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THE INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH PROJECT
SHOAH IN DAILY SCHOOL LIFE [1]
HOW DO PUPILS USE VIDEOTAPED
EYEWITNESS INTERVIEWS WITH SURVIVORS
IN A TABLET APPLICATION?

The Need for Empirical Teaching Research

More than seventy years after the liberation of the concentration camps, time is running out for sharing the experiences of people who can provide first-hand testimony of the policies of persecution, forced migration and extermination practised by the National Socialists. Many institutions that have worked during the last few decades to preserve the memories of survivors for future generations in the form of video interviews, like the *USC Shoah Foundation,* are therefore focussing more and more on the aspects of communication (Simon et al. 2013: 241–246). The extent to which memories of the Holocaust remain an element of a reflexive, living culture of remembrance depends in part on the availability and use of learning platforms that make use of videotaped interviews for teaching purposes. In Austria, for example, a growing number of video interviews have been prepared for the classroom. However, the question of the right teaching setting for work with videotaped eyewitness videos to ensure that learners obtain maximum benefit for the development of historical competencies has been the subject of theoretical reflection (Barricelli/Lücke 2013; Bothe/Lücke 2013) but of little empirical research. For that reason, _erinnern.at_ has organised the international research project *Shoah in daily school life* in cooperation with the Free University Berlin, the University of Teacher Education Lucerne and Innsbruck University. [2] A pilot study was made

to research learning in regular history classes using video interviews with survivors in a tablet-based learning environment. The main objective was to discover how pupils use videotaped eyewitness interviews in tablet-based history classes and what historical narratives of their own they generate through working with the interviews. The main results from this pilot study are presented below. |3

Main Project Data: The Study Design

The centrepiece of the project is the 90-minute lesson unit *Encounter with eyewitnesses of the Shoah,* which was released for use on tablets. The 30-minute interviews and the three questionnaires were also included in the application. In addition to the lesson unit, the pilot study also included five data capture phases:

1. To capture the pupils' initial profiles, they were asked to fill in a questionnaire a week before the lesson was held. The questionnaire related to
    – their knowledge of, experience with and interest in the Holocaust (as the subject of the planned lesson unit),
    – their experience with eyewitnesses (information source for the planned lesson unit)
    – and their experience with tablets (work and communications tool).
    – The personal data captured included gender, age, mother tongue, nationality and country of birth (of the pupils and their parents).

2. A video recording was made of the lesson in order to document interaction between the pupils and between them and the teacher, especially in the plenary phases at the beginning and end of the double lesson.

3. Tracking software was installed on the tablet with the lesson unit in the form of an application |4 so that a record could be made of the user behaviour of the pupils working with the app.

4. At the end of the lesson, the pupils were asked to fill in another questionnaire relating to
    – their assessment of the learning process and outcome
    – and questions concerning their experiences in the class and as learners.

5. Finally, two weeks after the lesson, the pupils were asked to fill in a third questionnaire. It contained the same questions as the first plus three open questions on their learning experiences and findings from the double history lesson.

The lesson unit app on the tablet served as a tool for empirical study of the pupils' learning processes. The tablet was a work tool, information carrier and research tool all at the same time. The interviews, which last up to two and half hours in the originals, were shortened to 30 minutes for teaching in the framework of the *Witnesses of the Shoah* project |5. The choice of interviews for the lesson unit was based on thematic considerations plus the desire to have both male and female interviewees. The pupils were invited to choose between three interviews, which cover the aspects "flight", "survival" and "resistance" and thus shed light on the Holocaust from different angles. The pilot study was performed from the end of February to the end of March 2015 with one class each in Berlin (D) and Innsbruck (A) and two classes in Zofingen (CH). A total of 74 pupils were involved. Their average age was 17.

The Pupils' Texts |6: What Do They Tell Us about Their History Learning Processes?

