

Training Foreign and Second Language Teachers

Training Foreign and Second Language Teachers:

*European Challenges, Successes
and Perspectives*

Edited by

Carmen Avram and Pierre Larrière

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Training Foreign and Second Language Teachers:
European Challenges, Successes and Perspectives

Edited by Carmen Avram and Pierre Larrivé

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INTRODUCTION

CARMEN AVRAM

This book provides a comparative perspective on training foreign and second language teachers in five countries – Germany, France, Ukraine, Russia and Uzbekistan. The impetus for the volume originated in the project ‘Developing the Teaching of European Languages: Modernising Language Teaching through the Development of Blended Masters Programmes’ (DeTEL), generously funded by the European agency Tempus, which promotes innovation in higher education in the partner countries of Eastern Europe, Central Asia, the Western Balkans and the Mediterranean region. The DeTEL project focuses on improving the learning and teaching of European languages in various partner countries and aims to gain a better understanding of the role of norms and goals in the training of foreign and second language teachers. It is developing a blended master’s programme for current and prospective teachers of European languages, based on innovative learner-centred methodologies that relate to both European Union standards and the needs of national contexts.

It is the theme of teacher training that is explored in this book. The training process is considered from two perspectives for each of the five countries discussed: a descriptive dimension of the current training routes through which necessary teaching qualifications are obtained; and an evaluation as to the degree to which the training fits the purpose of teaching foreign and second languages in state secondary schools. Teacher training is described within the contexts of national policies for language learning and the nature of providers and courses, along with details of opportunities for teaching practice. The evaluative discussions review the perceptions of researchers, teachers and learners in order to assess how well the training equips teachers for curriculum preparation, class management and end results as measured by learners’ language fluency and accuracy.

The particularity of the German education system, presented by **Matthias Hutz**, is its decentralization due to Germany’s federal system.

Responsibility for education, including the ways in which foreign language teachers are trained, rests with the sixteen federal states, each having developed its own system. Teacher training is typically divided into three main stages: a higher education course, preparatory training in a school setting and in-service training for fully employed teachers. The author explains how this works in relation to examples of teaching English and other foreign languages in secondary schools in Germany and the role of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages in developing communicative skills and intercultural communicative competence. Although encouraging dynamic, innovative and competitive education systems, federalism also causes numerous problems as a result of legislative changes affecting foreign language teaching/learning that can vary from state to state. There is also a real difficulty for teachers who wish to work in a different state from the one in which they were trained. Many universities establish interdisciplinary Centres of Teacher Education in order to prepare students for their teaching career and to ensure continuity between the different stages of training.

A shift between theoretical and practical teacher training seems to persist in France. **Anne Prunet** presents an overview of master's degrees in French universities that are designed for students wanting to teach French as a foreign language in France or abroad. Four sample master's degrees are explored in order to discover whether there is an overall coherence in defining the contents of training programmes for teachers of French as a foreign language. The strengths and weakness of these master's degrees are considered through interviewing a group of students who have followed such courses. The common feature of the master's degrees discussed in this chapter seems to be the diversity of approaches, courses and training options. This can partly be explained by the absence of a national competitive examination, unlike the training of teachers of French as a mother tongue.

Carmen Avram outlines the national competitive examinations that lead to certification for teaching French as a mother tongue and foreign languages in secondary schools in France. The competitive exams, which are at the heart of the French centralized system, are presented, focusing on the general admission conditions and the specific requirements of tests in French and foreign languages. The *CAPES* and *Agrégation* remain concentrated on discourse-based academic knowledge and do not provide a real evaluation of professional skills, despite changes to the oral tests having been introduced in 2014 and involving the simulation of a teaching

sequence. Driven by a wish to integrate theoretical and practical training, new teacher training master's degrees were created in 2013 within the ESPE (Ecole Supérieure du Professorat et de l'Éducation). However, the tendency in France seems to be an emphasis on the theoretical training of teachers provided by specialist master's degrees, together with the acquisition of professional skills that are defined by the Ministry of Education.

The Ukrainian model of foreign language teacher training, presented by **Lesia Dobrovolska** and **Tetyana Myronenko**, is related to national, socio-economic and cultural dimensions. In the first part of this chapter, the authors provide a framework of the Ukrainian education system, beginning with a historical perspective and continuing with a description of the most significant reforms in higher educational establishments, motivated by the implementation of the Bologna Process principles. Several changes were introduced during 2014/15 academic year, such as education quality control, decentralization, financial transparency and the economic autonomy of universities, student government, and faculty and student academic mobility. The second part of the chapter deals with higher education qualification levels in Ukraine and general admission requirements. The last part explores the applied qualities and professional competences necessary for teaching languages.

