's name, the date of the English lesson, and the topic of the lesson (or assignment).
- Express your personal impressions and thoughts about the project tasks honestly and critically. There is no 'right' or 'wrong'. Your entries will be treated anonymously and will not be graded. Your English teacher will not read them unless you specifically request it.
- You can use the following guiding questions. You are free to choose which questions you answer.
- Journal entries should be written on the day of the English lesson or the next day at the latest.
- Please send your texts to the researcher via email.

Guiding questions
You can choose one of the following areas per journal entry and answer some of the questions (you don't have to and shouldn't 'work through' all the questions). If something is not mentioned in the questions, but seems important or interesting to you, feel free to add it to your entry!

Learning content and learning objectives

- Which task(s) did you work on? What was the task about? Describe it in your own words.
- What do you think were the learning objectives of this task? What were you supposed to learn in the process?
- What were your personal goals? What did you personally want to learn or find out?
- How useful do you think the task was?
- What role did the computer or Internet play in this assignment for you?
- If you were the teacher: What would you do differently?

Learning processes and learning context

- Did you use the PC for your work? Which contents or applications did you use? How did you proceed?
- What decisions did you make before or during the task? Did you have to discard or change initial plans? If so, why?
- Did you collaborate with anyone? Or did you seek help and advice from classmates or your English teacher? How did you go about this?
- Was there a specific allocation of roles between you and your classmates, e.g. in group or partner work? Describe in more detail who was responsible for what and how helpful this division of labor was.
- Did you enjoy or particularly like anything about working on the PC today? Why?
- What worked particularly well for you today when working with the PC? Describe this in more detail.
- Were there any problems or obstacles in your work (with the computer)? Explain which problems these were. How did you deal with them?
- Did you omit or add certain sources or steps in a task on your PC? Did you work on the task in a different way than it was supposed to be done? Why?

Language learning

- Wie How did you communicate or talk with your classmates? Did you speak English the whole time? If not, why?
- What did you practice or learn in English today while working on the PC?
- What did you do well in English in class today? Did you learn anything new, such as what to say or write in English in certain situations? New vocabulary or grammar?
- Where did you experience language problems (e.g., with tasks on the PC)?

Thank you for participating in the research on the U.S. Embassy School Election Project!

5. **Technical equipment check list**
   - 2 digital video cameras (*Canon Camcorder AVCHD*)
   - 2 camera tripods (*Manfrotto 557B*)
   - 2 external microphones (Stage Line ECM 925 P)
   - 2 microphone tripods
   - Extra batteries and storage media
   - Chargers and cables
   - 2 audio recording devices (*Zoom H1*)
   - 2 *Easi-Speak-Pro* microphones/recording devices
   - 1 photo camera (*Sony CyberShot*)
   - Single-user license for *Camtasia*
   - Extension cables and multi-plugs

6. **Letters of consent**
   - Signed letter of agreement by the school principal
   - Signed letter of consent by course teacher
   - Signed letter of consent by the students' legal guardians
   - Ethics clearance by the regional school authority (*Landesschulbehörde*)