The last few years have seen a transformation in the standards of Holocaust education. Didactic research has contributed to greater professionalism among teachers and generated new findings with regard to teaching and learning. In the history curricula, emphasis is now placed on competence-oriented teaching to enable pupils to acquire new knowledge and skills and to find their own paths to developing opinions and attitudes with a personal focus (Barricelli et al. 2012). For most history education experts, promoting and developing narrative competence is central to history education. |7 Peter Gautschi has developed a competence model that relates very closely to practical history teaching and learning in schools. He divides narrative competence into four areas. According to this model, good history teaching should empower pupils to

- access a historical record: put questions and test suppositions against historical sources and records,
- develop a historical record: use historical sources and records to analyse, verify and present topics,
- interpret history: analyse, interpret, deduce, structure, present and arrive at historical judgements, and
- derive orientation from the experience of time: develop opinions and attitudes as orientation in practical life today; make value judgements (Gautschi 2015: 48–53).

In the lesson unit *Encounter with eyewitnesses of the Shoah*, pupils were given opportunities through a variety of assignments to practise competencies that are important for learning history and to produce their own narratives, for example when explaining their choice of interview, formulating their expectations of the interview selected, explaining their choice of quotation from the eyewitness testimony, describing their own responses (thoughts, impressions, feelings) and writing a summary of the interview. The texts written by the pupils during the lesson are designed to reveal the extent to which they understand historical narratives and are able to respond with narratives of their own. On the basis of the above competence model, the texts of those pupils in the pilot study were assessed who chose the interview with Eugen Herman-Friede [8] on the subject of resistance. [9]

The following table gives an overview of the methods and assignments for the double history class and the related development of competencies:

TEACHING PHASE	TIME	METHODS / ASSIGNMENTS	COMPETENCIES
Introduction	5 minutes	Four corners method	Perception and orientation competence
Part I: Orientation with the assignment	15 minutes	Choice of interview − Selection on the basis of the photo, short biography and video clip − Explanation of reasons for choice − Formulation of expectations	Perception, deduction and orientation competence
Part II: Work on the assignment for the eyewitness interview selected	55 minutes	Work on the interview − Note taking (thoughts, feelings, impressions) − Choice of quotations − Explanation of reasons for choice − Writing the summary	Perception, deduction, interpretation and orientation competence
Close	15 minutes	Evaluation of the assignment in the plenary Four corners method	Interpretation and orientation competence

When choosing an eyewitness testimony, the pupils demonstrated perception competence through their questions and suppositions on the video clip and short biography. They also demonstrated deduction competence after examining the source materials by making a decision and providing specific reasons for their choice.

The fact that Eugen Herman-Friede had a non-Jewish stepfather was noted by the pupils as a specific biographic situation. The change of school required by the National Socialists also aroused the pupils' interest and influenced their decision.

"I thought his story was the most interesting because he had a Jewish mother but not a Jewish father. His father (or stepfather) was not a Jew but he was still very interested in the rites. I found his story the most exciting, also because he had to switch schools." (berlin7) |10

The reasons given by the pupils show that the testimony generated questions to which they expected answers and more detailed information from their subsequent work on the interview. The questions formulated by one Swiss pupil show that she sees the eyewitness as a person who is looking back at childhood experiences from the perspective of his life today.

"I would like to know how he felt about his childhood and how he coped with it. And on the other hand I would like to see how he survived and what he thinks about those times today." (CH4B06)

The pupils approached the testimony of the interviewee by selecting a quotation they considered important and giving their reasons. They demonstrated interpretation and orientation competence by explaining the quotation and the conclusions they would draw for their own behaviour and for their response to the history of the Nazi period in their own lives. One Berlin pupil chose Eugen Herman-Friede's remark that everyone who wanted to know did know about the Nazis' criminal treatment of the Jews. She interpreted that sentence as a call not to "go through life with your eyes closed". And she says that those people who did so had no right to plead ignorance as an excuse.

