

SIGMA Scientific Committee on Languages

LANGUAGE STUDIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN SPAIN

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1. INTRODUCTION

The whole education system is in the process of being changed. This report will centre on the present situation while considering the new developments that can be expected; some of the proposals outlined in section 8 will probably be considered during the progressive introduction of the new system.

1.1. The national linguistic situation

1.1.1. National languages

Spanish is the national and official language. Other languages are recognised as the co-official, national languages of their own Autonomous Communities (ACs): Catalan, Valencian and Balearic (both are varieties of Catalan), Basque, and Galician -a variety of Portuguese. There exist other minor languages spoken by few people in Northern Aragón (Aragonese) and Asturias (Bable or Asturian). They enjoy a certain degree of protection in their corresponding ACs.

The Catalan language of Catalonia is in a well advanced process of normalization and enjoys a very high degree of official protection, being very widely used in administration, teaching etc. Many books and some journals and newspapers are published in Catalan which, together with its varieties, has about 6 million speakers; there are also many radio and TV- programmes in Catalan. Galician enjoys widespread use, being known by the majority of the Galician population although it is less used for administrative and other official purposes. There is a debate going on whether the standard language to be spread by the schools, should be closer to standard Portuguese (e.g. in spelling) than it has traditionally been; the standard now taught uses the traditional spelling, vocabulary etc which partially rely on those of Castilian Spanish. As for Basque, being the language of only about 25 % of the Basque population, great efforts are being made in order to: (a) develop and spread the standard form, *Euskara batua* (Unified Basque) as an alternative to the local dialects, and (b) to enhance its official use; these efforts seem to be successful. Basque radio and TV-programmes exist and a relatively large number of books is published, but the presence of the language in the media is still rather poor. Valencian is in a situation similar to that of Galician, but in its AC the situation is clearly one of Spanish-Valencian bilingualism with diglossic features. Balearic is the dominant language in its community although its presence in the media, the schools and universities etc is somewhat lesser than that of Catalan in Catalonia. As for the minor languages, their use is restricted to small communities although there have been some efforts to develop standardised forms and to enhance their use in primary schools at least.

1.1.2. Language policy

Spanish is taught at all levels in Spain and has all the privileges corresponding to a national and official language. Catalan is used at all levels of education, nowadays also as

the first language of instruction, Spanish being taught as a second language although it is the first language of as much as 40 % of the population of Catalonia. Some Catalan Universities use Catalan for most of the teaching in all careers, while in others Spanish is preferred. The Valencian and Balearic varieties of Catalan -officially considered as relatively separate languages- are taught at schools, high- schools and Universities together with Spanish. Galician is also taught at schools and partially at other levels, including the Universities; it is of official use for the autonomic administration although in a diglossic situation with respect to Spanish. Basque is taught at schools, and in a certain type of elementary school (*ikastola*) it is the first language of instruction.

No provisions are made for the teaching of these languages at elementary or secondary school level outside their own ACs, except at some of the Official Language Schools (EOI). Very few universities teach Catalan, Basque or Galician, and in those which do there exist no official degrees on the corresponding philologies, although universities are free to set them up. The Cervantes Institute can organise courses on the co-official languages abroad if enough demand exists.

The co-official languages enjoy no protection outside their AC, the basis of protection being the territory.

1.2. The system of higher education

The access to Higher Education usually runs from *Bachillerato* or the professional schools through a special entrance examination, administered in a centralised way at the *Distritos Universitarios* (usually coincident with the ACs). The marks obtained at the exam, together with those of the *Bachillerato* determine whether the student will be accepted at the University but also whether s/he will be able to enter on the career s/he wishes or will have to begin other studies. This system of access is not without considerable problems and its continuity or change is debated. Mature students (older than 25) can gain access through a special examination.

