



Challenges and opportunities in implementing a multilingual teacher education curriculum: A focus on the educators' experiences

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Our story in a nutshell

- Teacher educators and students share positive attitudes towards plurilingual education
- High motivation to implement a new cross-linguistic and multilingual curriculum

After the implementation:

- Students' attitudes still positive, but not higher than before
- Students appreciate plurilingual education, but are critical of the new curriculum
- Lecturers remain convinced of the new curriculum, but struggle with and debate various aspects

This study: A close look at how the lecturers construct their view of their own professional competences in discourse, and at an instrument to support their pluri-/multilingual teaching.

Research questions

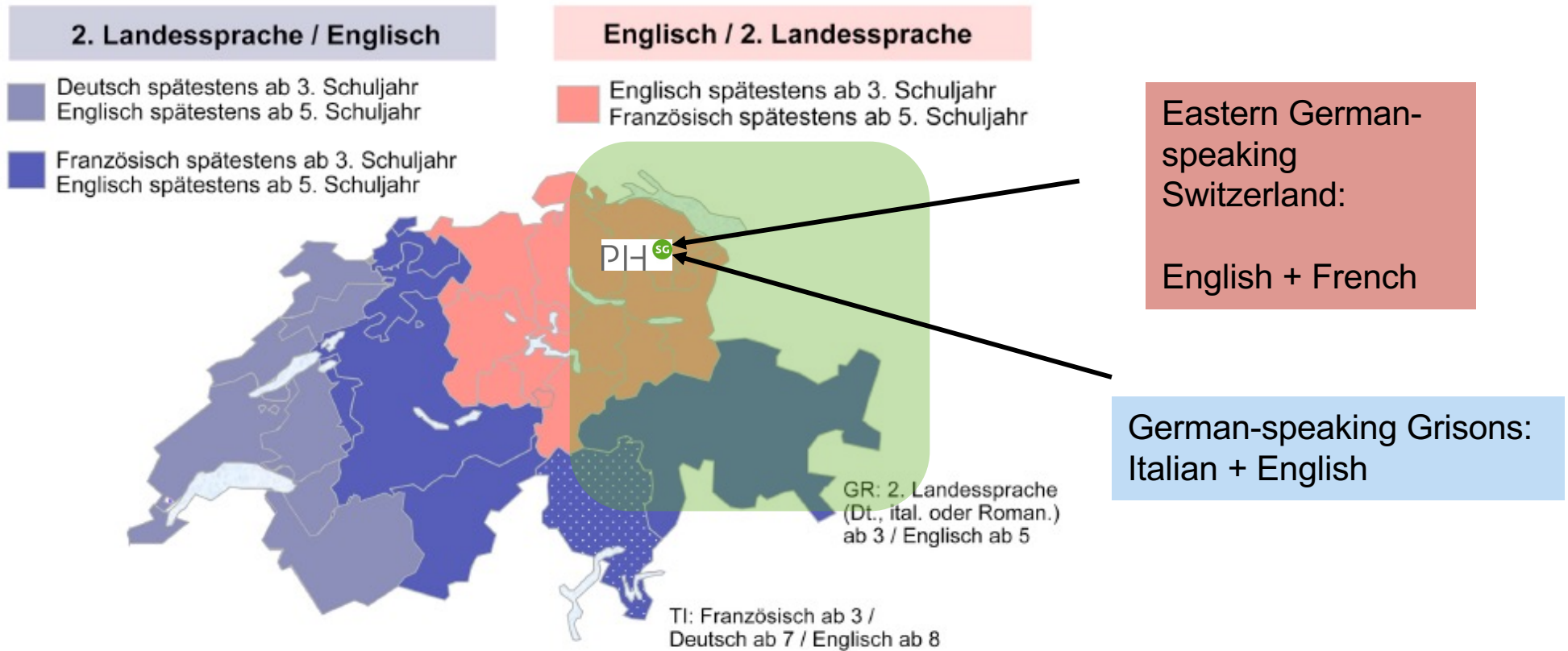
- What challenges and opportunities are involved with implementing a multilingual teacher education curriculum?
- What lessons can be drawn for a definition of plurilingual teacher and teacher educator competences?
- How can teacher educators be empowered for teaching crosslinguistic and multilingual courses?