Eugen Herman-Friede: "Everybody who wanted to know knew something."
Reason for choice: "This quotation stuck in my mind as I consider it a very important remark because you cannot go through life with your eyes closed and afterwards say, 'I didn't know anything about it,' because that is not how things were." (berlin7)

In the last assignment, the pupils were told to write a brief summary of the video interview. The results vary considerably with regard to length and

style and also their narrative character. Most of the pupils concentrated on the story of the narrative at the micro level. Some of them produced their own narratives and demonstrated their narrative competence, as in the case of one of the Innsbruck pupils. He links the micro and macro levels in his summary and connects the Nazi period with the present. He stresses the bravery of the people who hid Eugen Herman-Friede and also mentions the eyewitness' educational visits to schools. His narrative satisfies a number of criteria that are seen as parameters of narrative competence (Pandel 2010: 128–129). His summary is well linked and has a coherent structure, in which the facts are interconnected and not merely listed. He clearly identifies the actors and adds meta-narrative elements which are not present in the narrative of the eyewitness.

"Eugen Herman-Friede was taken out of school and subjected to many restrictions just because he is a Jew. He was concealed by several families, who took him in and kept him in spite of the danger they were putting themselves in. He was finally arrested by the Gestapo but liberated following the invasion by the Red Army. Now he calls on schools and, through his book and discussions with the pupils, tries to help them understand the past." (ibk1)

Questionnaires 1 and 3: What Can We Say about the Pupils' Learning Gains?

It was interesting and at the same time slightly disconcerting to compare the results of questionnaires 1 and 3, in which the pupils answered questions one week before and then one or two weeks after the lesson on their knowledge, their attitudes to and interest in the Holocaust, their experience of and attitudes towards eyewitnesses and their familiarity with the tablet as a work tool. The question sets were identical in the two questionnaires so as to detect any changes in the pupils' levels of knowledge and attitudes. A comparison on this before-and-after basis revealed very little difference. The highest approval rate was recorded for the statement that, after everything that happened in the Holocaust, we must support the rights of minorities in all parts of the world and also for the statement that the Holocaust is one of the most

gripping topics in the history of mankind. Another striking result concerned the pupils' experience with eyewitnesses in the classroom: In all three countries the pupils said in questionnaire 1 that they had little or no experience of eyewitnesses in the classroom. The result was radically different when the pupils were asked the same question in questionnaire 3. In that case the pupils did confirm a gain in experience following their work with the eyewitness interviews in the lesson unit. The pupils showed a positive attitude to the tablet as a work device. They said learning with the tablet was fun and varied and conducive to a good atmosphere for work because it created more quiet and encouraged concentration and permitted autonomous learning. There were differences, however, between the answers given by girls and those given by boys, with the former adopting a more sceptical and critical attitude.

Questionnaire 2:
Is it a Good History Lesson from the Pupils' Point of View?

The following seven closed-ended statements were used for pupils to evaluate the learning process using a four-point scale:

– In the history lesson I was so fascinated that I worked very hard.
– In the history lesson I really wanted to understand.
– In the history lesson I was able to follow all the time.
– In the history lesson I made sure I really understood everything.
– In the history lesson I concentrated hard so as to remember the most important things.
– In the history lesson I wondered what I had to do and how I should proceed.
– In the history lesson I immediately understood what I had to do or answer.

The following four closed-ended questions – to be answered on a six-point scale – were used to evaluate the learning outcome:

– Did you (on the whole) learn a lot or only little in the lesson?
– Did you (on the whole) understand the subject or not?
– Are you (on the whole) satisfied or dissatisfied with the learning outcome?
– Did you (on the whole) find the lesson interesting or boring?