There exist 46 state universities (*Anuario 1992*), administratively and financially dependent on the central Ministry of Education or on the education authorities of the ACs (as in Asturias, Catalonia, Valencia, Basque Country, Galicia, Madrid, Andalusia, Canarias) but enjoying a large degree of autonomy; there also exist 7 private universities, including those owned by the church (Deusto in Bilbao, Navarra, Pontifical U. of Comillas (Madrid) and Salamanca). Most private Universities are very new, having begun their activities only one or two years ago. A few more are expected to be created in the near future. Those owned by the church (Deusto, Comillas, Navarra) have been in existence for a considerable number of years. One state-owned university, the U.N.E.D., offers full university studies in a wide range of subjects on a non- presential basis. Another state university (Menéndez Pelayo) is restricted to offering extra-curricular courses especially, but not only, during the summer. Apart from these last two, the geographical distribution of the universities in the ACs is as follows (in brackets the number of private universities): Andalucía 8; Aragón 1; Asturias 1; Baleares 1; Canarias 2; Cantabria 1; Castilla y León 3 (+1); Castilla-La Mancha 1; Cataluña 7 (+1); Extremadura 1; Galicia 3; Rioja 1; Madrid 5 (+3; others in constitution); Murcia 1; Navarra 1 (+1); Valencia 4; País Vasco 1 (+1). Most students attend the university which is geographically closer to their families' place of residence, mobility being rather limited.

The so-called "long-cycle careers" are taught at the *Facultades* for scientific, social, and humanistic studies or the Technical High Schools (*Escuelas Técnicas Superiores* (ETS)) for engineering studies. The studies last for four or five years for most degrees, six or more for careers such as Medicine, Architecture etc. They lead to the degrees of *Licenciado*, *Arquitecto* and *Ingeniero Superior*.

Studies leading to the degree of *Doctor* also belong to these institutes. Having acquired a degree of *Licenciado*, students may begin their professional activity or pursue Third Cycle studies leading to the degree of Doctor. These studies (although not always the degree) are necessary in order to teach at a University.

In most *Facultades*, the First Cycle (1C) does not lead to a special diploma, although it enables the students to enter certain professions, mainly in the area of administration; to quote just one example, students who have finished the first cycle of university studies can sit for the exams leading to a job as translator for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Some 1C studies do lead to a separate degree: 1C at the Faculties of Education is the equivalent to the former studies to become an elementary-school teacher. The universities set up the regulations allowing access to the 2nd cycle (2C); it is also possible under certain conditions to enter 2C studies belonging to a degree different from the one taken up as 1C; students in many cases have to complete a small number of 1C courses of their new speciality before entering the 2C.

Shorter careers (usually three years), leading to the degrees of *Diplomado* or *Ingeniero Técnico* are taught at the *Escuelas Universitarias* or *Escuelas Técnicas*: Nursing, Optics, and medium level engineering schools belong to this group. The number of degrees offered at this level has increased dramatically in the last years and they are all vocational studies directly leading to professional practice. Many of these careers can be continued at the corresponding *Facultad* or *ETS*. Most "short-cycle degrees" belong to the same Universities which also have *Facultades* and *ETS*.

The Ministry of Education issues the general compulsory guidelines for the 250 odd degrees nowadays accepted. These guidelines include the minimum number of credits (1 credit = 10 teaching hours) and the basic, compulsory subjects (*troncales*) all students have to take at any university in order for the degrees to be officially recognised. On this basis, the Universities are free to set up their own curricula, adding compulsory and optional subjects. The universities decide the number of years necessary for each degree (usually 4 or 5) and the total number of credits (usually 300-340 for the degree of *Licenciado*). At least 10 % of the total of credits (i.e. 30-34) may be devoted to studies bearing little or no relationship to those of the main degree; these are the so-called "Free Optional Credits" (CLE). The new curricula are in the process of being established at all Spanish Universities.

In addition to the State-recognised degrees (*Licenciado* etc) the Universities may offer so-called 'University own degrees' (*Titulaciones Propias* (TP)): *Especialista* (usually one year), *Magister* (usually two years) etc. Many specialised studies are carried out under this system in spite of their not being officially recognised degrees (see *Estudios de Posgrado*, 1990).

1.3. The impact of secondary education on language studies in higher education

Under the new system of elementary and secondary education, pupils will begin learning a foreign language at the age of 8. Teaching of the foreign language goes on throughout the new Compulsory Secondary Education (*ESO*) system, ages 12-16, and the two years of *Bachillerato* which will also include an optional second language. Throughout the system, four weekly hours will be devoted to the 1st foreign language, three hours (2 years) to the second foreign language. A pupil will have therefore completed 10 years of a first foreign language (and optionally up to 6 years of a 2nd foreign language) when s/he enters the Higher education system (see *Estudios en España*, 1991).

In the present system, pupils usually complete 7 years of study in one foreign language. Most pupils choose English, French being a second option offered at all schools. German is learnt by only very few pupils at as yet few schools. The presence of Portuguese and Italian is marginal, Portuguese being mainly taught at a few schools in the border areas

(especially Galicia). No other languages are offered except at very few special private schools.