Iryna Sieriakova and **Olga Valigura** consider the efficacy of foreign language teacher training in Ukraine, based on the practical experience of teachers and students at Kyiv National Linguistic University (KNLU). The first part of this chapter deals with the general organization of teacher training. Although foreign language teaching training in Ukraine continues to focus on acquiring linguistic knowledge rather than practice-based preparation, continuity of training throughout the professional life of a teacher is provided by mandatory in-service courses every five years. In addition, during the first five years of teaching, a system of model teacher mentors helps novice teachers in their new profession. The second part of the chapter describes the English Language and Literature master's degree curriculum that was created at KNLU, which includes the implementation of the blended learning courses 'English Language Improvement' and 'Technology and Language Teaching'.

Natalia Fenenko and **Elena Chaika** analyse the efficacy of second language teacher training in the Russian system, based on the experience of teachers, students and graduates of Voronezh State University. The

chapter provides historical and analytical insight into the way second language teacher training is organized in Russia, together with the development of more recent changes, such as interdisciplinary integration, diversification, the introduction of information and communication technologies, and a focus on the intercultural aspects of teaching languages. The modern concept of second language teacher training adopted by the Faculty of Romance and Germanic Philology of Voronezh State University is based on competence and personality-active approaches. This model includes three substantive components: the assimilation of pedagogical and methodological knowledge about the learning process and the acquisition of professional skills; professional and personal self-assertion and self-development; creative self-realization and self-actualization in professional activities. A competitiveness study involving undergraduates of the Faculty of Romance and Germanic Philology is presented in the last part of the chapter. It shows that competitiveness includes not only theoretical and professional skills, but also, to a large extent, individual personality characteristics.

Margarita Galieva and **Nozliya Normurodova** consider political changes in Uzbekistan (which gained independence in 1991) in explaining the reforms in its education system: two legislative documents – the ‘Law on Education’ of 1992 and 1997, and the ‘National Programme for Personnel Training’ of 1998 – have become major guidelines in terms of educational policy, structure and system. This chapter provides a thorough description of the education system and of the different approaches and curriculum content of foreign language teacher training in philological, classical and pedagogical universities. The curriculums in higher educational institutions are designed to conform to the two national legislative documents and the 2012 Presidential Decree regarding the implementation of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages in teaching foreign languages (English, German and French). Postgraduate instruction is also provided by In-Service Teacher Training programmes, which are compulsory for teachers of all educational sectors and must be followed every three years.

The latest reforms in teaching modern languages in Uzbekistan are described in the next chapter, authored by **Gulnara Makhkamova** and **Aygul Tadjibaeva**. They present the features of evaluating the efficacy of modern languages teacher training, focusing on the professional requirements set down in the State Educational Standards. Assessment of the quality of training is organized using a system of internal and external

evaluation, which includes self-evaluation and a peer-evaluation (by learners as well as teachers) of aspects such as the quality of the subject matter and the educational programme as a whole. A questionnaire is conducted among teachers and students twice a year in order to monitor the quality and relevance of teaching subjects and coursebooks, the validity of assessment tools and so forth. External evaluation is organized by the State Testing Centre, which uses a range of different types of tests to assess the level of knowledge, language and professional skills of foreign language teachers.

The last chapter, written by **Natalia Fenenko** and **Tatiana Koziura**, presents examples of using Web technology – in particular, the Moodle learning management system – in training foreign language teachers at the French Philology Department of Voronezh State University in Russia. The first part of this chapter deals with e-learning courses for theoretical and practical courses such as ‘Business writing in the first foreign language’, ‘French as the third foreign language for bachelor’s students’, ‘Geography and culture of the French regions’ and ‘French language for students of non-language faculties’. The main purpose of using Moodle e-learning courses is to improve communication skills in a foreign language. In the last part of the chapter the use of ICT during the students’ teaching practice is discussed, its goal being to develop the general professional competences of future teachers of foreign languages and to help them acquire practical skills in teaching and organizing extracurricular activities.

The comparative perspective allows the identification of convergent and divergent features in teachers’ training. For example, the various degrees of autonomy of individual teachers is one dimension of differentiation between national systems. Furthermore, as Odile Blanvillain points out in the afterword, although school organization and teacher training are guided by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages in general terms, in actual fact they are heavily dependent on national policies and contexts. Beyond borders, progress is being furthered by lifelong learning – now compulsory in the Russian Federation, but virtually non-existent in France.