For questionnaire 2, use was made of item setting as already tested in the framework of the study on "Good history teaching" (Gautschi 2009: 149–165). Evaluation was performed with the help of a statistical analysis, in which it was found that a lesson can be considered "good" from the pupils' point of view if the average for "process" is equal to or greater than 3 and for "outcome" it is equal to or greater than 4. For the lesson unit in the pilot study *Encounter with eyewitnesses of the Shoah*, the averages for all three countries came to 3.43 for the learning process and 4.98 for the learning outcome. In comparison with other lessons evaluated in other studies, these figures are high (Gautschi 2015: 159–160). The pupils accordingly consider the unit to have been a good history lesson and have the impression that they learned a lot. That applies to all the classes in all the countries. It should be pointed out that the teachers did not play a very important part in the lesson. For most of the double lesson, the pupils worked alone and independently using their tablets. The double history lesson developed for this project would appear to offer a teaching structure in which the "What" and the "How?", i.e. the pedagogical offering, can lead to effective use on the part of the learners independent of the teacher.
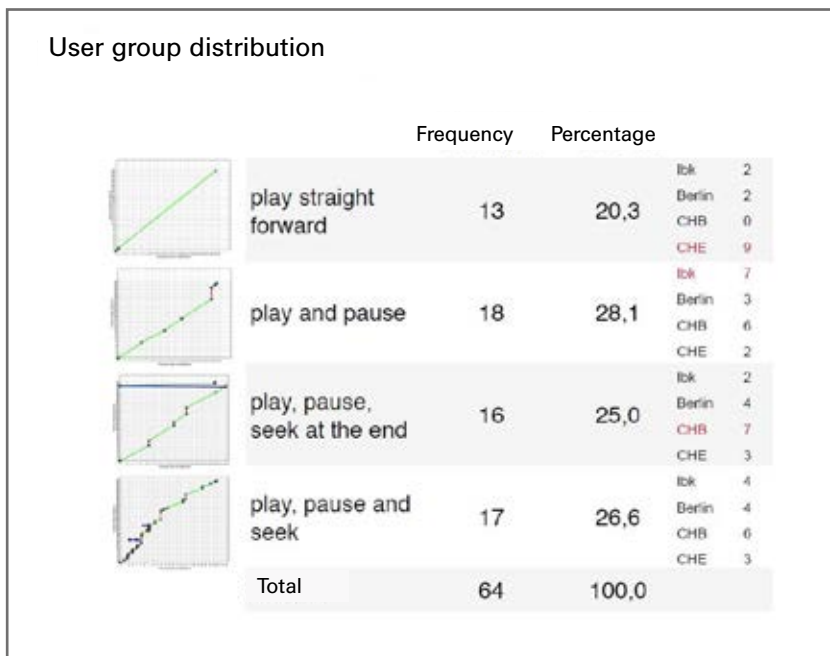
Evaluation of the Tracking Software: How Do the Pupils Use the App on Their Tablets?

Evaluation of the tracking data provided interesting insights into the learning processes of the individual pupils. The tablet app was programmed to show with the help of log files how the pupils proceeded. The following data were captured: commands for play and pause, search commands, duration of play in minutes, duration of pauses and total duration of the session in minutes. Guido Kempter evaluated the user data provided by the log files and identified six basic patterns of use (Bibermann; Kempter et al. 2016: 42–46):
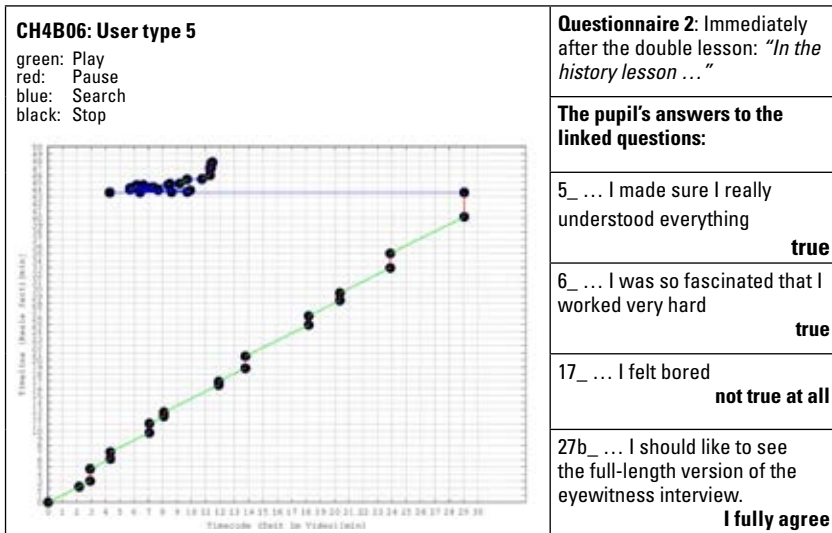
1. Pupils watch the video continuously without any major pauses.
2. Pupils watch the video continuously and at the end return to certain points and places.
3. Pupils alternate between Play and Search.