The level of language proficiency achieved is for the time being rather low, due in part to the insufficient language proficiency of many elementary school teachers. The new curricula for both elementary and secondary language teaching will probably change the situation for better.

2. LANGUAGE DEGREE PROGRAMMES OFFERED BY UNIVERSITIES

2.1. Traditional language and literature programmes

The following degrees in Philology can be offered: Arabic, Classical languages, Basque, Catalan, English, French, Galician, German, Hebrew, Italian, Portuguese, Romance Philology (usually including Portuguese and Rumanian), Slavonic languages (only at one university), Spanish. Dutch is offered at a couple of universities as an optional subject associated to degrees in German and/or English although it may be available to other students as CLE. Swedish, Norwegian, and Danish are offered at a couple of universities as optional and/or CLE subjects. Modern Greek is taught as an optional subject for students of Classical Philology (also possibly CLE).

2.1.1. Content and objectives

The degrees in Philology centre on the teaching of language and literature with a secondary component of cultural studies. The students shall achieve a very good level of proficiency in the foreign language and a good knowledge of the grammar and literature. Most students expect to become language teachers but most curricula devote little or no time to their pedagogical training. The degrees are articulated in two cycles, the 1C not leading to any intermediate diploma or degree (see *Titulaciones Universitarias*, 1990).

To show just one example the total of about 320 credits (the limits are 300/340) is organised in the following way: ca. 32 credits are CLE; 62 credits are compulsory, *troncal* for 1C; 43 credits are compulsory for 2C. 183 credits are organised by the individual universities as compulsory or optional courses; they may include the study of additional foreign languages, and some credits may also be acquired by means of a long written research paper (equivalent to a Minor Thesis), a stay at a university abroad etc. Most of the credits, however, have to be acquired through direct tuition, as 1 credit = 10 (contact) teaching hours.

For foreign language studies, the *troncales* set up by the general guidelines of the new curricula are the following (in brackets is the number of credits). First Cycle: Spanish (or the co-official language of an AC) (8), general linguistics (8), literary theory (8), a 2nd foreign language and its literature (12); and, for the language of the particular degree, language (14), literature (12). Second Cycle: grammar (10); language history (10), literature (15) cultural studies (8). The universities add new compulsory and optional subjects within the same fields, and foreign language teaching (FLT methodology is usually taught as part of this group. Spanish (or Catalan, etc) is the means of instruction although many subjects are frequently taught in the corresponding foreign language at most universities.

2.1.2. Structure and programmes

Two possibilities are offered in the new curricula: 4 or 5 years, structured in two cycles of 2+2 or 3+2 years: a first cycle conceived as of general introductory study; a second cycle leading to deeper specialization. The number of teaching hours per week is about 25, 10 of which have to be devoted to practice (whatever it may be!). After these years the degree of *licenciado* is awarded. The students' results are assessed by the individual

lecturers who assign numerical marks from 0 to 10: 0-4.99 is *Suspenso* (fail); 5-6.99 *aprobado* (pass), 7-8.99 *notable* (good), 9-10 *sobresaliente* (outstanding); a special honorific mark *Matrícula de Honor* is assigned for exceptional results. There are no degree-final exams although the universities may ask for a compulsory master thesis (*Memoria de licenciatura*) or a special examination to assess language proficiency.

2.1.3. Impact of Community programmes to date

The impact of European cooperation programmes has been very strong. Staff and student exchange have their share in the organization of the new curricula, as lecturers and students alike have been confronted to other programmes and curricula, different ways of teaching etc. The presence of larger numbers of foreign students has also led to certain changes in the organization of teaching. Taking into consideration the number of students participating in the European programmes, the impact has been much stronger than could have been waited. In 1991-1992, 3,978 students went abroad with the Erasmus programme, 427 under Lingua. Of these 4,405 students, 1,186 (= 26.93 %) belonged to Faculties of Human Studies and most of them were students of philology (see *Anuario* 1992). Staff exchange has been relatively limited but it is growing and it has already had considerable effects. The recognition of foreign studies is not without problems although for most students few difficulties arise. As in other points, the differences between the universities are enormous.

2.2. Alternative programmes

There exist no official degrees combining language and non- language programmes. There is a small offer in the form of *Títulos Propios*, e.g. courses on Law or Business Administration taught in English and with a number of hours devoted to language teaching at an advanced level. But these courses are exceptional. See also under 4.