CHAPTER ONE

TRAINING FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHERS IN GERMANY

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Abstract

As a result of its federal system, Germany's educational system is highly decentralized. This is also reflected in the way in which foreign language teachers are trained since each of the sixteen federal states has developed its own educational system. Teacher training in Germany is typically divided into three main stages: a higher education course, a preparatory service in a school setting and finally in-service training for fully employed teachers. In the first part of this chapter all three phases will be described in the context of foreign language education. In the second part, several political initiatives will be discussed, including the selection of foreign languages for study, the introduction of early foreign language learning and the role of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) in Germany. In the final part, Germany's teacher training programme will be critically assessed, in particular with regard to the pros and cons of the federal system and the cooperation between different institutions involved in teacher education and the professional development of teachers.

1. The education system

Due to its federal system Germany has a very complex and, in contrast to most countries, a highly decentralized education system. Responsibility for the education system rests with the sixteen federal states (*Länder*). Each one has its own education system and its own Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs, which is also responsible for the development of school curriculums and for teacher education, including in-service training.

However, in order to secure certain standards and to monitor the outcome of education on a national level, a national institution, the so-called ‘Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs’ (Kultusministerkonferenz; KMK), a voluntary assembly of the appointed State Ministers of Education and Research, was established in 1948. However, despite this national institution there are, in fact, sixteen different, relatively independent and sovereign education systems in Germany – each with its own distinctive features.

Each state has certain regulations concerning school enrolment and the transition from primary school to one of the lower secondary school types, but, as a rule, compulsory schooling begins in the year in which children reach the age of six and usually involves four years in primary school. German pupils have at least nine years of full-time schooling, but in some states – for instance, in Berlin, Brandenburg, Bremen and Thüringen – ten years are required.

The secondary school system (usually from grade 5 to grade 12 or 13) is traditionally characterized by a division into three courses of education (*Hauptschule*, *Realschule*, *Gymnasium*) with different leaving certificates and qualifications. However, the general principle of federalism has led to a great deal of diversity within the German education system. Each federal state has its own peculiarities, including different school types or different names for the same school types.

Hence, the following table (1.1) can give only a rough outline of the education system. In some of the federal states the length of primary education can differ (e.g. in Berlin and Brandenburg, primary school comprises six grades).

	Grade	Schools
Primary education	Before grade 1 Grades 1–4	Kindergarten (optional), Primary school
Secondary education Lower secondary level Upper secondary level	Grades 5–9 Grades 5–10 Grades 5–12 or 5–13	<i>Hauptschule</i> , <i>Werkrealschule</i> <i>Realschule</i> <i>Gymnasium</i> , <i>Berufliches</i> <i>Gymnasium</i> (‘Vocational school’)

Table 1.1

2. Teacher training

Like the education system itself, the system of teacher training is also decentralized. The training of teachers for all types of schools is not regulated by national legislation, but individually by the sixteen federal states. Teacher training courses are offered at universities and, in the state of Baden-Württemberg, at universities of education (*Pädagogische Hochschulen*). Each federal state offers specific bachelor's and master's study programmes that provide the qualifications required for admission to the preparatory service (*Referendariat* or *Vorbereitungsdienst*). The successful completion of this in-service training is, in turn, required before teachers can be fully employed in schools.

Stage	Institutions	Duration	Content	Examination
Stage 1: Higher education course	Universities, Universities of Education (<i>Pädagogische Hochschulen</i>)	BA: 3 to 4 years + MA: 1 to 2 years (Formerly 'First State Examination': 4 to 5 years)	At least two major subjects and educational studies; short-term practical training or student teaching semester (<i>Praxissemester</i>)	MA or First State Examination (final thesis, oral and written exams)
Stage 2: Preparatory service	Teacher seminars (<i>Ausbildungsseminare</i>) and assigned schools (<i>Ausbildungsschulen</i>)	1.5 to 2 years	Practical training; a) School setting: observation of teaching and guided teaching b) Teacher seminar: reflection of teaching and learning processes	Second State Examination
Stage 3: Continuing education	Institutions of teacher training at regional or local level and individual schools	Single days	Lectures, workshops or seminars on various aspects of teaching	Individual certificates

Table 1.2

Teacher training in Germany is basically divided into three main stages (see Table 1.2): a higher education course, practical pedagogical training in a school setting and, finally, in-service training for fully employed teachers. During the first stage at least two main subjects are studied at a university. The master's programme typically also includes educational studies and extended periods of practical training. The second stage, the preparatory service (*Vorbereitungsdienst*), which follows higher education, lasts between 18 and 24 months and includes practical training in a school setting as well as the attendance of courses at a teacher seminar. It involves guided and autonomous teaching and is supervised by mentors in schools and teacher seminars. It concludes with the so-called 'Second State Examination'. Finally, the third stage, in-service training, involves the professional development of teachers.