4. Pupils alternate between Play, Pause and Search.
5. Pupils alternate between Play and Pause and mainly choose Search at the end.
6. Pupils watch the video with pauses but without searching.

User group distribution

		Frequency	Percentage		
	play straight forward	13	20,3	Ibk Berlin CHB CHE	2 2 0 9
	play and pause	18	28,1	Ibk Berlin CHB CHE	7 3 6 2
	play, pause, seek at the end	16	25,0	Ibk Berlin CHB CHE	2 4 7 3
	play, pause and seek	17	26,6	Ibk Berlin CHB CHE	4 4 6 3
	Total	64	100,0		

The tracking data were also linked with other data sources so as to provide a more differentiated picture of user behaviour, e.g. some of the answers that pupils gave at the end of the lesson in questionnaire 2. Two items were used in which the pupils evaluate their own learning process, one item in which they describe their emotions after working on the video interview and another item in which they express their attitude to eyewitness interviews. It was found that pupils whose user graphs indicated a high level of activity while working with the app were more positive in their evaluation of the learning

process, felt least bored and were most interested in seeing the full-length version of the video interviews. Example: The user graph indicates that the Swiss pupil belongs to user group 5. She switches between "Play" and "Pause" and mainly goes to "Search" at the end. The evaluation results show that this user type responds to the questions used for data linkage with the highest level of approval.

CH4B06: User type 5 green: Play red:　　Pause blue:　 Search black: Stop 	**Questionnaire 2**: Immediately after the double lesson: *"In the history lesson …"*
	The pupil's answers to the linked questions:
	5_ … I made sure I really understood everything **true**
	6_ … I was so fascinated that I worked very hard **true**
	17_ … I felt bored **not true at all**
	27b_ … I should like to see the full-length version of the eyewitness interview. **I fully agree**

Findings and Open Questions

The results of the pilot study suggest that videotaped eyewitness interviews can be used for competence oriented history teaching. From evaluation of the data it is clear that, in the framework of the lesson, many pupils were able to make use of competencies that are relevant for learning history. The pupils were able to indicate what they had learned from the eyewitness testimony on the Holocaust. Through the details of the narrative they came to an understanding of the magnitude and impact of National Socialist policies of persecution: from the loss of identity to the loss of life. From the pupils' point