2.3. Postgraduate programmes

2.3.1. Content and objectives

After having achieved the degree of *licenciado*, students may proceed to doctoral studies if they fulfill the conditions stipulated by the departments, which are responsible for the Doctoral courses. Doctoral studies are the "Third Cycle" of university education and they are offered by the faculties and the technical high schools for engineering. There exist a few inter-departmental, inter-faculty, and inter- university programmes, and at most universities lecturers belonging to other institutes may be hired for some doctoral courses.

The main objective of the postgraduate programmes leading to the Doctoral degree is to prepare students for scientific research and for teaching at university level. Many students, however, pursue them in order to acquire a better, more specialised knowledge of the field and/or to have access to better professional jobs, for instance as a way to improve their position as teachers in the state school system. Only a small minority of Third Cycle students complete their thesis and get their degree.

As for the content of the programmes, these differ greatly. Although mainly centred on literary and linguistic studies, FLT is usually a part of many programmes in foreign languages. There exist no general guidelines concerning Third Cycle (3C) courses, with the exception of the types of courses that can be offered: a) courses devoted to scientific methodology etc; b) general courses which in this area are mainly devoted to specialised issues of linguistic or literary character; c) up to 9 credits can be obtained by writing a research paper which is compulsory in some programmes; d) up to 5 credits can be earned by attending external courses. There also exist a few programmes centred on FLT.

Most *Títulos propios* (TPs) are also taught at a postgraduate level. They offer the possibility of specializing in subjects which are frequently absent from (or very poorly represented in) the usual curricula. In the area of language degree programmes, it is mainly in this group of TP that specialised programmes on foreign language teaching are offered. Very frequently the students are practising language teachers, who can thus enhance their scientific knowledge of the field and have access to new developments in FLT methods. Their level is usually high, frequently not lower than the level required for 3rd Cycle programmes. They are usually expensive, although education authorities frequently provide grants for at least some of the students. These programmes have a more practical character than the usual 3rd Cycle programmes.

2.3.2. Structure of programmes

The *Títulos Propios* are so varied that it is impossible to offer a general overview. They usually have general courses together with practical work and optional (sometimes compulsory) research papers.

What follows refers to the officially recognised 3C programmes. Students have to complete 32 credits (320 hours) in at least two years. A part of them (usu. 9 cr.) may be done by means of a written research paper which is compulsory in many doctoral programmes. When the 32 credits have been obtained, students must forward the project of their Thesis, with the acceptance of a tutor, which will have to be approved by the Department. The Thesis must be ready in 4 to 8 years after the completion of the 32 credits and is "defended" before a committee of five members, at least two of which must belong to universities other than the student's; no more than two members of the committee may belong to the candidate's department. The Theses can be assessed in the following ways: *Apto* (Pass); *Apto Cum Laude* which can be unanimously granted or by a majority of 3 or 4 votes.

2.3.3. Impact of Community programmes

Few doctoral students have taken part in these programmes yet, their impact has therefore been slight up to now. The number is however increasing. Staff exchange opens up very interesting forms of cooperation, as it is much easier for a foreign lecturer to integrate for a short time in the Third Cycle courses than in those belonging to the First or Second Cycles.

2.4. Career prospects for graduates of language programmes

Most graduates in Philological programmes will become teachers, mainly at the secondary level. The level achieved after completing the programme is usually enough and especially in the last 10 years or so the level achieved by secondary school pupils has become much better than it used to be; this is due in great part to the increasing proficiency of their teachers, both in their command of the language and their knowledge of teaching methodologies. Most graduates, however, have to acquire this knowledge *after* they have finished their studies as e.g. not enough courses on FLT methodology had been provided. There are no other obvious jobs for graduates in the language programmes. The following is a short list of some possible ones: editing houses; translation; public relations; the Service-industry including steward(esse)s, hotel managers etc. There is no study yet of the jobs taken up by graduates in languages, but the number of graduates who have to work at jobs not corresponding to their academic level, or who find no job at all, is relatively high although lower than in other humanistic degrees such as history, philosophy etc.

3. INITIAL AND IN-SERVICE TRAINING OF LANGUAGE TEACHERS

3.1. Initial training

3.1.1. Institutions responsible for training

Secondary school teachers have to be *licenciados*, usually in a Philological Faculty. In order to be hired as teachers at officially recognised schools, graduates have to attend a special course on didactics and teaching methodology (*Certificado de Aptitud Pedagógica*, CAP), not centred on FLT. For more details, see (2) above. Graduates of the Official Language Schools (*Escuelas Oficiales de Idiomas*, EOI) may only teach in private schools. As for primary school teachers, the system has been very recently changed and it is impossible to assess the influence the changes introduced will have on the pupils' results. What follows is therefore a general characterization of the system.