2.1 University training

As for other programmes in higher education, the basic university entrance qualification for teacher training courses is the so-called *Hochschulreife*, which is awarded, as a rule, after attending school for 12 or 13 years and passing the *Abitur* examination at an upper secondary school.

The standard period for the first course of study is ten semesters, although in some cases training for primary school teachers and lower-secondary school teachers might be shorter than for upper-secondary school teachers. University students normally select two subject areas that are also taught in school. The study of teaching methodology in each subject is normally an integral part of the course as well as an extended period of teaching practice that is supervised by school teachers and/or university lecturers. In some cases even an entire semester might be spent in a school setting. In addition to this, educational studies and psychology have to be studied.

Teacher training is regulated by the legislation of the individual federal states. Examinations – i.e. First and Second *Staatsexamen* (State Examination) – are administered by the state examination boards of the *Länder*. The exams typically consist of a thesis in the first or the second subject or in educational science, written and oral exams in the subjects studied – mainly on academic aspects of the subject, but possibly also on subject-related teaching methodology – as well as an exam in educational science.¹

¹ Recently, as a result of the Bologna reforms, in most federal states the First State Examination has been replaced by the final exams required for an MA programme

2.2 Preparatory service (*Vorbereitungsdienst*)

Following a teaching-related course of studies in higher education, the *Vorbereitungsdienst* (preparatory service) is the second stage of teacher training for all teaching careers. Again, it may vary in length (from 18 to 24 months) depending on the state's specific legislation.

A pass in the First State Examination – or, more recently, the completion of a master's degree programme – is required for admission to the preparatory service, which takes place in regular schools. After graduation, a school is assigned to the trainee teachers where they are initially obliged to observe lessons held by other teachers before they teach their own lessons in their specific subjects under the supervision of a 'mentor' at the school. In general, their workload (approximately only 10 to 12 hours of teaching per week) is considerably reduced compared to that of regular teachers.

In addition to their teaching, the trainees also have to take courses at a teacher seminar, including classes on teaching methodology, educational studies, school law and civil service law. During the preparatory stage at least one day per week has to be spent at the teacher seminar in order to reflect on practical and theoretical aspects of teaching. The preparatory service concludes with the Second State Examination, which is the prerequisite for employment in a state-run school, but also in many private schools. The examination phase typically includes several written and oral exams as well as a graded assessment of individual lessons taught in the school setting.

2.3 In-service training

After pre-service teachers have successfully passed both examinations and have been fully employed by the state,² professional development of teachers normally continues in the form of state-run in-service teacher training courses offered by the federal states in order to extend the professional skills of the teachers. Despite the limited duration of the individual seminars this professional development is sometimes referred to as the third stage of teacher education.

since, by now, most German universities have introduced the bachelor's and master's system.

² Successful completion does not automatically guarantee employment by the state since employment depends on the availability of teaching positions. If there are too many vacancies, a federal state may also offer positions to graduates from other states. In many states, teachers can obtain the status of civil servants.

The training sessions, conferences or workshops may last for a few hours, a full day or, in some cases, several days. They are organized at national, regional and local level and may also take place within individual schools. All *Länder* have established state-run institutions³ in central locations, but lower-level supervisory authorities (*Schulämter*) often organize in-service training at local level for several schools.

Again, the provision of in-service teacher training may vary from state to state. Attendance is compulsory in some states, but some states have established complex incentive schemes for taking part in these workshops or seminars. The range of topics is usually very broad: the course content may be related to individual school subjects, but also to general educational issues such as ‘inclusion’ or ‘working in mixed-ability classes’.

3. Training foreign language teachers

The prototypical training route for teaching foreign languages in Germany is a five-year bachelor’s/master’s study programme. For instance, a prospective teacher of English as a Foreign Language is very likely to study the following areas within their course of studies:

- English language skills
- Area and cultural studies
- Linguistics
- Literature
- Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL)

During their programme they are also likely to get some practical training at a school: for example, at a primary school or a *Gymnasium*. Quite often, these placements are also supervised by university lecturers and accompanied by special courses related to the teaching experience. At many universities, foreign language teachers may also spend a semester abroad during their programme, although this usually happens on a voluntary basis.