Plurilingual curricula in (teacher) education: theoretical background

- Importance of teacher education and support for teachers (Egli Cuenat 2011; Portolés & Marti 2020; Dockrell et al. 2021)
- Teacher competences and resources:
 - **plurilingual** competences (Candelier & Schröder-Sura 2020)
 - **theory** (e.g. linguistics, pedagogy) and teaching **practice** (Todisco 2011; Königs 2019)
 - awareness of teachers' own **language biography** (Hu 2017; Jessner & Allgäuer-Hackl 2020)
 - sociocultural / sociolinguistic **context** (Liddicoat et al. 2014)
 - **beliefs** regarding multi-/plurilingualism and plurilingual methodology (Haukas 2016; Lundberg 2018, Manno 2022)
 - **cooperation** across subjects / languages (Haukas 2016; Hinger et al. 2019)
 - teachers' profession-related **language competences** (Kuster et al. 2014); including **partial competences** in a range of languages (Meissner 2019)
 - **translanguaging** (García & Wei 2014); **crosslinguistic translanguaging theory** (Cummins 2021)
 - **context-sensitive** teaching (Palviainen & Mård-Miettinen 2015)

Sociolinguistic / language policy context: Foreign languages in Swiss obligatory schooling



Hutterli, Sandra / Stotz, Daniel (2010) OECD Länderbericht der Schweiz: Die Bedeutung der Sprache. Bildungspolitische Konsequenzen. <http://verein.ecml.at/Portals/2/presentationen/OECD-CERILAenderbericht-Schweiz.pdf>.

The St.Gallen curriculum: Two main aims

Intensify exposure of students to, and foster engagement with linguistic and cultural elements **beyond the target language(s)**, for their development of plurilingual competences

Facilitate students' **choice of more than one foreign language**, especially the second and/or third national language (French and/or Italian)

