

# Training Foreign and Second Language Teachers



# Training Foreign and Second Language Teachers:

*European Challenges, Successes  
and Perspectives*

Edited by

Carmen Avram and Pierre Larrivé

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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).

|  | <b>Grade</b>                                     | <b>Schools</b>  |
|--|--|---|
| <b>Primary education</b>   | Before grade 1<br>Grades 1–4                     | Kindergarten<br>(optional),<br>Primary school   |
| <b>Secondary education</b><br>Lower secondary level<br><br>Upper secondary level | Grades 5–9<br>Grades 5–10<br>Grades 5–12 or 5–13 | <i>Hauptschule</i> ,<br><i>Werkrealschule</i><br><i>Realschule</i><br><i>Gymnasium</i> ,<br><i>Berufliches</i><br><i>Gymnasium</i><br>(‘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  |
|---|--|--|--|--|
| <b>Stage 1:<br/>Higher education course</b> | 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) |
| <b>Stage 2:<br/>Preparatory service</b>     | 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   |
| <b>Stage 3:<br/>Continuing education</b>    | 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.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 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,<sup>2</sup> 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.

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

<sup>2</sup> 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 institutions<sup>3</sup> 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

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<sup>3</sup> 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,<sup>4</sup> 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.

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<sup>4</sup> <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**

| <b>Language</b>     | <b>Total number</b> | <b>Distribution of languages</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|
| 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%                             |
| <b>Total number</b> | <b>10,157,787</b>   | <b>100%</b>                      |

Statistics based on data provided by the Federal Office of Statistics<sup>5</sup>

**Table 1.3**

<sup>5</sup> <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.<sup>6</sup> 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

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<sup>6</sup> 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 (Zydati 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 Schlerleistungen 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](http://www.kmk.org/fileadmin/veroeffentlichungen_beschluesse/2012/2012_10_18-Bildungsstandards-Fortgef-FS-Abi.pdf).

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## 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.<sup>1</sup> The observation on which we

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<sup>1</sup> 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

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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?

technology. However, language sciences, which sometimes incorporates the master's degree in teaching FLE, can belong to two different fields: humanities, languages and communication or human sciences. This is a second factor in explaining the diversity of training provision.

Finally, the European LMD (*Licence–Master–Doctorate*) university system and the relatively recent existence in the history of French universities of a pathway specific to the teaching of FLE lead many teachers already in post to follow a master's degree, which was introduced in the field in 1983 (decree of 25 January). The different master's degrees propose particular arrangements that allow these students to follow only certain modules and universities offer them accreditations, thereby introducing a new element of diversity, this latter public being, as a matter of course, more experienced than students in higher education but not always having an equivalent or similar theoretical training. In this respect, the twelve people that we interviewed are typical of the diversity of this public – in terms of their higher education (English, Arab, German as a foreign language, modern literature, history), of the level of training already attained (from Master 1 to postgraduate),<sup>2</sup> of the number of years of experience already gained when taking the master's degree (from no experience to fourteen years of teaching experience) and of their training objectives (retraining, diversifying, development of skills with a view to creating new professional expertise, initial training for teaching FLE, in France, abroad, for adults, children or adolescents). This diversity of potential FLE teachers is linked to the diversity of the users, which we present briefly here.

## **2.2 Learners: variety in level, age, background, objectives**

### **2.2.1 Structures for teaching French in France**

Future FLE teachers are required to teach within a great variety of structures. Firstly, let us consider those in France. Each year, university language centres, along with certain independent schools, welcome around 100,000 students who learn French as part of their studies. The aim of these students is to follow an integrated course in a French university with whom they sign up to an exchange programme that allows them to spend a year or a term abroad. These students are catered for by Centres Universitaires de Français Langue Etrangère (CUFLE). In addition, the

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<sup>2</sup> Master 1 is the first year of a two-year master's degree; Master 2 is the second year.

Alliances Françaises in France, whose mission is the promotion of the French language and culture in France and abroad, receive around 11,500 learners each year. Finally, there are also non-profit organizations (community centres, social centres, etc.) that offer free lessons: their students are often immigrants whose situation is precarious and whose level of schooling is sometimes low or non-existent. This is why these organizations offer literacy in addition to so-called FLE lessons. The teaching of FLE within businesses has also been developing since the 2004 law in which the command of the French language is recognized as a professional competence. Most of the centres labelled as FLE – university or otherwise – are also organizations for continuing education. For minors resident in France there are classes for non-francophone speakers designed for pupils newly arrived in France (ENAF) as part of the national education system: CLIN (*classe d'initiation*) in primary schools and CLA (*classe d'accueil*) in secondary schools.

CLA exist in *collèges* and *lycées*<sup>3</sup> and are located in all *académies*,<sup>4</sup> but it is the *académies* of Paris, Versailles and Créteil who have the most. The issue of teaching French in these classes is threefold. It concerns a learning of the language that might resemble FLE at the start. However, the learners live in France and are developing within an environment that is totally different from that of the learner of a foreign language living in their country of origin. Moreover, from the point of view of teaching French, the aim is to give pupils the tools that will allow them to understand French as a discipline, namely the variety of French known as 'FLM' (*Français Langue Maternelle*, meaning 'French as a first language'). It is also a question of teaching the national language, which is necessary in order to follow any lesson in our education system, and, in this sense, the issues of teaching French in a reception class differ from those of, for example, language centres, to the extent that this requires specific skills such as the understanding of instructions, of vocabulary specific to each discipline, of very specific documents of which the linguistic targets are not the same as that of the so-called general or standard French taught in FLE. Furthermore, the urgency (pupils are in CLA for one year) and the heterogeneity of the users (in terms of age, native language or type of previous education) lead to establishing priorities and to developing learning strategies specific to the teaching situation.

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<sup>3</sup> The *collège* and *lycée* are the two phases of secondary schooling, the *collège* taking pupils from 11 to 15 years old and the *lycée* from 15 to 18 years old.

<sup>4</sup> Secondary schools are administered by *académies* (regional education authorities), of which there are 30 in France.



## 2.2.2 Structures for teaching French abroad

Abroad, the Institut Français (answerable to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs) and the Alliance Française, together with private language schools, provide courses for children and adults. In addition, cooperation attachés are responsible for the promotion of bilingual areas, and for the training of school and university education providers.

Master's degrees in teaching FLE must take into account this diversity of learners and teaching contexts, and train future teachers to teach children, teenagers and adults, whether within the framework of higher education or continued education or in an extracurricular environment, in a francophone context or abroad, to a public whose native language is the same or to a public with different native languages, and having very diverse levels of French and schooling (ranging from illiteracy to postdoctorate); in addition, they should also provide training for trainers, trainers themselves teaching a very varied public.<sup>5</sup> The heterogeneity of situations is compounded by the fact that there was until recently no recognition of the FLE discipline in the secondary school sector. These contribute to the eclectic nature of the training for teaching FLE in French universities.

## 3. Presentation of master's degrees in teaching FLE

### 3.1 Analysis of the contexts through looking at titles and hierarchical structures

#### 3.1.1 Domain names

The macrostructure of a programme is driven by the academic domain it belongs to. Two broad trends stand out: thirteen master's degrees carry the name '*arts, lettres, langues*' (arts, literature, languages) and eight the name '*sciences humaines et sociales*' (humanities and social sciences). However, neither of the two domains indicates the teaching aspect. So the master's degree in teaching FLE is often integrated into a disciplinary field that does not separate teaching from disciplinary content. Two disciplinary fields emerge: the first (*arts, lettres, langues*) basing the teaching of French as a foreign language on more literary disciplinary content and

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<sup>5</sup> Such training for trainers is provided by university language centres, by teachers at UFRs that include courses in teaching FLE, often within the framework of intensive summer programmes.

showing FLE alongside other modern languages; the other integrating the teaching of FLE into the wider field of humanities and social sciences. To the latter field could be added the master's degree at Caen where the domain is called '*sciences de l'homme*' (human sciences) and that at Lille where it is called '*humanités*' (humanities). Alongside these two major, fairly balanced poles are master's degrees whose domains integrate both the two poles, using names such as '*arts, lettres, langues et sciences humaines et sociales*' (arts, literature, languages and social and human sciences), at Aix-Marseille, and '*lettres langue et sciences humaines*' (humanities, language and human sciences), at Pau, and even '*lettres, arts et sciences humaines*' (literature, arts and human sciences), at Nice, the latter offering the particularity of not singling out languages that are found integrated in the field of humanities or of human sciences. Another master's degree whose domain name is very encompassing is that of Lyon – '*lettres, sciences du langage et arts*' (literature, language sciences and arts) – a name, however, that sets it apart by the mention of '*sciences du langage*', preferred to the term '*langues*' (languages), more often used. This implies that the disciplinary field tends towards the study of the language rather than towards the learning of a foreign language. This is equally the case with the master's degree at Paris IV, called '*lettres, philologie et linguistique*' (literature, philology and linguistics), which, with the term '*linguistique*', like the master's degree at Lyon, puts the accent on studying the analysis of the language and, with the term '*philologie*', little used these days, fits it explicitly into a field of traditional studies. Paris III proposes '*littérature, linguistique et didactique*' (literature, linguistics and didactics), making the teaching aspect explicit in the domain name. The master's degree at Bordeaux fits into a field that puts the emphasis on the language and on civilization, doing away with the terms '*arts*' and '*lettres*', which makes the title more generic, a part of '*civilisation*', less and less used due to its connotations, but which here tends to show the desire to study language from a sociolinguistic perspective.

Thus the domain names reflect a very wide epistemological spectrum, with a continuum between different disciplinary fields labelled by terms used in the domain names: *civilisation*, *sciences humaines*, *sciences de l'homme*, *humanités*, *arts*, *lettres*, *littérature*, *philologie*, *linguistique*, *sciences du langage*, *communication*, *didactique*. These fields do not overlap. Some are more inclusive than others: for example, '*sciences humaines / de l'homme / sociales*' are wider than '*littérature*'. Others, though, show a difference in point of view: 'languages' versus 'linguistics', the first term putting the emphasis on the study of a foreign

language, and the second on language functions. ‘Language sciences’ versus ‘linguistics’ allows a distinction between a training programme more open to the fields of cognition (acquisition, cognitive science) and another more specifically centred on the study of the language.

### 3.1.2 Specifications

Concerning specifications for these master’s degrees, twelve use the name ‘*sciences du langage*’. However, not all belong to the same domain; on the contrary, one finds ‘*arts, lettres, langues*’ as much as ‘*sciences humaines et sociales*’, while others such as ‘*sciences de l’homme*’, ‘*langues et civilisation*’ and ‘*humanités*’ are less represented. To these twelve master’s degrees one can add a domain name that is close from the epistemological point of view: ‘*linguistique*’, as used at Orléans and at Poitiers. Eight master’s degrees use the name ‘*didactique des langues*’ (teaching of languages), revealing equally at this level a balance between two poles – on the one hand, language sciences and, on the other, teaching.

To these eight master’s degrees one can add the names ‘*français langue étrangère*’ of Paris X-Nanterre and Pau, ‘*FLE: analyse et programmation de la communication didactique*’ of Nantes, and finally ‘*didactique du français langue étrangère et seconde*’ of Nice. While all remain within the field of teaching, these three titles characterize the master’s degree by restricting the teaching field to FLE. The Nice degree explicitly mentions the field of FLS (*Français Langue Seconde*, meaning ‘French as a second language’), which allows one to think that the emphasis there is put on a certain kind of teaching of which the outlines remain indistinct, depending on the meaning one gives to this term.<sup>6</sup> The master’s degree at Nantes emphasizes the communicative aspect of FLE,

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<sup>6</sup> According to Cuq and Gruca (2002), FLS has three definitions. The first refers to a language learned after the native language (mother tongue); the idea that the process of its acquisition is different from that of the first language does not hold sway for all researchers. The second definition is based on the sociolinguistic context, the second language being a language learned after the native language but with the differentiated institutional status of a foreign language (French in French-speaking Africa for example). The third definition is more rigorous: it concerns French learned in a French-speaking country by immigrants. As a language essential for integration, it is differentiated from a foreign language for the learner, whether they be an adult in a social or a professional context, or a child or adolescent in a social or school context. In its last meaning, FLS brings us back to the teaching of FLE offered in France to learners who live there.

giving it an applied dimension, in the sense that language is considered as a tool that allows communication with another person.

Lastly, the specifications of four master's degrees combine aspects of language sciences or of linguistics together with teaching. '*Linguistique et français langue étrangère*' (Linguistics and French as a foreign language) at Avignon invites us to consider the link between the disciplinary field of linguistics and that of teaching/learning French as a foreign language. The same is true for the heading '*sciences du langage et français langue étrangère*' (language sciences and French as a foreign language), with the distinction already mentioned between the fields of linguistics and language sciences. '*Sciences du langage et didactique des langues*' (Language sciences and language teaching) at Nancy-Metz broadens the scope of FLE to that of the teaching of languages but invites one to make the same link between a disciplinary field and applied teaching. '*Sociolinguistique et didactique des langues*' (Sociolinguistics and language teaching) at Tours suggests that it is the contextual dimension of learning FLE that will be studied in order to better adjust the teaching according to different users and contexts. '*Langue française appliquée*' (Applied French language) at Paris IV leads us to believe that the FLE master's degree is part of the broader field of applied linguistics, with reference here to the learning of a foreign language.

Monitoring these specifications allows us to identify a second dichotomy between master's degrees in language sciences and those in teaching. The language sciences degrees appear under a very eclectic range of domain names, not necessarily putting the emphasis on either the linguistics aspect or the language sciences aspect. The majority of master's degrees in teaching are called '*didactique des langues*' (language teaching), inviting us to picture FLE teaching within a broader framework. Furthermore, it can equally be noted that some master's degrees seem to be conceived from the point of view of linking the two elements: language sciences and language teaching.

### 3.1.3 Names

Do the names of master's degrees confirm this distribution? At this level one observes a majority tendency that involves presenting teaching and FLE. All the master's degrees, apart from that at Caen entitled '*sciences du langage*' (language sciences), propose the terms 'teaching' or 'FLE' in their names. It is understood that the master's degrees that do not specify teaching consider that in proposing the teaching of French as a foreign language to French-speaking students necessarily implies the teaching

dimension.<sup>7</sup> However, names of some master's degrees indicate not only the didactic and FLE dimensions but also language sciences – Orléans '*sciences du langage et didactique de la linguistique appliquée à l'enseignement*'; Paris VII '*linguistique appliquée à l'enseignement des langues étrangères*'; Rennes '*master de linguistique et didactique des langues*'; Metz-Nancy '*master de sciences du langage et didactique du français langue étrangère*'; Grenoble '*sciences du langage spécialité français langue étrangère pour professionnels*' – also revealing at this level a link between on the one hand language sciences and linguistics, and on the other the teaching of FLE or languages.

Within these names mentioning only FLE or teaching, one can again identify certain tendencies: the first group, which mentions only FLE, inviting a general approach (Brest, Paris III, Nanterre, Pau).<sup>8</sup> Another tendency, the majority, which specifies the teaching of French as a foreign language (FLE) and of French as a second language (FLS): this is the case for thirteen master's degrees. Among these thirteen master's degrees that of Arras specifies that it means FLS by mentioning FLS '*en milieu scolaire et entrepreneurial*' (in school and business environments), giving the acronym its second definition according to the classification of Cuq and Gruca (2002). Paris V puts the accent on a particular public and a teaching founded on specific didactic principles: illiteracy. Angers, Le Mans, Nice, INALCO (Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales) and Paris VIII stress the didactics of languages, 'FLE' not appearing in the names of the master's degrees. One can imagine that the training provided by these master's degrees sees language teaching in its entirety and puts forward an approach to FLE contextualized by a wider epistemological scope – one that is not the teaching of French but of languages taught/learned as foreign languages. It should be noted that none of these master's degrees (except for that of Paris VIII) mentions language sciences or linguistics in its domain, specification or name. Incidentally, none of these universities (still with the exception of Paris VIII) has a language sciences or linguistics department. One can therefore

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<sup>7</sup> However, this underlying meaning is not decoded by all and many foreign students, having started a programme in French as a foreign language in a university language centre, think that these master's degrees in teaching FLE are a continuation of previous training and do not expect to be trained to teach FLE but to be taught FLE.

<sup>8</sup> To these four master's degrees can be added that of Montpellier, which prefers to speak of non-native French but refers to the teaching/learning of French as a foreign language, in the sense that one considers FLE in opposition to FLM (*Français Langue Maternelle*).

make the hypothesis that the epistemological scope of these master's degrees is centred on a core of didactics and that this leads to language didactics. What is the disciplinary material on which this didactic aspect is based? A closer analysis of four master's degrees will allow us to pinpoint this element. There is a concern that a focus on linguistics, while providing for a wider epistemological perspective, would tend to limit the didactic input. However, to us this seems to contradict a linguistics approach, which, according to its title, seemed to centre its epistemological spectrum more on the acquisition and the study of a general linguistics and not of a French linguistics, which leads one to think of a larger correlation with the teaching of languages than with the teaching of FLE.

Some other master's degrees specify that it is a matter of teaching the didactics of FLE and of languages at the same time: Chambéry '*langues et cultures européennes, FLE et didactique des langues*'; Clermont-Ferrand '*Didactique des langues et des cultures, français langue étrangère et seconde*'; Lille '*didactique des langues et des cultures en français langue étrangère et seconde*'; Toulouse '*apprentissage et didactique du français langue étrangère et seconde*'.

A third tendency consists of specifying domains other than FLE and FLS – that is, a supplementary expertise that does not correspond to any field identified by conventional university academic disciplines: Angers UCO '*médias*' (media) and 'TICE' (*Technologies de l'Information et de la Communication pour l'Enseignement*, meaning 'Information and Communication Technology for Teaching'); Avignon '*éducation interculturelle*' (intercultural education); Chambéry '*culture européenne*' (European culture); Clermont-Ferrand '*didactique des langues et culture*' (teaching of languages and culture); Lille '*didactique des langues et des cultures*' (teaching of languages and culture); Paris V '*interculturalité*' (interculturality); Nantes '*communication didactique*' (communication didactics). Even if these areas of expertise do not refer to a strictly identifiable domain, they nevertheless steer the master's degree towards disciplines such as humanities or sociology, or computer science and communications.

Other elements added to FLE refer to training concerned with designing programmes in addition to teacher training (Boulogne sur Mer: '*ingénierie de la formation*'; education technology) or even to an aspect of political linguistics, with a tendency to move closer to education technology or to preparation for professions such as '*attaché de coopération*': Angers '*master didactique des langues, didactique politiques linguistiques, TICE*'; Lyon '*master enseignement et diffusion du*

*français langue étrangère et seconde*’; or even Rouen ‘*diffusion du français*’.

In this way one can distinguish two main types of master’s degrees: those that are founded on language sciences or linguistics, and those that are founded on teaching, the first often limiting their scope of application to French as a foreign language (and as a second language), the second involving more the teaching of language in general. Nevertheless, these categories are not so marked and certain master’s degrees, by way of their names, refer to disciplinary fields other than language sciences or linguistics (humanities, computer and communications science). Incidentally, it is mainly master’s degrees that propose teaching rather than linguistics or language sciences that lead on to other fields.

Before concluding this section, we wish to draw attention to some names of master’s degree programmes that are puzzling. For example, a name such as ‘*Langues et cultures européennes, FLE et didactique des langues*’ (European languages and cultures, FLE and language teaching), at Chambéry, seems to consider on the one hand FLE as a language and a culture separate from the European area and, on the other, leads one to understand that the master’s degree proposes teaching European languages and cultures and that the teaching part only applies to FLE. At Clermont-Ferrand, the master’s degree ‘*Didactique des langues et des cultures, français langue étrangère et seconde*’ (Teaching of languages and cultures, French as a foreign and second language) suggests that French is a separate culture. Likewise, the master’s degree at Poitiers, ‘*Didactique des langues et du français langue seconde et étrangère*’ (Teaching of languages and of French as a second and foreign language), separates French from other languages, implying that French requires a distinctive didactic approach. At Nice, the master’s degree ‘*Didactique des langues et des disciplines*’ (The teaching of languages and of disciplines) leads one to wonder what the word ‘discipline’ might mean in this context: does this relate to academic disciplines? What connection is there between teaching a language and disciplines? Is this a form of teaching that aims to train specialists in teaching French, from the perspective of a foreign language and in its application in the academic world as part of the range of disciplines presented by a French university? In that case, why not use the term ‘FOU’ (*Français sur Objectifs Universitaires*, meaning ‘French for the academic context’) in the same way that one uses ‘FLS’ for French provided in secondary education?<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> The acronym ‘FOU’ emerged in the field of teaching FLE with, among others, Mangiante and Parpette 2011. Their work refers to the teaching of French offered in French, francophone and foreign universities, which prepares students for

Evaluating what is the spectrum of the epistemological field of these master's degrees by looking at the names of the programmes thus allows us to respond, not only to evaluate the relation between subject content and teaching. It would seem that FLE oscillates between content based on language sciences or linguistics and content based on sociology of language and literature. All ambiguity resides in the fact that FLE does not correspond to the learning of the French language. In contrast to the case for foreign language students, French is an acquired language in the sense that it is the native language of the students. However, command of it as an everyday language does not mean knowledge of the language, such as its function, its use and its modes of acquisition. Hence a large number of master's degrees are based on language sciences, although we have seen that certain degrees give preference to the teaching aspect. Nevertheless, the question of content remains, since it is absolutely necessary to explain what the learning objectives are. At this level it is the diversity of audiences that comes into play: the focus of the teaching changes according to learners' ages, their objectives, their needs and their abilities. Hence a lack of teaching content that is clearly identifiable. This is probably why different master's degrees offer language sciences content in proportions that vary from one degree to another, content that one could call sociocultural, which does not refer so much to teaching content as to knowledge that the FLE teacher should have (knowledge of the learners' languages/cultures) and to the didactics of teaching. This, however, brings up the question of linkage between these three types of content. Are these just placed side by side in the teaching programmes, presented as three separate elements that are important for the training of teachers of French as a foreign language, or can one identify an overall coherence that would enable one to define the contents specific to that particular training?

### **3.2 The presentation of four master's degrees**

In order to answer this question we decided to examine more closely the contents of degrees that the students we questioned had followed. This meant making a choice based on circumstances, which can be justified by the fact that we were able to cross-analyse programme and factual data (the programmes for these master's degrees) with the points of view given

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mobility within France or to a French-speaking country. One can, however, extend the field to teaching French in foreign universities, without there being any mobility expected by the students, in the sense that in this case they are learning French in pursuit of a university training objective depending on the modes (of teaching and of evaluation) of the French university.



by the students. We present the master's degrees available at Rouen, Poitiers, Angers and Arras.

### **3.2.1 Rouen**

In the case of Rouen, the master's degree offers training in both teaching FLE and the promotion of the French language abroad. The audio-visual presentation focuses on training for jobs abroad, both in terms of language collaboration/promotion and teaching. This indicates a particular preference, as there are also schemes for French language training in France, which we showed in the first part of this chapter. The university's website presents the programme. One can see that the proposed modules provide training for both the promotional context and teaching the French language, including a common basis (Semestre 1, UE1) for future teachers and for professionals working in the sphere of language collaboration. This same context is specified within the framework of the teaching French module (Semestre 1, UE2). The second semester offers a course in research methodology in the degree's specialist fields, which leads towards training in action research, the master's degree being a professional qualification that proposes a type of research that can be applied and that obtains a portion of its data on the ground (Semestre 2, UE1). It is possible to see the course in 'Specialist didactics' as a continuation of the 'Description and teaching French' course of the first semester. Having presented an overview of different teaching contexts, the training offers approaches to teaching that are tailored to each circumstance. The last course, called 'Texts and other types of writing in a multicultural context', can be viewed as a course that analyses the different kinds of texts that teachers of French might come across in a multicultural context: specifically, knowledge (knowledge of learners – variation depending on level of language, level of training, the native language), reception (what texts are proposed – variation depending on the learning context, country, institution, level of language and of training of the learners). We can see that this course favours writing at the expense of speaking and interaction. The second year offers a semester that comprises three courses: the first one ('Cultural and educational cooperation') deals with training for work promoting the French language, the second is the follow-up to a course started in the second semester of the first year ('Specialist didactics') and a third involves preparation for teaching practice. This preparatory course focuses on teaching practice, which, recommended during Master 1, is obligatory during Master 2. The last

semester is fully devoted to writing a dissertation about the teaching practice; the student attends no courses during this semester.

One can see that the degree offers content that relates to the position of French abroad, subjects that one can associate with the sociological aspect of language – that is, the place and use of French in the world as a whole. Other courses are explicitly centred on the teaching of French. Only one course – ‘Texts and other types of writing in a multicultural context’ – might be considered similar to the contents of language sciences. At the same time, this course is implicitly directed towards a target context: speakers of languages other than French. This last aspect steers the course towards the teaching of French as a foreign language, in so far as language is implicitly seen in terms of its communicative function, in production and in reception, between speakers of different languages and from different cultures. The last courses are dedicated to the preparation of the teaching practice and its report, putting the emphasis on well-considered and guided professional practice. One can therefore conclude that this master’s degree trains the student to understand French language and culture within an international context by focusing on two professional areas: language policies and teaching. The disciplinary content refers more to sociology as applied to the French language than to language sciences or linguistics. The didactic aspect is present (it takes up around a third of the lessons, without including the teaching practice, nor its preparation) and can be done, depending on the choice of the student, within a teaching framework or within the field of promoting French. In conclusion, the fact that ‘didactics’ is qualified by the term ‘specialist’ suggests an approach that is distinct from the teaching/learning of French according to contexts and users, but as we have only the headings of the module this is only an assumption.

### **3.2.2 Poitiers**

The second master’s degree that we examined is that of Poitiers. It should be noted that the relevant website provide much more information here than for the master’s degree at Rouen, for which we have only a very brief programme. If one compares the headings of the module, one can see that the Poitiers degree functions according to the ‘funnel principle’. Namely, a first semester based on language sciences (making up two of the three modules). The third module is, however, dedicated to the study of a foreign language and to multilingualism, a linguistic aspect that can be applied directly to the teaching of French as a foreign language. It is understandable that the knowledge of these characteristics can be put to

use by the future FLE teacher, both in the design of their teaching and in understanding the acquisition process of French by learners and thus, by these means, for training in formal language grammar and writing skills. The second semester also comprises three modules: the first in language sciences, the second in didactics, and a third including teaching practice, which replaces the linguistic and foreign language module. This teaching practice of 100 hours allows a first experience of the work environment and an interaction between language sciences content, a teaching approach and the observation of work practices. The Master 2 becomes increasingly specialized in the field of teaching French as a foreign language, gradually reducing the language sciences content: two modules of teaching and one module of language sciences. The specialization occurs on another level: the teaching modules tackle problems that are increasingly precise so that one moves from 'general teaching' to lessons that target a particular educational approach: the age of a type of audience; 'teaching language to children' and language skills; 'teaching listening' or another type of teaching tailored according to common and identified needs of learners (FOS, *Français sur Objectifs Spécifiques*, meaning 'French for specific purposes'). Regarding language sciences modules, one can see that the content and methods become more and more specific: from basic courses on linguistic theories one moves onto seminars and conferences, research and epistemology, this last aspect fostering reflection on practice, content and teaching. The last semester is essentially devoted to teaching practice (300 hours). The other teaching module delivers only 3 credits (out of 30) for the whole of the semester. The teaching practice and the preparation of the dissertation allow the future teacher to create and test teaching materials and to make a critical assessment of this experience. To sum up, Poitiers' master's degree is based on language sciences content, centred around the teaching of FLE and completed by an applied dimension that comprises teaching practice, class observation and tutoring sessions presented as part of the teaching FLE modules.

### 3.2.3 Angers

The master's degree at Angers offers a structure that concentrates on courses for the first three semesters and devotes the entire last semester of Master 2 to a research dissertation. Unlike other master's degrees, the dissertation is not based on teaching practice supported by another training

module.<sup>10</sup> The first semester offers five obligatory courses, which define a set of contents on which the degree can be based. These contents relate to specific elements of teaching of FLE, such as integrating TICE with educational studies in its relationship with teaching FLE, to language sciences and to sociology of language in a more linguistic way; on the other hand, *Théories et cultures de l'apprentissage des langues* (Theories and cultures in the learning of languages) follows a more 'sociolinguistic' and cultural direction. We can see that the contents refer essentially to the fields of sociology and language didactics, with one course belonging to the field of language sciences. The elective courses offer introductions to subjects: the associated professional field of education policies; *Outils d'enseignement* ('Teaching tools'), which is an aspect of teaching FLE; teaching *grammaire* (grammar), one of the components of language. These options allow the student to choose between a specialization in teaching FLE and the dissemination of the French language. Nevertheless, the alternatives (*Grammaire* versus *Outils d'enseignement*) might be surprising in that where the first course is very specific to an aspect of teaching, the other is very generic.

The second semester of Master 1 seems to be programmed in a similar way: among the five obligatory modules are found three that relate to didactics (in the widest sense, namely teaching and acquisition) and two referring to sociology, also in the widest sense of the term since this includes a module about developing cultural competence (*Développer une compétence culturelle*). The elective modules offer a choice between strengthening training in language policy or in teaching within the special area of literature.

The first semester of Master 2 seems to become more specialized (rather like the Master 2 at Poitiers), giving preference to seminars and teaching sessions discussing epistemology or focusing on research (methodology and workshops). This training semester retains an introduction to the dissemination of linguistics with the course *Politiques linguistiques: concepts et études de cas* (Linguistic policies: concepts and case studies) but no longer includes any courses in language sciences. The elective courses offer a choice between, on the one hand, a specialization in the teaching of FLE in a particular context – whether it be migration, student mobility or the world of business – and, on the other hand, a

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<sup>10</sup> The option chosen by many universities is to offer a master's degree in teaching FLE that is either professional or research-based, depending on whether the student chooses to do a teaching practice plus a report, or a research dissertation. At Angers, the teaching practice is connected to the 'Professional thinking and practice' module.

course called '*Langues du monde*' (World languages), which could be likened to typology, one of the specialist studies in language sciences. As the second semester of Master 2 is completely set aside for preparing a dissertation, this does not allow any assessment of the disciplinary basis of the degree.

We can observe that the applied aspect is provided via the intermediary of a course called '*Réflexions et pratiques professionnelles*' (Professional thinking and practice), offered in both semesters of Master 1. Master 2 specializes in the field of research and proposes both a theoretical perspective via the methodology course and a reflective and applied perspective via the workshop, which allows an exchange of points of view and practice.

The master's degree at Angers, like that of Poitiers and contrary to that of Rouen, is focused above all on teaching FLE. Nevertheless, as at Rouen but to a lesser extent, the dissemination of the French language is also present. The downside is that language sciences material is very poorly represented. On the other hand, it is the only master's degree that requires a research dissertation in addition to teaching practice, whereas the other degrees use the teaching practice as the basis for a dissertation.

### **3.2.4 Arras**

The master's degree at Arras is decidedly centred on teaching French as a foreign language: the first semester includes modules that describe the contexts and issues involved in teaching FLE and FLS, as well as a module devoted to teaching FLE. From the very start of the training a specific learning context is targeted: that of French as a second language, particularly in schools in France. A language sciences module called '*La langue française, de l'analyse à l'enseignement*' (The French language, from analysis to teaching), which is explicitly aimed at teaching, completes the first semester's programme. The same headings are presented for the second semester: their descriptions allow one to differentiate a more career-oriented approach in the module that introduces matters faced when teaching FLE (preparation for teaching practice, class observation, specific learning plans, introduction to research and to academic writing). A teaching practice of a minimum of four weeks, which takes place at the end of the semester, is obligatory. In Master 2 the programme focuses on training mechanisms in the business environment and in the language-training environment, with an emphasis on using multimedia. The teaching of FOS, one special aspect of FLE, is studied in particular, in the same way that FLS was put to the forefront in the first

year. The intercultural dimension is addressed in a course that reviews intercultural interaction in different FLE learning contexts. The teaching of linguistics that was present in Master 1 is no longer included.

It may be noted that the degree presents a specialization and gradual focus on teaching and education technology. Nevertheless, even from the first year onwards, the master's degree has a quality that can be identified as being the teaching of FLS, already purposefully establishing itself around teaching issues and matters concerning teaching/learning contexts. The second semester of Master 2 presents the same headings as the first, the methods of assessment revealing a progressive empowerment of students who are increasingly asked to create learning or evaluation scenarios, as for example for the '*Projet de formation en milieu entrepreneurial*' (Training project in a business environment) course, which is the development of a DELF/DALF test. The question arises, however, as to the merits of proposing the approach of a qualification such as DELF/DALF for a project that concerns the business environment; DELF/DALF is a qualification in French that is regarded as applying to the general use of the language.<sup>11</sup> Yet, if the course is centred on a training project and the environment is specified as being that of business, it seems obvious that any interest concerning education technology is found in analysing the specific needs of learners, taking into account the learning context, and in developing training that allows the acquisition of linguistic elements that respond to these needs. It is true that the DELF/DALF qualification is recognized in the business community in certain countries but, nevertheless, it seems to us that the qualification is too general to evaluate the skills of learners in a specific and identifiable context, as would seem to be the case in this module. Moreover, one might wonder why FOU is placed within the framework of education technology in business. To our mind these two training contexts are completely distinct, not only from the point of view of the objectives (training of business employees versus training of students) but also from the point of view of the homogeneity of the audience, which is most often consistent within the business context and varied within the FOU context.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> In a similar spirit to that of TCF (*Test de connaissance du français*), DELF/DALF in fact tests the mastery of a general level of French.

<sup>12</sup> This comment is justified from the point of view of the native language: identical for all the employees of the same workplace; diverse for foreign students studying in French universities. And from the point of view of needs and objectives: consistent for people of the same profession; varied for students, according to the disciplines they are studying.