Although the requirements are relatively similar for most foreign language teachers across Germany, there is also considerable variation during the two main stages of education. In some states, for instance, the

³ Recently, Centres of Teacher Education (*Zentren für Lehrerbildung*) have been established where academic scholars, teacher trainers and administrators work on bridging the gap between university and school.

academic education of teachers at primary schools might differ from that of teachers at secondary levels. Quite often there is even a separation between the upper and the lower secondary school level. Baden-Württemberg, for example, offers programmes for teaching English at primary schools and lower secondary schools at special universities of education where a considerable amount of time is dedicated to the study of TEFL and to educational studies, in particular in the context of the primary school classroom. Students pursuing a teaching career at a *Gymnasium* normally enter a university where more study time is allotted to academic fields – including cultural, literary and linguistic studies – than to teaching methodology. Thus, depending on the school type, the amount of academic input might differ considerably.

In general, however, there is obviously a considerable discrepancy between the study of English as an academic subject and teaching English at school. Students – even those eventually training to become primary school teachers – are required to acquire academic subject knowledge that goes far beyond what is actually needed at school (Grimm et al. 2015, 15), for example in the field of literature. This alleged remoteness from school practice during the first stage of teacher education has long been a topic of controversy, but it is general consensus that students need to have a solid theoretical foundation in their academic subjects as well. In most master's programmes the field of Teaching English or French as a Foreign Language is now an integral part, but its scope within the individual programmes may vary considerably. On the other hand, it is clear that students must also gain insights into foreign language teaching at an early stage – and possibly also get some practical training – in order to find out about their professional and personal aptitude as early as possible.

4. Teaching foreign languages in schools

4.1 The distribution of languages

According to Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union,⁴ 67.9% of pupils in German primary schools were learning at least one foreign language in 2013, which is below the EU average of 81.7%. In secondary schools, however, almost every pupil studied English as well as at least one other additional foreign language.

⁴ <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/2995521/7008563/3-24092015-AP-EN.pdf/bf8be07c-ff9d-406b-88f9-f98f5199fe5a>

In general, English is by far the dominant language both in primary and in secondary education. It is learnt by almost all pupils in primary school, with French as the second most common language trailing far behind with just 3.7%. However, in some regions that border onto France (e.g. in Baden-Württemberg and Saarland), French is taught as a first foreign language in primary school.

In secondary schools 97.8% of all pupils are studying English, while 24.4% are learning French, 3.7% are learning Spanish, 1.5% are learning Russian and 0.3% are learning Italian. The current trends indicate growing numbers for Spanish and Russian, but decreasing numbers for most other languages. In particular, French is coming under increasing pressure from Spanish in many regions. In fact, in vocational schools, learners of Spanish have already outnumbered learners of French.

Numbers of pupils studying foreign languages during the school year 2014/15

Language	Total number	Distribution of languages
English	7,274,027	71.6%
French	1,535,600	15.1%
Latin	688,625	6.8%
Spanish	404,183	4.0%
Russian	108,922	1.1%
Italian	51,012	0.5%
Turkish	12,182	0.1%
Greek	11,820	0.1%
Other languages	71,416	0.7%
Total number	10,157,787	100%

Statistics based on data provided by the Federal Office of Statistics⁵

Table 1.3

⁵ <https://www.destatis.de/DE/ZahlenFakten/GesellschaftStaat/BildungForschung/Kultur/Schulen/Tabellen/AllgemeinBildendeBeruflicheSchulenFremdsprachUnterricht.html> (numbers do not include vocational schools; often pupils learn more than one language simultaneously).

4.2 Early foreign language learning

In the school year 2003/04, English as a Foreign Language (EFL) was introduced as a compulsory primary school subject in all federal states of Germany in grades 3 and 4. Soon afterwards, several states introduced English (or in some border regions, French) as early as first grade. When foreign languages were introduced as a new school subject, it became apparent that there was a great shortage of qualified primary school teachers who had studied English or French as one of their majors at university. Instead, many 'half-skilled' teachers (i.e. those with some language competence in foreign languages) were appointed to teach foreign languages in primary schools. While some primary school teachers were made to teach English or French without any adequate training or formal qualifications at all, others participated at least in 'training-on-the-job' measures.

Several years after the nationwide introduction, doubts were expressed by parents, politicians and secondary school teachers about the effectiveness of teaching foreign languages in the primary school classroom.⁶ According to these critics, the early introduction of foreign language had not produced the positive results that had been expected, in particular in terms of lexical and grammatical competence. Baden-Württemberg, a state that had been at the forefront of the movement to introduce the learning of foreign languages at an early age, even began to question its own political initiative.