Theoretical concept and model for implementation of the new curriculum

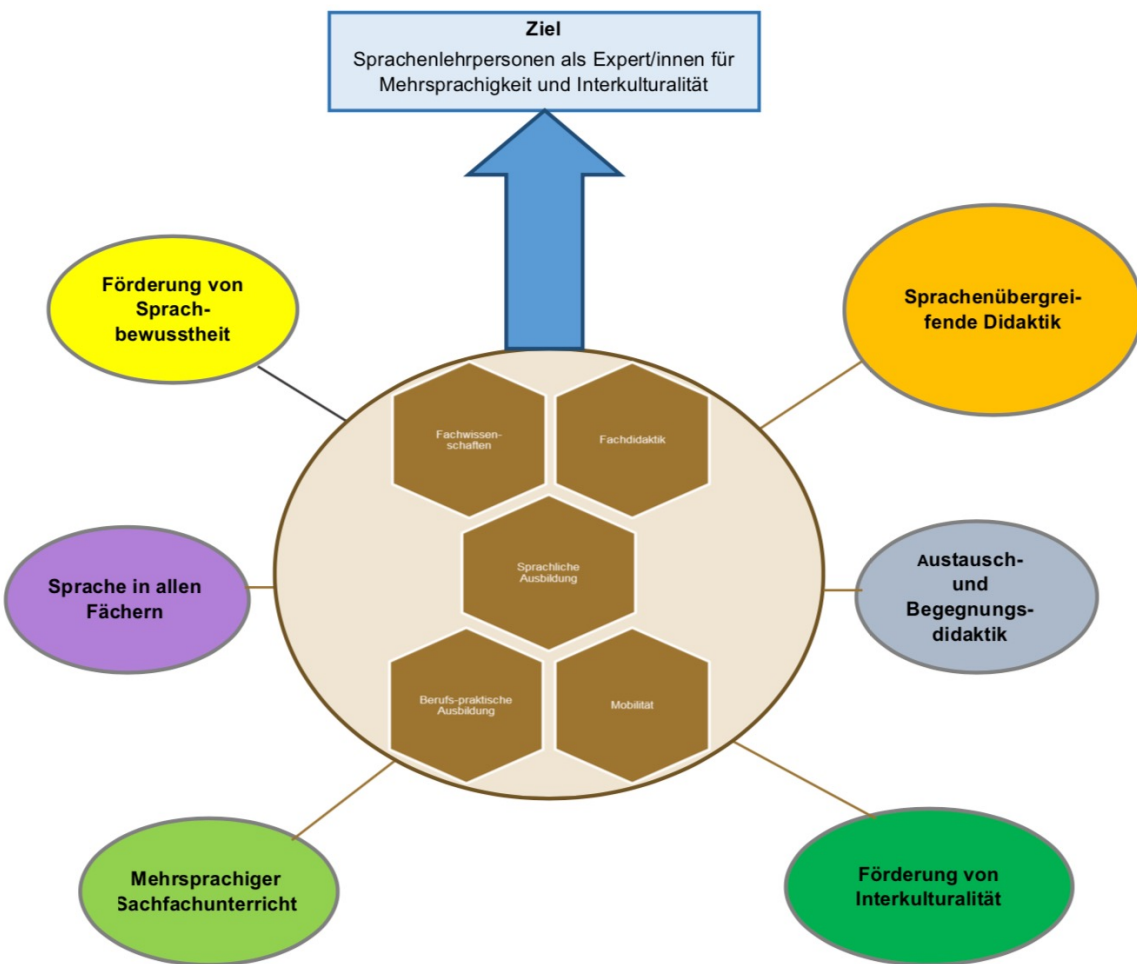


Abbildung 1: didaktische Gestaltungsprinzipien und Ausbildungsbereiche

Entwicklung sprachenübergreifender curricularer Elemente für die Ausbildung von Sprachenlehrpersonen Sek I (Bleichenbacher et al. 2019)

Based on: Candelier et al. 2007/2012; Sauer & Saudan 2008
 English version from: Bolitho, R. and Rossner, R. 2020. *Language Education in a Changing World: Challenges and Opportunities*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

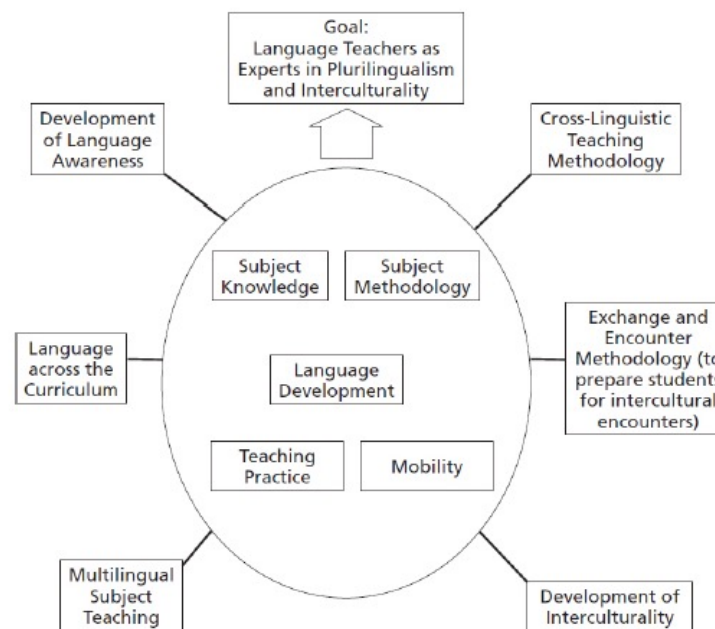


Figure 4.1 Design principles and syllabus areas (Bleichenbacher et al., 2019: 9)