### **3.2.5 The comparison of four master's degrees**

The four master's degrees that we have presented here are indicative of the diversity of approaches in FLE, as much in terms of subject content (moving towards language sciences or towards sociology/culture) as in the teaching contexts that the training chooses to give priority to. Some degrees provide, first and foremost, training for teaching, while others emphasize education technology. The dissertation is either based on the teaching practice in a professional environment or is purely a research dissertation. One should add to these diverse factors that of the audience, mentioned at the beginning, which makes more complicated the task of teachers responsible for putting together the programmes for these degrees. In fact, when choosing which master's degrees to follow, graduates hesitate between two positions. Having inevitably studied a discipline other than that of teaching FLE, at least up to first degree stage, they can choose a master's degree that is close to their disciplinary basis of training. Conversely, they can take the opposite approach and choose a master's degree that will complete their higher education. Sometimes, within the same master's degree, a student can nuance their direction by their choice of options. However, what one gains in flexibility, one loses in visibility, since the subtleties of the degree are not shown in a CV, added to which it is also nearly impossible to know exactly what training a student has followed. We are thinking particularly of universities in Paris that pool a part of their teaching while retaining their own separate training programmes, and of The University of Maine, which offers a master's degree that is truly the teaching of languages, in the sense that the training of FLE and modern language teachers is shared. These arrangements allow a larger choice of different training programmes but risk putting into danger the coherence of the whole and the legibility of the curriculum of each.

## **4. Interview with FLE master's degree students: what return on the programmes followed?**

Let us now look at what the people interviewed thought of the training that they had followed. First of all, we will describe the way in which the data was collected. We interviewed twelve people, giving them a questionnaire that comprised ten questions. This was followed up by a discussion based on their answers. The small range of interviewees does not allow us to consider the results as being general for all students of teaching FLE. Nevertheless, they do allow us to understand different student profiles

arising from different training programmes, different ages (between 23 and 50 years old), and with diverse experiences of teaching (from no experience, up to 17 years of experience) to a diverse range of learners.<sup>13</sup>

#### 4.1 Student profiles

The first question of the questionnaire allows us to construct a profile for each interviewee according to criteria set by the diverse audience for FLE master's degrees, as already mentioned. Regarding the twelve interviewees, we see that all have a minimum level of *bac +4* (i.e. four years of study at university), which indicates that the interviewees already have an academic qualification that is higher than average for Master 1 students. The disciplines are varied within the field of humanities: four interviewees have a master's degree in English (Camille, Emilie, Arnaud and Emma), one a master's degree in Arab and Hebrew (Mattéo), one a Master 2 in Spanish (Bérénice), one a doctorate in German (Pierre), one a Master 2 in history (Iris), two a master's degree in modern languages (Clarisse and Chen), and two a master's degree in language sciences (Soraya and Elisa).<sup>14</sup> Modern languages are the majority group, but it is evident above all that the academic spectrum tracked by means of administrative documents is supported by this sample. The proportion of people returning to study is also noteworthy: four, even five, out of twelve in this case. Emilie resumed a FLE training programme quite early (three years after the end of her studies) to find work abroad as a teacher, while she also held a CAPES in English. Camille, also qualified in English, asked for study leave in order to diversify her skills and her professional training, without aiming for a post in FLE in particular, after fourteen years of secondary school teaching. Arnaud, also a teacher of English, studied for a FLE master's degree so that he could follow his partner abroad (after eight years teaching in secondary school). Mattéo, after having taught Arab and Hebrew in the private sector, wanted to diversify his training and his

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<sup>13</sup> The interviewees' experience can be summarized as follows. Teaching in France – to French pupils (*collège* and *lycée*): French, foreign languages; to foreign learners: adult learners with little education (asylum seekers), foreign pupils in *classe d'accueil*, to foreign students at university, to foreign students in engineering school. Teaching abroad – to children in primary school, to adolescents in secondary school (in Spain), to high-school pupils (in Morocco); to university students: in China, Sudan, Turkey, Kazakhstan; in Alliances Françaises: to children, teenagers, adults (in Spain, in Russia).

<sup>14</sup> Or the equivalent, two of the students interviewed having carried out the beginning of their university courses in their countries of origin.



teaching. Iris said that she had undertaken a FLE master's degree in order to complement her knowledge and expertise acquired while teaching FLE in China for two years. These two years of study can be considered as a break from higher education. By the way, it is interesting to see that it is the interviewees' personal situations that lead them to opt for FLE with an eye to obtaining a teaching post abroad or, alternatively, the experience of teaching abroad gives rise to the need for training. Among the seven other students taking higher education, two chose FLE following a university foreign exchange (Clarisse and Bérénice), which inspired them to go and live in another country while putting into practice the skills learned during their training. Two (Soraya and Chen) chose FLE because they want to become teachers of French in their countries of origin; another (Pierre) chose to train in FLE didactics because he was attracted by foreign languages and language acquisition.

Thus the profiles reveal the element of diversity that has been described throughout the chapter. This is both the strength and the weakness of this kind of training, which has an obligation to take account of different experiences, outlooks, knowledge and expertise of its students, but that must equally respond to the needs of each individual, needs that can be very different according to the students.

## **4.2 Strengths and weaknesses of the master's degrees**

Before analysing what the students considered the strengths and weaknesses of their training, it should be noted that four of them studied at Rouen (Emilie and Arnaud, by distance learning; Camille and Bérénice, on site), three at Poitiers (Elisa, Iris and Pierre), three at Angers (Clarisse, Emma and Soraya) and two at Arras (Mattéo and Chen). We have summarized the interviewees' responses and present them here according to the three questions that we posed in the introduction,<sup>15</sup> reserving our analysis of their responses to the questionnaire's question no. 10 for our conclusion.

### **4.2.1 Link between disciplinary and didactic content**

The first observation that one can make is that the students who have resumed their studies prove to be very critical regarding the link between disciplinary and didactic content. This applies especially to the most

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<sup>15</sup> To what extent is it possible to define these epistemological foundations? What links do the master's degrees in teaching FLE propose between disciplinary and didactic content? What place is given to professional practice?

experienced teachers (Emilie, Camille and Arnaud), who were expecting to gain FLE teaching methodologies, to learn how to create teaching material for FLE learners, with which they were not familiar. They regret that this was not the case. Camille mentions the total lack of relationship between practical application and the courses given – to the extent that, in order to complete her teaching experience, she had to adapt her subject (initially planned within the field of research) towards one that involved the observation of classes and workshops, in order that she could gain some benefit from the training. They bemoan the lack of coherence in how the training is proposed, including descriptions and presentations that say little about the actual content of the courses.

Mattéo and Iris, who had only a little professional experience, are less critical about this aspect. Iris regrets not having dealt with teaching elements in sufficient depth but alludes to the fact that she only followed Master 2. Mattéo recognizes the part played in the teacher training by FOU, FLS, certain aspects of lessons about interculturality, and training about the notion of DELF/DALF qualification, but regrets that didactics and teacher training directed at learners with literacy needs was not tackled, as well as the teaching of literature.

Bérénice has the impression that didactic concepts as applied to students in higher education were skimmed through rather than tackled, and regrets that the lessons merely provide information about contexts and audiences rather than being a real reflection about teaching. Chen feels fairly satisfied with the training, but underlines the difficulties that she had in following the programme, not having been trained at a French university but in China. She therefore found herself confronted during the master's degree course with ways of doing things in the French context. Furthermore, she deplores the fact that the training did not include anything about acknowledging the native language of students in the education structure, notably when the teacher finds that their audience is of the same native language. Clarisse, Elisa and Pierre feel generally satisfied with the didactic dimension of the course and with its link with disciplinary content even if they are of the opinion that certain methods were only touched on and that perhaps it would be better to opt for a particular range of learning methods and work on them more intensively. Clarisse highlights the teaching of literature as being a particularly satisfactory contribution, while Mattéo was sorry that it was absent, which shows that the strengths and weaknesses of each master's degree are not the same. Pierre suggests a course in the general teaching of languages that would discuss the input of language sciences in the teaching of a foreign language, linked to a course in teaching FLE that would pose questions

about specific features of teaching the French language. These two courses could be completed by an overview of different users and training programmes, from which the teacher would choose a particular plan for development.

From the point of view of evaluating the teaching component one detects a split between experienced teachers and future teachers. In addition, even if several students recognize the value of their courses, they are not always satisfied with the connection between teaching and subject content: Iris regrets the artificial aspect of teaching situations (having to invent her audience); Camille thinks that the teaching dimension is lacking from the master's degree.

#### **4.2.2 Professional component**

Paradoxically, the students already in post do not question the professional component of the training as much as the other students. If some consider that this component is insufficient, they nevertheless like the fact that they were able to familiarize themselves with the FLE world through job shadowing, oral workshops given to students of FLE, and through exchanges with FLE teachers when putting together their dissertations. The students in continuing training also like this professional experience component but express caution as to the fact that the master's degree alone might shape the profession of a teacher: they say that they appreciated the varied teaching sessions that allowed them to educate themselves and learn the profession, the debates about ethics, the audiences, and say they have learned to take a distance in their practices as teachers. They also like the personal monitoring, which was the case for some of them (Mattéo in Master 1), while others (Cheng and Mattéo) lament the fact that the sessions do not lead to an adequate framework (Mattéo makes this comment specifically about Master 2).

#### **4.2.3 The disciplinary bases of these master's degrees**

Question no. 7 'What do you consider this master's degree to be a training in? Teaching; linguistics; literature and culture; other. Rank your responses from 1 to 4 (1 being the most applicable).' allows us to confirm the analyses that we made in the second part of this work. The responses delivered the following results: Arras's master's degree is considered to be in linguistics and in teaching (equally placed); Angers, in teaching and in education technology; Poitiers, in linguistics (in Master 1) and in teaching

(in Master 2); Rouen, in sociology of language (this response appears three times under the 'other' option).

## 5. Conclusion

The questionnaire allowed us to confirm a certain number of specific features of the teaching FLE master's degree that we had highlighted as features present on university Internet sites and as descriptions about the operation and institutional issues of different FLE training programmes. Faced with a reality that can be summed up by the word 'diversity', the master's degree programmes show themselves to be programmes that mostly attract those who want to complete their training or to diversify their professional teaching practices. These aspirations are partially attained at the end of training, although feedback is mixed and teachers already in post are disappointed by the programmes' lack of continuity. One notes, however, that the students, who are mostly highly qualified for entry into Master 1, are critical and very precise when it comes to suggesting projects. On the other hand, one notes a very rich choice of courses, if one combines the courses offered by the programmes as a whole, and some imaginative methods: online and on-site tutorials, research seminars... However, it is not obvious, neither for the teachers responsible for these master's degrees nor the students, how one should find one's way through this plethora of possible courses.

Perhaps the respective degrees of 35 universities would benefit from presenting their choice of training in a way that is more clearly identifiable and complementary. This would also allow the student public constituting the master's degree to identify their choices more easily. While the degrees are diverse in their programmes, the students have one common need: that the objective of the degree is clearly presented. Such clarification cannot come only from university departments but requires the national Ministry of Education's clarification on an institutional level as to the status of the teaching FLE master's degree.

Question no. 10 of our questionnaire was posed precisely in order to demonstrate that the authority of this master's degree is problematic. While other master's degrees designed to train teachers are explicitly accompanied by a competitive examination, there is no such exam related to the FLE degree. And this raises an issue. On the one hand, it reiterates the question about the epistemological spectrum: without pretending that the competitive teaching programmes are exempt from all criticism, they have in fact the advantage of making more visible the discipline on which the training is based. If one compares the FLE master's degree with a LVE

(*Langue Vivante Etrangère*, meaning ‘Modern Foreign Language’) or FLM master’s degree, one notices that the LVE and FLM degrees train one to teach in secondary education, while the FLE degree trains one to teach French as a foreign language in the very diverse contexts described in this chapter. This enriches FLE but equally can impoverish it if the training consists only of describing learning contexts without specifying modes of acquisition, features of designing a programme and teaching material appropriate for each context. Yet, if one takes a particular context as an example – that of FLE offered in French universities – one can make two observations: the fact that a number of lessons are based on FLE methods, thus delivering a general French that takes no account of the context; and that the courses that complete this general base are as eclectic as the courses offered to future FLE teachers – namely, lessons in sociology of language, culture, literature, linguistics, human sciences/humanities and so on. If one makes a comparison with secondary school teaching, a programme in French, for example, will focus on precise points, propose a progression and include end purposes (humanist culture, language proficiency). This lack of clarification of learning objectives adapted to contexts jeopardizes the acquisition of the language itself, which could become standardized, learned only in accordance with the needs of users and without consideration for the systemic logic of acquisition.

When interviewed about a CAPES for FLE, the responses of the twelve master’s degree students indicate the ambivalence surrounding the status of the FLE master’s degree: covering a very wide teaching context, it would be simplistic to attach a CAPES to FLE that would be pertinent only for a teacher of a *classe d’accueil* (comment given by eight of the students interviewed). However, the absence of a competitive exam contributes to a marginalization of FLE – for better and for worse, since this marginalization does not contribute to the recognition of the status, often precarious, of teachers (eleven responses lament the lack of recognition and the precariousness of FLE teachers) and perpetuates a grey area regarding the epistemological basis of training, but also leaves the field free for innovations and experiments in teaching, from the point of view of training future trainers as well as learners.

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## Websites

Directory of master's degrees in teaching FLE  
<http://www.ciep.fr/repertoires/master-professionnel-fle>

Université d'Angers  
[http://www.univ-angers.fr/\\_resources/lettres/documents/programme%20formations/FLE\\_M1\\_14-15.pdf?download=true](http://www.univ-angers.fr/_resources/lettres/documents/programme%20formations/FLE_M1_14-15.pdf?download=true)

Université d'Arras  
<http://www.univ-artois.fr/Formations/Formations-a-distance/Master-FLE-FLS-FOS>

Université de Poitiers

<http://www.univ-poitiers.fr/formation/nos-formations/par-diplome/les-masters/mention-linguistique/master-professionnel-et-recherche-arts-lettres-langues-mention-linguistique-specialite-didactique-des-langues-et-du-francais-langue-etrangere-et-seconde-20113.kjsp>

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# CHAPTER THREE

## TRAINING AND CERTIFICATING TEACHERS OF FOREIGN AND SECOND LANGUAGES IN FRANCE

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### **Abstract**

The training of teachers of foreign and second languages at secondary school level in France is geared towards obtaining the certification necessary for employment in the national education system. The first part of this chapter presents the general principles and organization of the French school system, focusing on the teaching of foreign languages. The second and third parts deal with the training and certification of foreign and second language teachers in the state system. The overall picture is one in which a focus on academic knowledge, still seen as a primary objective, leaves graduates unprepared for class management and real-life teaching.

### **1. France's education system**

Everybody knows that France is a highly centralized country. Its school system has been based on the principle of secularism (*laïcité*) since the end of the nineteenth century (Jules Ferry Education Act of 28 March 1882), which means respect for the beliefs of pupils and their parents in the absence of religious teaching in the syllabus and the banning of proselytism (Auduc 2006). More specific principles of teaching have been defined since 2011 in order to establish a Common Core of Knowledge and Skills. The Common Core constitutes a framework for developing the curriculum for primary and lower secondary school education. It is organized around seven key competences that need to be mastered by



every pupil during their schooling and taken forward during their continuing education, professional and social life. These are: command of the French language; proficiency (as measured by the CEFR standard) in a modern foreign language; the key elements of mathematics, sciences and technology; mastery of basic information and communication skills; humanistic culture; social and civic skills; autonomy and initiative. A new Common Core is to come into force in September 2016, along with a new programme for lower secondary schools. The five principles will be 'languages for thinking and communicating', 'methods and tools for learning', 'citizenship', 'technical and natural systems' and 'human activities and representations'. The application of these principles has been overseen by regional *académies* since the 1980s. There are 30 such local education authorities in France, each managed by a *recteur*, who is a ministry representative at local level.

The state determines programmes and diplomas. It also controls private schools, which according to statistics from the Ministry of Education (2012) account for about 17% of pupils in primary and secondary education. Upon signature of a public contract, private schools benefit from state support (Debré Law, 31 December 1959). Classes must follow the national curriculum and the general regulations of the state system. The state alone can award diplomas and set end-of-year examinations.

Schooling is compulsory from the age of six for all children (since 1882) and until the age of sixteen (since 1959). Children can attend nursery school from the age of two; almost every child attends school from the age of three. Since 1990, the skills that are expected of pupils have been fixed in stages (*cycles*): there are three stages for the primary school and three stages for the lower secondary school (*collège*). Primary school stage 1, or early learning stage (corresponding to *Grande section* and *Cours préparatoire*), applies to six years olds and is divided into five areas (appropriating language, getting ready to read and write, becoming a pupil, corporal movement and expression, discovering the world); stage 2, or basic skills stage (*Grande section*, *CP* and *CE1*), comprises learning the French language and mathematics; stage 3, known as the development stage (*CE2*, *CM1* and *CM2*), and for pupils up to eleven years old, is a continuation of stage 2, with new disciplines introduced, such as history, geography and experimental science. The learning of a first foreign language is compulsory from *CP* (*Cours préparatoire*) onwards. The lower secondary school (*collège*) prepares pupils for their general, technological or vocational schooling. It is organized in three stages corresponding to the four years of compulsory schooling: the adaptation stage (*sixième*) consolidates the achievements of primary school and

initiates pupils in the working methods of secondary school; the central stage (*cinquième* and *quatrième*) is characterized by a gradual enrichment of the curriculum and the introduction of optional subjects. Latin is introduced for 3 hours per week in *cinquième* as an optional module and continued in the next stage (*quatrième* and *troisième*); the orientation stage (*troisième*) allows pupils to build on what they have learned and to work towards general, technological and vocational study. At the end of *troisième*, pupils sit an examination towards the *brevet* diploma, which certifies command of the Common Core of Knowledge and Skills; this exam includes three written tests for each discipline of French, Mathematics, History and Geography, and Civic Education, and an oral exam in Art History. Coursework is taken into account. For the upper secondary school (*lycée*), pupils can take one general and technological route (*lycée général et technologique*: three years) or the vocational route (*lycée professionnel*: three years).

As of the academic year 2008/09, pupils are taught for 24 hours a week. The structure of the school system is presented in Table 3.1.

The new 2016 programme is expected to propose minor structural changes in order to consolidate core knowledge and ease the transition from the primary to the lower secondary school.

Foreign language classes are compulsory for all pupils, from elementary school through to secondary school graduation. Over 15 foreign languages are taught in elementary school and over 33 in elementary and secondary school combined (according to 2012 statistics). Having started learning a first foreign language in elementary school, pupils generally learn a second foreign language from age 13–14 (*quatrième*) onwards. A current bill is promoting the introduction of a second foreign language from age 12–13 (*cinquième*) onwards in all schools, as of the beginning of the 2016 school year (Gonzalez 2015). Target competence levels for each language are CEFR level A1 for pupils aged 10–11, A2 for students aged 14–15, and B1 and B2 for those who are 16–18 years old.

### The structure of the school system in France

|   |  |  |   |
|---|--|--|---|
| <b>Primary</b><br><i>(école primaire)</i><br>3–11 years | <b>Nursery school</b><br><i>(école maternelle)</i><br>3–6 years      | <i>Petite section</i><br><i>Moyenne section</i><br><i>Grande section</i>   |   |
|   | <b>Elementary school</b><br><i>(école élémentaire)</i><br>6–11 years | <i>Cours préparatoire (CP)</i><br>(6–7 years)<br><i>Cours élémentaire 1<sup>ère</sup> année (CE1)</i><br>(7–8 years)<br><i>Cours élémentaire 2<sup>ème</sup> année (CE2)</i><br>(8–9 years)<br><i>Cours moyen 1<sup>ère</sup> année (CM1)</i><br>(9–10 years)<br><i>Cours moyen 2<sup>ème</sup> année (CM2)</i><br>(10–11 years) |   |
| <b>Secondary</b><br><i>(secondaire)</i><br>11–18 years  | <b>Lower secondary</b><br><i>(collège)</i><br>11–15 years            | <i>sixième</i> (11–12 years)<br><i>cinquième</i> (12–13 years)<br><i>quatrième</i> (13–14 years)<br><i>troisième</i> (14–15 years)   |   |
|   | <b>Upper secondary</b><br><i>(lycée)</i><br>15–18 years              | <b>General route</b><br><b>Technological route</b>   | <b>Vocational route</b>                               |
|   |  | <i>Seconde</i><br><i>Première</i><br><i>Terminale</i>  | <i>Seconde</i><br><i>Première</i><br><i>Terminale</i> |
|   |  | <i>Baccalauréat général et technologique</i>   | <i>Baccalauréat professionnel</i>                     |

Source: *School Education in France, 2012*, [eduscol.education.fr/dossiers](http://eduscol.education.fr/dossiers)

**Table 3.1**

According to a survey conducted by academic departments during the school year 2012/13,<sup>1</sup> English is the most commonly taught language both in primary school (93% of state school pupils, 97% of private school

<sup>1</sup> ONISEP (Office national d'information sur les enseignements et les professions) and Académie de Caen, *Après la 3<sup>e</sup>, Guides 2013–2014*.

pupils) and in elementary school (92.83% of state school pupils, 96.54% of private school pupils). German is the second most common language in elementary school, followed by Spanish, Italian and Portuguese. Spanish is the second most common language in lower secondary school. There are specific programmes for many modern languages. They take the shape of language units in elementary and secondary schools, covering Dutch, English, German, Italian, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish, as well as Arabic, Chinese, Japanese and Vietnamese; bi-national units bringing together, through a specific curriculum, two secondary school graduation degrees: the French *baccalauréat* and its national equivalent in the country where the respective language is spoken; and international units, for French and foreign students.

## 2. Training for teaching languages in the French system

The principal training route leading to a language teaching career in the public or private secondary system is a two-year master's degree and certifying national examinations. It is followed by a special recruitment process as a civil servant, a qualifying teaching and training placement, and appointment on a permanent basis. This applies equally to teaching foreign languages and to teaching French as a foreign language to foreigners living in France.

Those who wish to teach foreign languages, French as a mother tongue or French to foreigners in France prepare their certification in a pedagogical postgraduate institution. The ESPE (Ecole Supérieure du Professorat et de l'Éducation; Higher School of Teaching and Education) is a specialist institution created in 2012 for training future secondary teachers (replacing the former IUFM, Institut Universitaire de Formation des Maîtres; University Institute for Teacher Training). The degree, called MEEF (*Master en Éducation et Métiers de l'enseignement et de l'éducation*; Master in Teaching, Education and Training Professions), includes general modules on the teaching context and content-specific modules (e.g. French literature, foreign languages). It prepares students for the CAPES, which is a requirement for applications for teaching positions in secondary schools.

The ESPE Master 1 programmes in linguistics and literature generally last one academic year. Programmes include internships to enable the student to plan for professional practice, to reflect on applying academic knowledge to teaching, to analyse the use of teaching materials and to assess pupils' achievements. For Master 1 in Modern Languages at the Caen ESPE, courses are organized in five modules: disciplinary (including

linguistics, literature and foreign languages), didactics (teaching contexts, and information and communications technology), professional context (education system), internship and research. Master 2 lasts one year and half of it is devoted to placement in schools, with the benefit of full pay.<sup>2</sup>

Prospective teachers of foreign languages are trained via a specialist master's degree or at an ESPE. The requirements and organization are the same as for the master's degrees in teaching French. The main domains of training include literature, linguistics, culture and intercultural relations, translating or journalism. The Caen ESPE offers a master's degree that prepares for certification examinations in English, Spanish, Italian and German.

Those who wish to teach French as a foreign language (FLE, *Français Langue Etrangère*) outside the state secondary school system are trained in a university via a master's degree in Teaching French as a Foreign Language (see Prunet's chapter in this volume). For foreigners in France wishing to apply for such a master's degree, the requirement is a high, typically C1, linguistic proficiency and a good bachelor's degree in modern French literature or French linguistics. Their application is examined by a committee assessing qualifications (VAE, *Validation d'Acquis de l'Expérience*), which is managed by the relevant university department of the university or ESPE.<sup>3</sup> This validation is compulsory for foreign candidates, especially if they are not from the European Union.

## 2.1 Further French and foreign language teacher training

There are more than 300 public and private centres in France that teach French as a foreign language to a large range of people with different needs, such as foreign students, tourists, adult migrants and job applicants. The diversity of demand for French as a foreign language has led to a number of different institutions and schemes offering it:

- at school, French as a foreign language for non-francophone children newly arrived in France (EANA, *Elèves Allophones*

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<sup>2</sup> Master 1 is the first year of a two-year master's degree; Master 2 is the second year.

<sup>3</sup> For example, at Caen University validations are managed by the Department of Studies and Student Life. Requests for validations to begin initial teacher training starting in September have to be made before 30 April of the same year. The ENIC-NARIC website (<http://www.ciep.fr/enic-naric-france>) gives information about procedures for the recognition of academic and professional qualifications.

- Nouvellement Arrivés*), FLS (*Français Langue Seconde*) or FLScO (*Français Langue de Scolarisation*, French as a school language);
- for adults, specific types of training for migrants (FLI, *Français Langue d'Intégration*) or for job applicants (FLP, *Français Langue Professionnelle*).

In addition, the CASNAV (Centre Académique pour la scolarisation des enfants allophones nouvellement arrivés et des enfants issus de familles itinérantes et des voyageurs), based in each *académie*, provides resources for the classroom and supplementary training for teaching French as a school language.

Courses and training for teachers are also organized by the Alliance Française network and by the Paris Chamber of Commerce (CCIP, Chambre de commerce et d'industrie de Paris). The Alliance Française Paris Ile-de-France offers a professional FLE degree (DPAFP-FLE) and a FLE certificate of observation and practice (CESOP-FLE), as well as a FLE diploma of teaching aptitude (DAEFLE) in collaboration with the National Centre for Distance Education (CNED, Centre national d'enseignement à distance).

Training for teaching FLE is also provided by the CNED, under the supervision of the Ministry of Education, Higher Education and Research. Courses are offered towards DELF, DALF or DAEFLE qualifications.<sup>4</sup> In addition, the CAPES or *Agrégation* examinations can be prepared through online courses and documents, and foreign language teaching is also supported. There are no specific requirements for these training courses; conditions are mostly financial and are established on registration.

A supplementary qualification is required for teachers in secondary education who wish to teach using a form of language immersion and content-based instruction. The European CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) approach, which in France is called EMILE (*Enseignement d'une Matière par l'Intégration d'une Langue Etrangère*), consists in learning a foreign language through studying another school subject. This can be applied to teaching Geography and History or Mathematics in a foreign language (where it is known as DNL, *Discipline Non Linguistique*). The supplementary teaching qualification is supported by the Ministry of Education.

Further routes of development for teachers include the right to set DELF and DALF tests in order to assess the French language level of

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<sup>4</sup> See the CNED website: <http://www.cned.fr/etudiant/concours-enseignants/capes-capet-caplp>.

foreign learners. These trainings are offered by the CIEP (Centre international d'études pédagogiques; International Centre for Studies in Education). This public institution operates under the auspices of the Ministry of Education, Higher Education and Research, and in partnership with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development. Applications to CIEP are made through their website or they may be channelled via certain regional organizations (e.g. universities and training centres), international organizations (e.g. AUF, Agence universitaire de la Francophonie; Francophone University Association) or European bursaries that seek to encourage candidates enlisting in teaching French as a foreign language. Length of courses – varying between one week and a few months – depend on the type of training and diploma the applicant wishes to obtain.

### 3. Competitive examinations

In France, teachers are recruited by national civil service competitive examination. Teachers at private schools that are under contract with the state are also recruited by competitive exam and acquire the status of public contractors. The objectives and common values of all state school teachers are defined by the decree of 9 July 2013. These relate to the knowledge and application of republican values, an understanding of national educational principles, the knowledge of a learning process that is inclusive for all pupils, the promotion of the national language and of at least one foreign language, as well as a commitment to ethics.

There are two national competitive examinations for teaching languages in the public or private sector:

- CAPES (*Certificat d'Aptitude au Professorat de l'Enseignement du Second degré*; Certificate of Aptitude in Secondary Teaching);<sup>5</sup>
- *Agrégation*, which is similar to the CAPES, although more competitive and with better working conditions.

Both the CAPES and *Agrégation* can be attained by two different routes: an 'external' one for candidates who have just completed the first year of their master's degree, and an 'internal' one for those who have already worked for three years as a substitute/supply teacher in primary or secondary schools in France (in recognition of their experience). Fully

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<sup>5</sup> For detailed information, see <http://www.education.gouv.fr/cid71609/descriptif-des-epreuves-capes-externe-cafef-capes-section-langues-vivantes-etrangeres.html>.

recognized teachers who have already obtained the CAPES and have been teaching in the secondary school system for five years may also take the prestigious *Agrégation* by the ‘internal’ route.

There are a number of specific entry requirements for the CAPES. In order to take the ‘external’ and ‘internal’ competitive exams for the state school system, candidates must have French nationality or be a national of a European Union state or of the European Economic Area, including Andorra and Switzerland. They must also be registered on a Master 1 or 2 programme. Foreign candidates who are not from the European Union or European Economic Area are allowed only to take the ‘internal’ exam for private schools and must obtain authorization from the Academic Commission of the Ministry of Education.

### 3.1 Competitive examination for teaching French

For teaching French as a mother tongue or as a second or foreign language in the secondary school system, the CAPES and *Agrégation* comprise two different stages of examinations.<sup>6</sup> The eligibility test is a written examination and verifies theoretical knowledge of French literature and linguistics; this includes the translation of medieval texts and the explanation of the evolution of words through the ages. The oral admission test covers literature and linguistics as theoretical disciplines and the applied domains of didactics and pedagogy. The competition has evolved and improved over the years. The written examination now comprises an analysis of teaching material, and a description of expected professional competences of teachers has been developed. However, the actual space devoted to teaching matters in an examination that is meant to select secondary school teachers remains limited, because the emphasis is still on selection through academic knowledge. This is the case for most professions, and the entry test for the highly competitive language therapy training includes an extraordinarily difficult orthography test that bears no relation to either the training or the profession. The level of competition is not as fierce for secondary school teachers of French, but it is significant.

According to the Ministry of Education, 1,310 secondary school posts for teaching French were available in 2015 and 1,316 in 2016 (via the

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<sup>6</sup> Applications for the CAPES and *Agrégation* are made through the Ministry of Education website. They are generally made in October and examinations take place in the following January (the eligibility test) and April (the admission test). For an illustration of CAPES examinations, see <http://www.education.gouv.fr/cid298/sujets-des-epreuves-admissibilite-rapports-des-jurys-des-concours-capes-session-2015.html>.



'external' CAPES). In 2013, more than 4,000 applications were received for the 1,100 posts at secondary school level open to competition (via the CAPES). The following table gives an interesting indication of the tension between candidates and number of positions available.

### Numbers of posts and candidates in CAPES for teaching French (2013–15)

| CAPES  |                                | 2013     |          | 2014     |          | 2015     |          |
|--------|--------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
|        |                                | External | Internal | External | Internal | External | Internal |
| French | Number of available posts      | 1,000    | 100      | 1,070    | 99       | 1,310    | 111      |
|        | Number of candidates           | 2,848    | 1,904    | 3,453    | 1,665    | 3,261    | 1,497    |
|        | Numbers of candidates admitted | 1,000    | 100      | 886      | 99       | 1,113    | 111      |

Source: <http://www.education.gouv.fr/cid5491/donnees-statistiques-session-2013.html>

**Table 3.2**

The *Agrégation* is a more selective exam.<sup>7</sup> The programmes, which are published the year before the certification tests, are more elaborate and specialized than those of the CAPES. The eligibility test generally comprises four parts: French composition, foreign language composition, linguistics composition and translation.

A peculiarity of the competitive exam is that the requirements for teaching French as a second or foreign language in the secondary school system are not as specific as those for teaching French as a mother tongue. Since 2013, a test (*Analyse d'une situation professionnelle*) geared to teaching French as a second or foreign language has been included as one of the four oral tests that make up part of the 'external' competition. This requires that candidates present a teaching sequence covering linguistic, communicative and cultural issues, relating to a topic assigned by the examination jury (Spaëth 2015). The underlying motive seems to be to test whether the candidate is able to integrate the speakers of other languages who are increasingly present in school classes.

<sup>7</sup> For detailed information, see

[http://www.education.gouv.fr/cid58356/programmes-des-concours-second-degre-session-2016.html#Concours\\_externe\\_de\\_l'agrégation](http://www.education.gouv.fr/cid58356/programmes-des-concours-second-degre-session-2016.html#Concours_externe_de_l'agrégation).

### 3.2 Competitive exam for teaching foreign languages

For teachers of foreign languages, the CAPES eligibility test consists of an essay in the foreign language (based on literature and culture, focusing on one of the concepts or themes within the *collège* and *lycée* curriculum) and a translation (to or from the foreign language, as decided by the examination jury). The admission test includes an interview with the jury concerning the teaching of the foreign language and a theoretical analysis of educational issues (such as methods and textbooks). This analysis is based on a file submitted by the jury, made up of documents relating to one of the concepts or themes within the curriculum. The analysis has two parts: the first, in the foreign language, consists of a presentation of the documents, their analysis and a discussion of how they relate to each other; the second, in French, consists of a teaching proposal and the learning principles on which it is based.

The programmes on which examinations are based are published by the Ministry of Education, generally one year before the eligibility test. They have very considerable coverage, comprising all the topics studied at *collège* and *lycée* (literature, grammar, culture; Poré and Zaugg 2013; Alladaye and Hervouet 2008). To take an example, the programme for the 2015 external competition in English published in April 2014 included general subjects taken from the *college* and *lycée* curriculums, focusing on ‘modernity and tradition’ and the writing of a literary text. In the case of German, the topics were ‘Myths and heroes’, ‘The writer in his century’, etc.

In elementary schools, modern languages are mainly taught by teachers with bachelor’s degrees, although teachers with master’s degrees, language assistants and various professionals can also be employed. Since 2008, all students working towards elementary school teacher employment are trained to teach foreign languages (during their initial studies and in Master 1). In order to reach this stage of training, they must have already achieved a B2 level in the target language.

Since 2011, a master’s degree is required for candidates for all state school teaching positions. Successful candidates become trainee teachers and are assigned to a particular school for a year. If the outcome of their assessment is positive, they are granted permanent status as civil servants (*titularisation*) at the end of their first year. In private schools that are under contract with the state the status of teachers is similar to those of state schools, although they enjoy less protection.

## 4. Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter is to present a description of the teaching of foreign languages in France from the point of view of teacher training. The descriptions of the competitive examinations show how elaborate the process is: they include several complex written and oral tests requiring literary, linguistic, cultural, pedagogical and didactic competences in foreign languages as well as in French.<sup>8</sup> Teachers who have already received their initial training have the opportunity to take a complementary qualification or to receive further training or support from institutions such as CASNAV. In addition, the establishment in 2013 of ESPE institutions within all academic centres is designed to offer training that is more specifically tailored towards producing professional teachers.