It soon became clear, however, that the results were largely due to the fact that the teaching of foreign languages had been introduced years before a substantial number of fully qualified teachers was available. Initially, many of the primary school teachers teaching English or French simply lacked appropriate qualifications, despite it being imperative that teachers not only set an adequate linguistic role model, but are also well-informed about the special conditions of EFL teaching methodology in the primary school classroom. However, more than a decade after the hasty introduction of teaching foreign languages in primary school, the problem of the shortage of fully qualified teachers has been largely solved.

In most states only two or three lessons (45 minutes each) of English or French are taught per week, which may not be regarded as sufficient to develop enough productive skills in the foreign language (Legutke et al. 2009, 14; Sauer 2000). In addition to this, in the past there has been

⁶ In an article about this topic the German news magazine *Der Spiegel* even claimed that the effect of teaching English in primary school was 'close to zero' (Greiner 2009).

relatively little exchange of information between teachers in primary schools and teachers in secondary schools to make sure that there is continuity for pupils. In general, the transition from primary to secondary school constitutes a great challenge both for pupils and for EFL teachers in Germany.

It should also be mentioned in this context that the early introduction of a foreign language is not the only factor that is crucial for success in second language learning. In fact, the quantity and quality of foreign language input are also significant variables that will determine learners' linguistic development in the long run.

4.3 The role of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)

Communicative competence has been the central objective of foreign language teaching in Germany since the end of the 1970s, when academics such as Hans-Eberhard Piepho made the term popular (Piepho 1974). When it was published in 2001, the Common European Framework of Reference certainly helped to entrench the goal of developing communicative skills and intercultural communicative competence in foreign language teaching.

The CEFR has also had great impact concerning language learning policy. The federal states have used the CEFR as a general framework to formulate their educational standards and curriculums in foreign language teaching (Zydatißen 2005; Grimm et al. 2015, 12). Therefore, most teachers are at least indirectly familiar with the CEFR. However, many teachers are sceptical about the direct implications of the CEFR for the classroom (Vogt 2012, 87f.; Beer 2007), also because of the relatively narrow focus on competences and the neglect of content. While the CEFR is widely accepted as a guideline for developing standards across Europe and the focus on the positive 'can do' statements rather than on learners' deficits is generally appreciated (Grimm et al. 2015, 13), there are also some problems involved. For instance, the idea of standardizing functional communicative competences may interfere with the idea of individualizing and personalizing the learning process based on the learners' specific needs when learning a foreign language.

The DESI (Deutsch Englisch Schülerleistungen International) test, which took place during the 2003/04 school year, attempted to monitor the outcome of English language instruction in a comparative test by examining the skills of listening comprehension, speaking, reading and writing, language awareness and intercultural awareness (see DESI-

Konsortium 2008). The study showed considerable differences concerning competence levels in all school types and deficits in listening and reading comprehension, but better results in productive skills. Despite the objectives stated in the CEFR and in various curriculums, the DESI study also revealed that the amount of teachers' talking time in the classroom was much greater than that of the students, which raised some doubts concerning the question as to how firmly established the communicative approach really was.

5. A critical evaluation

5.1 The federal system

An education system that is based on the principle of federalism certainly has numerous advantages since it can be very dynamic, highly innovative and competitive. New ideas can be implemented relatively easily in a decentralized system. A basic structure is respected by all the *Länder* and the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs is an institution that helps to secure standards on a national level.

However, the system also has its drawbacks concerning teacher education and foreign language education. Changes in government often lead to substantial legislative changes within the educational system. As a result of specific political initiatives, new types of schools might be established or existing ones restructured or simply renamed; new curriculums might be introduced as well as new master's programmes in teacher education. As a consequence, the education system is constantly subjected to reforms – and even reforms of the reforms – risking an educational patchwork in some cases.

Having sixteen different education systems can lead to numerous problems for pupils, parents and teachers. Even the decision as to when to introduce foreign language teaching is largely political in nature and can vary from state to state. The same is true for the sequence of teaching foreign languages. If families have to move from one federal state to another one for some reason, this can easily cause problems. While in most states English is the first foreign language, the second foreign language may differ from state to state. Even within a state there are sometimes 'language barriers': for example, in Baden-Württemberg, in the area close to the river Rhine, French is taught as a first foreign language in primary schools, while just a few miles inland English is taught. Thus, in the worst case, mobility might have a negative effect on pupils' performance in schools.