3.1.2. Content of training programmes

In the new curricula, primary school teachers attend a 1C at the Education Faculties, where they can become specialised language teachers; but the possibilities of achieving a good level in the spoken and written language are scarce considering the low number of hours devoted to language learning. They will acquire, on the other hand, a better knowledge of FLT methodology. In the old system, they had to attend Teachers' Schools (*Escuelas de Formación del Profesorado de EGB* (EFP)) where they could complete a few courses on foreign languages and their methodology. The level achieved by these prospective teachers was frequently very low indeed, being unable to use the foreign language they were supposed to teach. The courses offered at the EOIs are devoted only to language teaching, no provisions being made for FLT methodology etc.

3.1.3. Structure of programmes

In the new curricula, a minimum of 22 credits is devoted to usage courses on one foreign language, plus a minimum of 22 credits on linguistic, grammatical and phonetic issues etc; all of them during the three years leading to the degree of *Maestro* (Elementary School Teacher).

The diploma of proficiency issued by the EOIs is achieved by means of an examination; the five courses last for one year each on a part-time basis (usually five hours per week).

3.1.4. Impact of Community programmes to date

The impact of Community programmes is very varied although it seems not to have been as strong as for other university studies.

3.2. In-service training

3.2.1. Institutions responsible for training

The Ministry of Education, the Universities and other institutions offer shorter or longer courses in FLT methodology as well as (more rarely) further language training. Most teachers, however, attend the courses continuously offered by the special centres devoted to in-service training for teachers (CEPs) of which there exist many in practically every town. These courses are automatically recognised by the Ministry of Education while courses offered by Universities etc are only recognised if a formal agreement is reached.

There also exist some *Magister* and *Especialista* courses specializing in FLT, most of them recognised by the Ministry of Education (see under (2.3)). Teachers (both of secondary and elementary education) may devote part of their work time to these courses, which are officially recognised although they do not lead to recognised degrees. They can also enjoy state scholarships to attend language courses abroad.

3.2.2. Content of training programmes

These courses have to provide practising teachers with a more actualised knowledge of their field, the knowledge acquired being expected to be put into practice in their daily teaching activity.

3.2.3. Structure of programmes

There is no general structure for these courses or any fixed guidelines, apart from certain requirements concerning the lecturers hired to teach these courses. They may last for a few weeks to a couple of years, always on a part-time basis and the institutions enjoy a large degree of autonomy in their organization.

3.2.4. Impact of Community programmes to date

Community programmes seem to have had practically no impact yet.

3.3. Training of Teachers of 2nd Language

3.3.1. Institutions responsible for training

Some Universities offer degrees in Basque, Galician and Catalan (together with Valencian and Balearic), the co-official languages. Other institutions such as the Official Academies for these languages (or similar institutions, such as the *Institut d'Estudis Catalans*) also have exams leading to special diplomas enabling their holders to teach at all levels. The EOIs existing in many major cities in Spain also teach these languages enabling the holders of the corresponding diploma to teach at private schools.

3.3.2. Content of programmes

The training programmes are basically the same as for Spanish and/or foreign languages. See sections 2 and 3.1.

3.3.3. Structure of programmes

The structure of the programmes is the same as for other languages. See sections 2 and 3.1.

4. LANGUAGE PROVISION IN UNIVERSITIES FOR STUDENTS OF OTHER DISCIPLINES

4.1. Language studies integrated into non-language programmes and language options offered in combination with non-language programmes

The new curricula lack any integration of language and non- language programmes. Some of the new private universities do integrate language studies in some curricula (mainly business/economics and law), but the offer is mainly limited to postgraduate programmes (*Títulos propios*).

4.2. General and subject-oriented language courses accompanying non-language programmes

Non-language faculties may include language courses in their curricula, as compulsory or optional subjects. This affects mainly students of engineering and economics, but also medicine, nursing etc and is in most cases limited to English, French and German being offered at very few institutes. Some Universities have established language centres

devoted to providing instruction in foreign languages to students of all faculties. This system seems to be gaining ground everywhere in Spain. Other Universities offer language courses as Free Choice Credits (CLE) while others prefer lecturers belonging to the philological departments to teach at non-language faculties.