The very academic training of teachers has little direct relationship to the ever-changing school programmes. The new lower secondary school programme, which is designed to ensure better integration of primary school pupils, is meant to include the study of a second foreign language. There is, however, no specific training to prepare for this, and it may well come into conflict with the established interests of the teachers of the first foreign language, who will see the number of hours devoted to their subject diminish.

The central government decrees principles. It wants every teacher to be trained to the highest standards of academic knowledge in order to guarantee republican equality of teaching to all learners. However, despite recent changes, teachers rarely receive proper training for real-life teaching in the classroom. The yawning gap between principles and reality can be seen as the source of most failures of the French education system.

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<sup>8</sup> In contrast, these examinations do not on the whole apply to those who wish to teach French as a foreign language, since there are few such jobs in the state school system.

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### **The Ministry of Education, Higher Education and Research**

<http://www.education.gouv.fr/>

#### **Teaching foreign languages in France**

- <http://eduscol.education.fr/cid45718/les-langues-vivantes-etrangeres-ecole.html>
- <http://eduscol.education.fr/cid48779/langues-vivantes-etrangeres-college.html>
- <http://eduscol.education.fr/cid58018/textes-de-reference.html>
- <http://www.education.gouv.fr/cid206/les-langues-vivantes-etrangeres.html>

# CHAPTER FOUR

## FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHER TRAINING IN UKRAINE

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### **Abstract**

The specific characteristics of the Ukrainian model of foreign language teacher training are determined by historical factors relating to national, socio-economic and cultural dimensions, as well as by more recent aspirations for integration into a globalized world. The conceptual framework for the development of pedagogical education is provided by a series of legislation passed in July 2014, in line with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) under the auspices of the Council of Europe. This defines the training of foreign language teachers in a range of higher educational establishments: classical universities, pedagogical institutions devoted to teacher training, humanities institutes, teacher training colleges and teacher training schools (now reorganized as colleges). Within these contexts, one noteworthy development is the demand for the use of Web platforms and other technological media in the training process, which is motivated by Ukrainian students' mobility and the general desire for the modernization of higher education.

### **1. Introduction**

This chapter highlights some specific peculiarities of foreign language teacher training in Ukraine within the context of European integration. It briefly describes the changes in education that have taken place since the times of the state of Kievan Rus (tenth–twelfth centuries). The general

purpose of foreign language teaching and, in particular, the practical purposes of professional teaching were for a long time confined to the development of oral language skills. Other language training activities were regarded as additional means of teaching. The social need for foreign language specialists with written and oral competences led to the implementation of new standards and methodological approaches that prove the value of interconnected teaching.

## 2. Ukraine's education system

The roots of the Ukrainian education system and scientific knowledge date back to the Kievan Rus, when the first schools were established. The development of the school network and the creation of powerful academic centres reflect Ukrainian education's complicated history. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Ukrainian education and science developed amid confrontations between empires, involving Poland's *Rzeczpospolita* and the Russian empire, and later the Austro-Hungarian empire, as well as conflicts between the Catholic and the Eastern Orthodox Churches.

An outstanding achievement from those times was the enormous growth in literacy and the availability of schooling for various social categories. The first academic centre with a high public profile was the Ostrih School, which was opened in 1576 and had its own printing house, meeting the current standards of European institutions of higher learning. The Kyiv-Mohyla Academy was an influential research centre in the seventeenth century and Eastern Europe's first institution of higher learning. In 1661, Jan II Kazimierz, the king of the *Rzeczpospolita*, signed a document granting Lviv Jesuit College 'academy honour and university title'. In the nineteenth century, at the request of the public, the Russian government permitted the establishment of universities in Kharkiv (1804), Kiev (1834) and Odessa (1865). In 1875, Austro-Hungarian emperor Franz Joseph issued an edict establishing a university in Chernivtsi. These educational institutions gained reputations as significant research and education centres (Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine 2011).

The twentieth century proved especially fruitful for the progress of Ukrainian science and education: the number of schools, educational institutions and students increased; education became available for everyone – in 1959 the Eight Grades Standard School became compulsory, and in 1972 the Ten Grades Standard was introduced. A system of vocational schools and advanced vocational training schools was established. Despite the downsides of the Soviet system, education is regarded as one of its few advantages. The availability of secondary school

and higher education for learners as a whole reflected the desire of the state to develop professional and personal opportunities. This led to a great value being placed on education.

The last century also gave rise to the development of Ukrainian schools of research, which gained global recognition in disciplines such as the study of nature (Vladimir Vernadsky), microbiology (Ilya Mechnikov, Danylo Zabolotny), biology (Oleksandr Bohomolets), chemistry (Lev Pysarzhevsky), mathematics, mechanics (Stepan Tymoshenko), physics (Mykola Boholyubov), electric welding and bridge construction (Yegen Paton), cybernetics (Stepan Lebediev, Viktor Hlushkov) and space engineering (Myhailo Yanhel).<sup>1</sup>

The positive attitude towards education in Ukraine means that the number of people completing university is rather great, while more than 90% of Ukrainians achieve either secondary or higher education. School students attain high levels of competence, winning various national and international competitions in the exact sciences. Ukraine's constitution guarantees every citizen free access to higher education on a competitive basis. The entry procedure for higher educational institutions was reformed in 2008. Now, just as in many other countries, anyone who wants to continue education must pass the External Independent Test (EIT) and obtain an appropriate certificate. The demand for higher education remains invariably high in Ukraine: according to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, enrolment in universities and academies increased in 2000–06 from 50% to 73%, an indicator that exceeds the average for North America and Eastern Europe (Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine 2011).

At present, Ukraine's national education system is undergoing a democratization that involves reforms and modernization: the implementation of humanist ideas and fundamental values, a subject-oriented approach, the reorientation from an informational to an active approach, a focus on students' needs and abilities, developing leadership potential, and tolerance towards different cultures. One of the reform's major directions is integration into the European and global educational community. One objective is the recognition of Ukrainian qualified specialists in European countries, establishing close contacts with

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<sup>1</sup> An array of inventions by Ukrainian researchers has served as the foundation for world-renowned scientific achievements in many areas. These include, among many others, groundbreaking results such as the controlled nuclear reaction to split lithium atoms, the production of heavy water, the establishment of a new branch in metallurgy known as electrometallurgy, and the development of space rockets and aeronautics.

educators and scientists from Europe as well as all over the world. The main impetus for integrating the Ukrainian higher education system into the European educational community and fostering contemporary improvement, particularly in teacher training education, is the Bologna Process.

### **3. Implementation of the Bologna Process in higher education**

In 2005 Ukraine joined the Bologna Declaration and is now, together with the other 46 European countries, carrying out the resulting reforms. Thus, Ukraine has taken the course of accepting the European educational standards that are part and parcel of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). In order to introduce Bologna's requirements, Ukraine's national education system is undergoing large-scale reforms and modernization. This involves a transition, within a short period of time, from the two-stage specialist preparation system inherited from Soviet times to the three-stage European system.

The implementation of the three-stage system of training specialists via bachelor's, master's and PhD degrees is currently underway. Institutions of higher learning have been issuing bachelor's and master's degrees since 2008. However, the national scale of educational grades still retains the Junior Specialist and Specialist qualifications as transitional options for graduates who want to orient themselves towards practical activities rather than theoretical research. The third-stage, PhD qualification is equivalent to the Candidate of Sciences and Doctor of Sciences grades. Ukrainian institutions of higher learning have already made a transition to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) of knowledge assessment by preparing a European-standard Diploma Supplement (Hrynevych 2014; Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine 2011).

It is necessary to completely reorganize the education management system, including building a new academic framework and knowledge assessment system, and, in addition, carry out a number of other reforms: adjust curriculums and syllabuses according to European requirements, broaden students' rights to choose optional classes, implement distance learning courses and transfer credits from previous courses.

The most significant reform is the introduction of external independent knowledge testing (EIT) for secondary school pupils intending to apply to higher educational institutions, which will lead to a transparent admission system. Universities and academies now admit students on the basis of external independent evaluation. In democratic countries independent



evaluation has proved effective; in Ukraine this has replaced the previous system of individual entrance examinations held at each institution of higher learning.

The higher educational institutions are currently undergoing administrative and educational optimization. The number of institutions of higher learning has been reduced from 807 to 317 in order to prioritize quality over quantity, in accordance with Ukraine's Law of Higher Education, which came into force in September 2014. Less than 20 years ago all educational institutions were national and funded exclusively from the state budget, but since Ukraine's independence private educational institutions have been introduced and now exceed 20% of the total number of institutions. A proportion of the state-funded places in state institutions of higher learning are financed by state awards, which means that applicants who successfully pass the entry requirements do not pay for their education. A young person may also apply for a non-state-funded place at a state university or institute on a fee-paying basis (Hrynevych 2014).

Bachelor's, master's and PhD degrees are to be of equal value to European standards. Currently, Ukraine's higher education comprises five qualification levels: Junior Bachelor, Bachelor, Master, PhD, Doctor of Science. The Specialist and Junior Specialist degrees will be abolished at the end of the 2016/17 academic year. Everyone who has already obtained a Specialist degree will be awarded a master's degree automatically. All current holders of a Candidate of Science degree will receive a PhD. Bachelor's, master's and PhD degrees correspond to the academic classifications accepted in most European countries, which facilitates the academic mobility of Ukrainian students and scientists.

Ukraine became a full governmental member of the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) together with eighteen member countries of the Bologna Process in 2008. This resulted in the signing of the Magna Charta Universitatum by 70 Ukrainian universities, including Mykolayiv V.O. Sukhomlinsky National University. Ukraine's national system of quality assurance is realized by means of licensing and accreditation procedures. Higher educational establishments are authorized to carry out the learning process based on possessing licences, whose obligatory conditions comply with standards established by the Ministry of Education and Science. The bodies authorized to control the quality of higher education are the Ministry of Education and Science, the State Accreditation Committee, the State Inspectorate for Educational Institutions and the Higher Attestation Board. Higher education institutions that have

attained licences are included in the State Register of Higher Education (Kremen 2004).

Priority objectives as a result of the Bologna Process include the following changes to the higher education system:

- Implement an easily understandable system of degrees equivalent to the European model; issue the Diploma Supplement for the future professional employment of Ukrainian specialists in order to increase international competitiveness in terms of standards set by the European higher education system.
- Implement a system based on three main stages of education: undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate degree, access to the second stage of study requiring successful completion of the first stage, which lasts at least three years. The degree/qualification awarded at the end of the first stage of study to be comparable to European standards; the second stage assumes obtaining a master's degree; and the third stage a doctorate (PhD), as is the case in many European countries.
- Implement a credit system of the ECTS type to allow student mobility among European universities. Credits are acquired within the framework of different stages of education as well as at higher learning institutions, encouraging students to pursue lifelong learning.
- Fulfil student mobility by implementing the following steps: provide students with access to education and practical training, plus related services; give teachers, researchers and administrative staff recognition and credit their time spent on conducting research, teaching and training in Europe, without diminishing their rights.
- Promote European cooperation by ensuring quality of training in the development of appropriate criteria and assessment methodologies.
- Develop curriculums, inter-institutional cooperation, mobility schemes, joint training programmes, practical training and implementation of scientific research in line with European views about government-supported higher education (Kremen 2004).

#### **4. A new national system of higher education**

As a result of implementing the new Law of Higher Education in September 2014, several general principles have been introduced, starting in the 2014/15 academic year. We consider the main ones here.

The first one concerns **decentralization**. It allows educational establishments to provide their own educational and scientific programmes and award academic/scientific degrees. The National Knowledge Quality Agency (NKQA) is supposed to validate the Dissertation Defence Board and consider appeals against their decision. Consequently, universities have the right to issue both private and state diplomas and recognize foreign university diplomas and degrees.

In relation to higher educational establishments, much of the power and responsibility of Ukraine's Ministry of Education and Science will be transferred to the NKQA, its function being **education quality control**. The NKQA will be a collegial body comprising university representatives (state, private and municipal), members of the Academies of Science and student representatives. Presidents of universities and Academies of Science will have no right to participate in the NKQA as it will be an independent body. The NKQA will monitor the quality of education, set and accredit the list of degrees, define knowledge acquisition in degrees, develop standards for higher education and create a specialist supervisory committee. The NKQA will determine the criteria for assessing the quality of education in specific higher education establishments in order that they can be ranked. With the implementation of a new law, each institution will have to guarantee the quality of their degrees. The results of knowledge evaluation for each degree will be valid for five years, after which the institution may be accredited once more or else lose its right to run a course in a particular field of study.

**Admission** to higher educational establishments is granted on the basis of the obligatory External Independent Testing (EIT) of school leavers. General access to higher education requires complete general secondary education, including the attainment of the School Leaving Certificate. Admission is accomplished on a competitive basis and for certain programmes is also dependent on an entrance examination. Applicants choose the particular institution they wish to attend at the stage they take their EIT exams. Students are supposed to be ranked according to EIT results, the best having the right to a government scholarship. The ranking of major and higher educational establishments, determined by applicants' preferences, is published each year. Students who study at private universities may also apply for government funding. All **scholarships** should correspond to the minimum living wage. Registration to all educational institutions via an online platform will be available from 2016.

In order to comply with **transparency of financial and economic autonomy**, universities themselves must manage their own finances, dealing with such matters as obtaining loans, disposing of property and

land, and keeping their own audited accounts. In addition, universities are allowed to create scientific enterprises engaged in research work, have the right to administer their own revenues, including tuition fees, which cannot be transferred to state or institutional budgets. All such documents, as well as students' knowledge proficiency levels, should be published on the website of each university.

The purpose of **student government** is to liaise between university administration and students; to protect students' rights and interests; and to participate in academic and extracurricular activities. All universities host different kinds of student organizations who publish journals and newspapers.

Instances of **plagiarism** are no longer to be tolerated in Ukrainian universities. In compliance with the new Law, theses and reviewers' reports are to be posted on the university website before any public presentation takes place. Penalties for plagiarism are strict: the researcher will be deprived of their degree; the scientific supervisor, reviewers and the chairperson of the Dissertation Defence Board will be deprived of the right to participate in board meetings for two years; the institution will be deprived of the right to hold such dissertation defence boards for a period of two years.

The **contact hours** of teachers and students will be decreased to conform to European standards. The number of hours has already been reduced to 600 hours per academic year since 2015. Although this results in scaling down the number of complementary subjects available to students, it also allows more time for research work for faculty members. Contact time will decrease from 36 to 30 hours per week.

The ECTS system has already been implemented in all Ukraine's educational establishments, thus encouraging faculty and student **academic mobility**. The system comprises course credits: a 'bachelor' is awarded 180–240 credits when successfully completing the course; a 'master' is awarded 90–120 credits. The European-standard Diploma Supplement includes a scale of marks and potential number of credits in each subject. This allows students and teachers the mobility to study and conduct research in European universities and to cooperate with European counterparts.

Students are able to choose a significant number of **elective courses** (at least 25%). They select a programme of study from among a set of courses and include such courses that are required by their degree. Bachelor's degree students entering master's degree programmes have the right to change their subjects.

The Law of Higher Education specifies that the **language of teaching** is the national language or English. In order to improve international academic mobility an institution has the right to offer courses in English or other foreign languages, although they must first ensure that students have access to such courses in Ukrainian (<http://texty.org.ua/pg/article/textynewseditor/read/55679/>).

## 5. Higher education qualifications and lengths of academic study

Ukrainian higher education institutions are either public (state or municipal) or private, and include the following types: university, academy, institute, conservatoire (music academy), college and technical (vocational) school. Universities, academies, institutes and conservatoires may offer all types of study programmes (Junior Specialist, Bachelor, Specialist, Master, Candidate of Science) as well as a postgraduate programme. A university or academy may be awarded ‘National’ status for outstanding performance in research and scientific activity (Kremen 2004). The Law of Higher Education establishes three levels of higher education: incomplete, basic and complete; plus the corresponding qualifications of Junior Specialist, Bachelor, Specialist and Master (see Table 4.1).

**Junior Specialist (*Molodshyi Spetsialist*)**. Programmes leading to Junior Specialist Diplomas are provided for a period of two–three years on the basis of having completed a general secondary school education and obtaining the Matriculation School Leaving Certificate, or three–four years after carrying out a basic general secondary school education and obtaining the basic School Leaving Certificate. The study programme must be completed by a final state examination. Graduates receive a Junior Specialist Diploma (*Dyplom Molodshogo Spetsialista*), which confers the right to enter a bachelor’s degree study programme or employment.

**Bachelor (*Bakalavr*)**. The entry requirement for a bachelor’s degree programme is a Matriculation School Leaving Certificate and satisfactory results attained in External Independent Testing (EIT). The programme leading to the bachelor’s degree generally lasts three–four years (40 months of study), but may be one–two years shorter in the case of entry with a Junior Specialist Diploma in a given or related field of study. The study programme must be completed by a final state examination. Graduates receive a Bachelor Diploma (*Dyplom Bakalavra*), which confers the right to apply to enter a master’s degree study programme or employment.

### Stages of education and qualifications

| Stage  |                             | Qualification                         | Period of study (ECTS credits)  | EHEA cycle  |
|--|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| <i>Doktorantura</i> (post-doctoral research) |                             | Doctor of Science                     |   |   |
| <i>Aspirantura</i> (doctoral studies)        |                             | Candidate of Science                  | ≥3 years  | Third cycle                                       |
| Higher education                             | Complete higher education   | Master's degree<br>Master Diploma     | 1–2 years (90–120 ECTS)<br>(1–3 years for medicine, veterinary medicine)                | Second cycle                                      |
|  |                             | Specialist Diploma                    | 1–1.5 years (60–90 ECTS)<br>(5–6 years for medicine, veterinary medicine; 300–360 ECTS) |   |
|  | Basic higher education      | Bachelor's degree<br>Bachelor Diploma | 3–4 years (180–240 ECTS)<br>(2–3 years after Junior Specialist Diploma)                 | First cycle                                       |
|  | Incomplete higher education | Junior Specialist Diploma             | 2–3 years (120–180 ECTS)<br>(3–4 years after ISCED 2)                                   | Short cycle (within or linked to the first cycle) |
| Vocational education                         |                             | Qualified Worker,<br>Diploma          | 3 years (after ISCED 2)<br>1–1.5 years (after ISCED 3)                                  | Entry to higher education                         |

|  |  |   |           |  |
|--|--|---|-----------|--|
| General secondary school education     | Complete general secondary school education (ISCED 3)* | <i>Atestat</i> (Matriculation School Leaving Certificate) | 2–3 years |  |
|  | Basic general secondary school education (ISCED 2)     | School Leaving Certificate                                | 5 years   |  |
|  | Primary school education (ISCED 1)                     |   | 4 years   |  |
| Pre-primary school education (ISCED 0) |  |   |           |  |

\* ISCED = International Standard Classification of Education.

**Table 4.1**

**Specialist (*Spetsialist*).** Programmes leading to Specialist Diplomas are provided for a period of one year on the basis of already having received a bachelor's degree. In selected fields, such as medicine and veterinary studies, the Specialist programme is available directly after the completion of secondary school education, in which case it lasts five–six years. The study programme must be completed by a final state examination. Graduates receive a Specialist Diploma (*Dyplom Spetsialista*), which confers the right to enter a profession or continue studies in programmes leading to a master's degree or a Candidate of Science degree (equivalent to a PhD).

**Master (*Magistr*).** A master's degree programme may be entered on the basis of having attained a bachelor's degree or Specialist Diploma. The programme generally lasts for a period of one–two years (22 months of study). Study must be completed by a final state examination, which includes a public presentation and defence of a thesis. Graduates receive a Master Diploma (*Dyplom Magistra*), which confers the right to enter a profession or postgraduate courses leading to a Candidate of Science degree (equivalent to a PhD).

In the case of foreign language teaching, a prospective teacher must attain a certain number of ECTS credits in order to receive particular higher education qualifications. The training programme requirements are 229.5 ECTS credits for a bachelor's degree and 108 ECTS credits for a master's degree in major (lectures, seminars, practical lessons), individual lessons, laboratory lessons and independent work; teacher training practice

(10.5 ECTS credits for a bachelor's degree and 6 ECTS credits for a master's degree); research practice in major (6 ECTS credits for a master's degree); course/term paper (obligatory for bachelor's degree students); thesis defence (obligatory for master's degree students) (Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine 2011).

Students are awarded credits if they successfully complete all tests and examinations. Students take state graduation examinations at the end of the academic study.

### Credit scale for assessing students' knowledge

| Total marks for all types of activity | ECTS | Assessment according to the Ukrainian National Standards   |   |
|---------------------------------------|------|--|---|
|                                       |      | for examination, coursework and teaching training practice | for a credit                                |
| 90–100                                | A    | excellent  | passed                                      |
| 80–89                                 | B    | good   |   |
| 65–79                                 | C    |  |   |
| 55–64                                 | D    | satisfactory   |   |
| 50–54                                 | E    |  |   |
| 35–49                                 | FX   | unsatisfactory, with the right to re-sit an exam           | failed, with the right to re-sit a credit   |
| 1–34                                  | F    | unsatisfactory, with obligatory study of the course        | failed, with obligatory study of the course |

**Table 4.2**

**Special scientific degrees.** The Candidate of Science (*Kandidat Nauk*) is equivalent to a PhD, although it is applied only to scientific fields. It normally requires at least three years of postgraduate studies (*Aspirantura*) in a higher educational establishment or research institute, after having been awarded a Specialist Diploma or a master's degree. It culminates with an official public defence of a thesis.

The Doctor of Science (*Doktor Nauk*) is the highest scientific degree, which is achieved by postdoctoral research following the award of the Candidate of Science degree, usually in the form of a three-year research appointment (*Doktorantura*) in a higher educational establishment or



research institute. It requires research in a particular subject that contributes essentially to the given field of investigation, presentation of its results in scientific publications, and official public defence of a thesis.

## 6. New approaches in foreign language teacher training

### 6.1 Basic requirements

The learning of foreign languages is encouraged from pre-school age through to professional training. The aim is that the learner recognizes the foreign language as a way of comprehending the uniqueness, identity, culture and historical achievements of a particular country, allowing them to understand the diversity of cultures. Consequently, the Law of Higher Education has shifted priorities in the training of future specialists and at the same time reinforced the academic mobility of the profession by means of introducing innovative learning techniques and technologies (Hrynevych 2014). Modernization of the content of future foreign language teacher training requires the following elements: the comparable level of foreign language acquisition; the determination of new approaches in selecting content and teaching materials; the usage of appropriate forms and types of evaluation and assessment.

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) divides language learners into three main divisions (levels):

|   |                     |    |                    |
|---|---------------------|----|--------------------|
| A | Basic learner       | A1 | Beginner           |
|   |                     | A2 | Elementary         |
| B | Independent learner | B1 | Intermediate       |
|   |                     | B2 | Upper intermediate |
| C | Proficient learner  | C1 | Advanced           |
|   |                     | C2 | Proficient         |

**Table 4.3**

According to the CEFR, a foreign language teacher should master a communicative competence that consists of linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic components, which lead to improving the foreign language of a proficient learner (C1 and C2) (Nikolaeva 2003). Nowadays, the languages in most demand are English, German, French, Spanish, Italian and other European languages.

The Ministry of Education and Science has offered a new approach to the philosophical foundations of learning a foreign language, which is reflected in the national standards, programmes and textbooks. This approach deepens students' understanding of the nature and essence of the language, its poly-functionality and place in modern society. The purpose of language learning is to develop a full range of cognitive abilities for the future teacher; help form a spiritually rich person who is skilled in the free usage of expressive means of the language, its types, styles, genres, forms in all types of speech activities; capable of self and autonomous study, self-improvement and self-evaluation, self-awareness and interpersonal skills (Nikolaeva 2003).

In order to train future foreign language teachers with a new outlook and more professional skills, the Tempus project (Developing the Teaching of European Languages: Modernising Language Teaching through the Development of Blended Masters Programmes – DeTEL; 544161-TEMPUS-1-2013-1-UK-TEMPUS-JPCR Aston University) was introduced in two Ukraine universities: Mykolayiv V.O. Sukhomlinsky National University and Kyiv National Linguistic University.

As the number of Ukrainian students who are currently able to obtain internships at European universities is rather small due to mobility issues, overcoming the language barrier without a year abroad is seen as an integral element of foreign language teacher training.

The implementation of the goals mentioned above involves the fulfilment of the following:

- increasing students' sustained motivation for language acquisition and methods of teaching a particular foreign language;
- developing communicative skills for the appropriate use of language in various different spheres of communication, determined by a particular curriculum;
- promoting self-identity, a humanistic world outlook and spiritual awareness of national and human values;
- teaching language as a medium for exploring aspects of social and cultural life;
- promoting students' individual study and lifelong learning;
- encouraging future teachers of foreign languages to be tolerant, open to new ideas and to mutual cultural dialogue;
- fostering autonomous language learners with a particular emphasis on strategies for on-going development (Nikolaeva 2001).

## 6.2 Applied qualities required for foreign language teaching

In order to resolve all the requirements of foreign language teaching Ukraine needs qualified teaching staff who possess key competences. Effective language teaching should result in students being multilingual, which implies a conscious separation of different speech systems and relatively free transition from one language to another, according to changes in situation ([www.mon.gov.ua/ua/often-requested/state-standards](http://www.mon.gov.ua/ua/often-requested/state-standards)). Thus, foreign language teachers should know and understand basic requirements for attaining proficiency:

- the main stages of methodology development involved in the process of teaching foreign languages;
- basic theory about students' communicative competence training, which comprises the language itself, linguistic, sociocultural, sociolinguistic, foreign country studies, educational, strategic and discursive competences;
- the ability to form an individual learning style, the main tool of which is 'language portfolio', as a means of self mastery in the process of obtaining foreign communicative competence;
- the ability to carry out communicative, educational, pedagogical, methodological and organizational functions, which are the main requirements for the practical training of foreign language teachers according to the National Standards of Modern Language Education. These are divided into three components: state, university and department, which include the names of educational programmes and their modules (Nikolaeva 2001; [www.mon.gov.ua/ua/often-requested/state-standards](http://www.mon.gov.ua/ua/often-requested/state-standards)).

The main principles of the teacher training process at higher educational establishments are:

- the state's realization of an effective foreign language policy that ensures effective implementation of foreign language education strategies;
- the bringing together of scientists and teachers to discuss issues concerning a modern humanist outlook, including foreign language training in the context of the Bologna Process;
- the updating of Ukraine's National Standards of Modern Language Education in accordance with the Common European Framework

of Reference for Languages (CEFR) in order to guarantee foreign language learning improvement;

- the implementation of modern educational techniques and technologies.

### **6.3 The professional competence of future foreign language teachers**

The professional competence of future foreign languages teachers, based on the recommendations of CEFR, is associated with the ability to apply a set of knowledge, skills and way of life as part of an interdisciplinary range of issues. The acquisition of competence is achieved gradually during the process of study, so that its levels are different at various stages of training. Competence, being the ability to exercise knowledge in practice, is a valuable characteristic of any professional activity. From this perspective, communicative competence is the common goal in training future foreign language teachers and results from their professional development.

The communicative competence of future foreign language teachers is determined by the function of speech and professional language peculiarities. Communicative function takes priority in teachers' careers because foreign language is viewed either as a form of communication or as a means to educate pupils. Scientists also declare that communicative competence is an integral component of professional competence of future foreign language teachers, because speech is the mechanism that allows them to perform all functions in professional activities.

Acquired professional competence for foreign language teachers includes the following aspects: fundamental sciences, lingua-didactic knowledge, psychology, communicative competence, major foreign language awareness to operate effectively in lessons, methods of language acquisition related to linguistic knowledge, modes of lesson delivery, teaching skills involving theoretical input from a methodological view point, age pedagogy, forms, means and methods in pedagogy, language origin and its development, functional characteristics of the language, history of world, English and American literature, the fundamentals of the Ukrainian law system.

## 7. Conclusion

Globalization has resulted in a new stage in humankind's history, with its associated modernization of education bringing different cultures of the world closer together. Ukraine cooperates with many countries and participates in international projects, the result of which is the implementation of best practice in different programmes and the signing of more than 150 international agreements in the field of education. Ukraine cooperates with such European institutes as the British Council, Tempus/Erasmus +, DAAD, Goethe Institute, Alliance France, UNESCO and others.

Revolutionary changes bring us a new understanding of such notions as 'educational area', which is not concentrated within one country but has broadened the boundaries of the European educational community. To encourage students' and teachers' academic mobility in the sphere of higher education Ukraine joined the Hague Convention, which is a new step in promoting the modernization of Ukrainian education and higher education and making the Ukrainian educational community a European one. Introducing innovations in the curriculums of educational establishments is part of the official policy of the Ministry of Science and Education, which values both European experience and national peculiarities in training its new generation of specialists.

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## CHAPTER FIVE

# THE EFFECTIVENESS OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHER TRAINING IN UKRAINE

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### **Abstract**

In this chapter the effectiveness of foreign language teacher training in the Ukrainian context is analysed. Evaluation is provided on how this training is effective in Ukrainian universities, as applied to both academic and professional qualifications, in terms of successes and challenges in this field. The analysis is based on the practical experience of foreign language teachers and students of the department of Germanic philology at Kyiv National Linguistic University. We considered the national philology curriculum, surveyed a selection of master's degree language students, and analysed teaching and testing methods used in the communicative classroom. In particular, we focused on the key ideas of how linguistic and methodological theories can be converted into good and beneficial language teaching practices, and how to incorporate e-learning platforms and blended learning scenarios into learner-centred educational management in order to meet current challenges in Ukraine's foreign language teacher training.

### **1. Introduction**

In times of economic, political and cultural ties between European states, the crucial issues that have to be discussed in national and international educational communities are closely connected with foreign language learning and teaching. The demand for knowing a foreign language has greatly increased during recent years due to its worldwide importance in both social and professional communication. Ukraine's national priorities

in higher education place a strong emphasis on implementing the Bologna principles in the sphere of foreign language teaching training, with the focus on its quality assurance and integration with European and global higher education areas. The Bologna Process reforms applied to the system of higher education in Ukraine have caused radical changes in teaching, learning and evaluating the knowledge of a foreign language according to international standards as well as in the training of foreign language teachers.

## **2. Foreign language teaching as a national priority**

Being one of Ukraine's national priorities, foreign language teaching is well developed and much supported by the Ukrainian authorities and external bodies such as cultural institutes and educational publishers. Communicative foreign language teaching has been established but needs to be extended, with more attention dedicated to the use of new technologies by foreign language teachers and to intercultural competence as an aim for learners. The role of foreign language teaching in contributing to the creation of national identity has been addressed in new teaching materials and could be further developed by an emphasis on intercultural competence.

The main foreign language taught in Ukraine is English and consideration needs to be given to English as a lingua franca in the contemporary process of globalization, together with the potential impact of English as an International Language on curriculum planning. Moreover, 2016 has been declared the Year of the English Language in Ukraine and high-quality foreign language education is considered a necessary prerequisite to Ukraine's integration into the European and world community.

The increasing role of a foreign language as an essential marker of social identity and as a main tool for cross-cultural communication is an opportunity for higher education institutions to upgrade their quality assurance systems and to search for innovations both in curriculum design and in the forms and ways of educational activities. From this perspective, Ukrainian universities aim at providing high-quality education and learner-centred teaching in order to achieve high levels of learning outcomes and sustainability in the education process in general. Before discussing the quality and effectiveness of foreign language teacher training in the Ukrainian context we shall present a brief account of Ukraine's system for training language teachers.



## **2.1 Foreign language teacher training system: context and structure**

The foreign language teacher education system consists of pre-service and in-service training. Pedagogical universities, pedagogical colleges and classical universities provide pre-service teacher training while a state-wide network of in-service teacher training institutes organizes the professional development of in-service teachers. Although both pedagogical institutions and classical universities work towards preparing teachers, they differ in their focuses and the amount of pedagogical knowledge and experience that they offer to their students.

Pedagogical colleges specialize in training pre-school and primary school teachers. Pedagogical universities provide the same training but in addition also prepare secondary school teachers and university teachers. The main difference between how pedagogical and classical universities prepare teachers is in the amount of time devoted to pedagogical studies and student teaching experience. In classical universities, this amount is much smaller in comparison to pedagogical colleges and universities. Classical universities, which see their main role as training academic professionals, not pre-school or school teachers, offer their students opportunities to work mainly in the secondary school system by offering some pedagogical courses and student teaching opportunities; some classical universities have pedagogical institutes as an integral part of their structure. Like other higher education institutions, pedagogical colleges and pedagogical universities are a part of a centralized higher education system overseen by the Ministry of Education and Science.

The structure of Ukraine's foreign language teacher education system is based on the education systems of the developed countries of the world in accordance with recommendations from UNESCO, the UN and other international organizations. Having joined the Bologna Declaration in 2005, Ukraine is now carrying out Bologna reforms together with the other 46 participating countries. As in most countries, Ukraine's higher education now consists of three levels of education (incomplete, basic and complete higher education) and is divided into three academic stages or cycles (Bachelor, Master, PhD). The three-stage system is provided thorough academic, professional and practical training, with the following higher education degrees: Junior Specialist (incomplete higher education), Bachelor (basic higher education), Specialist and Master (complete higher education).

Incomplete higher education in Ukraine starts with Junior Specialists who are trained at pedagogical colleges (higher educational institutions of

the 1st–2nd accreditation levels). Junior Specialist is the proficiency level of a person who on the basis of complete secondary school education has attained incomplete higher education at college. The normative period of training takes two–three years on the basis of a full secondary school education; or three–four years if the applicant holds a basic secondary school education diploma. This level confers the right to engage in professional activities and to apply for a bachelor’s degree training programme. It is the equivalent of the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System’s short sub-cycle of the first cycle or 120–180 ECTS credits.

Bachelor’s degree undergraduates are trained at educational institutions of 2nd–4th accreditation levels (universities, academies, institutes). The bachelor’s degree is awarded to somebody who has received a thorough general training on the basis of complete secondary education, and fundamental and profession-oriented knowledge and skills. This level allows the person to engage in professional activities and to apply for a Specialist’s or master’s degree training programme. The normative period of training takes four years (240 ECTS credits) or one–two years less if the student already holds a Junior Specialist qualification in the selected specialization or area of training. It should be noted that if a student abandons a bachelor’s degree programme, they may acquire a Junior Specialist’s qualification for an individual programme. It is the equivalent of the European Higher Education Area’s first cycle or 180–240 ECTS credits.