Overview of the curriculum

Crosslinguistic

Comparative / plurilingual literature / culture and linguistics

4 courses, 8 ECTS

Plurilingual methodology

4 courses, 7 ECTS

Plurilingual language competence: Transversal principle in all courses

Language-specific

English	French	Italian
English Studies (culture, literature, linguistics) 4 courses, 9 ECTS	French Studies (culture, literature, linguistics) 4 courses, 9 ECTS	Italian Studies (culture, literature, linguistics) 4 courses, 9 ECTS
Methodology: English as a foreign language 2 courses, 4 ECTS	Methodology: French as a foreign language 2 courses, 4 ECTS	Methodology: Italian as a foreign language 2 courses, 4 ECTS
English language competence 1 course, 2 ECTS	French language competence 1 course, 2 ECTS	Italian language competence 1 course, 2 ECTS
Language stay	Language stay	Language stay
Language Diploma	Language Diploma	Language Diploma
Teaching practice	Teaching practice	Teaching practice

Planned scenarios and their implementation

Planned scenarios

- Team-teaching by lecturers with different specialisations
- Teaching by single (plurilingual) lecturers, sometimes with language assistants
- Only few courses in the language of schooling

Bleichenbacher et al. (2019)

Actual implementation

- Lecturers often teach on their own, mainly in their main target language, but partly also in a second and third target language
- English and French are predominantly used; no consensus about use of German
- Italian and other languages used to a lesser extent
- Students are required to mainly interact in the target language(s) they specialize in, but sometimes also in other ones

Bleichenbacher et al. (2021)

Methodology

- Eight semi-structured online interviews in German with lecturers teaching in the cross-linguistic modules
- Length : 45 – 60 minutes
- Time frame: June – October 2021
- Transcription and first analysis of parts of the interviews

Selected questions

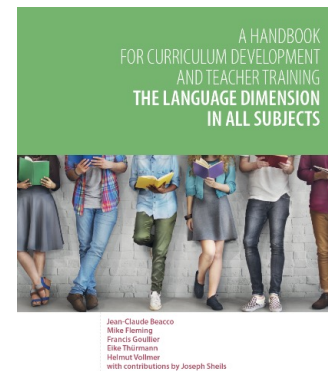
- How do you see yourself as a plurilingual lecturer?
- How do you define *Mehrsprachigkeitsdidaktik*?
- What principles of language teaching are important for you?
- What went especially well?
- What would you tell a new colleague?
- What stories of success and challenges would you share with them?
- What changes to the curriculum would you welcome?

Teacher competences for pluralistic approaches and for languages in education (taxonomies from ECML projects)



www.ecml.at/pluralisticteachercompetences

www.ecml.at/teachercompetences



Profil de compétences langagières spécifiques des personnes enseignantes en langues étrangères au degré primaire

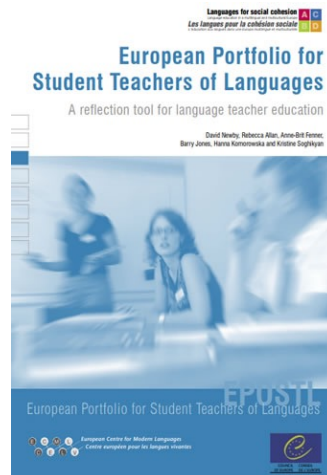
Direction du projet PH St. Gallen, Institut Fachdidaktik Sprachen
Witold Kuster (chef de projet), Mirjam Egli Cuenat,
Peter Kwe, Thomas Roderer

En collaboration avec HEP Vaud
Daniela Zappatore
Université de Lausanne, Centre de langues
Élisette Forster Vosicki
SUPSI – DFA Locarno
Gé Stokli, Daniela Kappler