4.2.1. Content and objectives

Usually courses for academic or professional purposes are offered, sometimes general language courses too. At a few institutes there is a certain integration of language and non-language subjects, e.g. English in connection with economic analysis, where a part of the subject may be taught in the foreign language. In most cases, however, the main objective is to enable the students to read the literature of their speciality. In some vocational degrees (e.g. business administration) more attention is paid to the oral mastery of the language. The resulting level is usually rather low, so that those students who are interested in mastering the language have to learn it through external courses.

4.2.2. Structure of programmes

They vary greatly and there exist no general guidelines, everything being up to the individual faculty or school. But usually the number of credits for language teaching is small (12-20) and the tendency is to reduce it even further. Few non-language programmes have compulsory language courses which are in most cases optional.

4.2.3. Impact of Community programmes to date

It is difficult to ascertain, as students go abroad for their non-language subjects and the language instruction they get at their home university (if any) is usually not enough to enable them by themselves to take courses taught in a foreign language. The impact is slightly stronger for staff-exchange.

5. THE TRAINING OF TRANSLATORS AND INTERPRETERS

5.1. Institutions responsible for training

Up to very recently, translation was taught at some *Escuelas Universitarias* of which only a few existed. Faculties of translation and interpretation have been created a couple of years ago but a considerable number of them now exists, including those at some new private universities, and more are expected to be set up in the near future. There also exist some private institutes offering courses in translation which do not lead to any recognised degrees. Some *Títulos Propios* are also offered for postgraduate students. Translation and Interpretation are always integrated except for some *Títulos Propios* limited to one or the other.

5.2. Content of training programmes

Mixed translation and interpretation subjects, including techniques and theory of translation etc. Language training, usually in two foreign languages (called B,C) plus Spanish (or in the ACs their co-official language and/or Spanish, A1 and A2). Students have to pass an admission exam and their level in the foreign language has to be relatively high, usually much higher than for the philological degrees. Graduates are expected to be able to work as translators (also as specialised translators) and/or interpreters. The compulsory subjects (*troncales*) for 1C include: Documentation, A-Language (the minimum is 8 credits), B-Language (12 credits), C-Language (12 credits), Linguistics, Translation methods and Translation theory. For 2C: Terminology, Computational linguistics, Specialised translation, Interpreting, etc. The foreign languages taught are usually French and English but others may be offered (e.g. Dutch, Italian, Russian, Arabic etc).

5.3. Structure of programmes

Translation and Interpretation can be offered as a full degree taking 4/5 years, or as a 2C degree, i.e. two years after 2/3 years at another, usually but not necessarily philological faculty.

5.4. Impact of Community programmes to date

There exist some very active networks; both student and staff exchange take place regularly and affect a sizeable number of students. The impact is considerable, both in language and theoretical and/or professional instruction, also for staff exchange. Students of some Universities have to spend at least one term abroad to gain some of their total number of credits (e.g. 20 or more) and this is usually done through Erasmus programmes.

6. LANGUAGE STUDIES IN NON-UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

6.1. Language programmes

No institutions of higher education offer language programmes which do exist, however, at the secondary level as vocational schools (the EOIs).

6.2. Language studies integrated into non-language programmes and language options offered in combination with non-language programmes

Certain vocational schools which are outside the university system but which could be considered as equivalent to higher education institutes include a language component. Such are the *Escuelas de Turismo* where two foreign languages are a part of the curriculum. This type of institution is however clearly separated from the Higher Education system proper and belongs to the -as yet under-developed- system of higher vocational training.

7. NEW NEEDS IN THE AREA OF LANGUAGE STUDIES

7.1. In undergraduate and postgraduate programmes offered by universities

7.1.1. Seen in relation to the development of language studies.

The present structure of "Fields of Knowledge" makes it impossible to offer degrees in languages that have not been traditionally taught in Spain: no degrees can be offered in Dutch, Modern Greek, the Nordic languages, Irish etc because the corresponding Fields have not been officially accepted. They cannot even be taken as the second language compulsory for language students. Although there may be a potentially sizeable number of students of some of them, particularly Dutch and the main Nordic languages, the courses offered have to remain at the level of optional subjects and/or CLE with only marginal possibilities of specialization. Even the other Spanish languages are very little taught indeed outside their own ACs, and their knowledge is not favoured; they cannot be learnt by secondary school pupils. The Spanish university system therefore cannot satisfy the needs that will probably arise in the near future, and specialists in these languages will still have to get their training abroad.