Complete higher education in Ukraine includes Specialist’s and master’s training programmes. Specialist is the proficiency level of a person who on the basis of the bachelor’s degree has attained complete higher education. This programme consists of special disciplines and various types of hands-on training, allowing the graduate to acquire specialist knowledge and skills, as well as experience of applying them to complex professional tasks. The normative period of a Specialist’s training takes one year (60 ECTS credits) on the basis of a bachelor’s degree. This level is the equivalent of the European Higher Education Area’s second cycle or 60 ECTS credits. A master’s and Specialist’s diploma gives equal academic rights to their holders, along with the possibility to continue their education in a postgraduate school to achieve an academic degree. In fact, a master’s and a Specialist’s diploma are different only in the content of the programmes their holders have taken. At the present moment, Ukraine is in the process of a transition to a three-cycle education system (Bachelor, Master and PhD) at the completion of which the Specialist level will not be retained in the system of degree qualifications.

The master's degree is awarded to somebody who has attained complete higher education, special skills and knowledge, sufficient to cope with professional tasks and work of an innovative character at a certain level of professional activity (in teaching, pedagogy, etc.). A person studying under a master's training programme acquires thorough knowledge and skills, and experience of applying and generating ideas. During studies for a master's degree or Specialist qualification, students are required to write and present a thesis on a selected subject, to be able to collect, analyse and summarize, and study theoretical and practical material. The period of training takes typically 1.5–2 years of study (90–120 ECTS credits). The master's degree allows the graduate to engage in professional activities (in our case, teaching) or to continue their education via a postgraduate training programme. In actual fact, the majority of holders of a master's degree in a pedagogical field start their professional careers at schools, colleges or universities.

After five years of work, and every five years thereafter, teachers are required to take further training courses. This ensures a continuity of training throughout a teacher's professional life and is a considerable advantage that does not exist in a number of other countries. It is acknowledged that pre-service training cannot provide all the skills needed by a teacher practising the profession and that during the early years of teaching novice teachers should be trained to evaluate their strong and weak points. That is why, for the first five years, a system of model teacher mentors helps new teachers into their profession, compensating for any lack of didactic/methodological training in the pre-service phase. A mentoring system seems to be very fruitful and it may be necessary to evaluate and regulate this system from time to time in order to gain full advantage of it.

## **2.2 Foreign language teacher training system: curriculum**

The academic process in Ukraine's pedagogical institutions is based on a curriculum that comprises a professional training programme and structured training model. The curriculum is approved by the management of the educational institution and establishes study disciplines, their number, the progression of study, the procedure and forms of study, as well as types and methods of knowledge assessment.

This curriculum usually consists of four main components: academic studies (courses that are relevant to the student's major, such as English language and literature); pedagogical or educational studies (courses that provide students with knowledge about teaching techniques and skills,

children's psychological development and educational theories); general studies (courses that are aimed at the general intellectual development of students, such as, the history of Ukraine, philosophy, sociology or political science); and student teaching or school teaching practice.

Foreign language teacher training in Ukraine continues to focus on acquiring disciplinary (linguistic) knowledge rather than practice-based instruction, by means of traditional transmissive methods of teaching. This separation of linguistic knowledge from pedagogical knowledge and skills is prominent in traditional universities, whereas pedagogical universities and similar institutions are in the process of developing ways of ensuring an integration of foreign language studies and pedagogy.

Linguistic knowledge has to be transformed into a double transposition – first for study by trainee teachers and then for study by pupils in the classroom – for there to be successful acquisition in the classroom. Therefore, as part of their professional education, future foreign language teachers need to study and acquire knowledge in Foreign Language Teaching Methodology, Appropriate Language Pedagogy, and Curriculum Design and Evaluation. The need for such subject-specific knowledge to be incorporated into pre-service foreign language teacher training has been identified in many European countries and is being put into practice in Ukraine's pedagogical universities.

Other issues that affect Ukraine's foreign language teacher training programmes, along with the rest of the higher education system, include underfunding, which impedes the upgrading of facilities and technological resources, the updating of teaching resources, improving faculty members' professional development and increasing their salaries, and a surfeit of bureaucracy, which influences the quality of faculty members' preparation of courses and reduces time available for academic work. Despite these difficulties, the content and practice of foreign language teacher training programmes are changing in a positive way.

### **2.3 A survey of foreign language teachers**

A survey was carried out among Ukraine's foreign language teachers in order to investigate the current state of foreign language teacher training. This initiative is part of an EU Tempus project (Developing the Teaching of European Languages: Modernising Language Teaching through the Development of Blended Masters Programmes – DeTEL, 2013–16) aimed at developing new foreign language teacher training programmes for school teachers. The questionnaire was directed at both those who were currently training to be teachers and those who had finished their training

and were already teaching. The objective of the survey was to find out about their experiences of training to become a language teacher in the Ukrainian context.

The participants comprised 110 pre-service and in-service foreign language teachers, all of whom were Ukrainians and worked as English language teachers in Ukraine. Half of the respondents worked in universities and of the remainder the majority worked in state secondary schools and the rest in state primary schools. All of them had graduated from universities and the majority had a master's degree in English Language and Literature. All the respondents were female and spoke English and Russian languages; half of them spoke German. 30% of the respondents had been working as English language teachers for over 10 years; 30% for 6–10 years; the remainder for 1–5 years or less than a year. Only two teachers (2%) had lived in a country where the language they taught (i.e. English) was the common language, one having lived there for up to five years, the other up to two years. All teachers used the communicative approach as their main method of teaching. The majority of coursebooks used during the classes were books published in the UK (by, for example, Cambridge University Press, Oxford University Press and Express Publishing), although a lot of teachers used coursebooks published in Ukraine.

When asked which of the areas they covered in their teacher training courses, the respondents chose nearly all of the suggested options, which were: language teaching pedagogy/methodology; government standards/requirements; sociopolitical contexts of language learning; curriculum; materials; discourse analysis; second language acquisition; psychology; culture; literature; special educational needs; motivation; content-based learning; pastoral care; knowledge about the target language; linguistics; assessment; continuing professional development; intercultural communication; teaching practice. Of these options, the ones that they did not choose (thereby indicating that these were omitted from their courses) were: sociopolitical contexts of language learning; special educational needs; pastoral care.

The respondents mentioned the following as the most successful features of their programmes: methodology; knowledge about the target language; teaching practice (up to five weeks); linguistics; literature. On the other hand, respondents underlined that they lacked the following: extended psychological and pedagogical practical aspects; content-based learning; different workshops; introduction of modern teaching techniques. To their mind, curriculums for training foreign language teachers needed to have more time allocated to courses where language teachers study

together, discuss their common interests, new teaching ideas and ways of implementing them in school. The respondents mentioned that it would be useful for them to have more teaching practice and the possibility of qualifying with the help of distance learning or blended learning.

Recurrent advice about foreign language teaching included keeping abreast of new tendencies, the development of critical thinking, creativity, enthusiasm and motivation. The respondents highlighted the role language teachers have as generators of knowledge concerning all aspects of foreign language teaching in Ukraine. The results of the questionnaire indicated that foreign language teaching has changed greatly in recent years, becoming more practice-oriented.

## **2.4 Foreign language teacher training system: reforms and problems**

According to a comprehensive study of teacher training in the Eastern Partnership countries, initiated by the European Commission (European Commission 2011), the major foreign language teacher training reforms achieved to date in Ukraine are: the introduction of specialist education in secondary schools; a competence-based approach to learning; and the implementation of programmes and projects at national and regional levels related to modern education technology. Joining the Bologna Declaration has led to improved language training, better accessibility and increased inter-university mobility within Ukraine and abroad. Indeed, participation in international projects such as the EU Tempus programme 'Developing the Teaching of European Languages: Modernising Language Teaching through the Development of Blended Masters Programmes' strengthens Ukraine's standing in Europe, promotes linguistic diversity and facilitates aims towards European integration.

However, a number of problems in foreign language teacher training still exist, including the need to elaborate a system of quality assurance, the lack of full-scale provision for international mobility by students and staff, and insufficient communication between universities and stakeholders. Other limitations include: stereotypical thinking about foreign language teaching among teachers; reluctance of some teachers and school principals to introduce innovations; insufficient financial support for schools; low-quality teaching practice; and the overall difficult social and economic situation of the country (Kutsyuruba and Kovalchuk 2015). Due to lack of precise definition it is not clear in programmes for future foreign language teachers what proportions of the courses will be devoted to didactics and methodology. Besides, there is an obvious need for internal

discussions within Ukrainian higher educational institutions about course content and methodology.

In fact, Ukraine is involved in substantial change and transition in education, as in other aspects of social life. It is responding to the influences and challenges of modern approaches to foreign language teacher training as set out in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Due to the shift to learner-centred teaching and the broader introduction of learner autonomy, foreign language teachers need to be trained and retrained in order to bring their attention to innovative teaching methods and to be more effective in classroom interaction. One can understand that quality is not only about process; rather, it is about teaching, intellectual innovations and curriculum design, though is rather difficult to identify how quality can be measured in these contexts.

Ukraine's foreign language teacher training institutions are responding to these quality challenges by designing new curriculums and programmes that are able to meet the European professional standards. In such programmes, course delivery is becoming more flexible by means of introducing new teaching and learning technologies, which are alternatives to face-to-face classes. E-technology brings with it new kinds of embedded assessment quality processes by providing blended learning methodology that is aimed at forming and assessing knowledge and skills through the lens of measurable student outcomes and subject-specific competencies (Myronenko and Dobrovolska 2015; Valigura 2015).

Having explored the changes and reforms in the structure of Ukraine's foreign language teacher training system, we can underline the necessity for introducing new teaching and learning technologies in its training institutions.

### **3. Language learning innovations in the philology faculties of Ukrainian universities**

As already pointed out, the demand for foreign language teacher training is increasing in Ukraine. Faculties of philology in classical and pedagogical universities are the main bases for such training. Here students are able to master the language system (phonetics, vocabulary, morphology, syntax) and comprehend the history, literature, culture and traditions of a particular language community. The efforts of the universities to make available the variety of new curriculums to as many languages as possible and to support philological studies – especially teacher training studies via the Internet, digital media, databases and distance learning – are leading to

the development of an international outlook, as well as increased competitiveness among graduates.

Meanwhile, the universities' central objective is to introduce innovations that can contribute to the development of a national conception of education that aims to increase the level of European language acquisition of the Ukrainian population. Foreign language teacher training institutions determine their own approaches to teaching communicative and intercultural competencies and ways to assess them, enabling effective learning environments in the Ukrainian context (Kvasova and Kavvytska 2014). The teacher training university programmes are encouraged to introduce innovative learner-centred (competence-centred) methodologies tuned to EU standards. Special attention is given to adapting programme content to the needs of the particular university and local educational context (Sieriakova et al. 2015).

As an illustration, we can take Kyiv National Linguistic University (KNLU), which was founded in 1948 as the Kyiv Pedagogical Institute for Foreign Languages. Nowadays it is recognized as a key linguistic university in Ukraine, where 24 languages are taught in 7 faculties. It is a powerful academic and research institution where new methods of foreign language teaching have been tested and introduced, along with diverse fundamental and applied research in many areas, including linguistics, literary studies, translation studies, cognitive studies, pedagogy, psychology, linguodidactics and computer studies. The bachelor's and master's degree programmes incorporate the best experience and expertise in foreign language teaching in Ukraine and from the leading linguistic centres of Europe (including universities of Great Britain, France, Germany, Italy and Spain) and the USA.

### **3.1 Master's degree programmes**

Master's degree programmes at KNLU are designed in accordance with the Bologna Process requirements to provide students with not only subject-specific competences necessary for succeeding in their careers as school teachers, but also with in-depth theoretical foundations for further growth in the field of linguistics and in foreign language teaching methods. For this purpose, in addition to a variety of graduate degrees at the master's level, KNLU offers several postgraduate and doctoral programmes. Master's programmes in European languages such as English, French, German, Spanish, Italian, Greek, Hungarian, Dutch, Finnish, Polish, etc. provide students with practical and theoretical knowledge to meet the challenges and demands of living today in the



globalized world. KNLU students also gain all the advantages of online training.

Graduates of KNLU's Master in Philology (Language and Literature) have proved their skills in independent research in one of three alternative specializations: linguistics, literature or foreign language teaching methodology. This results in them attaining the skills of research project methodology as well as a good command of the target language. These graduates are also qualified in four main areas: command of two foreign languages, foreign language teaching methodology, linguistics, and research competence. Students majoring in English gain insight into cognitive, stylistic, social and pragmatic relativity of the language, using as examples English fictional and non-fictional discursive practices. Students acquire knowledge of phonological, morphological, syntactic and super-syntactic levels of the English language, and theoretical foundations of their descriptions, in addition to a knowledge of didactics, pedagogy and foreign language teaching methods.

The Master in English Language and Literature being of two types – research-oriented or practice-oriented – the research-oriented strand is the basis for a doctoral programme in Linguistics, Literature or Foreign Language Teaching Methodology. The objective of this programme is to encourage, in combination with teaching practice, well-founded knowledge and a command of independent academic research including methodologically appropriate treatment. Thorough preparation for more advanced academic work in the field of English studies is also provided.

### **3.2 New curriculum design**

The Teaching European Languages through the Development of Blended Masters Programme, which was introduced in KNLU in the 2015/16 academic year, prepares its graduates for teaching English and German (French, Hungarian etc.) as foreign languages at secondary schools and higher educational establishments. It is practice-oriented, combining both face-to-face and online learning. The advantage of this programme is that it focuses on language improvement for pre-service and in-service teachers, language pedagogy and language awareness, and pays more attention to innovative teaching methods.

This programme's content and methods have led to expected outcomes and competences in the students. Such outcomes can be demonstrated by different means: formative and summative assessments and tests, documentation of teaching practice in schools, self-evaluation reports by students and so on. In this way all providers of foreign language teacher

training maintain their freedom to teach and assess as they wish but also ensure that the learning outcomes are appropriate to the profession of foreign language teacher as defined nationally.

The structure of this programme is presented in the following table:

**MASTER'S CURRICULUM**  
**English Language and Literature**  
**Specialization: Teaching European Languages**  
**through the Development of Blended Masters Programme**  
**Duration: 1 year 6 months**

|     | <b>Course</b>   | <b>Credits / Hours</b> |
|-----|---|------------------------|
| 1.  | English Language Improvement  | 240 / 8                |
| 2.  | German / French Language Improvement  | 240 / 8                |
| 3.  | Foreign Language Teaching Methodology   | 90 / 3                 |
| 4.  | Technology and Language Teaching  | 120 / 4                |
| 5.  | Age Appropriate Pedagogy  | 90 / 3                 |
| 6.  | Curriculum Design and Evaluation  | 90 / 3                 |
| 7.  | Theory of Literature  | 90 / 3                 |
| 8.  | General Linguistics   | 90 / 3                 |
| 9.  | Comparative Historical and Typological Linguistics  | 90 / 3                 |
| 10. | Comparative Typology of English and Ukrainian   | 90 / 3                 |
| 11. | Pragmatics of Non-verbal Communication / Cognitive Poetics / Theory of Speech Communication           | 90 / 3                 |
| 12. | Stylistics and Text Interpretation / Emotional Communication in Discourse Practices                   | 120 / 4                |
| 13. | Theory and Practice of Translation in English / Theory and Practice of Translation in German / French | 180 / 6                |
| 14. | Semiotics / Research Methods  | 60 / 2                 |
| 15. | Research Components: Methods of Organization of Modern Research                                       | 60 / 2                 |

**Table 5.1**

The requirements for this master's degree include core courses in Language Improvement, Foreign Language Teaching Methodology, Technology and Language Teaching, Age Appropriate Pedagogy, Curriculum Design and Evaluation, General Linguistics, as well as optional courses in Pragmatics, Stylistics and Text Interpretation, etc. (as

listed in Table 5.1).

It should be underlined that in the 2016/17 academic year a new master's degree programme in Secondary Education will be introduced. It will prepare students for foreign language teaching careers in secondary schools, offering broad training in the proficiency of two foreign languages, foreign language teaching methodology, technology in foreign language teaching, with possible focuses on education process management and pedagogical creativity, methods of teaching foreign languages and culture in a European context, and blended learning in foreign language teacher training.

#### **4. Benefits of blended learning in foreign language teacher training**

The spread of English as a mode of intercultural communication and trends in the development of modern society highlight the need for the use of technology in foreign language education. The information age in which we live has shaped numerous advances in educational technologies, providing such forms of education as online schooling as an alternative to full-time attendance at university, or blended learning, which is a combination of online and classroom education.

Researchers (Bender 2003; Bonk and Graham 2005; Garton and Edge 2012; Gilpin 1997; Marriott and Torres 2009; Murray 2007; Murray and Christison 2011; Oliver and Trigwell 2005; Rovai and Jordan 2004) have indicated a number of advantages of online learning, such as greater flexibility, possibility of distance learning, and broader possibilities for collaboration. Educators consider that such technologies are the most effective means of involving more learners in more educational contexts – for instance, learners living in remote or distant areas, or adults working full-time (Murray and Christison 2011).

Recently, researchers have begun to investigate online community development, not only in distance education settings but also in hybrid-type courses, which combine features of online distance learning with traditional classroom-based learning. The appearance of information technologies in teaching foreign languages has led to the introduction of a relatively new method, called blended learning. The term is most commonly defined as a combination of online and face-to-face instruction, combining various types of pedagogy with different tools for interaction and discussion. In a sense, blended learning courses reap the benefits of both face-to-face and online communities, as they combine the two methods of delivery.

Most researchers define blended learning as a combination of face-to-face and computer-mediated instruction (Bonk and Graham 2005) – in other words, a mix of classroom and online learning – thus underlining some of the conveniences of online courses without the complete loss of face-to-face contact (Rovai and Jordan 2004). This means that, for example, an academic writing course might have five weekly contact hours of which two or three are conducted online; or other language courses may be conducted primarily online and may require only one or two meetings in the classroom during a semester, in which students conduct reports, work as a group or give presentations.

Based on the definition by C.J. Bonk and C.R. Graham (2005), three components of blended learning can be singled out: face-to-face learning, which is the traditional format of teachers and students meeting in the classroom; online collaborative learning, which is online cooperative work done by students and teachers in the form of webinars (Web-based seminars), wikis (websites that allow collaborative modification), Skype conferences, etc.; self-study learning, which assumes different types of activities – such as searching on the Internet, Web-Quests, etc. – performed by students unassisted.

Indeed, learning English through technology has become a fact of life and all the activities mentioned above address both learners' and teachers' needs in their professional development. However, challenges arise when it comes to carrying out blended learning in practice. For instance, how can the development of blended learning within the framework of the master's degree programme be evaluated? What are the most efficient and motivating ways of self-study learning and online cooperative work leading to developing professional competences? In addition, questions arise as to how to combine the components of blended learning in the most effective way in order to enhance the learner's communicative competence, as well as how to prepare foreign language teachers to create a productive blended learning environment that provides a positive learning experience for students. These issues are under discussion in those Ukrainian universities that have put into practice blended learning in foreign language teacher training.

At KNLU blended learning is used in relation to new master's degree programmes. Blended learning has been adopted as the principal means of teaching and learning in its new Teaching European Languages through the Development of Blended Masters Programme in order to enhance its learning and teaching activities by delivering pedagogically and methodologically sound courses in the field of foreign language teacher training. In the autumn semester of 2015, twelve master's degree students

of the Germanic philology faculty specializing in Foreign Language Teaching Methodology entered the new programme, which started with the blended courses English Language Improvement and Technology and Language Teaching. To discover whether the integration of face-to-face teaching with online methods was successful, students were asked to answer a questionnaire soliciting their opinions on various aspects of the new programme. The questionnaire consisted of the following questions:

1. What or who motivated you to attend this course?
2. Did you find the blended learning method motivating / not motivating. Why?
3. List three activities in the classroom that were most useful to you.
4. List three online activities that were most useful to you.
5. Were there any online activities you did not find useful? Why?
6. Did you welcome the possibility to have more face-to-face lessons? Why?
7. Would you recommend the course to other people?
8. Further comments?

Generally, all the respondents gave positive answers, which showed satisfaction with the overall structure of the course. The main motivation factors for attending the course were students' eagerness to improve their English and their intention to use blended learning skills in their future teaching. They all stated that the tasks and activities given to them during the whole course had been very useful. They considered a variety of technological tools such as discussion boards, chats, wikis and blogs to be quite useful, motivating and important for the development of a sense of community. Students appreciated exercises they could do alone and have immediate teacher feedback. According to the respondents, the most useful face-to-face activities were creating dialogues, writing essays and discussing common grammatical and lexical mistakes. As for the question concerning online activities, only one student commented that there had been too many assignments in the online part of the course. All but two of the students welcomed the chance to have more face-to-face lessons, appreciating input from their teachers. The students indicated that they believed the blended approach would make this course a success and it would help them to develop their language skills in a shorter time and become more confident in using them in different situations. In conclusion, the students added that they would recommend the course to other students in the faculty.

The results of the questionnaire demonstrated that all the activities address students' needs and goals in their professional development as future teachers of English, though for most of the students working in a virtual learning environment is a new experience, so they need teacher guidance and practice in using it. This is sometimes complicated by the students' prior learning experience, which to a large extent is based on face-to-face learning and a teacher-centred approach to foreign language learning and teaching. However, the benefits for learners of teaching English as a foreign language with technology remain.

## **5. Conclusion**

Both the institutions and individual teachers that comprise Ukraine's philology faculties continue to contribute to the improvement of the educational quality of teaching and learning by applying new technologies in education. While acknowledging some problems in this mode of teaching, these seem to be outweighed by the advantages, such as the opportunity for distance learning, which undoubtedly increases the quality of education and goes beyond traditional ways of teaching and learning, thus extending further possibilities for learning. As far as foreign language teaching is concerned, modern information technologies offer challenging ways of teaching and learning, such as easy access to study materials, the opportunity for the individual to proceed at their own pace, and to choose the time and place of studying, and almost immediate feedback on writing with email tutorial support. Computer-mediated learning is becoming increasingly popular in teaching foreign languages and today's students often expect an online component or support as part of their course. Therefore, many institutions offer online learning options to supplement face-to-face classes. Current research suggests that the best results come from a blended learning method. Blended learning can be particularly time-saving and provides convenience and flexibility of learning. It has a tremendous potential in teaching foreign languages as it offers an opportunity to integrate the innovative and technological advances of online learning with the interaction and participation of the best traditional practices.

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## CHAPTER SIX

# THE TRAINING OF SECOND LANGUAGE TEACHERS IN RUSSIA AND ITS EFFECTIVENESS

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### **Abstract**

In this chapter the effectiveness of second language teacher training in the Russian environment is analysed. The analysis is based on the experience of teachers, students and graduates of the department of foreign languages at Voronezh State University.

Like other similar departments of Russian classical universities, Voronezh State University offers a number of undergraduate and postgraduate degree courses, with the focus on the competence-based approach. Particular attention is paid to the use of information and communication technologies (ICT), development of new technologies for language education and improvement of postgraduate training of second language teachers from Voronezh and neighbouring areas.

Such organization of training gives graduates broad opportunities to work at educational institutions of all types (secondary schools, classical, pedagogical and technical universities, language courses and centres of preparation for international testing and international examinations).

### **1. Introduction**

One of the most important tasks of modern university education is considered to be the training of proactive, highly cultured, ‘thinking outside the box’ specialists. Changes in the socio-economic sphere of public life have made many countries, including Russia, think about the necessity of reforming their educational system. Russia’s integration into the international community calls for a thorough study and analysis of

both domestic and foreign experience in the organization of the education system, including higher vocational education. Recently there has been a significant change in understanding the overall objectives of training within the system of vocational language teacher education. What amounts to a paradigm shift from traditional education to student-oriented learning makes clear the necessity for higher educational institutions preparing second language teachers to improve the process of training specialists.

Currently there is a particular urgency to train second language teachers, because the social and cultural context of language learning in Russia has changed: it has become possible for a much larger proportion of the country's population – people with different beliefs and interests, and of different age groups and professions – to be involved in direct and indirect (via the Internet) communication. This has led to an increased motivation for studying languages as a means of international communication.

Modern language education in Russia has changed greatly; nowadays it is characterized by interdisciplinary integration, multi-cycled structure, diversification and a focus on the intercultural aspect of mastering a language. In addition, the scope and types of professional activities available to a language teacher have also changed. This raises the question of how a second language teacher of the new generation should be trained.

This chapter provides an historical and analytical insight into the way second language teacher training is organized in Russia's different higher educational institutions, specifically characterizes second language teacher training at Voronezh State University and gives statistics that show that most graduates are quite successful at working at educational institutions of all types.

## **2. Types of higher educational institutions training second language teachers**

In Russia, second language teacher training is carried out in the departments of foreign languages at pedagogical universities and classical universities (the total number of such universities in Russia's state sector is 116). As in the other parts of the Russian Federation, in the Central Black Earth region – one of Russia's biggest regions, comprising six territories (called *oblasts*) – second language teacher training is carried out under the direction of 'Linguistics', 'Philology' and 'Teacher education' in the following universities situated in the *oblasts*' main cities:

1. Belgorod State University (Belgorod *oblast*);
2. Kursk State University (Kursk *oblast*);

3. Lipetsk State Pedagogical University (Lipetsk *oblast*);
4. Lipetsk Eco-Humanitarian Institute (Lipetsk *oblast*);
5. Oryol State University (Oryol *oblast*);
6. Tambov State University named after G.R. Derzhavin (Tambov *oblast*);
7. Voronezh State University (Voronezh *oblast*);
8. Voronezh State Pedagogical University (Voronezh *oblast*).

The specific features of second language teacher training in classical universities and pedagogical universities of Russia can be seen by taking Voronezh State University and Voronezh State Pedagogical University as examples (Table 6.1).

### Comparative characteristics of a classical university and a pedagogical university

|                          | Voronezh State University   | Voronezh State Pedagogical University  |
|--------------------------|---|--|
| <b>Provision</b>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provides training within the educational standard of the bachelor's degree programme in Linguistics;</li> <li>• the educational process is focused on developing professional competencies equally in production (speech and language skills) and scientific and methodological activities (methodological knowledge and skills);</li> <li>• graduates receive a diploma of higher education with the qualification to teach a foreign language</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provides training within the specialist's degree programme in Teaching Foreign Languages;</li> <li>• the educational process is focused mainly on methodological training of future specialists;</li> <li>• graduates receive a diploma of higher education with the qualification to teach a foreign language</li> </ul> |
| <b>Length of courses</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bachelor's degree programme lasts four years (eight semesters) / profile 'Theory and Methodology of Teaching Foreign Languages and Cultures';</li> <li>• the curriculum provides 240 ECTS credits in total</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specialist's degree programme in Teaching Foreign Languages lasts five years</li> </ul>   |

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <b>Teaching practice (where included)</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• one pedagogical practice for four weeks (216 hours);</li> <li>• held in secondary schools and specialist schools of foreign languages (English, German, French)</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• two types of practice:<br/>A) training practice (36 hours in 1, 2 and 4 semester each)<br/>B) pedagogical practice (18 hours in 8 and 9 semester each);</li> <li>• held in secondary schools and specialist schools of foreign languages (English, German, French)</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Qualification obtained</b>             | a state Bachelor of Linguistics diploma  | a state diploma with a qualification in teaching a foreign language  |
| <b>Core competencies acquired</b>         | <p>A) in production practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- acquire the system of linguistic knowledge, including the knowledge of the basic phonetic, lexical, grammatical, word formation phenomena and laws of functioning of a studied foreign language, and its functional types;</li> <li>- acquire basic discursive modes of statements with respect to the features of the current communicative context</li> </ul> <p>B) in the field of scientific and methodological activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- acquire theoretical foundations of foreign language teaching, the essence and the laws of the teaching and learning of foreign languages;</li> <li>- develop the ability to use various teaching aids and teaching materials for the development of new educational materials on a given topic;</li> <li>- acquire the ability to critically analyse and build the educational process, implementing teaching activities in educational institutions of pre-school,</li> </ul> | <p>A) in pedagogical practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- acquire the ability to develop and implement training programmes and basic elective courses in various educational institutions;</li> <li>- prepare to apply advanced techniques and technologies, methods of diagnosing achievements of students to ensure the quality of the educational process</li> </ul> <p>B) in the field of scientific and methodological activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- acquire the ability to develop modern educational technology, taking into account the features of the educational process, the tasks of education and personal development;</li> <li>- acquire the ability to use basic methods of scientific research in educational activities</li> </ul> |

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
|   | general, primary and secondary vocational education, as well as additional language education in accordance with the specific objectives of the course and the conditions of teaching foreign languages            |  |
| <b>Modes of delivery</b>                                      | lectures, seminars, laboratory classes, students' independent work, blended learning based on courses designed in the e-learning environment   | lectures, seminars, laboratory classes, students' independent work   |
| <b>Details of course tutors</b>                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• teachers without a scientific degree;</li> <li>• teachers with a Candidate of Sciences degree and a Philological or Pedagogical Sciences doctorate<sup>1</sup></li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• teachers without a scientific degree;</li> <li>• teachers with a Candidate of Sciences degree and a Philological or Pedagogical Sciences doctorate</li> </ul> |
| <b>Number of foreign language teachers currently employed</b> | There are 1,030 secondary schools in the Voronezh region. There are 122 secondary schools in the city of Voronezh, including 1,000 foreign language teachers.  |  |

Table 6.1

### **3. Second language teacher training at the Faculty of Romance and Germanic Philology, Voronezh State University**

The effectiveness of second language teacher training in the Russian environment is analysed by using that of Voronezh State University as an example. The analysis is based on the practical experience of teachers, students and graduates of the university's Faculty of Romance and Germanic Philology. In the authors' view, the roots of the programme's effectiveness lie in the way the process of second language teacher training is organized, and therefore this aspect is examined first.

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<sup>1</sup> The Candidate of Sciences degree is the equivalent of a PhD; and the Philological or Pedagogical Sciences doctorate is the equivalent of a second doctorate, known in France as an *Habilitation*.

Like other similar departments and faculties of Russian classical universities, the Faculty of Romance and Germanic Philology of Voronezh State University, since its establishment in 1962, has made all possible efforts to provide students with educational facilities that will later allow them to work successfully in the field of language education. Soon after its opening the faculty turned into an academic centre for training foreign language teachers who can teach two foreign languages, and have a thorough knowledge of methodology as well as various linguistic disciplines and humanities (foreign literature, theory of language, history, geography and culture of the target language, foundations of the theory of translation, fundamentals of economy and philosophy). Nowadays, offering a number of undergraduate and postgraduate degree courses, the faculty focuses on the competence-based approach which, firstly, expects the students to achieve the level of effective operational proficiency (C1) according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and, secondly, forms all necessary skills required in future professional activities. Particular attention is paid to the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) in the educational process, development of new technologies for language education and strategies for learning a foreign language for specific purposes (LSP), and the improvement of postgraduate training of second language teachers from Voronezh and neighbouring areas.

Such organization of foreign language teacher training gives graduates broad opportunities to work at educational institutions of all types. The statistics shows that most graduates are quite successful at working in specialist schools for the advanced study of foreign languages, in departments of foreign languages of classical, pedagogical and technical universities in different cities of the Russian Federation, in language schools and foreign language courses for various groups of learners, and in centres of preparation for international testing and international examinations (TOEFL, CPE, DELF, DALF, DELE).

### **3.1 The faculty's concept of second language teacher training: historical background**

Foreign language teacher training is carried out at Voronezh State University by the Faculty of Romance and Germanic Philology. Since the time the faculty was founded in 1962, the concept of training second language teachers began to develop, and in Russian methodological science it became known as the 'Voronezh methodological school' (Fenenko 2012). Its authors were Russia's well-known experts in the field

of teaching methodology – Anatoly P. Starkov, Gregory E. Wedel and Alexandra S. Shklyayeva – who also established the faculty. Largely thanks to their efforts the faculty from the very first days of its foundation became an academic centre in the field of second language teaching and, at the same time, a creative laboratory for the development, testing and implementation in the educational process methods of teaching foreign languages that were innovative for the time.

The concept proposed by these scientists was based on the method known as ‘conscious-practical’. In contrast to the ‘conscious-comparative’ method, which was dominant in the system of foreign language education then, this method was based on the following principles:

- oral basis of second language teaching;
- thinking in the target language;
- mastery of the grammatical structure of the language through sentence types;
- learning vocabulary through a proposal model (or a voice sample), a proposal model, or proposal speech unit, being seen as a minimal communication unit.

These principles were presented in the works of Gregory E. Wedel, including his monograph *Conscious-practical method of learning foreign languages: 40 years* (Wedel 2002), which was awarded a medal at the All-Russian Contest of Scientific Works.

The conscious-practical method was the basis for the development of a series of textbooks and teaching kits for secondary schools, in English (written by Anatoly P. Starkov), in French (written by Alexandra S. Shklyayeva) and Spanish (written by Valentina A. Belousova, Irina V. Krymova and D. Baskes). All material prepared by these authors or groups of authors were published by the Prosveshchenie Publishing House, which, in Russia, indicates the authors’ high professional level and a wide target audience; the books were also placed on the list of textbooks that the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation recommended should be used in secondary schools all over the country.

At that time, in order to introduce new techniques in the teaching process, the Faculty of Romance and Germanic Philology started doing a lot of organizational work, which included:

- drawing up programmes and curriculums;
- creating materials and technical bases (phonetic, photography, film and philological laboratories);

- maintaining the educational process by publishing and using methodological materials, etc.

Also during that period, close contacts with secondary schools in Voronezh and the Voronezh region were established and the basis of pedagogical teaching practice was formed, providing the opportunity to introduce and test the new textbooks and manuals. Testing was also held in Voronezh's higher educational institutions. As part of the training system, the faculty opened a two-year higher educational course to prepare teachers for technical colleges and pedagogical universities, as well as to train professionals leaving to work abroad.

In subsequent decades, under the influence of new requirements for training foreign language teachers at the Faculty of Romance and Germanic Philology, as in language universities and faculties in the country as a whole, there occurred a change in scientific and methodological paradigms. The conscious-practical method gave way to the 'communicative method', for which the foundations were developed by Professor Efim I. Passov from the Lipetsk region. Within the communicative method, a 'sociocultural approach' to teaching foreign languages proved to be most productive, and this method was based on recognizing a close relationship of a taught language with the language's culture and native speakers. The development of new technologies and methods of training, aimed at identifying the cultural identity of languages and mastering the national character of speech strategies, began. The members of the faculty who were experts in the field of second language teaching focused on the problems of increasing the cognitive activity of students, the rational organization of their independent work, and the development of the principles of monitoring and testing trainees' knowledge as well as students' self-assessment.