Accompagnement scientifique IFM, Universität und PH Freiburg
Peter Lenz

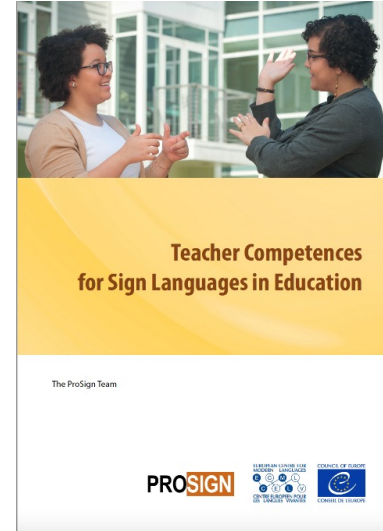
Soutien financier et personnel Conférence Suisse des rectrices et recteurs des hautes écoles
pédagogiques (CSH-EP)
Office fédéral de la culture (OFC)

Mai 2014



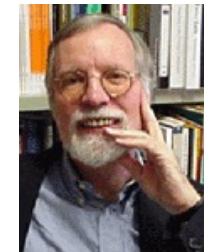
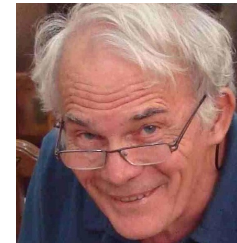
Towards a Common European Framework of Reference for Language Teachers Vers un Cadre européen commun de référence pour les enseignants de langues

Erste Schritte zu einem gemeinsamen europäischen Referenzrahmen für Sprachlehrpersonen EFSZ 2016-2019



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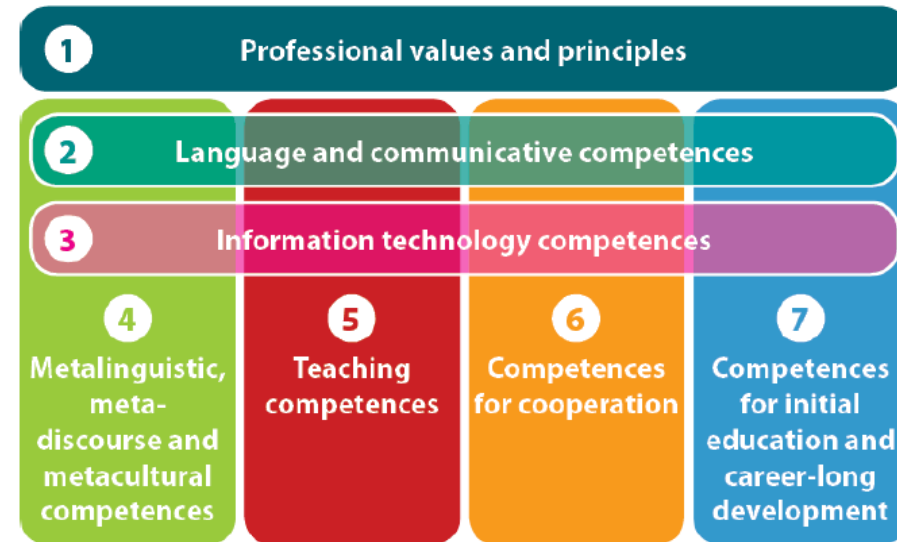
Lecturers' competences

Main focus on:

- Dimension 2: Language and communicative competences
- Dimension 5: Teaching competences
- Dimension 6: Cooperation

Little to no focus on:

- Dimension 1
- Dimension 3
- Dimension 4
- Dimension 7



Yes, I have to say quite honestly, sometimes a bit like a **split personality**. So I also had the feeling that it even influenced how they perceived me as a competent teacher, although I actually still spoke competently about the subject despite perhaps a certain linguistic deficiency. (1)

Sometimes I get a bit confused, because I get a **language salad** myself. It has happened to me that I change the language in the middle of a sentence and I have to discipline myself very much to stay in one target language and only then, if necessary, when the Power Point presentation changes the language, to change the language again accordingly, or to use the counter-language or the additional language. I feel very challenged, very tired too, because I find this language bath in different languages **quite tiring, exciting, tiring**. (6)