The students' entrance level of proficiency in foreign languages is usually insufficient to guarantee the desirable results. Although this situation seems to be changing, the fact remains that many students will have difficulties in achieving the level necessary for a good language specialist. In degrees with large numbers of students, especially English,

it is often impossible to develop the students' proficiency in a sufficient way, so that they are supposed to complement their studies at the University with external courses, usually commercial ones. This is however difficult in the new curricula which allow the students too little free time to be devoted to such activities. A good level should have been reached before the students enter a university; but the weight of the foreign language component in the access examination (*Selectividad*) is rather low, even for the degrees in foreign languages.

The system of teaching still relies too much on lectures leaving little time for the students' individual work. This is a side-effect of the new system of credits, understood in terms of teaching hours; although there is some room for gaining credits through written papers and attending courses abroad etc, the credits assigned to individual courses are still understood in terms of real contact hours, and 25 teaching hours a week seems to be too high a figure.

Practical teaching is also still insufficient at most universities, in great part due to the lack of enough teaching staff. As a consequence, the students will acquire a theoretical knowledge of their field rather than a good level of proficiency. Teaching is probably too theory-oriented, little attention being paid to the practical needs the students will encounter in their professional life. As it seems, university teaching in languages seems to be trying to prepare specialists to teach at universities and do research work of more or less high level, instead of offering good standpoints for the graduates' future professional activities.

7.1.2. Seen in relation to professional requirements.

Some Departments of Modern Languages concentrate heavily on literary studies which most students will not directly need in their professional life, as secondary school teaching is basically restricted to the practical mastery of the foreign language chosen. On the other hand, the linguistic programmes are frequently of a purely theoretical nature, no relation being expected between the scientific requirements for linguistic study and the professional needs. Applied linguistics, especially FLT methodology, is still weakly represented in the curricula, also at the Doctorate level, although there is a growing number of graduates doing research in this field and the number of Doctoral Theses read every year on issues related to FLT is considerably large, and the number of postgraduate courses (TPs) specializing in foreign-language teaching is also growing.

Those graduates who need a working knowledge of two or more foreign languages have to attend external courses, both for improving their proficiency and for learning less-taught languages. Although all foreign-language students now have to take a minimum of compulsory courses in a second foreign language, the small number of credits allowed does not guarantee a good level of proficiency. As most courses try to encompass all practical and, secondarily, theoretical aspects of the language (plus its literature), there is little hope that the students will be able to gain more than a cursory practical knowledge of the language chosen. Some universities give their students the possibility of taking a higher number of credits in the second language, but the total (up to 52 at some universities) is nevertheless not enough unless the initial level is high. The same applies to foreign languages taken as CLEs. The result seems to be better when the courses specialise in the 'passive skills' only, i.e. reading or reading + oral comprehension and fall within the area of 'language for specific purposes'.

Most graduates are still expected to become teachers of a foreign language but the need clearly seems to be arising to find jobs of other types. The present curricula do not seem to be paying enough attention to this fact, which would need a study in depth of the possible future perspectives.

7.1.3. Seen in relation to the creation of Europe.

The limitation to one or two of the most widely spoken languages, usually English and French or German does not seem to guarantee the understanding of the European peoples necessary for the creation of a really united Europe. Practically no attention is paid to the 'minor' languages.

On the other hand, the curricula still offer little in the field of cultural studies although a cultural component is a compulsory part of the curricula. Little is still being done in the area of comparative European studies within the departments of foreign languages. Even comparative literary studies are just at its beginning although a 2C degree in Comparative Literature will soon be offered at some universities.

It seems therefore necessary to increase the amount of time and work devoted to cultural studies from a wide perspective considering the common features of the different European cultures. Research in this area should also be promoted, although an increasing number of specialists is nowadays doing some interesting work in the field. TPs can allow the establishment of interdisciplinary degrees of this type.

7.2. In initial and in-service language teacher training

7.2.1. Seen in relation to the development of language studies.

The problems affecting secondary-school language teaching have been sketched in 7.1. As for elementary-school teachers, the teachers' practical knowledge of foreign languages is usually insufficient, mainly as far as the oral skills are concerned; teaching children does call for a good mastery of the language, of course, but the number of language credits offered does not seem enough: 44-50 credits (i.e. 440-500 teaching hours, including methodological subjects) may seem enough only if the student has a good initial level, which unfortunately does not seem to be the most frequent case.