Some time later the ongoing work in this area received theoretical justification in the writings of Victoria V. Safonova, who is a graduate of the faculty and now a professor, a member of the Academy of Social Education of Russia, and general director of the research centre Euroschool (Moscow). In her book *Study of the languages of international communication in the context of dialogue between cultures and civilisations* (Safonova 1996), Safonova stressed that the foreign language as a school discipline becomes a tool for the development of the bilingual and multicultural personality of students, and promotes awareness of a person learning a language as a cultural and historic entity. The author suggests a coherent concept of second language teaching, analysing in detail its elements and outlining the ways to implement it. This new angle



of research led Safonova to the conclusion that in order to construct a model of multicultural education considering the identity potential of a second language as an academic subject, the interdisciplinary community of philosophers, sociologists, psychologists, culturologists, didacticians, philologists and methodologists should aim at multidimensional studying of the bilingual capacity of the individual (Safonova 1996, p. 189). The approach is reflected in a series of textbooks for senior secondary schools with advanced study of English. These tutorials created by a team under Safonova's scientific supervision were awarded classification by the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation.

### 3.2 A modern concept of second language teacher training

After Russia entered the Bologna Process and signed the Bologna Declaration in 2003, the Faculty of Romance and Germanic Philology felt the need to develop a competence-based approach, as suggested by the Declaration. The orientation of the educational process at the faculty required the implementation of 'competence and personality-active approaches' (Scherbakova and Fenenko 2010).

The model for training a future second language teacher,<sup>1</sup> which integrates the above-mentioned approaches, includes three **substantive components** that are closely linked with the **structural components**:

1. Assimilation of pedagogical and methodological knowledge about all components of the learning process (goals, means, object, result, etc.) and acquisition of the techniques of professional activity (socio-pedagogical aspect);
2. Professional and personal self-assertion and self-development (individual semantic aspect);
3. Creative self-realization and self-actualization in a number of professional activities (value-activity aspect).

The **first structural component** of the model is **educational and professional activity** based on the accumulation of relevant professional knowledge and skills (the basics of mastering the teaching profession). This aims to ensure the necessary level of students' methodological

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<sup>1</sup> A pedagogical model is understood as a generalized image of a system, and this image displays significant structural and functional links of the object of study. The model under discussion is, first of all, structural by nature as its formation is based on modelling the educational process. It is also meaningful, as it reflects the inner contents of the process of training a future second language teacher.

training and is also an element of a system that integrates ideological, psychological, pedagogical and specialist (linguistic) training. By implementing a complex approach to the formation of readiness for the profession of a second language teacher, the Faculty of Romance and Germanic Philology of Voronezh State University offers a coherent system of study of psycho-pedagogical and methodological disciplines, taking into account their dynamics from one year of study to the next.

The first-year students follow the course 'Pedagogics and Psychology', whose mission is to provide the basics of pedagogical science, focusing on mastering core concepts that form the basis of educational activities (goal-setting, selecting training content, creating an integrated teaching system, choosing methods and means of training, and others). The contents include a set of data necessary for the successful implementation of educational activities. This course is designed to intensify the process of professional self-determination of students, as well as contribute to the formation of professionally significant personal qualities of the future second language teacher.

Within the block of so-called 'special' disciplines, the curriculum offers first-year students the subject 'Introduction to the Profession'. Its purpose is to provide favourable conditions for the successful study of methodological science. The course is aimed not so much at giving new scientific knowledge as preparing students for its assimilation throughout their period of study at the university, and creating stable professional motivation in the field of the chosen specialty.

During the second year, students study 'Educational Anthropology', which is key to pedagogics. The course's main aim is to systematize and integrate theoretical knowledge about children's learning. The 'Pedagogical Anthropology' course is intended to form a science-based and humanistic ideology-based understanding of innovative and traditional education systems and to combine this with the students' own life and personal experiences.

During the third year, students are offered a 'Theory of Speech Activity' course (as the basics of 'Psycholinguistics'), which forms the ground for studying, in their fourth year, the most important part of methodological science, which is 'Theory of Teaching Foreign Languages'. The purpose of 'Theory of Speech Activity' is a comprehensive analysis of speech activity as an object of the process of mastering a second language. The knowledge and skills acquired by students while studying this discipline enables them to manage consciously their educational and professional activities in the process of mastering a second

language. This is supported by the fact that students gain knowledge about:

- the nature of communication as a special kind of activity;
- issues in contemporary second language education;
- the patterns and principles of organizing the educational process.

In addition, the students gain the ability to analyse, summarize and systematize the information obtained during the course of study. They also master modern methods of searching, processing and using required information, and ways of interpreting and adapting it to the teaching process (Scherbakova and Chaika 2015b).

The fourth-year students study two courses: 'Theory of Teaching Foreign Languages' and 'Linguodidactic Problems of Teaching Foreign Languages'. These are aimed at training second language teachers to organize the process of training, focused on the needs and capacities of specific learners.

The purpose of 'Theory of Teaching Foreign Languages' is to provide students with basic methodological training, combining educational, psychological, linguistic, didactic and methodological principles. One of the main objectives of the course is the development of students' professional and methodological skills necessary for the organization of the teaching process, such as creative skills in order to plan and deliver lessons of all types, using various materials in new circumstances.

The purpose of 'Linguodidactic Problems of Teaching Foreign Languages' is to deepen experience of professional methodological training, encouraging students to focus on key areas of reformed language education in Russia and abroad. Thus, students have the opportunity to become familiar with the main trends in language education reforms, to correlate world (mainly European) trends in the theory and practice of teaching foreign languages with the priorities in the theory and practice of foreign language teaching in Russia, and to master the innovative technologies of foreign language training.

The backbone of methodological training is students' practical activity. Students' theoretical knowledge reinforced by practical activity is carried out during the process of trainee and teaching practice.

The main objectives of pedagogical practice include:

- practical application of the main modern teaching principles (communication, activity, consciousness, and others) in teaching a second language;

- proper use of modern methods and effective techniques and exercises at all stages of mastering speech material (introduction of the material, its drill and application);
- improving socio-personal and general professional competences while communicating with students and teachers of the school where the teaching practice is held;
- getting to know the peculiarities of the pedagogical process in educational institutions.

The development of research competence is delivered via students' research work. The inclusion of students in research activities in the field of education contributes to:

- expanding and deepening their theoretical knowledge in fields related to the modern methodology of foreign language teaching;
- familiarizing future second language teachers with a number of research activities in these areas, developing their creativity and commitment to continuous professional self-improvement;
- forming the skills of purposeful self-conscious independent research in the field of the theory of foreign language teaching.

The **second structural component** comprises the **professional education** of students, which is a substantial aspect of professional and personal self-development. The personality-active approach is aimed at training a student to be capable of self-education, self-actualization, self-improvement and social self-determination. This objective determines the main aims of the faculty's educational work:

- to create conditions for maximum development of each student's personal capacity;
- to involve the maximum number of students in students' government;
- to establish an atmosphere of creative self-development;
- to encourage students' readiness for professional work in modern social conditions.

The **third structural component** is regarded as profession-oriented **creative activity**. Its content can be defined as creative self-realization and self-actualization in the profession. Among the forms and methods of second language teacher training, an important place is occupied by various professional competitions and students' contests. These include

specially organized assessment and control procedures aimed at ensuring intensive feedback and determining the possibility of achieving high-quality training for students, which is education's ultimate goal. One such tool is the Faculty of Romance and Germanic Philology's 'My Profession is a Teacher' contest, which assesses the readiness of future second language teachers for their professional activity. The competition is aimed at developing educational, extracurricular activities and the creative abilities of students. It also identifies talented students, with an eye to recruiting them in the future and thus replenishing the faculty's staff.

It is clear that the matter of fulfilling the professional training of a future second language teacher does not rest on only one of the above-mentioned components; it requires concerted and coordinated action in respect of all the components involved in higher professional language education. The structural and substantial model of readiness for professional activity, as described here, is based on an integrated, multidimensional approach, which implies a close relationship between academic and extracurricular profession-oriented activities. At the core of this complexly structured training is sustained motivation to pursue educational activities, which assumes that a graduate possesses a number of professionally significant qualities and competences that they can successfully implement in their future work as second language teachers.

### **3.3 Development of new approaches and methods of second language teaching**

#### **3.3.1 Search for new technologies**

Theoretical studies of experts in the field of language education at the Faculty of Romance and Germanic Philology are aimed at identifying the psycholinguistic foundations of learning a foreign language and defining the components of a learning management system and its quality indicators, as well as the means of educational measurement and language testing at different stages of learning. The results of these studies are reflected in the three-volume edition of lectures (*Current issues* 2000–11) by the leading methodologists of the faculty and also in regularly published scientific journals such as the 'Problems of Higher Education' and 'Linguistics and Intercultural Communication' series included in the 'Proceedings of Voronezh State University', as well as in scientific collections and journals published by the higher education institutions of Moscow, St Petersburg, Volgograd and other cities in Russia. The applied aspect of research in this direction is focused on the development of a

series of exercises and activities aimed at creating a variety of professional competences.

New approaches and technologies in foreign language teaching offered by the faculty staff are reflected in a series of manuals on lexical grammar of the English language, the regional geography of Great Britain, German language improvement, stylistics of the French language, German grammar, etc.

The German Philology department has developed and introduced a special method of learning a foreign language using sounded speech (the so-called ‘gestural phonetics’ method). This is considered as a support for creating the basis of pronunciation of the studied language. A gesture is seen as a kind of sign, helping to overcome intonation and articulation difficulties and prevent interference from the native language. The method of a ‘non-native phonetic sign language’ was successfully tested at Voronezh State University, the Institute of Slavic Studies at Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg (Germany) and the University of León (Spain), and recognized both in Russia and abroad. Learning a foreign language by sounding speech on the basis of gestural phonetics has become an expertise of the Voronezh methodological school of foreign language teaching.

### **3.3.2 Development of ‘language for specific purposes’ (LSP) strategies**

One of the objectives of foreign language teaching is seen as being the formation of students’ ability to communicate in their professional field. In this way, a foreign language is converted from the ‘base’ subject into a means of professional development for an individual. The development of a strategy for learning a foreign language for specific purposes for students of humanities and sciences at Voronezh State University resulted in a programme of teaching a foreign language to students of non-linguistic universities, written in 2009 together with scientists at Moscow State University and recommended for use in non-linguistic faculties of Russia’s higher educational institutions.

### **3.3.3 Introducing information and communication technologies (ICT)**

Information and communication technologies (ICT) have become the key technologies of the twenty-first century. Their use in foreign language teaching contributes to the implementation of a student-centred approach, provides individualization and differentiation, helps take into account students’ personal characteristics and level of education, and improves

cognitive activity and motivation, thus reinforcing the process of learning and students' self-activity (Chaika 2011). During the last decade and a half, such kinds of information technologies as multimedia presentations, searches for information on the Internet, its selection and analysis and then application in the classroom, multimedia didactic programmes and many others have definitely become an obligatory part of the teaching and learning process. The development of electronic textbooks, teaching aids and interactive websites allows both teachers and students to feel constantly involved in designing the most efficient language classroom inside and outside the university.

In addition to this general shift, the Theoretical and Applied Linguistics department, together with the Scientific and Methodological Centre of Computational Linguistics, is developing electronic databases, dictionaries and parallel text corpora. These new information products are designed for the scientific and methodological support of the 'Fundamental and Applied Linguistics' programme but are becoming more widely used in the learning processes of other specialties, including pedagogical studies (Kretov 2004–11).

### **3.3.4 Creation of individual training plans**

The possibility to create individual training plans is closely connected with opportunities to participate in international academic mobility programmes. 'Inclusive education' and 'double degree' programmes enable a student to obtain a master's degree from a European university or the European Diploma Supplement to add to their state diploma. Such programmes are implemented within the framework of cooperation agreements between Voronezh State University and University Paris-Est Marne-la-Vallée (France), the University for Foreigners Perugia (Italy), University of León (Spain) and Humboldt University of Berlin (Germany).

A long-term international cooperation between the Scientific and Methodological Centre of Phonetics (headed by Professor L. Velichkova) and the Institute of Phonetics and Speech Study at Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg (Germany) can be considered a unique experience. Their joint project *Study of suprasegmental speech means in intercultural communication* is an example of the effective participation in academic mobility of teachers and students specializing in the field of comparative phonetics and phonology.

### **3.3.5 New master's degree programmes**

In recent years the Faculty of Romance and Germanic Philology has prepared and introduced new master's degree programmes in the field of philology, such as 'General linguistics, psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics (speech study)', 'Translation studies and practice of translation', 'Romance Philology' and 'Philology for International Business Communication'. These programmes reflect not only the fundamental issues of philology, but their authors' views about issues of modern linguistics, which is why these programmes require serious scientific and methodological understanding and support by scientific and methodical literature and manuals.

During the process of their implementation it has become clear that these programmes are aimed mainly at forming the theoretical knowledge base of a future specialist. Applied, practice-oriented aspects of training are presented to a much lesser extent. This can be explained, on the one hand, by the novelty and insufficient development of the concept of the master's degree in Russia's higher linguistic education, and, on the other, by the specifics of the philological field, which, in fact, focuses on the in-depth study of issues in language and literary theory. Currently the faculty staff is developing new master's degree programmes that comply with the new foreign language training requirements and meet the needs of employers in the educational market.

### **3.3.6 Postgraduate training**

Improving the postgraduate training of specialists has traditionally been seen as an important component of the system of continuous pedagogical education, and one of the Faculty of Romance and Germanic Philology's foregrounding methodological and scientific activities. Great attention is paid to improving the professional skills of working teachers, developing their methodological competences, familiarizing them with modern trends in the development of language education and the latest technologies of foreign language teaching.

Faculty members themselves have the opportunity to take a variety of forms of postgraduate training in the leading universities of the country and in partner-universities all over the world. They also take part in training programmes developed by the faculty and approved by the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation. The programmes developed and implemented within the period 2008–14 are as follows: 'Communicative competence of the teaching staff', 'Teaching foreign



languages to graduate students and applicants', 'Preparation of a translator in the sphere of professional communication', 'Latin in the system of modern education', 'Problems of theory and practice of modernizing language education (foreign language teacher training in modern conditions)' and 'Information and educational technologies in theoretical and applied linguistics'.

To take one of these programmes as an example, the purpose of 'Problems of theory and practice of modernizing language education (foreign language teacher training in modern conditions)' is to give trainees the necessary knowledge and skills to use the latest educational technologies in the teaching process. For this, the programme integrates the latest knowledge from the fields of the methodology of teaching foreign languages, computer technology and language policy. Its interdisciplinary nature is directly reflected not only in the name of the programme but also in the professional competence generated during the training process.

The introduction of a new federal state educational standard of general education brings to the forefront the issue of teacher training, including the ability to work effectively under conditions imposed by the modernization of language education, using innovative teaching methods together with ICT. In this regard, the additional teacher training programme 'Improving information and communication competence of a foreign language teacher in the conditions of implementation of new state educational standards of general education in the learning process' was designed and offered to the teachers of primary, general basic and secondary schools. The purpose of this programme is to improve the professional pedagogical skills of foreign language teachers through the development of information-communication competence based on applying innovative ICT in the educational process. The implementation of this programme contributes to the effective integration of university research and school practice, the creation of a single pedagogical community in the Central Black Earth region, which unites experts in the field of theory and methodology of foreign language teaching and working teachers.

Lectures and workshops (the most widely organized activities are role-play, business and communication games, work in small groups, projects, presentations and master classes) for all programmes of postgraduate training are held interactively with the use of multimedia technologies and software. Trainees have free access to computer laboratories and the Internet Centre of Voronezh State University, the Scientific and Methodological Centre of Phonetics, and the Scientific and Methodological Centre of Computational Linguistics, which undoubtedly

contributes to their mastery of professional competence within the framework of existing programmes.

The practical value of the postgraduate training programmes of the faculty can be explained by the fact that they are aimed at training professionals who can not only provide solutions to educational, scientific, technological and industrial problems, but also promote newly acquired knowledge and skills in their own professional environment. The orientation of these programmes to the real needs of the market is recognized by the teaching community of the region and confirmed by the steady interest of internal and external users.

During the period 2008–14 the number of postgraduate trainees at the faculty was more than 300, including among them teachers of higher educational institutions of the city of Voronezh, as well as universities of the other cities of the Central Black Earth region. In addition, the programmes are popular with teachers of private educational institutions. The annual analysis of user survey results shows that more than 90% of postgraduate trainees evaluate the knowledge, skills, abilities and competences acquired during their training as ‘extremely important’ for their professional activity.

### **3.3.7 Scientific and practical conferences**

Scientific and practical conferences are regarded as an effective form of exchanging experience and scientific knowledge in the field of foreign language teaching methodology. The tradition of holding these conferences at the Faculty of Romance and Germanic Philology dates back to the 1960s, when the Voronezh methodological school was established at Voronezh State University. The series of such conferences lasted until the 1980s and laid the foundations of professional communication among specialists in the field of foreign language teaching in the Central Black Earth region. In 2000 the work was resumed in a new format.

One of the most important of these is the annual international phonetic symposium *Sounding speech: theory and practice of learning* which is part of the long-term collaboration between the Scientific and Methodological Centre of Phonetics and the Institute of Phonetics and Speech Study at Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg. Their workshops organized in 2002, 2004, 2006, 2008 and 2010 aroused great interest from the region’s teachers of German (Velickova and Petrocenko 2011 and 2013).

In 2012 the first regional scientific and practical conference *Current issues of theory and practice of modern language education* was held.

Marking the fiftieth anniversary of the faculty, it attracted a large number of the faculty's graduates working in the educational system. The conference was attended by foreign language teachers from various educational institutions in the Central Black Earth region and school teachers from Voronezh and the Voronezh region. Among them there were a large number of young, novice teachers, who considered the professional dialogue with experienced colleagues an opportunity to improve their teaching skills. It was decided to continue holding conferences on the subject and to reflect the results of the conference in a collection of articles.

In February 2014 the international conference *Current issues of theory and practice of modern language education: theory and practice* was organized by the faculty together with the city of Voronezh's Department of Education. Its main objective was to exchange experiences of higher educational institution academic staff and secondary school teachers in the form of professional scientific communication. The format comprised plenary and breakout sessions, workshops and round table discussions to explore modern methods, strategies and techniques of foreign language teaching in universities and schools, and to enrich the experience at different levels within the educational system (Fenenko and Scherbakova 2014a). The wide range of issues discussed at the conference attracted more than a hundred people, among them university professors and school teachers from Voronezh, plus the Belgorod, Lipetsk, Tula, Volgograd and Voronezh regions, as well university teachers from Germany, Great Britain, Iraq, Israel, Mexico, Moldova, Spain and Ukraine. Particularly notable was the active participation of faculty graduates, many of whom are now recognized authorities in the field of foreign language teaching in universities and schools.

#### **4. Competitiveness of graduates as an effectiveness indicator**

Today, competitiveness is seen as one of the main conditions for the successful professional and social development of an individual. The special role of education in the modern world – regarded as an extremely important component of human activity – actualizes the issue of effectiveness of university training. Thus the development (and self-development) of students' competitiveness has become one of education's priorities.

It is important to diagnose an individual's capacity for competitiveness given its role in a future graduate's employment and career development.

The criterion of competitiveness is, first of all, the person's ability to determine their own professionally significant personal qualities and specific competitive advantages as well as to use them quickly and effectively.

Two major integrated criteria can serve as indicators of whether a specialist has been trained effectively:

- the amount of time needed for a graduate to adapt to their workplace, depending on their training profile;
- the number of related specialties in which a graduate can operate without significant investment of time and effort in developing them.

A study of competitiveness of undergraduates of the Faculty of Romance and Germanic Philology at Voronezh University was carried out in 2013–15. The goal was to determine the effectiveness of training and to compare it to the desire expressed by undergraduates for career growth and readiness to compete in the labour market (Scherbakova and Chaika 2015a). The survey involved 66 students of the 5th year (specialist's degree), and 51 students of the 4th year (bachelor's degree) studying 'Theory and Methodology of Teaching Foreign Languages and Cultures'. Students were asked to answer a series of questions aimed at identifying their own assessment of competitiveness, their understanding of competitive professionals in the labour market, and their opinion about the quality of university education in view of their intended future careers.

The analysis of the data received in the survey shows that the majority of the students (65%) start to plan their career at the age of 20, which means that at the time of entering university young people do not think primarily about their future employment. This is supported by the results of sociological surveys of applicants, according to which: 1) up to 40% of secondary school students leave school without making a professional choice; 2) 45% of vocational school students are sure that their choice is right; 3) every third college graduate is dissatisfied with their profession (Fenenko and Scherbakova 2014b). While university undergraduates do not have a clear picture of how their education choices relate to the labour market, the majority of them are able to relate their capabilities and skills to employers' requirements.

When asked how often students try to assess their own level of competitiveness in the potential labour market, 12.1% of the 5th-year students gave the response 'very often'; 57.2% chose the answer 'often'; 30.3% answered that they 'rarely' think about their competitiveness. The

4th-year students' responses to the same question were as follows: 19.6% 'very often'; 52.9% 'often'; 27.4% 'rarely'.

As competitiveness undoubtedly depends on education received, the next question in the survey referred to the areas of knowledge and skills that, in the students' view, play an important role in building their future careers. The vast majority of the 4th-year students (90.2%; 46 respondents) believed that the knowledge of special subjects such as the knowledge of foreign languages is of prime importance for a successful career. Further factors include theoretical knowledge (68.6%; 35 students), followed by knowledge of technology for solving professional problems (64.71%; 33 students), methods of foreign language teaching (54.9%; 28 students) and ethics of professional communication (45.1%; 23 students).

In assessing their prospects in the labour market, 51% of the 4th-year students and 35% of the 5th-year students who participated in the survey 'look to the future with optimism'. However, 30% of the 4th-year respondents and 40% of the 5th-year respondents thought that 'the job search will be a difficult challenge' for them.

Assessment of the effectiveness of training competitive specialists was made in order to evaluate the quality of graduates' competitiveness from the point of view of potential employers. This allowed recommendations on how to improve graduates' competitiveness in the modern labour market to be developed. The questionnaire comprised four main blocks. The **first block** asked the undergraduates to assess **the quality of their training as professionals**. The organization of the educational process in general was assessed 'positively' by 85.4% of the respondents; 12.8% of respondents chose 'satisfactory' on the rating scale; 2.56% found the educational process 'difficult to assess'.

Then the students were asked to make suggestions for improving the educational process. 11.95% of the undergraduates found it 'difficult' to respond. All the other responses were as follows: 19.4% of the respondents were absolutely satisfied with the quality of the educational process at the faculty, so they did not make any suggestions for improvement; 40.7% proposed improving the organization of the teaching practice; 35.9% suggested improving the curriculum and schedule by adding some disciplines or increasing the number of classroom hours devoted to certain subjects; 10.2% thought that the faculty's material and technical base should be updated (e.g. increasing the number of classrooms, purchasing and using modern technical teaching tools as well as educational and scientific literature); 20.5% insisted that more information and communication technologies (electronic lecture material resources, multimedia lectures, student–teacher interaction via the Internet) should be

introduced. Among other proposals, assistance with finding employment and tasks oriented towards potential employers were mentioned.

Assessing the level of education that they received at the faculty, the majority of undergraduates expressed their satisfaction: 52.9% of respondents (62 students) rated it as 'good' while 41% (48 students) rated it as 'excellent'; 5.9% (7 students) assessed the level as 'satisfactory'; the 'unsatisfactory' rating was not chosen.

When asked about their plans for continuing education, the majority of the respondents (64.9%) demonstrated their desire to continue and 19.65% (23 students) had already been involved in receiving additional education by the time of the survey. Only 15.3% (18 students) said they did not envisage further study.

When asked why they were interested in receiving further education, the undergraduates responded as follows: 79.2% of them wanted to increase their competitiveness in the labour market and were interested in career development; 18.1% wanted it for self-realization; and 12.1% for broadening their professional perspectives; while 7% wished to continue with research activities. 40.7% of the respondents said they would like to study for a second degree; 47.3% were intending to enter a master's degree programme; 9.2% were thinking about studying for a doctorate.

Thus, an analysis of undergraduate students' responses shows that the majority were satisfied with how the educational process is organized at the faculty. However, they put forward proposals that they saw as improving their professional perspectives. Assessing the level of the education received, most of the undergraduates intended to continue learning after graduating as they did not feel confident about their competitiveness in the labour market.

The **second block** of questions was related to the study of **key competences of young professionals**, both from their own points of view and those of employers. For this, the two groups of respondents – employers (15 companies) and undergraduates (117 students) – were asked questions about what 'personality characteristics' (competences) are important for effective employment within their specialty. The list of the key competences they named includes three main groups – personal, social and special competences of young professionals. Professionally significant personal competences include characteristics such as responsibility, commitment to continuous professional growth, broad-mindedness, initiative and independence. For all employers (100% of respondents), the most important personal characteristic was the employee's responsibility for the work performed. In the situation where employers are ready to employ graduates without previous experience of work and train them

within their own organization, ‘the willingness and ability of the graduates themselves for further education and professional growth’ was seen as being extremely important and was chosen by 80% of respondents. In assessing themselves as future professionals, the undergraduates rated the personal competences that they believed themselves to have, in the following order: 1) responsibility (85.4%); 2) commitment to continuous professional development (83.7%); 3) broad vision and the ability to acquire new knowledge (71.7%); 4) taking the initiative in work and creative self-realization (52.9%); 5) independence of decision in non-typical situations (46.1%). In considering the personal competences prioritized by the employers and undergraduates, one can conclude that undergraduates understand what skills they should possess in order to be successful in the labour market and to attract a potential employer.

### **Key personal competences of young professionals as rated by undergraduates**

| <b>Personality characteristics (competences)</b>      | <b>Percentage</b> |
|---|-------------------|
| Responsibility  | 85.4              |
| Commitment to continuous professional development     | 83.7              |
| Broad vision and the ability to acquire new knowledge | 71.7              |
| Initiative in work and creative self-realization      | 52.9              |
| Independence of decision in non-typical situations    | 46.1              |

**Table 6.2**

The **third block** of questions was aimed at considering employers’ and undergraduates’ views about **social competences** (i.e. skills of social interaction with the community and within a team). The employers noted important communication skills as being the ability to work in a team and to achieve collective goals, to interact positively and cooperate with colleagues, acquire necessary communication skills and negotiate with people. About half of the respondents also pointed to organizational skills and the ability to share experience. The undergraduates indicated what social competences they believe they have (Table 6.3): 89.7% find that they can work in a team and achieve collective goals; 85.4% seem themselves able to negotiate with people and 82% successfully cooperate

with colleagues; 53.8% have, in their view, organizational skills and 41% feel that they can share their professional experience.

### **Social competences of young professionals as seen by themselves**

| <b>Social competences</b>                              | <b>Percentage</b> |
|--|-------------------|
| Ability to work in a team and achieve collective goals | 89.7              |
| Ability to negotiate with the people                   | 85.4              |
| Ability to cooperate with colleagues successfully      | 82                |
| Organizational skills                                  | 53.8              |
| Ability to share professional experience               | 41                |

**Table 6.3**

The questions in the **fourth block** referred to **special professional competences** that a graduate might use in their work. The employers showed that they valued computational skills, knowledge of computer programmes, and the ability to acquire these skills and knowledge, as well as the capability to search and process information, and also to plan and evaluate activities. In answer to the same questions, the majority of undergraduates (94%) claimed that they possessed the ability to learn new technologies and all of them claimed that they had skills in searching and processing information; a large number (74.3%) thought they knew how to plan and evaluate activities (Table 6.4).

### **Special professional competences of young professionals as seen by themselves**

| <b>Special professional competences</b>        | <b>Percentage</b> |
|--|-------------------|
| Skills in searching and processing information | 100               |
| Ability to learn new technologies              | 94                |
| Ability to plan and evaluate activities        | 74.3              |

**Table 6.4**



On the whole, the employers judged the educational level of the faculty's students to be sufficient to carry out professional activities and they intended to continue employing the graduates. The main advantages and benefits of professional training of the graduates, in the employers' opinion, included 1) a high level of theoretical knowledge; 2) the desire to graduate to self-development and self-education; 3) the willingness to provide rapid responses to abnormal situations; 4) the possession of communication skills. Among the most frequent critical remarks about young professionals, employers mentioned their rather superficial knowledge, lack of a systematic way of thinking and incapability of independence in problem solving. The main reason that they identified for these shortcomings was the rapidly spreading consumer culture among young people: as a result, young people get used to using finished products, and the motivation for creative self-realization can become limited. Also mentioned were the perceived unwillingness to keep a stable job, inflated self-esteem and high ambitions. So, when considering competitiveness among new graduates, it can be stated that this involves not only professional competences but also, to a large extent, individual personality characteristics of future specialists.

The development of competitiveness turns out to be a complex, multidimensional and systematic process that requires the creation of specific conditions or environments in which the personal and professional development of future specialists takes the form of a permanent activity.

## **5. Increasing the effectiveness of second language teacher training**

It is evident nowadays that in Russia the decisively important enhanced competitiveness of a university graduate is determined by the transition from the so-called 'state educational standard' focusing on universal learning activities of the second generation to the federal standard of the third generation, and then to generation 3+. The distinctive feature of the updated concepts lies in the notion of competence, which combines not only knowledge and skills but also personal characteristics and professional experience. As a result of training in higher educational institutions, students must acquire a definite mode of existence combining knowledge, skills and education, which contributes to their personal fulfilment and finding their place in the world. Consequently, education must maximize personal potential and contribute to the recognition and realization of the graduates' personalities by the surrounding community and by the graduates themselves.

The distinctive feature of the curriculum of basic educational programmes at universities in Russia, currently being implemented according to the new federal standard, is that the federal standard defines only the number of credits. The total number of credits attained on a bachelor's degree programme (lasting four years) is 240, and on a master's degree programme (two years) 120. The total number of credits on a specialist's degree programme (five years) used to be 300 credits. The curriculum for specialists used to include an extensive list of obligatory disciplines in each of its sections (humanities, sciences and sociological, as well special, disciplines). Today, a higher educational institution bears full responsibility for deciding on the list of disciplines for the programme in general and each cycle of disciplines. The only federal requirement is the distribution of the total number of credits among the cycles of disciplines and semester modules.

According to the results of the series of surveys of undergraduates' opinions about new bachelor's degree programmes delivered at the faculty in 2013–15, there is more emphasis placed on the theoretical disciplines and there is a lack of hours devoted to practical training, particularly in the disciplines that are designed to prepare students for mastering their future professions. Students pointed to the 'flaws in undergraduate curriculums which prevent them from becoming professionals', 'insufficient number of academic hours for training in methods of foreign language teaching, especially in the final year', 'lack of practical training in methods of foreign language teaching', etc. Despite the fact that graduates were generally quite appreciative of the level of development of their pedagogical skills (projective: 48 out of a maximum of 60; organizational: 40 out of 50; communicative: 24 out of 30; gnostic: 39 out of 50; research: 22 out of 30), their observations should be considered valid. Their criticisms were very often directed towards the organization of teaching practice: the amount of time devoted to acquiring knowledge about professional and educational activities, the development of new social roles, studying various aspects of pedagogical work, etc., is three times less than it used to be on a specialist's degree programme.

A comparison of curriculums of a bachelor's degree programme now and of a specialist's degree programme in the past (for the 'Theory and Methods of Teaching Foreign Languages and Cultures' profile) reveals a significant decrease in the total amount of time (and therefore the hours of classroom training and students' self-study) devoted to special subjects:

### Comparative characteristics of special subjects in bachelor's and specialist's degree programmes

| Special subjects                                      | Total number of hours on a bachelor's degree programme now | Total number of hours on a specialist's degree programme in the past |
|---|--|--|
| Educational anthropology                              | 108  | 86   |
| Introduction to the profession                        | –  | 48   |
| Theory of teaching foreign languages                  | 108  | 100  |
| Linguodidactic problems of teaching foreign languages | 72   | 110  |
| Modern technologies in foreign language teaching      | 72   | 88   |
| Classroom activities                                  | –  | 32   |
| Current issues of teaching foreign languages          | –  | 100  |
| Teaching practice 1                                   | 2 weeks  | 3 weeks  |
| Teaching practice 2                                   | 2 weeks  | 5 weeks  |

**Table 6.5**

It becomes obvious that following the curriculum of a bachelor's degree programme cannot be considered sufficient for acquiring professional experience in the activities determined by the federal standard as educational, practical, research and professional. In order to foster readiness for professional and educational activities, and to strengthen future professional development to become a competent foreign language teacher, a new master's degree programme has been introduced. 'Teaching foreign languages using online technologies' aims to provide theoretical knowledge and practical skills for teaching foreign languages using the 'activity' approach.

As a result of studying the disciplines included in this master's degree programme students are supposed to get to know how to solve professional problems in various activities, such as educational, research, project and methodological. The primary condition for achieving this goal is, above all, the establishment and implementation of interdisciplinary links between the linguistic and psycho-pedagogical cycles, when both

linguistic and psycho-pedagogical disciplines are aimed at developing professional competences of a future language teacher. This interdependence of the most important components of the training process is presented in the following table:

**Interdisciplinary links between the linguistic and psycho-pedagogical cycles on a ‘Teaching foreign languages using online technologies’ master’s degree programme**

| <b>Types of activities</b> | <b>Disciplines</b>                                | <b>Total number of hours</b> |
|----------------------------|---|------------------------------|
| Educational                | Modern technologies of training and education     | 144                          |
|                            | Pedagogics and psychology of higher education     | 108                          |
| Research                   | Current issues of pedagogics and education        | 108                          |
|                            | Methodology and methods of scientific research    | 72                           |
|                            | Innovative processes in education                 | 108                          |
|                            | Social and cultural aspects of language education | 72                           |
| Projective                 | Design and curriculum                             | 108                          |
|                            | Technology of designing individual teaching plans | 72                           |
| Methodological             | Methodology in language teaching                  | 108                          |
|                            | Technology of assessing educational achievements  | 72                           |

**Table 6.6**

## **6. Conclusion**

In this chapter we have shown the way language teacher training in university linguistic faculties and linguistic institutes in Russia has been developed and improved with time. We have also tried to demonstrate that the effectiveness of this training is inseparably connected with the competitiveness of a graduate. In order that a graduate can be competitive in the labour market and efficient in their professional activities, it is

essential that they are prepared to act in constantly changing working conditions. For this it is necessary that the training process shapes the future professional's qualities, enabling them to take into account the labour market situation, to assess their own capabilities and to realize their professional and educational potential.