From my experience, I would emphasise very strongly that this **modelling («Vorleben»)** of **plurilingualism** is central. This leaving of the comfort zone, that one does not look at it too seriously, but that it really is an **embodiment of this ideal**, that one should somehow approach it a bit and that this is not easy. (3)

What is my self-image and what is important for me to feel confident and competent in front of a class in a multilingual module. I think that's a lot of work on yourself. Not only in terms of language competence, that you make yourself fit again. This is not even absolutely necessary. That's something you're free to do. But rather in your **self-image as a lecturer**. That can also be difficult, because it requires a certain letting go. You **have to show yourself as a learner** and not as a complete expert. That can be **a stumbling block**. (2)

And then the second tip is that you certainly think in advance about which/ how you want to teach, so how do I teach that specifically? (9)

It's all project-based learning. (...) And I think that's the future. (...) There is too much content. (...) What is important, the brain/ connections between/ And I think multilingualism is also a first step in that direction. (4)

And in addition I would say is that it takes into account the students' languages of origin and includes them in these multilingual modules. But at the same time, it also tries to show transfer achievements that are feasible and justifiable at the target levels, middle school, lower secondary school. (6)

6

Competences for cooperation

Work in mixed-language teams. That's a tip. Learn with and from each other. Don't be surprised that it is **brutally intensive in terms of resources**. Concerning students, be prepared for **cooperation and resistance**. Be aware that you are working on an innovative model that has a lot of potential and opportunities. And ask questions. Talk to your experienced colleagues. Learn, get involved with new things, **just as we expect students to do**. (2)

I believe that there are people who have involved in many multilingual modules who perceive something else than someone who is mainly on the conceptual level and simply reflects and propagates that. But to put it a bit crossly, **being on the front line is something else than just developing it on paper**. We put a lot of effort into it, but when 20 students with three foreign languages are sitting in front of you, it's something else again. (7)

Navigation map (*Orientierungslandkarte*) as a tool – some features



- experience-based and open
- providing content, teaching materials, interaction models, language choice, methods, scaffolds to support plurilingualism
- support structuring the modules
- systematically integrate English, French, Italian
- consider the individual flexibility of the lecturers
- basis for communication and cooperation of lecturers

Morphological box (Schawel & Billing 2012) – work in progress

attributes	parameter values				
Dimension of teacher competences	D1	D2	D3	D4	...
Scenario	Synchronous team teaching	Asynchronous team teaching	Blended team teaching	Self-organized learning	...
Content	methodology	linguistics	literature	Language competences	...
Materials	multilingual	in all target foreign languages	in language of schooling	in English and French	...
assignments	Essay in target language(s)	Plurilingual presentation	Oral / written exam	Microteaching	...
Language of interaction	Target language(s) of student	Target language(s) of lecturer	Plurilingual	Language of topic/content	...
scaffolding					...
language competences (GER)	A1-A2	B1-B2	C1-C2		...

Example of use

Competence area: D5; D1
 Students' language level: French B1;
 Italian A2
 Content: Mehrsprachigkeitsdidaktik

attribute s	parameter values			
A	♠	♣	♥	♦
B	♔	♚	♖	♘
C	●	■	▲	★

Phase	Material	Social interaction	Results	Scaffolding
1	Text extracts multilingual	Group work	Presentation in the target languages	
2	French/English	Plenary session	Key words in the target language or in several languages	----
3	Examples of teaching materials	Group work	Integrating multilingual elements, exchange in the target language	

Discussion and conclusions

- The implementation of an intensively multilingual curriculum involves substantial opportunities, but also challenges, for lecturers, which interact with the students' learning trajectories
- By mapping lecturers' statements onto the taxonomy for teacher competence, the areas of plurilingual language competences and teaching competences point to language sensitivity as a key area of concern and debate
- We expect the use of the navigation map to positively influence both lecturers' and students' experiences and competence developments
- Which elements of this cross-linguistic curriculum would function in your context?



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