Likewise, it is also very difficult for teachers – albeit not impossible – to work in a different state than the one in which they were trained or even to do the preparatory service in a different state. Some states are reluctant to let teachers go because they have invested a lot of money in their training. Unless there is a shortage of teachers for specific types of schools or individual subjects, other states may be reluctant to recruit teachers with a different profile because they were trained in a ‘foreign’ education system. In most cases, mobility among teachers is organized more or less privately, i.e. a teacher may have to find, personally, a substitute from the state they wish to work in.

5.2 Transition from first to second stage of training

One of the greatest challenges in teacher education in Germany is to ensure a large degree of continuity between the first and second stages of teacher training. At present, however, two relatively autonomous systems coexist: teacher education at university level and teacher education at teacher training colleges during the preparatory service. In theory, continuity should be more or less guaranteed as a result of the fact that each federal state is responsible both for its universities and its training colleges. In practice, the exchange of information between institutions from both systems has been limited, which has led to several problems.

In the past the universities have sometimes been criticized for not preparing prospective teachers sufficiently for the real classroom experience (e.g. Blömeke 2001; Terhart 2013). On the other hand, teacher training colleges have sometimes been criticized for not fully implementing recent research and theoretical approaches.

To overcome these deficits, numerous changes have been introduced in recent years. Many universities have established interdisciplinary Centres of Teacher Education (*Zentren für Lehrerbildung*) to prepare students for their teaching career and to make teacher education more effective and coherent. In addition to this, a so-called ‘*Praxissemester*’, a long-term school placement, has been introduced in numerous states, such as Baden-Württemberg and North Rhine-Westphalia. One of the main objectives of this placement is to combine theoretical and practical considerations. In some cases this idea has also been formalized through the supervision of students jointly provided by a university lecturer and a school teacher.

Thus, students are expected to reflect upon their classroom experience in a theoretically informed way. In the context of foreign language teaching, this means that students prepare lessons (usually of 45 minutes each) on specific topics and hand in lesson plans before they conduct their

lessons. In their lesson plans they typically have to specify the following items:

- general topic of the lesson
- general teaching objectives (e.g. language skills, vocabulary, grammar)
- length of the individual phases
- specific objectives of the individual phases
- description of tasks and procedure
- type of teacher–student interaction
- class arrangement (e.g. pairwork/groupwork)
- use of media

Typically, students receive feedback on their lesson plan from their supervisors before they hold the lesson. Afterwards, there is usually a joint session of both supervisors and the student group to discuss the lesson in great detail. In general, this form of reflective practice has been found to be very effective.

6. Conclusion

All in all, the German system of teacher education is very dynamic and has undergone numerous changes in recent years. This is particularly true for the field of foreign language teaching. Some factors that have redefined foreign language teaching have been the introduction of early foreign language teaching in primary schools, the increasing dominance of English, and numerous significant initiatives on a political level, including the consideration of the Common European Framework in most curriculums. All of these factors have led to numerous changes in training foreign language teachers during all three stages of teacher education.

Some of the problems (e.g. the lack of continuity between the different stages in teacher education) have been addressed, but not yet entirely solved. In particular, it remains to be seen how the challenges posed by the principle of federalism, such as the issue of mobility among pupils, students and teachers, might be resolved in the future.

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DESI-Studie (Deutsch Englisch Schülerleistungen International)

<http://www.dipf.de/de/forschung/projekte/pdf/biqua/desi-zentrale-befunde>

Kultusministerkonferenz (2012): *Bildungsstandards für die fortgeführte Fremdsprache (Englisch/Französisch) für die Allgemeine Hochschulreife*

http://www.kmk.org/fileadmin/veroeffentlichungen_beschluesse/2012/2012_10_18-Bildungsstandards-Fortgef-FS-Abi.pdf.

<https://www.destatis.de/DE/ZahlenFakten/GesellschaftStaat/BildungForschungKultur/Schulen/Tabellen/AllgemeinBildendeBeruflicheSchulenFremdsprachUnterricht.html>

<https://www.european-agency.org/country-information/germany/national-overview/teacher-training-basic-and-specialist-teacher-training>

http://www.kmk.org/fileadmin/veroeffentlichungen_beschluesse/2013/2013_10_17-Fremdsprachen-in-der-Grundschule.pdf

<http://www.kmk.org/dokumentation/das-bildungswesen-in-der-bundesrepublik-deutschland/dossier-englisch/publikation-zum-download.html>

http://www.stifterverband.info/publikationen_und_podcasts/positionen_dokumentationen/reform_praxisphasen_lehrerbildung/reform_praxisphasen_lehrerbildung.pdf