These conclusions are based on the assumption that the competitive quality of graduates is the result of professional education. In higher educational institutions, as well as having the opportunity to enter the world of work and get a professional job, a graduate also learns the basics of certain patterns of behaviour in the labour market, acquiring their first experience of work during teaching practice. It is there that they learn to be competitive employees, because receiving professional education by itself does not guarantee employment. The level of competitiveness of graduates can act as an indicator of the quality of higher education.

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# CHAPTER SEVEN

## TRAINING FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHERS IN UZBEKISTAN

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### **Abstract**

In Uzbekistan, under the aegis of the government, a large number of reforms are currently taking place in the training of qualified and professionally developed foreign language teachers. In particular, this entails the modernization of education programmes and curriculums, introducing teaching methods based on the communicative approach, equipping classrooms with information and communications technologies (ICT) and establishing international cooperation with different education establishments all over the world. This chapter provides general information about the principles of the Uzbekistan education system and its structure, and foreign language learning requirements in all levels and types of education establishments. In addition, it discusses the process and structure of higher education institutions training foreign language teachers, its application, teaching practice, assessment procedures and curriculum content, as well as details of postgraduate foreign language teacher training programmes. The chapter also considers existing challenges in training foreign language teachers in Uzbekistan and measures taken to resolve them.

### **1. Introduction**

In 1991, after Uzbekistan gained independence, the structure of its education system was reformed in order to meet international standards and ensure its competitiveness in the world market. This became possible

due to the adoption of the two legislative documents ‘Law on Education’ (1992, 1997) and ‘National Programme for Personnel Training’ (1998), which have become main guidelines in terms of education policy, structure and system. The main principles of education policy are the availability of up-to-date knowledge, a continuous education system with compulsory secondary school and specialist secondary education, a secular approach, and fostering harmonious relationships between generations, with humanistic and democratic values.

Concerning foreign languages, a major reform is the implementation of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) for learning, teaching and assessment, and the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) in all education institutions throughout the country.

## 2. Principles of Uzbekistan’s education system

The process of globalization has brought a large number of changes in education. The ‘National Programme for Personnel Training’ has provided a long-term strategy for strengthening education, developing a continuing education system and reinforcing the multistage higher education system. Uzbekistan’s education system is based on a number of principles stated in the ‘Law on Education’ and the ‘National Programme for Personnel Training’, which include the humanization of education, its secularization, the integration of technology, continuity and cultural development, and learner-centred education.

The first principle is the **humanization of education**. This implies discovering the individual’s abilities and satisfying their diverse needs, ensuring the priority of national and universal values, and harmonizing relationships between the individual, society and the environment. Humanization of education also presupposes the formation of an aesthetically rich outlook, high spirituality, cultural awareness and the creative thinking of learners. The content of the disciplines taught in any type of education institution should be a source not only of fundamental knowledge but also of effective means for the development of personality. Humanization of education is a priority for academic issues that reflect general problems of humankind in terms of moral, civil and cultural aspects.

Other principles of the Uzbek system include the **secular character of education**, i.e. no kind of religious education is included; the **cultural aspect of education**, which presupposes providing intercultural competence, i.e. knowledge of national and universal cultural values, the development of these values, and their mutual influence, aimed at



fostering respectful and tolerant individuals; and the **continuity of education and cultural development**, which aims to develop harmoniously – i.e. spiritually and intellectually – developed individuals.

A third strand of principles relates to more concrete aspects of the learning and teaching experience and includes the **integration of technology into education** – the use of different forms of training (e.g. project-based, group work), the implementation of ICT into all fields of education – and **learner-centred education**, which involves motivating talented young people and providing them with both fundamental and specialist knowledge at the highest level of education.

In accordance with the Decree ‘On measures on further development of computerization and introduction of information and communications technologies’, issued by the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan, many classrooms have been equipped with computer technologies and official websites have been set up and operated in all universities and schools. Due to the initiative of the President, the project ‘National network e-education’ was developed, which allows video lectures, seminars and courses to be carried out through distance learning. On the basis of analysis of curriculums of various European universities, a new curriculum for training foreign language teachers has been developed in Uzbekistan. This is based on a learner-centred approach and mostly focuses on developing communicative skills, profession-oriented language, and methodological aspects of learning and teaching foreign languages. Currently, further attempts to improve the quality of education are being made throughout the country.

The main feature of the education system is its focus on the learner, directed towards providing an individual with the opportunity to master two or three specialties and one or more languages, taking the demands of the employment market into consideration. Thus, Uzbekistan has established a system of education based on modern world standards that offers a variety of opportunities for the young generation in professional, scientific, cultural and other spheres of human activity.

### **3. The structure of the education system and foreign language studies**

The education system is based on continuity of learning and consists of the following types and levels. A general education over a nine-year period is compulsory, starting from the age of six or seven for all children, until the age of fifteen. It is divided into primary education (grades 1–4) from the age of 6–7 to 10–11; and secondary education (grades 5–9) from the age

of 10–11 to 15–16. Upon completion of the obligatory nine years, students can continue their studies for the next three years (from age 15–16 to 17–18) in specialist secondary education establishments, which are divided into two types – academic lyceums and vocational colleges, both providing secondary education required for entering university. After acquiring specialist secondary education and receiving a Certificate of Completed Secondary Education, there comes the two-level higher education, consisting of four years of bachelor's degree programme and two years of master's degree programme. Post-higher education includes the doctorate programme that lasts three years.

Within this system, knowledge of foreign languages, especially English, is considered to be very important. Foreign language classes have become a core subject at all educational levels and the number of students learning languages is increasing day by day due to recognition of the fact that knowledge of a foreign language is a passport to a better career, advanced knowledge, and communication with the world. The changing needs of language learners have prompted changes in the concept of education, towards developing a new framework in which communicative competence is not only an objective goal for our students, but also a subjective investment on the part of both learners and teachers.

Until 2012 foreign language classes were compulsory from grade 5 (10–11 years old) to the end of secondary education (16–17 years old). However, since 2012, due to adoption of the Presidential Decree No. 1875 'On measures for further improvement of the system of teaching foreign languages', followed by the implementation of the CEFR, foreign languages are now taught from the beginning of primary school (grade 1, 6–7 years old) up to higher education. This has been done in order to enhance foreign language learning and to strengthen the communication skills and international impact of future Uzbek specialists in all fields. The most common languages taught at schools, lyceums, colleges and universities are English, French and German. Target CEFR levels for foreign languages are adapted according to the local context and are applied as follows: A1 level for grades 1–4 (up to 10–11 years old), A2 level for grades 5–9 (up to 15–16 years old), B1 level for students of academic lyceums and vocational colleges (up to 17–18 years old), B1+ for students of language-oriented lyceums. Foreign languages classes are compulsory in bachelor's, master's and postgraduate programmes too. Target levels are B2 for bachelor's and master's of non-linguistic universities and C1 for students of linguistic universities, plus C1+ for institutions of senior scientific personnel and researchers.

This renewed demand for foreign languages raises the question of the training of teachers. Uzbek foreign language teacher training is carried out in philological and pedagogical universities and in the philological faculties of classical universities. There are seventeen higher education institutions that provide foreign language teacher training in different regions of Uzbekistan.

There are different approaches to foreign language teacher training in philological universities, in philological faculties of classical universities and in pedagogical universities. In **philological universities and philological faculties of classical universities**, the education process emphasizes developing professional communicative skills (listening, speaking, writing and reading) and skills of scientific analysis mainly in the field of linguistics. The graduates can work in a variety of fields: state education institutions such as schools, academic lyceums, vocational colleges, higher education institutions and teachers' upgrading and retraining institutions. Other fields include public administration institutions, non-government organizations, professional associations, mass-media organizations, publishing houses, information agencies, television, radio, publicity and advertising agencies, public relations, consultancy, scientific research and analysis centres, state and private enterprises, representative offices and embassies of foreign countries, joint ventures, archives, libraries, museums, and spheres of tourism and culture.

**Pedagogical universities** provide training within the specialist programme in teaching foreign languages. The education process mainly focuses on the development of communicative, pedagogical, psychological and instructional competences for the successful training of foreign language teachers: analysing curriculums in all types of education institutions, designing new curriculums and courses, developing and implementing training programmes, devising methods of assessing achievement, etc. Graduates receive a bachelor's degree in the specialty 'Foreign language and literature' with the right to work in all types of state education institutions (schools, academic lyceums, vocational colleges, higher education institutions and teachers' upgrading and retraining institutions), public administration institutions and methodological centres.

In order to be employed as a lecturer at any higher education institution a candidate should hold at least a master's degree. Lecturers are selected and employed on the basis of a competition that takes place every five years, depending on teaching positions available within universities. Academic staff of higher education establishments are employed on a contract basis for five years at a time. Each year, lecturers are assessed by heads of departments, according to criteria set down by the department of

academic monitoring. This assessment evaluates lecturers' achievements during the past year, including academic and methodological work (published textbooks and manuals, peer observation, preparation of winners of republican or international academic contests, etc.), scientific work (published articles, monographs, participation in academic projects, supervision of students and postgraduate researchers, etc.) and pedagogical work (supportive and pedagogical work with students in classes and those living in dormitories, extra work with students outside classes and in their free time, organization of different university events, etc.). This assessment system is aimed at encouraging and increasing responsibility among academic staff.

#### **4. The structure of higher education establishments training foreign language teachers**

Pre-service teacher training includes bachelor's and master's degree programmes, and postgraduate education.

The **bachelor's degree programme** is a first stage of higher education that provides fundamental and applied knowledge in the field of the specialty. Bachelor's degree courses last for four years (eight semesters) where full-time study is required. The students have approximately 28–32 hours of lectures, seminars and practical classes each week and attendance of all classes, six days a week, is required. In the fourth year, the students carry out obligatory internships (teaching practice in lyceums, vocational colleges and schools).

The application procedure and entry requirements are centralized. Annually, the Cabinet of Ministers issues a resolution providing detailed information about the admission procedure (for both bachelor's and master's degree programmes), establishing quotas for admission, and defining the quota for state-funded students (i.e. those with grants) and contract-based students (i.e. those who pay fees). The number of places for both state-funded students and contract-based students is limited to those established in the quotas.

In order to be admitted to the bachelor's degree programme, as well as having the Certificate of Completed Secondary Education the applicant has to submit a set of documents in person to the university's Admission Commission during the period 20 June–20 July. In addition, an entrance examination is held on 1 August each year, over the whole country and for all types of higher education institutions.

The examination is taken in several subjects, established by national education policy and based on multiple-choice tests devised by the

Uzbekistan State Testing Centre under the direction of the Cabinet of Ministers. There are three tests, each in a different subject, depending on the university's specifications and sphere of application (exact sciences, humanity or natural sciences). For example, in order to apply to the Uzbek State World Languages University, the applicants have to take exams in English/French/German/Spanish, native language (Russian or Uzbek) and history. The tests require thorough knowledge and understanding of the subjects, clear logic and other relevant skills. The number of the tests in each subject is 36, making the total number of tests 108. For the first (specialty) subject each correct answer receives 3.1 points; each correct answer in the second and the third subjects receives 2.1 and 1.1 points respectively. So, the total number of maximum points is 226.8 points. The universities select students according to the minimum and maximum total scores achieved in the tests, depending on the quota established for the number of students to be admitted: the quota for state-funded students is allocated to those with the highest scores and the quota for contract-based students is allocated to students with fewer points.

The **master's degree programme** provides fundamental and applied knowledge in a particular field and lasts for two years of full-time study, consisting of four semesters of approximately 16–20 hours of lectures and seminars per week. This programme has a mainly scientific direction and focuses on developing research skills in the fields of linguistics, methodology and literature. The students choose the theme for their thesis in the first year and after carrying out research and writing it over the two-year period they have to defend it at the end of the course. In the final term of study they do scientific-pedagogical practice (teaching theoretical and practical courses and concluding the practical part of their investigation). The graduates obtain master's degrees in Linguistics, Education or English Literature, allowing them to work as a teacher in all types of education institutions.

Admission to master's degree programmes follows a similar process to that of the bachelor's degree programmes. The number of student places is also determined by quotas and is provided on the basis of state grants and individual contracts. The tuition fees for attending higher education establishments and taking specializations are determined by the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Uzbekistan at the beginning of each academic year.

Only those who have obtained a bachelor's degree can apply for a master's degree programme. All applicants have to submit in person a set of documents to the university's Admission Commission during the period 1–20 July. The entrance examinations are usually taken between 4 and 10 August. It should be mentioned that the holders of presidential and other

governmental personal scholarships are admitted to master's degree programmes on a state-funded basis without any entrance exams.

The examination is comprised of several stages. For the first stage, the points presented in the applicant's bachelor's degree academic records book are examined and the rating points are taken into account in calculating the overall entrance score. The second stage is a compulsory examination called Basics of the Theory and Practice of the Construction of a Democratic Society. The third stage is a written examination in a relevant specific subject, which depends on the area of specialization (mathematics, physics, biology, chemistry, law, engineering, mechanics, economics, etc.). For example, at Uzbek State World Languages University this is an examination in a relevant language. For the last stage, the applicant takes an oral examination that is focused on theoretical aspects of the language in order to discern the applicant's abilities and skills in scientific research and analysis.

All students of both bachelor's and master's degree programmes are provided with monthly grants, which are determined by the Cabinet of Ministers in order to ensure the social protection of students and to reward those who study successfully, the amount awarded depending on the results (excellent, good or satisfactory) of the term's assessment. The most talented students may be awarded special individual and government stipends.

At the **postgraduate** level, research is carried out at the Institute of Senior Scientific Personnel and Research to obtain a scientific PhD. This programme lasts for three years, during which researchers work on their theses in the fields of Linguistics, Methodology or Literature, presenting their results in scientific publications (both local and abroad) and at theoretical and practical conferences. Depending on the field of research, the researchers are awarded a PhD in Philology or Pedagogy after successful public defence of their thesis.

#### **4.1 Curriculum content in higher education institutions training foreign language teachers**

Higher education institutions in Uzbekistan initiated a major reform by implementing the use of CEFR, which had been made part of the Presidential Decree No. 1875 'On measures for further improvement of the system of teaching foreign languages', adopted in December 2012.

The curriculum and content of bachelor's and master's degree programmes are designed taking into consideration such principles as humanism, secularism, international and national values, the nurturing of a

morally and intellectually enlightened generation, continuous education, the training of professionally developed and competitive pedagogical staff capable of contributing to further integration of the republic with the global community. The rapid development of ICT has triggered wide implementation of such technologies into higher education institutions with the aim of improving and upgrading the necessary ICT skills of foreign language teachers.

In bachelor's degree programmes the curriculum comprises what are called '5 blocks of sciences'. The main purpose of the first two blocks – 'Humanitarian and Social-Economic Sciences' and 'Mathematics and Natural Sciences' – is to develop students' outlook and general knowledge on matters concerning culture, historical background, philosophy, spirituality, democracy, mathematics, economics, management and ICT. Subjects concerning language are presented in blocks 3 and 4, while the last block (block 5) is devoted to 'Special Courses', which can be introduced each year depending on training needs.

The comparative characteristics of the 'General Professional Development Courses' (block 3) and the 'Specialty Courses' (block 4) of the bachelor's degrees in 'Philology and Teaching Languages' and of 'Foreign Languages and Literature' are presented in the following table:

|                | <b>Philology and Teaching Languages</b>   | <b>Foreign Languages and Literature</b>  |
|----------------|---|--|
| <b>Block 3</b> | <b>General Professional Development</b><br>3.01. Psychology: theory and practice<br>3.02. Pedagogy: theory and practice<br>3.03. Methodology of foreign language teaching<br>3.04. Practical course of the English/German/French language<br>3.05. General linguistics<br>3.06. Stylistics<br>3.07. Literature of English/German/French-speaking countries<br>3.08. Second foreign language<br>Optional courses | <b>General Professional Development</b><br>3.01. Practical course of the English/German/French language<br>3.02. General linguistics<br>3.03. Lexicology and stylistics<br>3.04. Theory of literature<br>3.05. Literature of English/German/French-speaking countries<br>3.06. Second foreign language<br>Optional courses |

|                    |   |  |
|--------------------|---|--|
| <b>Block<br/>4</b> | <b>Specialty</b><br>4.01. History of English/German/French language<br>4.02. Theoretical grammar and phonetics<br>4.03. Lexicology<br>4.04. Comparative typology and translation theory<br>Optional courses | <b>Specialty</b><br>4.01. Theoretical grammar and phonetics<br>4.02. Theory and practice of translation<br>4.03. Methodology of teaching foreign language and pedagogical technologies<br>4.04. General pedagogy<br>4.05. General psychology<br>Optional courses |
|--------------------|---|--|

**Table 7.1**

The differences between the curriculums of Philology and Teaching Languages (PTL) and Foreign Languages and Literature (FLL) are mainly in blocks 3 and 4 (shown in Table 7.1). The number of General Professional Development (block 3) courses is 8 for PTL and 6 for FLL; the number of Specialty (block 4) courses is 4 for PTL and 5 for FLL. The pedagogy and psychology courses are included in Specialty courses in the case of FLL, whereas for PTL they are included in the General Professional Development courses. Moreover, PTL includes more theoretical courses concerning linguistics such as ‘Comparative typology’ and ‘History of language’. In short, the training process of PTL focuses on developing linguistic knowledge as well as communicative skills, whereas in FLL more attention is paid to communicative and instructional competences.

In September 2013 a new teaching plan was developed based on the Pre-Service Teacher Training (PreSETT) Project, which was carried out in cooperation with international experts from Great Britain. As a result, all seventeen higher education institutes training foreign language teachers (philological and pedagogic) in Uzbekistan switched over to a completely new programme designed in accordance with the CEFR standard. On completion of the PreSETT curriculum the graduates are expected to have mastery of a foreign language at C1 level.

The PreSETT curriculum is implemented in the ‘Practical course of the English/German/French language’ (see 3.01 of FLL’s General Professional Development in Table 7.1) as part of the existing curriculum. It includes 21 modules that are divided into two main strands – Language courses and Methodology courses – as presented in the following table:



|    | <b>Language</b>                      |    | <b>Methodology</b>                          |
|----|--------------------------------------|----|---|
| 1  | Listening and speaking               | 1  | Language learning                           |
| 2  | Reading                              | 2  | Approaches to language teaching             |
| 3  | Writing                              | 3  | Teaching and integrating language skills    |
| 4  | Integrated skills                    | 4  | Teaching language systems for communication |
| 5  | Grammar in context                   | 5  | Language testing and assessment             |
| 6  | Vocabulary                           | 6  | Materials evaluation and design             |
| 7  | Discourse analysis                   | 7  | English for specific purposes               |
| 8  | English as an international language | 8  | Planning for teaching and learning          |
| 9  | Independent study skills             | 9  | Classroom investigation                     |
| 10 | Classroom language                   | 10 | Developing intercultural competence         |
|    |                                      | 11 | Teaching different age groups               |

**Table 7.2**

In master's degree programmes the curriculum is scientifically oriented and focuses not only on training foreign language teachers but researchers as well. The Uzbek State World Languages University, for example, provides master's degrees in three areas: Linguistics; Literature (English Literature); Translation. The first two are oriented to training foreign language teachers with the focus on the field of specialty. The curriculum includes '4 blocks of sciences'. Comparative characteristics of the Linguistics and Literature master's degree programmes are presented in the following table:

|                | <b>Linguistics</b>   | <b>Literature</b>  |
|----------------|--|--|
| <b>Block 1</b> | <b>Methodological basis of science</b><br>1.01. The strategies of social and economical development of Uzbekistan<br>1.02. Methodology of scientific research<br>1.03. Pedagogical technologies and pedagogical skills | <b>Methodological basis of science</b><br>1.01. The strategies of social and economical development of Uzbekistan<br>1.02. Methodology of scientific research<br>1.03. Pedagogical technologies and pedagogical skills |

|                |  |  |
|----------------|--|--|
|                | 1.04. Second foreign language<br>1.05. Information technologies<br>Optional courses  | 1.04. Second foreign language<br>1.05. Information technologies<br>Optional courses  |
| <b>Block 2</b> | <b>Specialty</b><br>2.01. Modern trends of linguistics<br>2.02. Text linguistics<br>2.03. Foreign linguistic conceptions<br>2.04. Practical course of the English/German/French language<br>2.05. Modern trends of comparative linguistics | <b>Specialty</b><br>2.01. History of literary criticism<br>2.02. Topical problems of foreign literature<br>2.03. Comparative literature<br>2.04. Modern foreign literature<br>2.05. Literary relationships |
| <b>Block 3</b> | <b>Optional courses</b><br>3.01. Methodology of teaching special courses<br>3.02. Optional courses   | <b>Optional courses</b><br>3.01. Methodology of teaching special courses<br>3.02. Optional courses   |
| <b>Block 4</b> | <b>Scientific research</b><br>4.01. Researching and working on Master's thesis<br>4.02. Scientific-pedagogical training<br>4.03. Professional training   | <b>Scientific research</b><br>4.01. Researching and working on Master's thesis<br>4.02. Scientific-pedagogical training<br>4.03. Professional training   |

**Table 7.3**

The difference between Linguistics and Literature curriculums is in the courses included in Specialty courses (block 2), which is determined by the particular interests of these two subject areas. It should be noted that the 'Practical course of the English/German/French language' (Linguistics, 2.04) includes language material aimed at developing communicative and scientific-research competences. The difference between this course and the corresponding one in the bachelor's degree programme lies in the fact that the master's degree course develops academic language skills (writing articles, synthesis, critique, different types of review, oratorical speech and so on).

## **4.2 Assessment procedure**

Students of both bachelor's and master's degree programmes are assessed on the basis of a rating system (minimum 56 points–maximum 100 points) that was introduced in 1999 for all types of higher education institutions in Uzbekistan in compliance with the regulation introduced by the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Special Education: No. 194 'Charter on assessment of students' knowledge and rating system'.

Several stages of assessment take place during the bachelor's and master's degree academic year, corresponding to each academic subject taught during the semester, at which the following marking scheme is applied: 86–100: excellent (5); 71–85: good (4); 56–70: satisfactory (3); 55 and less: unsatisfactory. On the basis of the assessment results a student continues to the next year of the programme. If the student does not meet curriculum requirements and gets an unsatisfactory mark, they are dismissed from the university with the right of reinstatement during a period of five years.

The assessment is held in three stages. In the first stage ongoing assessment is held continuously during the semester. Students can achieve a maximum of 40 points according to the results of their daily study and submitted tasks. The second and third stages comprise a mid-semester assessment that can be held in different forms (written or oral tests) and can earn a maximum of 30 points and an end of semester assessment that is a written test, also earning a maximum of 30 points. The total maximum points for each subject in the programme is 100.

At the end of programmes, in all types of higher education institutions, students have to take compulsory final state examinations. On condition of passing these successfully, bachelor's degree students undergo a defence of their final qualification papers based on research in a linguistic subject or teaching methodology or literature, while master's degree students have to defend their dissertations.

## **4.3 Practical training in foreign language teacher training institutions**

At the bachelor's degree programme level, practical training/internship is included in the curriculum as a part of the 'Methodology of foreign language teaching' course (see 3.03 of PTL's General Professional Development and 4.03 of FLL's Specialty in Table 7.1) and starts at the beginning of the fourth year. Students are required to carry out at least ten weeks of practical training in schools, lyceums and colleges.

The procedure is set out in a contract between the university and the secondary education institution. The student is tutored and mentored by a university teacher and a teacher from the school where they are carrying out the practical training. The first two weeks involve passive practical training: students study the peculiarities of curriculums, calendar and thematic plans, lesson plans, etc., and observe lessons taught by teachers. After two weeks, active practical training begins: students design their own lesson plans and deliver lessons under the supervision of their tutors and mentors. In addition, they give an open door observation lesson (visited by several leading teachers from university and school) and organize some kind of educational event in the classes they teach. At the end of their teaching practice, the students present a portfolio containing all lesson observations, analyses of curriculums, lesson plans and an overview, and scripts of the open door observation lesson and the educational event.

In the case of the master's degree programme, students have scientific-pedagogical and professional training. They attend lectures and practical lessons taught at higher education institutions (in bachelor's and master's degree programmes). The master's degree scientific-pedagogical and professional training comprises several types of activities. The first type is passive practical training, which focuses on developing scientific and methodological skills of analysis. It includes, under the tutoring of a scientific supervisor and other teachers, the study and analysis of existing curriculums, course programmes, scientific and methodological literature, topics and themes of course papers and qualification papers, observation and analysis of lectures, seminars and practical lessons. The second type is practical or active training and includes, under the control of the supervisor and other specialists, working out pedagogical technologies and participation in designing methodological complexes for certain courses, devising tasks for all kinds of assessment (continuous, mid-term, final), designing and giving lectures, seminars and practical classes. The third type focuses on developing the social-communicative competence of future teachers and includes providing individual and group consultations on the problems of independent learning strategies and individual and group counselling with students, focusing on self-esteem enhancement, drug awareness, and national, cultural and religious tolerance. At the end of the scientific-pedagogical training, students have to reflect the results in their master's degree thesis.

## **5. Postgraduate teacher training programmes**

### **5.1 In-Service Teacher Training**

In-Service Teacher Training (InSETT) programmes are provided by the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Special Education and Ministry of Public Education, through teacher training institutions established within the key universities or in regional teacher training institutes. This training is compulsory for teachers of all education sectors (school, lyceum, college, university) and must be taken every three years. On completion of the programme the teachers are awarded a certificate that gives them the right to teach for another three years. By the end of each year, every university, school, college and lyceum informs the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Special Education (or the teacher training institution directly) of who will attend the InSETT programme during the following three years. Depending on the requirements and proposals of each education establishment, the teacher training institution together with the Ministries of Education and Finance develop a budget and decide on the number of teachers who should participate in the programme. To attend the InSETT programme the teachers should provide a referral from their place of employment and their bachelor's or master's degree certificate confirming their speciality as a foreign language teacher.

The duration of the InSETT programme is 288 hours (two months) and consists of two main strands: language development and methodology. The curriculum is apportioned as follows: 50%–70% to psychology, pedagogy, language teaching, communicative approach to language teaching, language, etc.; 10–20% to ICT technology in teaching language, innovations in education; 5% to the study of legislative and normative documents concerning national educational standards, education policy and regulations in the education system; 10% to pedagogical training; 5% to qualifications.

Participants are assessed at the end of the programme through the submission of a teacher portfolio and a final test. The portfolios include 6–10 entries, such as developing materials for teaching vocabulary and writing, reading and listening materials, lesson plans for an assigned topic and group, report on article discussion with peer teachers, classroom observations with reports, reflection on modules, peer feedback on classroom research, written feedback on a teacher teaching in class, report on chosen Internet teaching websites.

## **5.2 Retraining programmes**

A limited number of teacher training institutions offer retraining programmes with qualification certificates awarded upon completion. These programmes are funded either by the participants paying the tuition fees themselves or by the relevant Ministry (Public or Higher Education). Currently in foreign language teaching there is only one retraining institution for public education and two retraining institutions for specialist secondary and higher education.

Mainly teachers of languages such as French, German and Spanish and translators attend these programmes in order to convert existing qualifications or gain additional qualifications in an extra foreign language. For example, a teacher of German might convert their qualification into English or vice versa. Those who have other specialities – such as mathematics for example – can also attend this programme in order to obtain a foreign language teaching speciality, but they should hold a certificate (CEFR, IELTS, TOEFL or certificates from local or overseas centres of foreign language) confirming knowledge of English or another foreign language. The course focuses on advancing language skills and developing teaching skills. A wide range of teaching and learning strategies are used in class, including lectures, seminars, tutorials, self-study, round table discussions and so on. Most of the course is conducted face to face, although currently it is suggested that modules may become available online. After retraining the teachers are qualified for professional work according to their specialization and can work as a language teacher in education institutions. The retraining needs to be updated every three years.

The curriculum and courses are similar to those provided by the InSETT programme, although the length and duration of courses and topics covered are different. To attend the applicant should have a bachelor's or master's degree and take a language test. Applicants submit their documents at the end of August for courses taking place in September–December or at the end of January for February–May courses. The assessment procedure consists of three stages, the first being the submission of a teacher portfolio at the end of the programme, and the second and third including a language test and defence of a thesis.

## **6. Challenges in training foreign language teachers**

Along with the positive reforms in foreign language teaching there are still some problems that need to be addressed. It has to be acknowledged that

any changes introduced into the existing system are bound to reveal shortcomings in the initial stages. A primary issue concerns the lack of resources. Native video, audio and printed material is often unavailable, especially in remote regions. Similar availability challenges concern coursebooks designed for the subjects included in the recently introduced PreSETT curriculum. Another major issue is the scarcity of ICT equipment in classrooms and also teachers who possess the necessary training or knowledge to use such equipment. ICT is a fundamental part of teacher training programmes as modern-day teaching approaches require the use of various ICT softwares and resources to boost learning in classrooms. A third problem is that the teaching practices in schools, lyceums and colleges are found to be too short, causing some imbalance between the theoretical and practical parts. Students would benefit more from longer internships or a succession of several internships. Furthermore, it is unfortunate that exchange programmes have not attracted native speaker instructors to the teaching practice programmes. An alternative measure towards improvement would be to provide students with the opportunity to carry out their internships in the countries of their learned languages.

A move towards the further training of foreign language teachers was initiated by the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, No. PD-1971, 'On measures for improving the activity of the Uzbek State World Languages University', adopted in 2013. This made the Uzbek State World Languages University (UzSWLU) a key educational and scientific-methodological institution for the system of continuous education in foreign languages. The aim is to ensure the implementation of measures for the further development of learning foreign languages, and to upgrade in accordance with international standards the quality of training of qualified teachers of foreign languages for secondary schools, vocational colleges and academic lyceums.

As a result of the decree, UzSWLU put forward new objectives, as outlined on their official website. First and foremost is the use of modern pedagogical methods and information and communications technologies for teaching foreign languages in the training of foreign language teachers for secondary schools, vocational colleges, academic lyceums and higher education institutions. Another comprises the development and continuing improvement of the State Educational Standards, curriculums, textbooks and teaching aids for foreign languages for the entire system of continuous education in accordance with international standards, involving, as appropriate, international consultants. Other objectives are developing and implementing modern methods of teaching foreign languages in all institutions of the continuous education system, and training or retraining

teachers and methodologists of foreign languages, especially of specialist universities and institutions of training and retraining.

In 2004, as part of UzSWLU, the Republican Scientific-Practical Centre for Developing Innovative Methodologies in Foreign Languages Teaching was founded. This centre is responsible for retraining and upgrading pedagogical personnel, preparing and publishing up-to-date material on foreign language acquisition and teaching, devising recommendations for assessment and certification of language proficiency, and developing distance learning. Its main activities include providing serious scientific research focused on developing and implementing innovative approaches to teaching foreign languages at all levels of continuous education, improving state standards and regulatory documents in the field of teaching foreign languages, providing methodological support to other higher education institutions, monitoring the implementation of CEFR within foreign language training and developing a range of media resources and teaching material.

Currently, UzSWLU is actively cooperating with international experts in the field of training foreign language teachers, including those of the British Council, the Regional English Language Office, the European Commission and the Erasmus Mundus programme. A new generation of textbooks based on CEFR levels are being created for the entire continuous education system, involving international consultants where applicable. In order to train foreign language teachers to manage modern technologies, a great number of courses and conferences devoted to this issue are being held, in particular the ICT courses that are an obligatory component of the recurring InSETT and retraining programmes. Much effort is being made to equip classrooms with ICT technologies and implementing them within the teaching and learning process. In actual fact, a large variety of training programmes and conferences for foreign language teachers are being organized aimed at providing participants with teaching material and aids as well as up-to-date knowledge concerning new pedagogical technologies and modern methods of teaching. At many education institutions across the country multimedia (audio/video) laboratories are being created and are in operation. Specialists are devising a new set of tests designed to assess the foreign language proficiency of pupils (grades 1–4 and grades 5–9) and students at academic lyceums and professional colleges (1–3 courses) and higher education institutions, including doctoral programmes.



## 7. Conclusion

It is evident that much significant and fruitful advancement has taken place in the education system in Uzbekistan since the country achieved independence. The last years have witnessed enormous positive changes in the area of foreign language teaching and learning. During a very short period, several teacher training institutions have reformed their programmes and systems in the light of new legislation that has stimulated beneficial changes in the field of foreign languages. It should be noted that the continuation of the reform process in all levels of Uzbekistan's education system is equally evident in the training of foreign language teachers.

As regards future and continuing development, several priority areas in foreign language teacher training have been identified. The first priority concerns educational demands. It is manifested by the desire for improved operational proficiency in foreign languages. The second priority is the provision of high-quality pedagogical staff by upgrading the skills of teaching staff and improving the quality of training and qualification of graduates. The third priority is the introduction of ICT and modern pedagogical technologies into the learning and teaching process, and the development of updated teaching and learning materials so as to provide all sectors of the education system with the necessary resources. An overarching priority is furthering the integration of education with science and ensuring the further development of education reforms in line with the development of the employment market and its demands.

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## Government legislations

- 29 August 1997: Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. 463-I 'National Programme for Personnel Training'

- 29 August 1997: 'Law on Education' No. 464-I
- 1999: Regulation of the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Special Education No. 194 'Charter on assessment of students' knowledge and rating system'
- 2006: Appendix to the Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. 20 'On rules of employing the pedagogical staff into higher education institutions'
- 2007: Charter adopted by the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. 1707 'On Postgraduate Studies'
- 10 December 2012: Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. 1875 'On measures for further improvement of the system of teaching foreign languages'
- 23 May 2013: Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PD-1971 'On measures for improving the activity of the Uzbek State World Languages University'

### **Websites**

- Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan: [www.gov.uz](http://www.gov.uz)
- Ministry of Higher and Secondary Special Education of the Republic of Uzbekistan: [www.edu.uz](http://www.edu.uz)
- Uzbek State World Languages University: [www.uzswlu.uz](http://www.uzswlu.uz)

## CHAPTER EIGHT

# EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF MODERN LANGUAGE TEACHER TRAINING IN UZBEKISTAN

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### **Abstract**

This chapter is devoted to the description of the latest reforms in the system of modern language teaching in Uzbekistan. Modern language teacher training in Uzbekistan is implemented according to the guidelines of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) adapted to the national context. It is carried out using the competence-based approach, which allows devising a set of requirements that can be adopted as the State Educational Standards. In order to answer the needs of modern language teachers, a wide range of evaluating criteria and dimensions have been created. In general, the evaluation of modern language teacher training is carried out by representatives of the State Testing Centre (external monitoring) and members of the monitoring commission of the university (internal monitoring). External and internal monitoring includes observation and analysis, testing the modern language teachers (listening, speaking, reading and writing skills; competence in use of information and communications technology) and surveying bachelor's and master's degree students. This chapter also describes the needs analysis results that reveal the strengths and weaknesses of Uzbekistan's existing teacher training programme. In addition, the process of evaluating a new master's programme that has developed out of the DeTEL (Developing the Teaching of European Languages: Modernising Language

Teaching through the Development of Blended Masters Programmes) Tempus project is presented.