of view, the double history lesson *Encounter with eyewitnesses of the Shoah* was a good lesson. The pupils also see the Holocaust as an important subject for history classes. Videotaped eyewitness interviews are a medium in which pupils show great interest. With regard to the design, it can be said that pupils will pay attention to "talking heads" in a 30-minute interview format. Learning with tablets is something the pupils like, among other things because they permit autonomous learning. The learning setting – one tablet with earphones per pupil – enables them to take their own paths to learning and to work in depth on aspects of the topic they have chosen themselves. The pupils make highly individual use of the offering in the lesson unit with regard to the "What?" and the "How?". There are some questions, however, that cannot be clarified with the data collected: Does the way in which the video interview is used relate to the pupils' interest in the subject or the learning arrangement or their motivation level? Or is it the formal design of the video interviews, the structure of the assignments or the pupil's learner type that influence user behaviour? In the follow-up project, the data are to be studied with greater precision since not all paths to learning proved equally successful. It is also unclear why so little change was detected in the pupils with regard to their knowledge and attitudes. In the follow-up study more differentiated question sets are to be developed to clarify this point. Nor can an unequivocal answer be given to the question of the role of the teacher in this teaching setting. The thesis so often postulated in the literature of the importance of the teacher for good history lessons was not confirmed in the learning environment created for the research project. This double history lesson would appear to offer a teaching structure in which the "What" and the "How?", i.e. the pedagogical offering, can lead to effective use on the part of the learner independent of the teacher. Through reflection on their experiences and findings one week after the lesson, the pupils provide information on their personal learning gains. This is clear, for example, from the remark made by an Innsbruck pupil to the effect that the eyewitness interviews enabled him to see "how hard things were for a Jew in those days" (ibk17) and in the words of a Swiss pupil, who said that the eyewitness interview

had revealed to him "how good we have it today" (CH4E). The results of the pilot study show that videotaped eyewitness interviews provided for pupils on tablets as learning tools represent a highly promising solution for modern teaching on the subject of the Holocaust.

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QUOTED QUESTIONNAIRES

The data from the questionnaires and the texts the pupils wrote while working on the tab-let app have been stored in a database and are also available in hardcopy.

Questionnaire 1: on the pupils' personal data and previous knowledge and attitudes to-wards the Holocaust, eyewitnesses and tablets

Questionnaire 2: pupils' evaluation of the learning process and outcome of the lesson

Questionnaire 3: on the pupils' knowledge and attitudes towards the Holocaust, eyewitnesses and tablets; open questions on the learning experience and findings from the double history lesson

1 For the title of the project and lesson unit, the term "Shoah" is used but in the pupil questionnaires we speak of the "Holocaust" since we assume that pupils are more familiar with that word.

2 The institutes involved are the Friedrich Meinecke Institute and the Center for Digital Systems (CeDIS) at the Free University of Berlin, the Centre for History Teaching & Learning and Memory Cultures (ZGE) at the University of Teacher Education Lucerne and the Institute of Contemporary History at Innsbruck University.

3 For a more detailed presentation of the results of the pilot study see Bibermann, I., Dreier, W., Ecker, M., Gautschi, P., Kempter, G., Körte-Braun, B., Lücke, M. (2016): Vermittlung der Shoah im schulischen Alltag in einer Tablet unterstützten Lernumgebung. Schlussbericht zur Pilotstudie. Bregenz: _erinnern.at_

4 The pupils in Innsbruck were informed by the project leader that their user behaviour (stop, play, pause and search commands) would be recorded on the tablet for research purposes.

5 www.zeugendershoah.de, accessed 26 April 2017.

6 These texts were written on tablets during work on assignments relating to the eyewitness interview.

7 For the various competence models, see Gautschi 2015: pp. 54–66.

8 The pupils who worked on Eugen Herman Friede were selected for the assessment of the pupils' texts because that interview was chosen in all countries and classes and by both boys and girls of the same age group.

9 The interviews used in the pilot study are to be found on the DVD *Witnesses of the Shoah* http://www.bpb.de/shop/multimedia/dvd-cd/141267/zeugen-der-shoah-fliehen-ueberleben-widerstehen-weiterleben, accessed 8 November 2017.

10 An individual code was assigned to each tablet and pupil to ensure that the pupils used the same tablet for all data capture phases. The Berlin codes are berlin1 to berlin20, the Innsbruck codes ibk1 to ibk21, the codes for form 4E in Zofingen are CH4E01 to CH4E19 and for form 4B in Zofingen CH4B01 to CH4B14. This system ensures reliable linkage of the data captured.