CHAPTER TWO

TRAINING TO TEACH FRENCH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE: AN OVERVIEW OF MASTER'S DEGREES OFFERED BY UNIVERSITIES IN FRANCE

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Abstract

This chapter concerns the master's degree in France that is designed to train teachers of French as a foreign language and assesses its appropriateness to the professional practice of future teachers in the field. This training is generally offered as part of a master's degree in linguistics. It is peculiar in the French education landscape in as much as it is not regulated by the national certification examinations for state secondary school teaching, and the types of posts for which it is designed are far more diverse. This review presents 35 such master's degrees, exploring their content and objectives. In order to further understand the appropriateness of the training offered, a sample group of students who had followed this type of training were interviewed. The resulting questionnaires reveal that the introductions to elements of professional practice were found to be beneficial but, on the other hand, most programmes took too theoretical a stance and lacked clearly defined professional outlooks. It would appear that this mismatch between training and readiness for real-life teaching results from a highly centralized, state-directed environment.

1. Introduction

This chapter describes master's degrees available in French universities that are designed for students wanting to teach French as a foreign language. As a preamble we need to specify what is available for the teaching of foreign languages in secondary schools in France. Avram's chapter in this volume discusses the training of foreign language teachers in general. This chapter concentrates on the case of French, which is different for two reasons. Firstly, the context and the means of teaching are different: in effect, French as a foreign language (FLE, *Français Langue Etrangère*) involves teaching in a native context with delivery in the target language, while for the other languages it is a question of teaching in a foreign context delivered for the most part in the target language but with the possible use of the language shared by learners and teachers. In addition, for FLE the training of teachers is different from that of teachers of other foreign languages, in so far as there is no CAPES or *Agrégation* for FLE; therefore, master's degrees are the training method for teaching French as a foreign language.

We have identified 35 training programmes. In order to present them and to understand in what ways they are complementary, we have brought together general information defining the institutional framework surrounding the teaching of French as a foreign language, as well as information relating to the 35 programmes from the universities' Internet sites. There we found the presentation of master's degrees, including the training objectives and the course programmes that are provided. Also, we were able to question twelve people who had gained a master's degree in teaching FLE (between 2001 and 2014), with a view to gathering together a testimony of students who had followed these programmes. The questionnaire that we submitted to them was designed to collect their feedback on the courses they had followed.¹ The observation on which we

¹ The questions were as follows:

1. Personal situation: number of years of teaching experience; type of student; type, date and place of master's degree training; highest diploma achieved; other disciplines studied.
2. Why did you choose to do a Teaching French as a Foreign Language master's degree?
3. What are the strong points of the training?
4. What are the weak points?
5. What were you expecting from it that was not covered?
6. How should these have been covered?

base our analysis is as follows: the domain of French as a foreign language displays great variations and this has an impact on how we define the epistemological outlines and foundations of the discipline. To what extent, however, is it possible to define these epistemological foundations? What links do the master's degrees in teaching FLE propose between disciplinary content and didactics? What place is given to professional practice? We discuss the public for these master's degree programmes and the teaching context, give a summary evaluation of the programmes, analyse the responses of the twelve interviewees, and evaluate the points of divergence and convergence between the factual and programmatic data of the training programmes and the testimonies.

2. For whom are these master's degree programmes designed?

2.1 Prospective teachers: diversity of training, experience and needs

Access to the master's degree in teaching FLE is possible for holders of a first degree in languages, in modern literature and in the science of languages accompanied by a FLE course. The consequence of these access requirements is that students come from a very broad range of academic backgrounds and it is difficult to claim that the master's degree in teaching FLE constitutes a real continuity of any previous course. Furthermore, the French university system as a whole is in the process of restructuring its training provisions; so, the different universities that offer master's degrees in teaching FLE are currently presenting their training within the framework of the previous system – determined by the UFR (*Unité de formation et de recherche*), then department, then title of the master's degree course – or of the future system, which is structured in terms of subject areas. Under the new system these subject areas are reduced to four: legal sciences, politics, economics and management; humanities, languages and communication; human sciences; sciences, health and

7. Do you see this master's degree as focusing on didactics, linguistics, literature, culture, or some other field? Rate the importance of each from 1 to 4 (1 being the most important).

8. Do you feel that the relation between didactics and other disciplines is satisfactory? Feel free to expand.

9. Do you think that your master's degree trained you well for your teaching career? Feel free to expand.

10. Do you think a FLE CAPES is a good idea? Why?