## **1. Introduction**

In Uzbekistan, in the field of education, knowledge of a foreign language is seen as a career requirement. The foreign language can be obtained through both academic study and practical experience. The demonstration of a high level of proficiency in English is a mandatory component of teacher certification.

The main goal of educational services related to modern language teaching is to supply high-quality education, especially for vocational purposes. The attainment of this objective is dependent on a variety of factors, a central one being effective quality management and ensuing reforms. The issue of modernization directly affects teachers, as the central figures of the educational process. The current reforms in teacher training programmes and the implementation of an innovative educational model are timely.

This chapter covers the following issues: the multistage model for modern language teaching, the results of the reforms of modern language teaching, evaluation of modern language teacher training, needs analysis for creating a new master's degree programme, its specific features as a blended programme and its evaluation model. The aim of the chapter is to assess the modernization processes taking place, which are seen as crucial since acceptance of such ideas determines the ability of systems and individuals to adapt to new challenges. First and foremost, modernization of education means changing its goals and results. Applying modern methods and technologies to the practice of teaching/learning is also seen as a significant factor. And, finally, the revision of the State Educational Standards (curriculums), syllabuses and coursebooks is considered to be an inevitable measure. As part of this process, all the components of the methodological system of modern language teaching need to be modernized, from approaches and principles to methods and techniques.

## **2. Multistage model for modern language teaching**

The multistage modern language teaching model has been worked out in accordance with the key points of the 'National Programme for Personnel Training' (Karimov 1998). This model aims to foster, in particular, the humanization of education, personality-centred education, skills-based education, the interdisciplinary integration of technologies in education

and the continuity of education (lifelong learning). This model is reflected in the educational directive ‘State Educational Standards of the Continuous Educational System of the Republic of Uzbekistan’ (2013, p. 5).

This model for learning a modern language has diverse advantages: it functions in line with international standards, while not neglecting the needs and expectations of national environments. The model has been built according to the competence-based approach and takes into account CEFR standards. The CEFR levels and descriptors are adapted to Uzbekistan’s national context and the general aim and objectives are defined for each stage. The adaptation and application of international evaluation standards with regard to communicative competences at all stages of foreign language teaching enable the model to meet world requirements.

An integrated curriculum provides for systematic and continuous content, and ensures that the transitive components from one stage to another are harmonious. The multistage and gradual character of the process of cognition is reflected in the model’s progression, which aims towards lifelong learning. The content and requirements for communicative competences are described at each stage of learning (see ‘State Educational Standards of the Continuous Educational System of the Republic of Uzbekistan’, 2013, pp. 4–32).

The Uzbek model of education presupposes the localization of modern language teaching materials. Such materials are written by both native and foreign authors, so that current teaching materials do not always reflect the national context and require adaptation to suit our own needs; otherwise the creation of new teaching materials is required. The localization of teaching materials calls for relevant teaching content and contexts and a balance between local and foreign cultural concepts and images (Makhkamova 2014). Humanization of the teaching materials is reflected in the ‘State Educational Standards of the Continuous Educational System of the Republic of Uzbekistan’ through the topics covering global issues concerning humanity, relationships between nations and the cultural aspects of learners’ development. Communicative language teaching and learner-centred approaches are considered to be most important.

This educational directive views the interdisciplinary integration of technologies in education as being the implementation of a variety of forms and technologies of teaching, putting into practice information and communications technologies (ICT). The criteria and parameters of learners’ achievements evaluation depend on the stage of education. Thus, the new education model, which has been developed over a long period, is

reflected in modern educational principles: it meets international standards and provides great perspectives for modern language learners and teachers.

### **3. Reforms in modern language teaching**

The early 2000s marked a new era of modern language teaching in Uzbekistan, when all the stakeholders felt they were ready to change the way language was taught and learned. Launching a reform in modern language teaching was a real challenge: psychologically, all the participants felt the necessity for change but were unsure about what exactly needed to be done. A needs analysis was conducted by the British Council in cooperation with the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Special Education in order to provide data about challenging issues. This showed that the problems were due to a lack of alignment between the existing curriculum and international standards, and students' dependency on teachers. Consequently, the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Special Education declared changes in in-service teacher training in higher and specialist/vocational secondary education a policy priority and invited the British Council to be a leading partner in reforming the national In-Service Teacher Training (InSETT) programme.

An InSETT training programme focusing on language learning, classroom management and materials adaptation was developed and piloted nationwide. Three Professional Development Centres were organized in key InSETT institutions in Tashkent, Samarkand and Andijan. In 2006, the first stage of the reform of the InSETT training for English teachers in lyceums, colleges and universities started to provide immediate help to teachers by developing a new programme. The second stage of the project was the reform of the Pre-Service Teacher Training (PreSETT) curriculum with the aim of enhancing the learning experience of English language training students and establishing clear standards for graduates that would be equivalent to international ones.

The main result of the project was the creation of a national team of materials writers whose members cooperated in developing a unique programme for Uzbek teachers. In addition, the Dynamic Teacher Trainer Team was devised to train teachers from different regions in the three Professional Development Centres. Within the four-year period of the experiment (2007–11), about 500 teachers of higher and specialist secondary education institutions across Uzbekistan were trained. In addition to the main results already mentioned, concrete achievements were realized, such as the revision of the four-year curriculum and the implementation of course specifications for about 30 modules. Also

reconsidered was the assessment specifications for each course, including final examinations, and the development of sample teaching materials to deliver the new courses. More than 1,000 students from 18 higher education institutions were formed into 70 experimental groups and followed the new bachelor's degree programme. A generic collection of teaching and learning materials was provided.

In spite of the success of the project, the problem of standards to be attained by graduates relating to English language proficiency (having adapted the CEFR levels to the local context) remained unresolved. The solution was a challenge to the foreign language teaching and learning process since the traditional curriculum did not explicitly express the requirements of graduates majoring in English.

In December 2012, the Presidential Decree No. 1875 'On measures for further improvement of the system of teaching foreign languages' was adopted, which focused on the question of assessing and evaluating modern language teacher training. In accordance with the Decree, starting from the school year 2013/14, a foreign language, usually English, is taught from the first year of schooling onwards. This change in starting age necessitates modifications to the programmes of students majoring in languages, which in turn changes the way modern languages are taught in primary and secondary schools. These adjustments are aimed at meeting world standards and introducing more tangible practical and communicative teaching and learning.

Optimization of the process of foreign language teaching involves the development of certain areas of instructional activity, such as interactive teaching methods, cooperation between teacher and student, learner-centred teaching, assessment tools and ICT. All these criteria are taken into account during the process of designing curriculums, syllabuses and coursebooks for primary, secondary and high schools. Optimization of foreign language teaching is aimed at the development of certain competences, which in the case of language is reflected in the achieved level of language proficiency. Thus communicative competence is a result of modern language teaching, the components of which are enshrined in the CEFR's six reference levels.

In the scientific literature on methodology, various models of communicative competence (Celce-Murcia 2007) have been suggested. In current interpretation, communicative competence includes the ability to display linguistic and sociolinguistic skills, and strategic, sociocultural and social competences (Van Ek 1986). Our local model contains linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences. Pragmatic competence, for instance, presupposes the knowledge of the functions or illocutionary

forces implied in the utterance/discourse, as well as the socio-contextual aspects and communication strategies that affect its appropriateness. In addition, it involves the knowledge of cultural aspects, such as the rules of behaviour that exist in the target language community, as well as cross-cultural specifics, including differences and similarities in intercultural communication.

As we see, reforms have an affect on the curriculum, teaching materials and assessment – all of which are crucial in the preparation of skilful modern languages teachers and in which they must be trained and retrained (see Figure 8.1).

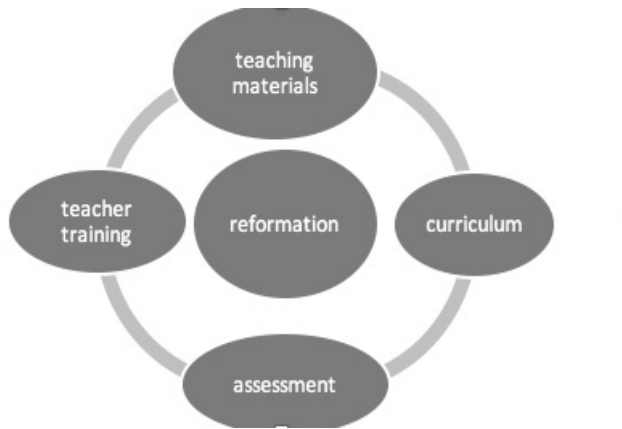


Figure 8.1. Four aspects of reform in modern language teaching

#### **4. Management system in quality training of modern language specialists**

In general, the process of systematic management means above all the creation of favourable conditions for optimal learning. It is obvious that where positive dynamics in teaching are absent and results are systematically lower than described in the standards (norms), the education system needs modernization. When applied to the modern language training process, monitoring fulfils various objectives.

1. Monitoring the educational activity of learners and teachers. As the education process involves interaction between teacher and student, this activity needs to be traced.



2. Monitoring the objectiveness and reliability of assessment of learners' achievements. The assessment should be relevant to the type of task in which the learner is engaged. Assessment techniques should be designed according to the language level designated in the curriculum. In addition, the conditions of study and techniques used to evaluate language skills should be monitored.
3. Determining and analysing the dynamic progression and regression in learners' achievements. It is important to learners that they know where progress is being made and the criteria upon which their performance is being judged. The progress and shortcomings of language performance need to be followed.
4. Creating a competitive environment for teachers' and learners' creative and productive activity. Students and teachers can be encouraged to monitor each other's performances. Peer assessment is one of the techniques that motivates and improves monitoring capacity. Another tool that creates competitiveness among teachers and students is testing.
5. Analysing the persistent assessment of teaching and learning processes. The analysis of the results of assessments allows stakeholders to be informed about the efficiency of teaching materials and assessment tools.
6. Predicting the perspectives of education system development. Via analysis of the educational system and discussion of the situation with the stakeholders, we can predict challenges and resolve them in time to achieve progress.

## **5. Evaluation of modern language teacher training**

The quality of modern language teacher training is assessed through a system of internal and external evaluations (Table 8.1).

The effectiveness of modern language teacher training is closely related to the specific types of vocational activity and the professional requirements demanded by the State Educational Standards. Their requirements for BA 5A120100 Foreign languages and literature (Romance-Germanic languages) and MA 5A120102 Linguistics (Romance-Germanic languages) are defined according to the future pedagogical activities of the graduates and the expectations of all the stakeholders.

### Types of evaluation

| Internal  | External                |
|---|-------------------------|
| Self-evaluation and peer-evaluation (learners and teachers)   | Governors               |
| Evaluation of the quality of the subject/module (learners and teachers)                             | Individuals and parents |
| Evaluation of the educational programme quality (learners, teachers, internal monitoring committee) | Stakeholders            |
| Internal monitoring committee for teaching process evaluation                                       |                         |

**Table 8.1**

Criteria that establish the effectiveness of foreign language teacher training include the entry and end-of-diploma test results, the synchronous interaction between educational institutions and all the stakeholders, the continuity of all the stages in education establishments (all stages of continuous education), the availability of resources and equipment, the professional level of teachers and opportunities for retraining, the organization of appropriate and effective teaching, the requirements of modern language teachers, compliance with international standards.

The main goal of a higher education establishment is to train a specialist whose knowledge, skills and personal qualities will meet the requirements of the employment market. So, monitoring is an obligatory component of modern language teacher training and the successful management of this process.

### 5.1 The internal evaluation system

The evaluation of students' performance in Uzbekistan's higher education establishments is carried out through assessment that comprises continuous, mid-term and final assessment. Continuous assessment evaluates the current progress of a student in class and during self-study, the maximum score being 40 points. There are usually two mid-term tests during a course, for which the student can score a maximum of 30 points; and a final assessment, for which the maximum score is also 30 points.

The possibility of self-assessment and self-evaluation has not yet been considered in Uzbekistan, although in the context of 'lifelong learning' these criteria have become important for teachers and learners. Such

evaluation would necessitate the creation of theoretical-methodological tools for self-assessment for teachers and learners, which at the same time should avoid becoming institutionalized. We understand 'self-evaluation' to comprise judgements about proficiency (in language or professional activity), teachers/learners evaluating their own performance or experience themselves, using clear criteria for assessment that has been agreed beforehand.

Another type of internal evaluation of the quality of modern language teaching, already used in higher education establishments, is conducted by means of a questionnaire for students and teachers, which is conducted twice a year. The survey includes questions about, for instance, the quality and relevance of teaching subjects, coursebooks, the effectiveness of the teaching resources, and the validity of the assessment tools. Analysis of the responses allows an evaluation of the quality of teachers' activities and the formulation of measures to improve the quality of modern language teaching.

In addition, internal evaluation of education programmes is organized by a monitoring committee composed of skilled specialists and administrators, in accordance with regulations stipulated by the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Special Education. The criteria for quality evaluation of bachelor's and master's degree programmes include qualification requirements and the content of the suggested subjects.

Lastly, a special monitoring committee is organized from within the education establishment to assess the teaching process, documentation and the level of students' achievements through the analysis of the results of mid-term and final examinations. This committee also deals with evaluation of the teaching process from the perspective of the State Educational Standards; monitors the necessary teaching resources; tests the effectiveness of education programmes from the perspective of education establishments; and provides quantitative evaluation (how many undergraduates successfully complete the programme) and qualitative evaluation (what their achievements are, their capacity to continue studying or find employment). The results of the assessment are reported to the Scientific Council of the education establishment.

## **5.2 The external evaluation system**

The education system as a whole is evaluated by the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Special Education together with municipal and local administrative bodies. State accreditation of an educational establishment's activity is targeted towards testing the quality of teaching and whether it

meets set standards. Special focus is directed at the structure of education programmes, their content, duration and entry requirements. The academic activities of faculties are also controlled – in particular, their practical results. The quality of management organization in higher education institutions is also a concern. However, the most challenging areas for the state are the evaluation of education programmes and students' readiness to meet the requirements of the employment market.

External evaluation is also carried out by the Uzbekistan State Testing Centre under the auspices of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan. The State Testing Centre conducts different types of tests in order to assess the level of foreign language teachers' professional skills and provide them with certificates corresponding to their level of skills (for instance, CEFR levels B2, C1 or C2); a further test allows them to award (in accordance with the Presidential Decree No. 1875) a 15% gratuity to foreign language teachers in cities and a 30% gratuity to foreign language teachers in the countryside.

The first type of test designed by the experts of the State Testing Centre, and based on CEFR criteria, assesses foreign language teachers' levels of knowledge and language skills. Two weeks after the test the participants take a national certificate that indicates their level of language proficiency. The second type of test, which determines whether a gratuity can be awarded, consists of six sections: listening, reading, lexical and grammatical competence, writing, speaking. The maximum score for each section is 30 points, the total maximum score being 180 points. To pass one must obtain at least 50% in each section and, in general, not less than 60%. Participation is voluntary and if the results are unsatisfactory the employer has no right to conduct any disciplinary measures or to terminate the teacher's employment contract.

Evaluations made by individual students and parents is an original dimension of programme evaluation. After studying in an institution the student and their parents are concerned about the challenges of obtaining a well-paid job, i.e. deriving benefit from study and obtaining rapid promotion in a profession. Their opinions about the quality of education, the conditions of education and how the family might benefit are revealed in a sociological questionnaire that has been conducted with the help of careers offices at universities during the last three years. The careers offices examine the graduates' vocational capacities and help them find jobs.

As well as evaluating educational programmes and the quality of foreign language teaching, the Ministry of Education also has overall responsibility for ensuring that quality of teaching is consistent and does

this through a system of retraining teachers. This is carried out by the Republican Scientific-Practical Centre for Developing Innovative Methodologies in Foreign Languages' Teaching (part of the Uzbek State World Languages University), which plays an important role in evaluating foreign language teacher training. The centre is responsible for retraining and upgrading pedagogical staff, and preparing and publishing educational and didactic literature related to learning and teaching foreign languages.

One of its major functions is to evaluate the quality of modern language teacher training and retraining in secondary school. At the beginning of the academic year, all applicants for foreign language teacher positions at universities are tested, focusing on listening, reading, writing and speaking skills in order to define the level of their language proficiency, and must attain at least level C1 in order to proceed. In addition, applicants for foreign language teaching posts must have knowledge of the main methodological approaches, the application of new methodological techniques and strategies in class and the ability to adapt material as required. Also the applicants should have a good knowledge of ICT and be capable of using these technologies in language classes.

Throughout the academic year each teacher at university is continuously observed by mentors who provide constructive feedback in order to plot changes and progress. The mentors can be either internal or external (from other universities). Usually teachers are informed in advance about lesson observation but sometimes the head of department or another experienced teacher might drop in and observe a lesson without warning. The lesson observation may be general or focused on one aspect, such as, for example, the methods used by the teacher, the application of ICT technologies or interaction in class. The observer decides what form of observation to conduct and provides written feedback to the authorities. In the case of negative feedback, the teacher is given a certain period of time for improvement, based on practical recommendations from the mentor, after which they are observed again.

The system for evaluating modern language teacher training comprises a large number of aspects, ranging from legislative, scientific and methodological to managing and monitoring. The monitoring and managing of modern language teacher training are organized from different positions, using effective instruments. However, in our opinion, monitoring would benefit from involving independent experts from schools, lyceums and institutes since they are considered to be our future 'consumers'.

## **6. Needs analysis for a new master's degree programme**

In order to outline the main challenges Uzbek teachers face obtaining their vocational training, we conducted a needs analysis by carrying out a survey (as part of the Tempus project 'Developing the Teaching of European Languages: Modernising Language Teaching through the Development of Blended Masters Programmes – DeTEL'). The survey helped us to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the current education programmes for modern language teacher training. It involved 120 participants from different institutions and colleges, working in different regions: Tashkent, Namangan, Samarkand and Andijan. Since the basic aim of the survey was to evaluate the effectiveness of modern language teacher training, class activities and adaptation of teaching methods in language institutes, we distributed the questionnaire among teachers and asked them for their views regarding the teacher training process. They did so by responding to the 23 questions concerning the effectiveness of existing foreign language teaching in Uzbekistan's higher education institutions. The questions were either multiple-choice or open-ended (e.g. 'What is the best advice you could give to a colleague about teaching languages?'). In the latter case, participants were asked to provide answers in the form of advice, solutions and arguments.

Having collected the data, we analysed it for the recurrence of descriptors. According to the survey the most successful aspects of the curriculum for secondary school teaching are theoretical courses and practical language courses. For instance, within the theoretical courses on Text Linguistics, General Linguistics, Cognitive Linguistics, Methodology, Cultural Studies, Phraseology, students become acquainted with the latest theories and their application in practice. Practical language courses are designed in accordance with CEFR requirements and are aimed at the development of each of the language skills.

Another major positive aspect mentioned by the participants was the fact that in recent years the change in training has been revolutionary: teachers receive training on modern methods and technologies including ICT, and new State Educational Standards have been created, as well as curricular material and coursebooks that are written in co-authorship with native speakers. What is more, teachers are motivated by external assessment mechanisms.

The participants also indicated some challenging aspects of the current programme – the majority of teachers particularly highlighted the fact that native speakers are not involved in the training and that language teachers lack the opportunity for language practice with native speakers. The data

show that 77% of teachers had not been in the country of the target language and while 8% had had such an opportunity their stays were not long. Another factor that negatively influences the quality of the teaching programme is the use of non-native language material. Also, according to the participants, more attention should be paid to vocational-oriented training in practical language courses: during the fourth year, the topic 'My future profession' is the only part of the curriculum that involves developing future vocational skills. Another negative factor mentioned by the participants was the lack of ICT available, the absence of online programmes in theoretical and practical courses being a particular disadvantage.

The participants also contributed a wide range of suggestions for improving the situation, such as carrying out the teaching practice in the countries of the target language, conducting continuous teaching practice and practical training in schools, and organizing special courses for in-depth training. In particular, the participants pointed out that there are specific subjects they want to be taught: Curriculum and Syllabus Design, Material Design, Assessment, Writing, and Language Acquisition.

Regarding teaching practice, the participants enjoyed the opportunity to build a rapport with pupils and motivate active learning, teach speaking skills and use different methods and techniques and interesting teaching material. As for shortcomings, they identified that technical equipment, computer programs and listening materials are not used, that the work is carried out mainly by following a coursebook, that teachers in schools do not use additional material and do not possess the skills to create material themselves. Also decisive is the fact that the time allocated for teaching practice in schools is limited, which makes it difficult to adapt to the future teaching profession.

It is expedient to mention that there are aspects for which teachers themselves have to take responsibility, such as developing communicative competence through self-study, mastering up-to-date methods and technologies, attending mentors' classes and participating in various training programmes.

Thus, according to the survey, measures that need addressing in the near future include: updating programmes with the help of special courses that teach practical modern language teaching skills; introducing continuous teaching practice at schools in order to master teaching skills; involving native speakers in teaching some subjects in the specialty; devising online programs for training teachers in secondary school and introducing distance learning; and carrying out vocational-oriented training using practical modern language courses.

## **7. A new blended master's degree programme**

The DeTEL Tempus project is designed to overcome the weaknesses of the master's degree programme as described by the survey participants in the previous section. The main focus of a blended master's degree programme is the creation and implementation of profession-oriented modules that integrate both face-to-face and online formats.

Special modules are designed as part of the project for the effective training of foreign language teachers at master's degree level, which include, in particular, Foreign Language Teaching Methodology, Age Appropriate Language Pedagogy, Course Design and Evaluation, Technology and Language Teaching, English Language Improvement, French Language Improvement and German Language Improvement. The modules are designed for English, French and German language departments and their content takes into consideration those of the bachelor's degree programme in order that there is not any overlap.

Founded on the integration of theory and practice, the blended teaching modules enhance learners' autonomy and allow a wide implementation of ICT into the teaching process, combining synchronous and asynchronous interactive activities. The synchronous activities allow students to interact with the tutor and other members of the group through online chats and forums and instant messaging. The asynchronous format presupposes sharing and answering messages by email and via a discussion board. The integration of online teaching with face-to-face instruction increases student motivation by means of interactive activities, introducing different types of profession-oriented material (print, audio and video), while taking into account all learning styles of students, in order to achieve expertise in profession-oriented situations and contexts, and to promote students' autonomous learning. Blended learning combines many of the best elements of face-to-face teaching, thereby allowing greater variety and flexibility than in a traditional classroom set-up and responding to teachers' and learners' needs.

## **8. Evaluating the new master's degree programme**

As part of implementing the new master's degree programme, it is important to design an evaluation system that can assess the quality of the new programme. The absence of effective management tools leads to a decreasing quality of foreign language teacher training.

There are different models for the effectiveness evaluation of educational programmes (Schmalenbach 2005) but Donald L.



Kirkpatrick's four levels of evaluation (Kirkpatrick 1994) is a successful tool for evaluating the new master's degree programme. He defines these as being:

**Level 1** – Reaction – what is the reaction of the learner to the learning experience?

**Level 2** – Learning – what has the learner actually learnt?

**Level 3** – Behaviour – to what extent have the behaviours of the learner changed within the programme – what is the influence of the learning programme on the behaviour of students in their workplaces?

**Level 4** – Results – how much better is the students' performance?

Following Kirkpatrick's four levels of evaluation and his argument about the difficulty of evaluating Level 4, we can formulate levels adapted to our context of study (see Table 8.2).

#### Evaluation levels for the new master's degree modules

|                | <b>Forms and objectives<br/>(What and How)</b>   | <b>People<br/>(Who–Whom)</b>   | <b>Stages<br/>(When)</b>   |
|----------------|--|--|--|
| <b>Level 1</b> | 1. Initial testing (entry test) to reveal the level of knowledge and skills within a module<br>2. Questionnaire of students' needs and expectations from a module    | 1. Teachers–testers<br>2. Students–respondents                                   | Pre-experimental   |
| <b>Level 2</b> | 1. Assessment tasks and activities within module content<br>2. Self-evaluation and peer-evaluation forms<br>3. Mid-term testing<br>4. Final testing                  | 1. Teachers–testers<br>2. Students–respondents<br>3. Teachers–respondents        | Experimental teaching  |
| <b>Level 3</b> | 1. Observation of lessons conducted by students<br>2. Qualitative and quantitative analysis of students' achievements in initial (entry), mid-term and final testing | 1. Teachers–testers<br>2. Students–respondents<br>3. Mentors–teachers working in | Pedagogical practice in different types of educational establishments; post-experimental |

|                |  |   |   |
|----------------|--|---|---|
|                | 3. Questionnaire to reveal students' views of module<br>4. Questionnaire to reveal teachers' views of module | different types of educational establishments |   |
| <b>Level 4</b> | Professional competence in the aspect of language teaching via questionnaire                                 | Stakeholders                                  | Production (schools, lyceums, colleges, institutes) |

**Table 8.2**

**Level 1.** This level defines to what extent master's degree students understand the module's content. This level relates to the satisfaction of the learners with the educational programme. A more important means of revealing the quality is a students' questionnaire. The following questions can be asked:

- Is this module directed to development of the pedagogical/teaching skills?
- Are the stated aims important within a module?
- Is the content of the module effective for conducting pedagogical activity?
- What topics would you like to add?

As a result we can evaluate students' satisfaction with the suggested module and its relevance to their expectations. We can outline the advantages and disadvantages of the suggested modules. The structural organization of the modules will be identified. And we will know their preferences in terms of module content. In this respect, it is necessary to organize an initial testing (entry test). This will enable the comparison of the results of this module with the mid-term and final testing results.

**Level 2.** The purpose of this level is to assess students' achievements within modules, to know if the stated aims have been achieved and to evaluate the effectiveness of the module. Views can be solicited by asking questions such as: How compatible is the module? Is the material complicated? How has the material been used and tested? Is the module clear and practical?

At this stage we can use multiple-choice tests or reflective writing on the main issues covered in the module content to reveal the effectiveness of the module in comparison with the initial, continuous, mid-term and final testing results (indicators). Too often teachers think about assessment of instructional effectiveness only in terms of the end-of-course evaluation

by students. This indeed has summative value, but some specific aspects of teaching can be missed. There are valuable ways of using data from other teachers and from students to positively affect instructional quality. There are also self-evaluation and peer evaluation instruments.

**Level 3.** This level is directed towards data collection about teachers' and students' attitude to the module as well as about teaching English at different types of educational establishments during students' pedagogical practice. Mentors from schools, lyceums and colleges evaluate students' performance when they conduct English lessons. Mentors evaluate the practical benefits of the modules and the students' proficiency in applying acquired knowledge and skills in practice. The mentors observe lessons and fill in the observation form. In addition, we make qualitative and quantitative analysis of the students' achievements alongside the initial, mid-term and final testing, and organize a survey of students and teachers to reveal their attitudes to the module. The evaluated aspects include students' and teachers' views about strengths and weaknesses of the module, what difficulties they faced and how much they benefited. All the results of different types of testing, questionnaires and observation instruments give evidence about the effectiveness of the module.

**Level 4.** The last level, which studies the impact of the module on the quality of educational establishment activity (schools, lyceums, colleges), is considered to be a long-term evaluation that reveals the teaching quality of the graduates.

## 9. Conclusion

The reforms undertaken in the Republic of Uzbekistan are aimed at renewing curriculums, teaching materials, assessment instruments and teacher training. The key purpose is the provision of quality teaching and learning of foreign languages.

Analysis of the latest achievements in managing and monitoring aspects, especially in the internal and external evaluation strategies, makes it possible to assert that a variety of evaluation models and instruments are being used successfully. Nevertheless, evaluation of the effectiveness of the new master's degree modules established within the DeTEL Tempus project requires the design of specific evaluation instruments.

Data collection can be implemented formally and informally. It is known that informal methods rely on intuition and experience, and do not generate systematic information that can be verified. On the other hand, formal methods such as questionnaires, interviews and experiments presuppose qualitative and quantitative analysis. These methods are

widely used by practitioners. One of the strengths of formal methods is the relative accuracy of the data collection, which is why special attention has been paid here to describing the procedure and results of the needs analysis conducted via questionnaire. It allowed identification of a particular demand for ICT, which is perceived as a means of furthering best practice in teaching foreign languages.

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## Government legislations

- 10 December 2012: Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. 1875 'On measures for further improvement of the system of teaching foreign languages'

- 2013: State Educational Standards of the Continuous Educational System of the Republic of Uzbekistan. *Public Education Journal* 4:5–32
- 2014: State Educational Standards for bachelor's degree in specialty 5A120100 – *Foreign languages and literature (Romance-Germanic languages)*. The Ministry of Higher and Secondary Special Education
- 2014: State Educational Standards for master's degree in specialty 5A120102 – *Linguistics (Romance-Germanic languages)*. The Ministry of Higher and Secondary Special Education

## CHAPTER NINE

# EXPERIENCE OF E-LEARNING COURSES DEVELOPMENT IN LMS MOODLE FOR TEACHING FRENCH AT UNIVERSITY

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### **Abstract**

This article presents practical applications of Web technology – in particular, those of the learning management system Moodle (Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment) – used to develop the communicative competence of teachers. The article provides examples of the use of this system in the following e-learning courses for theoretical and practical fields: ‘Business writing in the first foreign language (French)’, ‘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’. In addition, it examines the role of the use of Moodle during student teaching practice and in assessing levels of plagiarism/originality of graduation qualification projects. It ends with conclusions about the advantages and disadvantages of the Moodle system and the effectiveness of its application in the teaching of French in secondary school.

### **1. Introduction**

The framework of the modern foreign language teaching method applied in higher education institutions of the Russian Federation exists in the form of communicative and competence-based approaches. A foreign language is not regarded as just a fundamental discipline of the curriculum, but as ‘a means of a person’s professional development’ (Programme 2009). These approaches are aimed at the development of

various competences and communication skills, which are necessary for using a foreign language in different spheres (in everyday life, in cultural and professional domains, in education and learning) as well as for working with different sources of information in the target language (documents, reference books and technical literature). The new goal to teach to communicate in a foreign language demands from the secondary school teacher a qualitatively new way of organizing a learning process.

Currently, to achieve the goal of developing communicative competence, teachers are widely using the latest achievements in the field of new information and communications technologies (ICT), including work with the learning management system (LMS) Moodle. This modular system allows a teacher to create a virtual learning environment and is designed to manage learning via this environment. The unquestionable advantages of this system include the opportunity for a learner to study at their own pace, freedom and flexibility, accessibility, mobility and technology-enhanced learning (Andreev et al. 2008; Anisimov 2009; Keith 2013; Koryen 2013). Moreover, another convenient feature of the LMS Moodle is the universal nature of the proposed tasks, which allows the teacher to apply it in teaching a foreign language, particularly French, and as the first, second and third foreign language for students in applied linguistics, teaching and translation, as well as the first foreign language for the students of other professional domains.

## **2. E-learning courses in LMS Moodle for theoretical and practical disciplines**

We examine several e-learning courses, both for theoretical and practical disciplines in the French language teaching curriculum, designed in LMS Moodle by teachers of the French Philology Department at Voronezh State University (VSU).

### **2.1 E-learning Moodle course**

#### **‘Business writing in the first foreign language (French)’**

The use of ICT to support the framework of this course is due to several factors:

- significance of written communication and business writing that have traditionally played an important role in Western culture and are becoming more and more common in Russian business culture;

- growing importance of business writing and its evolution due to the appearance of numerous and various Internet technologies and electronic means of communication;
- variety and variability of business texts (business letters, agreements, orders, circulars, various administrative documents) that are used in cross-cultural business communication;
- linguistic-specific features of French business text composed according to strict standards both in terms of form and composition, and the language used.

It is evident that skills in composition of different types of business documents, as well as knowledge of the principles of their translation, represent an essential component of the professional training of a specialist in applied linguistics and one of the important conditions for their successful adaptation to the current job market context. The course 'Business writing in the first foreign language' comprises 50 hours of face-to-face teaching (1 hour per week for 3 semesters), while the number of hours allocated to students' independent work is 94. The limited number of hours for the face-to-face teaching within the framework of this course increases the importance of the organization and optimization of the students' independent work, as well as of assessment of skills in written business communication. This work is complicated, however, by the lack of coursebooks that fully meet the requirements of the course in terms of its number of hours and the achievement of its goals and objectives.

The aim of the course is to develop communicative competence while learning French business writing. To achieve this goal, as well as to address a number of specific objectives associated with its achievement, an e-learning course in LMS Moodle has been developed by Professor N.A. Fenenko and Associate Professor S.Yu. Bulgakova.

The e-learning course includes theoretical, practical and assessment materials. The course structure consists of a set of mandatory sections that are generally used in Moodle faculty templates: elements for providing instruction to students (instructional block), elements providing information (information block), elements to ensure interaction and feedback between the teacher and the students (communicative block), elements for assessment (assessment block) (Bulgakova 2014).

The elements in the instructional block have been designed for organizational, methodological and consultative purposes. Its goal is to help learners to create an individual educational trajectory while studying the materials. The block includes the following information:



- introduction with a brief description of the course;
- curriculum, establishing a list of topics and number of hours devoted to their study;
- criteria of assessment of proficiency in language use and communication skills at the end of the course.

The information block includes several tools integrated into LMS Moodle, such as lesson plan, glossary, Flash Video, SCORM, compulsory and recommended reading lists, etc. It also includes additional materials in HTML form and references to francophone websites – for example, the site [www.calliope.be](http://www.calliope.be), where specific requirements for business letter layout and structure are presented – as well as sites that provide samples for different types of letters.

The communicative block is a system of tools to provide feedback and ensure interaction among the participants of the course. This block of the course is being developed at the moment.

The assessment block includes tests for summative and formative assessment, as well as a list of self-assessment questions. Two types of tasks are provided for assessment: tests and assignments in training mode (when a student gives the wrong answer to the question, they have the opportunity to see the correct answer) and tests and assignments in assessment mode (having answered all the test's questions, the student receives the information concerning the number of points they have gained and whether they have passed the test).

The course consists of several sections (Bulgakova 2014), the first series of which focus on the study of theory – especially the concept of style of speech and official style in particular, cultural specificities of business communication, with business writing and business letters as one of its genres. The section provides a lecture in PowerPoint presentation format that students who missed the class can read online and a number of self-assessment questions. The key terms introduced in a section are stated in the glossary. The next section is devoted to the specific features of French business correspondence layout and language use. It is presented in the form of a series of lectures in PowerPoint concerning the main characteristics of business language and clichés of business French, etc. The main part of this section is represented by training activities in the form of various tests such as drag-and-drop matching, embedded answers and multiple-choice, as well as assignments in essay form. All tests are given in training mode during the trial period of the course. The following section is aimed at developing students' skills in writing various types of business letter, such as a cover letter (*lettre de motivation*), a letter

requesting information (*lettre de demande d'information*) and the answer providing information (*réponse à une demande d'information*), a letter of complaint (*lettre de réclamation*) and an answer to a letter of complaint (*réponse à une lettre de réclamation*).

During the first phase the students carry out, with the teacher's help, linguistic and pragmatic analyses of each type of letter in order to identify specific expressions used in different situations in business writing. Students then proceed to various tests (drag-and-drop matching, multiple-choice) in order to develop the skills to select the expressions appropriate to each communication context, according to the speaker's intentions. The final phase of work on each section consists of written assignments when students independently write business letters suitable for the situation given by the teacher. This type of task is done in the form of an essay and is corrected manually by the teacher.

The e-learning course 'Business writing in the first foreign language (French)' was tested over a period of three semesters. The results show that students have great interest in using ICT and particularly LMS Moodle in their work and, in general, successfully fulfil the proposed assignments, although a number of challenges were identified during the development of the e-learning course.

## **2.2 E-learning Moodle course**

### **'French as the third foreign language for bachelor's students'**

The e-learning course 'French as the third foreign language for bachelor's students' was designed for students who are studying for a bachelor's degree in linguistics, and was developed by O.B. Polyanchuk and T.N. Koziura for third and fourth-year students studying French as their third foreign language.

The overall course goal is to develop basic communication skills in French (levels A1–A2), sufficient to participate in simple dialogues in everyday life and on professional subjects. The objectives of the course are to develop the skills to ask and answer questions of a personal nature, initiate and maintain a simple conversation on a topic of interest for the interlocutors, as well as the skill to compose and write simple personal letters. The studied topics concern everyday life, learning and studying, and social, cultural and professional domains; the learning materials include brief authentic texts of different genres and styles: culture, fiction, society and politics.

The course structure allows students to achieve the above-mentioned objectives and to make a formative assessment of the basic phonetic,

grammatical and lexical skills in French, within a limited number of hours of face-to-face learning according to the programme.

All the tasks in the framework of the course are combined in thematic units that correspond to the topics of the course ‘French as the third foreign language for bachelor’s students’:

1. The family, occupations. Studies, nationalities.
2. The portrait.
3. Regions, city, street, travel.
4. Numbers. Hours.
5. People, places, food.
6. Months and seasons.
7. French life: outings; emotions, language registers; famous men; phone; films, cinema; holidays.<sup>1</sup>

The structure of the course includes the basic universal blocks described in the previous section (2.1 E-learning Moodle course ‘Business writing in the first foreign language (French)’). The instructional block consists of an introduction with a brief description of the course, the course programme, a list of the topics with the number of hours devoted to each of them, and criteria for assessing proficiency in language use and communication skills at the end of the course.

The information block consists of a thematic glossary and a grammar reference. The thematic glossary includes basic vocabulary for the topic and contains explanations of the lexical and grammatical meanings of the words as well as examples of their functions in different contexts. Here is an example of an element in the glossary:

**café** (*m, sing.*), *cafés (pl)* – 1) coffee; 2) café.

Every meaning of a word contains a reference to the most pertinent examples:

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<sup>1</sup> 1. La famille, les professions. Les études, les nationalités.  
 2. Le portrait.  
 3. Les régions, la ville, la rue, le voyage.  
 4. Les nombres. Les heures.  
 5. Les gens, les lieux, les repas.  
 6. Les mois et les saisons.  
 7. Réalités des Français: sorties; émotions, registres de langue; hommes célèbres; téléphone; films, cinéma; vacances.

1) I want a coffee = I want a cup of coffee; - Would you like a coffee?

No, I don't drink coffee;

How many coffees do you want? Three coffees, please!

Buy coffee! In the morning I drink coffee with cream.

I put the coffee in the sideboard. She doesn't like coffee.

2) Are you coming to the café with us?

You are at the airport? - No, we're in a café.

Look, I'll take you to a café... a very special one! Do you like it?

At noon, the restaurants, pubs and cafés are full. This café is called 'Régine'.<sup>2</sup>

The grammar reference contains information about the basic grammatical categories studied in the course, with examples; the material is distributed under the relevant sections. The learner can use the toolbar or pass directly to a given section of the grammar reference with the help of the links. For example, the heading *Les pronoms* refers to sections 1) subject pronouns - direct object pronouns - indirect object pronouns; 2) tonic pronouns; 3) reflexive pronouns; 4) the pronoun *en* to express quantity; 5) position of pronouns; 6) relative pronouns.<sup>3</sup>

Accordingly, each section contains a table with examples that appear when students click on the links. For example, when you click on section 5) *La place des pronoms*, the page containing the following table opens on the screen:

Do you know Didier? Yes, I know him. No, I do not know him.

Have you spoken to Peter? Yes, I have spoken to him. No, I have not spoken to him.

I have to help Marcel? Yes, help him. No, don't help him.

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<sup>2</sup> 1) Je veux **un** café = Je veux une tasse **de** café ; - Vous désirez **un** café?

Non, je ne prends pas **de** café;

Combien **de** cafés voulez-vous? Trois cafés, s'il vous plaît!

Achetez **du** café! Le matin je prends **du** café crème.

J'ai mis **le** café dans le buffet. Elle n'aime pas **le** café.

2) Tu viens **au** café avec nous?

Vous êtes à l'aéroport? - Non, nous sommes dans **un** café.

Tenez, je vais vous emmener dans **un** café... très spécial! Ça vous plaît?

À midi, les restaurants, les brasseries et **les** cafés sont pleins. **Ce** café s'appelle «Régine».

<sup>3</sup> 1) Pronoms sujets - pronoms compléments d'objet direct - pronoms compléments d'objet indirect; 2) Pronoms toniques; 3) Pronoms réfléchis; 4) Pronom EN pour exprimer la quantité; 5) La place des pronoms; 6) Les pronoms relatifs.

The pronoun is placed before the verb on which it depends, except in the imperative affirmative.<sup>4</sup>

The assessment block consists of lexis and grammar tests. Students can do the tests as individual work at home as well as online in the classroom for formative assessment. The tests include a variety of question types: short answer; multiple-choice (drag-and-drop questions, choice from a drop-down menu); ordering; matching, etc. Here is an example:

For ‘Match the questions and answers’<sup>5</sup> the students manually drag elements into the table – in this case the number of answers corresponds exactly to the number of questions, as it often does.

1. Hello, how are you? 2. Are you Italian? 3. You are at the airport?
4. What’s your name? 5. Is it a dog? 6. I live in Helsinki, and you?
7. They are Japanese? 8. They are at school? 9. Do you like coffee?
- a) I’m fine, and you? b) No, never on Wednesdays. c) No, Thai.
- d) No, a cat. e) Me, in Rouen. f) Yes, a lot!
- g) No, we’re in a café. h) No, I’m Swiss. i) Catherine.<sup>6</sup>

The communicative block includes a forum created to provide feedback and interaction among students as well as between them and the teacher. The ways in which course participants can use forums in LMS Moodle are extremely diverse:

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<sup>4</sup> Tu connais Didier? Oui, je **le** connais. Non, je ne **le** connais pas.

Tu as parlé à Pierre? Oui, je **lui** ai parlé. Non, je ne **lui** ai pas parlé.

Je dois aider Marcel? Oui, aide-**le**. Non, ne l’aide pas.

Le pronom se place **devant** le verbe dont il dépend, **sauf** à l’impératif affirmatif

<sup>5</sup> Retrouvez les répliques

<sup>6</sup> 1. Bonjour, ça va ?

2. Tu es italienne ?

3. Vous êtes à l’aéroport ?

4. Vous vous appelez comment ?

5. Est-ce qu’elle a un chien ?

6. J’habite à Helsinki, et toi ?

7. Ils sont japonais ?

8. Elles sont à l’école ?

9. Vous aimez le café ?

a) Ça va, et toi ? b) Mais non, jamais le mercredi. c) Non, thaïlandais.

d) Non, un chat. e) Moi, à Rouen. f) Oui, beaucoup !

g) Non, nous sommes dans un café. h) Non, je suis italienne. i) Catherine.

- to provide instructions and information relevant for the training course for students (teachers);
- to discuss the contents of the course, or issues related to its particular topic;
- to deliver the assignments prepared by the teacher and further collectively discuss and assess them;
- to continue online the discussion started earlier during the face-to-face phase;
- to provide methodological assistance – that is, via the forum users can ask for advice and obtain expert opinion very fast;
- to ensure individual and group support for students.

During the trial phase of the e-learning course ‘French as the third foreign language for bachelor’s students’, which was carried out over two semesters, another important advantage of LMS Moodle became apparent. In addition to growing motivation and active learning, the role of self-assessment also increases significantly, since the students have the opportunity to develop independently and assess their own communication competence.

### **2.3 E-learning Moodle course ‘Geography and culture of the French regions’**

The course ‘Geography and culture of the French regions’ comprises 16 hours of teaching, made up of 8 hours of lectures and 8 hours of seminars during one semester, at the end of which the students receive a ‘pass/fail’ mark. This course is taught in Russian, which avoids additional difficulties in individual work due to the low level of language proficiency, as many students begin studying French only at the university (usually about 50% of students, learning in groups). These difficulties are related to some aspects of the theory of regional geography and culture studies, understanding a teacher’s assignments in a foreign language, comprehension of certain social and political terms, etc.

The e-learning course, designed by M.V. Zyryanova, comprises two blocks of topics:

- France: general characteristics (administrative division, political system, economy, social policy, membership in international organizations and role in the world);
- France: the regional aspects (regions, overseas departments and territories).

All topics have the same logical structure, which allows the student to easily navigate the course contents and structure:

- lecture;
- PowerPoint presentation;
- questions for self-assessment;
- an assignment;
- useful links;
- chat (online feedback) or forum (offline feedback).

Each block consists of 4–5 topics and is assessed via a test.

While designing and testing the e-learning course the author has come to the conclusion that the contents can be effectively adapted and presented in the form of a Moodle course that

- provides students with necessary and relevant information that can be found only on the Internet;
- gives the students the opportunity to access the studied material at any convenient time, as well as the opportunity to enhance existing knowledge by participating in discussions on the forums for each block of themes;
- allows students to find some extra information that they can add to the course contents by working on the forums;
- allows assessment of the acquired skills by a specially developed system of tests or project-based learning;
- increases students' motivation and learning activity;
- allows the teacher to evaluate the activity, independence and individual contribution of each student during the work on a team project.

An essential advantage of the LMS Moodle is the flexible and efficient organization of students' independent learning, both as individuals and in groups. For instance, via the creation of a wiki students can complete or edit their own Web pages. At the same time older versions of pages are saved and can be easily restored. A wiki gives the students the opportunity to create documents in groups, thus ensuring collaborative learning.

Within the framework of this course, both open-ended questions and standard tests are effective and include:

- matching;
- multiple-choice;

- true/false;
- short answer;
- essay (the student answers in the form of a test; the teacher assesses the answers).

The author of the course emphasizes that this e-learning course allows application of all the major didactic principles of education: scientific character of education, continuity and systematic learning, accessibility of material and use of visual methods, conscious and active participation of students in the learning process, development of individual learning skills, individual approach in teaching (Zyryanova 2014). For example, the principles of continuity and systematic learning are realized via the presentation of the material in logically interrelated sequences which are studied one after another. The LMS Moodle has a simple layout that allows the teacher to create a multilevel structured presentation of the course contents: themes, theme elements, lessons. A lesson is a series of pages that can be displayed as a linear set of content pages or as a non-linear set that offers paths between the pages and various options in learning the material. The principle of the use of visual elements is implemented via different tools. Word documents, texts, PowerPoint presentations, Flash Video, sounds and music that appeal to the feelings and emotions of students contribute to more efficient assimilation of the material. The principle of conscious and active participation of students in the learning process is implemented through greater involvement of students in self-assessment. Working with e-learning materials, students can participate in updating the content of assignments, as well as carry out the tasks that help to acquire a more profound and broader knowledge of the course materials.

## **2.4 E-learning Moodle course 'French language for students of non-language faculties'**

The purpose of the course 'Foreign language for students of non-language faculties' is to improve communication skills in a foreign language that the learner has already acquired at the previous level of education, as well as to achieve the level of communication competence necessary and sufficient to address social and communicative needs in various areas: everyday life, cultural, professional and scientific domains, as well as for lifelong learning. Learning a foreign language is also thought to further enhance independence in learning, self-education skills, to broaden



students' minds and raise their cultural level (Fenenko and Lebedeva 2014).

The course consists of four blocks: 'Foreign language for general purposes', 'Foreign language for academic purposes', 'Foreign language for specific/professional purposes' and 'Foreign language for business communication'. All the blocks have their contents presented in the same way and include a series of tasks aimed at developing the necessary competences – communicative, cognitive, informational, sociocultural and professional – as well as raising students' general level of culture. The number of hours devoted to each section may vary depending on the specific requirements of the faculty and the initial level of students' knowledge of the target language.

Due to the transition to the new Federal State Educational Standards (so-called FGOS 3 and FGOS 3+), the organization of independent learning has become of the utmost importance as this learning format becomes more and more significant in foreign language teaching. For example, according to the new standard for foreign language teaching at the Faculty of Law at VSU, 56 hours are devoted to independent learning, while the number of hours reached only 20 in the previous standard. Moreover, the growing importance of independent learning is due to the reduction of hours for face-to-face learning: 52 hours in the new standard as compared to 168 hours in the previous one. In order to rationally manage students' independent learning at the Faculty of Law, the teachers of the French Philology Department of VSU are elaborating the principles of a systemic approach to the organization of this type of learning using new ICT and LMS Moodle in particular.

According to the teachers who have developed the e-learning course 'French for Law Students of the Voronezh State University' (N.A. Fenenko and O.V. Lebedeva), the system of tests designed in LMS Moodle has proved to be very effective. As LMS Moodle has an automated test creation feature, the teacher can generate question banks and form quizzes for the formative and summative assessment of skills. Students are offered two possible options when performing quizzes: they can view the correct answer to the proposed question or receive a summary of their test result. The automatic correction of quizzes aimed at developing communication competence via reading and writing, understanding the basic content of the text, and honing grammatical and lexical knowledge seems the most efficient way to do things (Fenenko and Lebedeva 2014).

Furthermore, a range of activities developed by the authors of the e-learning course section 'French for professional purposes' comprises legal

texts, both authentic French texts and official translations into Russian (Feneko and Lebedeva 2014).

For independent learning the students are offered several activities consisting of different types of questions:

### 1. Matching legal terms

While performing the activity, students are supposed to read the collocations from the text that are presented at random in two columns in the French and Russian. Then, comparing their meaning, they match the corresponding numbers and letters, which in the following instance are: 1 - f; 2 - e; 3 - d; 4 - c; 5 - b; 6 - a.

- 1) executive
- 2) execute the laws
- 3) financial resources
- 4) administrative staff
- 5) adopt and enforce regulations
- 6) unilateral acts

- a) unilateral acts
- b) adopt and enforce regulations
- c) administrative staff
- d) financial resources
- e) execute the laws
- f) executive<sup>7</sup>

The computer programme highlights the incorrect equivalents in red and allows the student to perform the activity up to three times.

### 2. Activity: 'true'/'false'/'not given' («vrai»/«faux»/«non-mentionné») – reading for specific information

Within the framework of this activity the students are offered a text (document) fragment that allows them to choose the correct answer concerning the presence/absence of relevant information. Students are allowed to reread the text several times online in order to find the

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<sup>7</sup> 1) pouvoir exécutif

2) exécuter les lois

3) moyens financiers

4) personnel administratif

5) prendre et appliquer les règlements

6) les actes unilatéraux

corresponding sentence in the text. Take the following passage as an example:

1) The Administration includes all authorities who act under the impulse of the executive power to execute laws, adopt and enforce regulations, in order to define and achieve the common good. 2) These authorities, which have become increasingly important in developed countries, include specialist agencies that differ from private organizations. 3) To carry out its missions in the interest of the common good, the Administration can use various bodies (various administrative authorities, which themselves can sometimes be little developed), levels of action (centralized, devolved, decentralized), methods of action (unilateral action, contracts, police, public services of various kinds).<sup>8</sup>

Having read the text the students determine whether the statements are 'true', 'false' or 'not given' in the text.<sup>9</sup>

### 3. Activities with embedded answers

These are used to develop and improve the use of basic grammatical forms and structures, as well as to improve spelling skills. Students are supposed to type in the words in the correct form. For instance, they need to make adjectives and nouns agree in gender and number, and put the verb in the correct form (person, number, tense). In this case several types of question are presented:

- multiple answer question;
- question with short answer;
- open cloze text;
- multiple-choice question.

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<sup>8</sup> 1) L'Administration comprend l'ensemble des autorités qui agissent sous l'impulsion du Pouvoir exécutif pour exécuter les lois, prendre et appliquer les règlements, en vue de définir et de réaliser l'intérêt général. 2) Cette fonction, devenue de plus en plus importante dans les pays développés comprend des institutions spécialisées, différentes des institutions privées. 3) Pour effectuer ses missions d'intérêt général, l'Administration dispose d'ensemble, parfois peu développé, d'organes (les diverses autorités administratives), de niveaux d'action (centralisés, déconcentrés, décentralisés), de modalités d'intervention (actes unilatéraux, contrats, police, services publics de diverse nature).

<sup>9</sup> «vrai» / «faux» / «non-mentionné»

Activities can also comprise other types of questions that are not embedded in the standard package offered by Moodle. One has the option to randomize questions and answers, which limits the possibilities of cheating and ensures the independent performance of quizzes. Using a combination of different parameters, the teacher can create a variety of training quizzes. Performing quizzes requires from students a level of creativity as well as a good knowledge of the grammar and vocabulary that has been studied. The assignments engage the students in active comprehension and memorization of educational material (Polat 1998).

The experience of organizing independent learning for the French classes taken by law students at VSU has shown that the use of LMS Moodle:

- ensures an individual approach in teaching and learning;
- provides a large volume of data for error analysis and skills assessment, which contributes to more efficient independent learning;
- allows performing and correcting assignments during a convenient time or online;
- creates, in electronic form, a history of results of skills development for each student (Polat 1998).

### **3. The use of ICT during students' teaching practice**

At the Faculty of Romance and Germanic Philology of VSU different kinds of ICT are used not only during face-to-face and independent learning, but also within the framework of teaching practice and work placement. The goal is 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.

Teaching practice is preceded by the acquisition of the necessary theoretical knowledge through a series of fundamental and specialist disciplines. These include: the target language, history and culture of the target language countries, theory of language teaching, linguo-didactic aspect of foreign language learning, foreign language for academic and specific purposes, and others. Within the framework of disciplines such as linguo-didactics and methodology of foreign language teaching the students become acquainted with the current state of the education process in education institutions and the ways in which the professional work of the teacher is organized. They learn a variety of foreign language teaching techniques based on the principles of the communicative and competence-

based approaches (Savignon 1997). Moreover, in studying these theoretical disciplines the future teachers become accustomed to the idea that the use of ICT is an important factor in enhancing learners' motivation in foreign language learning – it makes lessons more effective, productive and interesting, and helps to develop all the elements of communication competence through learning and extracurricular activities within the framework of foreign language studies. Furthermore, the use of ICT enhances students' cognitive activity while taking into account their ages and individual characteristics. Thus, already at the acquisition stage of theoretical knowledge essential for teaching practice, students are aware of the need to use up-to-date ICT recommended by the teacher, as well as those used in the classroom during the foreign language classes at university.

According to the Federal State Educational Standard for teacher training, by the time students proceed to their teaching practice at school, they should have developed different types of ICT competences – as applied to general use, use in education, and use in language teaching. Thus, they should possess the ICT usage skills that are necessary and sufficient for planning, carrying out and assessing teaching and learning activities for children of early and preschool age. Once they have acquired the necessary competences in these domains during teaching practice, students possess a wide range of ICT that can be used in different aspects of teaching and learning. These may include the creation of training programmes, multimedia dictionaries and e-learning courses, presentations, projects, distance-learning techniques, professional Internet contests, etc. These resources can be used at different stages of learning and teaching and help to manage face-to-face classes and the independent learning process. For instance, during teaching practice, students widely make use of Microsoft PowerPoint – the software for creating computer presentations – which they use both in the classroom and during extracurricular activities devoted to the French language and culture. In addition, when creating their lessons the students use different online resources, including videos, animation and music. Thanks to their own experience of technology-enhanced learning in the Faculty of Romance and Germanic Philology, the students of the French department try to diversify their classroom activities using training programmes, including that of TV5Monde, which is one of the most popular websites.

It is worth noting that, in Voronezh, schools where the students of the French department of VSU do their work placements have all the necessary equipment for the use of new ICT. With the help of their placement supervisor, the students choose the kinds of ICT that are most

suitable for the learners' age characteristics, their phase of learning, and the type of material studied.

As a result of effective use of ICT during the period 2013–15, the trainees noted and recorded in their teaching practice reports the growing motivation of school students and improvement in their learning results, as well as the enhancement of their communication and information-management competences.

#### **4. LMS Moodle as a means of assessing levels of plagiarism/originality of graduation qualification projects**

Use of LMS Moodle is not limited to the development of e-learning courses for teacher training. Currently, this electronic system also helps monitor the completion of graduation qualification projects of bachelor's degree students and assess levels of plagiarism/originality. The students upload onto the Moodle platform a PDF file with the description of their graduation qualification projects carried out during their last year of studies. Each student uploads the files independently ten days before the day they make their public defence of their papers. Having uploaded the file the student does not have the right to modify the text. A teacher in charge has access, via their Moodle account, to the graduation qualification projects in a certain field of studies, and they can download the files from Moodle and perform a check to calculate the percentage of plagiarism/originality in the text using one of a range of specially developed software tools. This result is taken into account when the student receives their final grade for their qualification project. If the percentage of originality in the text does not reach a certain threshold (51%), the student is not allowed to defend their project, and therefore does not fulfil requirements to obtain their degree.

#### **5. Conclusion**

Based on the experience of using LMS Moodle in teaching the French language at VSU, we observe that the virtual learning environment creates favourable conditions for interactive learning. It provides an opportunity to increase the effectiveness of the education process, by contributing to the development of students' systematic thinking, motivation and autonomy.

However, while designing and implementing the e-learning courses the teachers concluded that not all activities can be adapted to the standard LMS Moodle tools. This applies to creative tasks, such as writing an essay, and composing a business letter or its response according to defined

parameters. The limits of the system are especially evident in relation to the so-called principle of 'singleness', which is when the system recognizes only one answer as correct and any deviations are processed as errors. This is problematic when, according to the principle of linguistic variation, in some cases two or more answers can be considered as correct. The presence of possible multiple answers complicates the automatic correction of activities.

The development of e-learning courses, the selection of information and the design of virtual classes are very laborious tasks that require a lot of effort from both the teachers involved in the development process and from students mastering the new technology. The use of new ICT creates greater demands on the quality of work and level of competence of university teachers, who need to constantly improve their computer skills and search for the effective use of ICT in the education process.

The teachers can develop their professional competence in using ICT in a variety of ways. For instance, the VSU Faculty of In-Service Training has developed a special course based on distance learning and LMS Moodle. It comprises 36 hours of training sessions and is designed for university teachers who are actively participating in creating e-learning courses in various disciplines. During lectures and practical sessions the trainees acquire basic skills in using LMS Moodle, including its use to design e-learning courses.

An additional effective way of enhancing teachers' professional competence in ICT use is their involvement in various international projects that enable the exchange of knowledge and expertise. In particular, as part of the Tempus project 544161 'Developing the Teaching of European Languages: Modernising Language Teaching through the Development of Blended Masters Programmes' (DeTEL), three teachers from the VSU French Philology Department were trained at the Université de Caen and learned about the French ICT experience. These VSU teachers then took an active part in the development and implementation of VSU's master's programme 'Foreign language teaching using online technologies', as well as in the development of its key modules 'French language improvement' and 'Age appropriate pedagogy'. Future means of disseminating good practice will certainly contribute to further developing the ICT competences of the master's degree students.

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# AFTERWORD: CHALLENGES, SUCCESSES AND PERSPECTIVES

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The idea of comparing the training offered to (future) foreign language teachers in different countries (in this instance, Germany, France, Ukraine, Russia and Uzbekistan) is interesting in various respects, and certainly should be exploited more often. It is also an experience that should be revisited, as obviously the teaching of foreign languages has undergone recent changes in many countries, and we shall need to look at the further outcomes arising from these developments, as well as broaden the number of countries explored.

Several issues have been examined through the contributions in this volume, and I should like to focus here on how the national and institutional expectations of each country are reflected in the contents and organization of their training programmes.

## **Centralization**

This aspect can, of course, be looked at from the point of view of the centralization (or not) of the education system of each country. In this regard, Uzbekistan is a good illustration of the importance of the state in the changes that have been made in the training programmes of foreign language teachers. As we learn in Margarita Galieva and Nozliya Normurodova's chapter, after independence gained in 1991, Uzbekistan's education policy was directed by the Law on Education (1992, 1997) and the National Programme for Personnel Training (1998), which were used as guidelines for the changes to come. In 2006 the beginning of the reform of teacher training was defined by the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Special Education of Uzbekistan, and now the admission procedure is centralized and controlled by quotas established by the Cabinet of Ministers.

The perspective is clearly different in a federal state such as Germany, where school programmes and teacher training are determined by the Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs of each *Land*. According to Matthias Hutz, the existence of a national mechanism, the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs, does not prevent differences between each of the sixteen independent education systems in the sixteen *Länder*.

In Ukraine, as shown by both contributions on the subject (by Iryna Sieriakova and Olga Valigura and by Lesia Dobrovolska and Tetyana Myronenko), pedagogical institutions are part of a centralized higher education system, under the control of the Ministry of Education and Science. But as a result of the new Law of Higher Education, several changes have been introduced since 2014, and much of the task of the Ministry of Education and Science in relation to higher education establishments is to be transferred to the National Knowledge Quality Agency. This decentralization process gives universities the rights to choose their own programmes, to deliver both private and state diplomas, and also to acknowledge foreign university diplomas and degrees.

The case of France presents a high degree of centralization for the foreign languages training system and recruiting of teachers, as explained by Carmen Avram. Since 2011 various changes have been introduced, such as the Common Core of Knowledge and Skills (including 'Proficiency in a modern foreign language') adopted in French schools and, since 2013, the new Standard for Professional Skills, which applies to all teaching professions. The new type of teaching-oriented master's degree (MEEF), launched in 2013 and developed in specialist institutions (ESPE), includes both practical and theoretical modules, and prepares for the CAPES, a centralized competitive certification examination (required in order to apply for teaching positions in secondary schools). The *Agrégation* is another centralized recruitment exam for higher education.

### **Theoretical versus practical**

Besides the MEEF master's degree and the centralized exams to become a foreign languages teacher in France, there exists another kind of master's degree, one steered towards research (*Master Recherche*), designed for students aiming at a doctoral degree, although this is also the most common type of degree chosen by students wanting to become teachers of French as a foreign language (FLE, as distinct from French as a mother tongue, or foreign languages). This is why the centralized picture of the MEEF and national recruitment exams for secondary school foreign

language teachers is quite different from the training and recruiting of FLE teachers. In fact, the FLE-oriented master's degrees can vary greatly in terms of their content and objectives, as Anne Prunet shows in her contribution. And the recruitment criteria for FLE teachers cover a full range of factors, depending on work contexts (outside France, institutions such as Alliance Française, or inside France, those such as CASNAV, university centres, private companies and non-profit associations for helping migrants, etc.).

It would be interesting to compare the training in FLE in France to corresponding training situations concerning national languages in other countries: for example, English as a foreign language in English-speaking countries, German as a foreign language in Germany, etc. However, the dichotomy found in France between teaching-oriented and research-oriented training programmes, is also found in Uzbekistan, Ukraine and Russia, if one compares pedagogical institutions and traditional universities. In these universities, a clear distinction between disciplinary (linguistic) and practice-based (pedagogical) instruction is drawn, with a bias towards theoretical knowledge. In contrast, the new employment-market-directed trend is now prioritizing professional skills so that students are able to adapt to the current job environment in which working conditions are constantly changing (see Natalia Fenenko and Elena Chaika's chapter in relation to Russia). According to Hutz, the same dichotomy seems to apply in Germany, where two parallel teacher training systems coexist – one in universities (sometimes criticized for lack of real classroom experience) and the other in teacher training colleges (sometimes criticized for not offering enough recent theoretical approaches).

### **Lifelong training (in-service teacher training) and evaluation**

The expectations of the state are also reflected in lifelong training and continuous evaluation of in-service teachers, as is clearly illustrated by Uzbekistan, where this issue became crucial after the President of the Republic signed the Decree 'On measures for further improvement of the system of teaching foreign languages' in 2012 (see Gulnara Makhkamova and Aygul Tadjibaeva's chapter). In their companion chapter, Galieva and Normurodova explain that the compulsory InSETT (In-Service Teacher Training) programmes are to be followed by teachers of all education sectors every three years, so as to be certificated to teach for another three years. Information on the number of teachers due to go through this programme is submitted annually by every university and school to the

Ministry of Higher and Secondary Special Education or directly to teacher training institutions, who develop a budget for the programme accordingly, in consultation with the Ministries of Education and Finance.

In Ukraine (see Sieriakova and Valigura's contribution), teachers are required to take further training courses every five years. During the first five years of teaching, a mentoring system guides new teachers in their classroom practice, which compensates for the lack of didactic and methodological training in pre-service training.

### **The CEFR and Bologna Process**

Two other factors that can be isolated are the increasing importance of the CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) and the new LMD (Licence–Master–Doctorat) university degree structure, introduced by the Bologna Process. In fact, this trend seems vital to the countries that want to fully integrate into Europe and to enter the European labour market.

For example, in Uzbekistan, the reform of higher education, initiated by the already mentioned Presidential Decree 'On measures for further improvement of the system of teaching foreign languages', was based on the use of the CEFR (see Galieva and Normurodova's chapter). And in Ukraine (see both contributions on Ukraine), the series of legislation supporting the development of pedagogical education passed in 2014 takes as its reference points the CEFR and collaboration with the Council of Europe, which illustrates their recent aspirations for integration into a globalized world. This trend is in line with Ukraine's national priorities in higher education, centred on implementing the Bologna principles in foreign language teaching and learning, Ukraine having joined the Bologna Declaration in 2005. In France, 'Proficiency in a modern foreign language', which is one of the key principles of the Common Core of Knowledge and Skills, also applies the CEFR, as do the Ministry-approved foreign language lessons in secondary schools. So, the expressed will of each country to be a part of the Bologna Process and its pedagogical objectives or use the CEFR scale of language proficiency plays an important role in developing international mobility for both learners and teachers, inside Europe at least.

In Germany, the question is rather more complex as the mobility of teachers within the country is impeded by the differences in education systems and teacher training programmes that exist across the federal states, as Matthias Hutz explains. Nonetheless, all the federal states have introduced the CEFR and use it as a general guideline for their language

proficiency standards and foreign language teaching and learning programmes, even though many teachers remain sceptical about its usefulness in the classroom.

## **The importance of ICT**

The last point I would like to highlight is the weight of the expectations of state institutions in developing information and communications technology for the training of language teachers. This will is often clearly expressed and is particularly emphasized in the Russian, Ukrainian and Uzbek contributions in this volume. It seems motivated by the necessity to meet European professional standards, increase students' opportunities for mobility, and a desire to innovate higher education in general.

Natalia Fenenko and Tatiana Koziura observe the development of ICT since 2013, through the use of the Web-based virtual learning environment Moodle for the teaching of French in Voronezh State University in Russia. As do other contributors, they put forward trainees' increased motivation and ICT skills as the positive results. They also highlight the opportunities for a personalized learning process, the flexibility offered by blended learning and the system's usefulness for international collaboration. However, the development of e-learning courses is a time-consuming process and a pedagogical and technical challenge for teachers. Problems of underfunding and a difficult financial context may also be hindrances.

What is interesting is that introducing/developing ICT use in learning environments goes hand in hand here with pedagogical reflection. Sieriakova and Valigura (Ukraine) view it as a way of challenging 'stereotypical thinking about foreign language teaching among teachers'. And when Galieva and Normurodova (Uzbekistan) discuss the reforms undertaken by their government and mention 'modernization of educational programmes and curriculums', they talk about 'introducing teaching methods based on the communicative approach', alongside 'equipping classrooms with ICT technologies and establishing international cooperation with different educational establishments all over the world'.

Pedagogical choices have been made: the communicative approach (rather than the task-oriented approach, also promoted by the CEFR) is regularly mentioned, as is individualization of the learning process (rather than collaborative pedagogy) and flexibility of programmes, including the introduction of blended learning. These choices may vary with time, with ICT becoming common practice, the important point being not to disconnect technological thinking from the pedagogical one, and to be

aware of possible discrepancies between official guidelines and the actual practices in the classroom.

The DeTEL (Developing the Teaching of European Languages: Modernising Language Teaching through the Development of Blended Masters Programmes) Tempus project seems to have played its part in developing and implementing education technologies in the Eastern European countries and, as is indicated by Fenenko and Koziura, certainly provides a useful way of exchanging knowledge and expertise.

## **Conclusion**

Through identifying these different strands, we see how the expectations and organization of each country influence not only the contents and organization of training programmes for potential language teachers, but also their recruitment, their assessment and their in-service training. This volume reveals how these factors can affect training programmes in a positive way but can sometimes be considered as impediments to change – such as the uncompromising power of recruitment exams in France's centralized education system, or the difficulties in harmonizing training programmes and recruitment procedures in federal Germany.

The DeTEL project is an interesting example of collaboration between countries, which both helps broaden each partner's horizons and supports and guides individual states in implementing their reforms. So, let us conclude with a wish that these effective changes, promoted by each country and aimed at improvement, remain in the future focused and nourished by the reflection of professionals and specialists in the domain, and by the fruitful collaboration between countries.

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