Not enough attention is still paid to specific FLT issues either, courses on general issues of pedagogy having the leading hand. The new, well-developed objectives for language teaching at the elementary and secondary levels are now in the process of being implemented, and they include the need to reach a satisfactory level of knowledge of the four skills in at least one foreign language; but this can only be achieved if the teachers are provided with a sound linguistic and pedagogical training. There exists general agreement that the efforts made by the administrations are not enough to guarantee the best results, mainly due to insufficient funding for in-service training of already practising teachers.

Teachers being usually prepared for the teaching of only one language does not make it easy for the 'minor' languages to have any possibilities of being taught in the near future. English is taught at all schools and although French has to be offered by all secondary schools in the state system, the number of pupils taking it is very low. The situation of the other languages is even worse, pupils interested in any of them having few possibilities of satisfying their wish. This leads to the existence of few teachers specialising in languages other than English, bringing about a vicious circle.

The in-service courses are usually of a rather general character, not centring on the enhancement of proficiency in the foreign language or on issues such as contrastive linguistic studies etc. There is frequently little funding for teachers to be able to travel abroad in order to enhance their knowledge of the foreign language, or to attend specialised courses on a regular basis.

7.2.2. Seen in relation to professional requirements.

Elementary school teachers are well-prepared in general pedagogical matters, although they have seldom mastered the foreign language well enough to really make their pupils

advance in their knowledge of the language along the lines set by the objectives of the new curricula.

7.2.3. Seen in relation to the creation of Europe.

Practically no attention is paid to the cultural issues needed for an understanding of the role of the European countries and their languages. A specific cultural component has to be included in the school curricula in order to overcome the prejudices arising from lack of knowledge of the other European peoples.

Other European (and Spanish co-official) languages should be introduced in the secondary school system, therefore widening the present offer; but these languages should also be in offer for students.

7.3. In language provision in universities for students of other disciplines

7.3.1. Seen in relation to the development of language studies.

Most language teaching here falls under the heading of 'language for specific purposes', mainly centring on the passive skills; a significant amount of research is now devoted to this field in Spain and there already exists a sizeable number of lecturers specializing in it. The main problem seems to be the lack of consistent language provision in the curricula. Language courses, where they exist, are mainly optional and usually considered as a marginal component of the curriculum, being restricted to a very small number of teaching hours. More research is needed in the increasing area of teaching foreign languages for special purposes.

There is at present a growing tendency toward the creation of special language centres at many universities which, in spite of their obvious advantages, run the risk of teaching only the usual general language courses -again centred on the 'four skills'- with the danger of displacing the specialised, usually intensive courses in 'language for specific purposes' now taught at some Faculties and Technical High Schools.

As for Spanish courses and certificates for speakers of other languages, a problem is the absence of any universally accepted criteria. Although the offer is enough and many courses are of high quality, there is no system of officially recognised certificates, with the exception of the certificate in Spanish at the EOIs which, however, is taken by only very few people, and the certificate awarded by the Cervantes Institute, still little known at both the national and international levels. The situation is not much better for all the other co-official languages although the number of certificates in offer is smaller and there exist a couple of recognised institutions awarding them.

7.3.2. Seen in relation to professional requirements.

The knowledge of English and at least another language is now seen as of paramount importance by employers, as all opinion polls have repeatedly shown. If the importance of the Service-Industry in Spain is taken into account, the need of a good knowledge of foreign languages cannot be overemphasised. Only a minority of graduates, however, have mastered any foreign language to an acceptable level during their stay at a university; this leads -among other things- to an incredibly high offer of privately organised language courses to serve the needs of professionals; needless to say, not all the courses offered are of good quality. Even when the curricula guarantee a good training for the professional activities the graduate is expected to engage in, foreign languages have seldom been a part of it. Many graduates can read technical literature of their speciality in one or two foreign languages while being unable to make any active use of these languages.

Knowledge of foreign languages is usually restricted to the major ones, but the internationalisation of many activities has made it necessary for an increasing number of professionals to learn some of the less widely spoken languages; the universities have very little to offer in this respect yet, although a few exceptions do exist. To mention just one example, courses in the Dutch language on offer at a few universities are being taken by professionals of different disciplines in increasing numbers because it is expected to be of much use for their activities. An increase in the offer of languages taught at universities will certainly lead to an increase in the number of students applying for them.

7.3.3. Seen in relation to the creation of Europe.

The creation of Europe needs professionals with something more than a better or worse knowledge of one great international language; although English and perhaps French and German are usually enough in most cases, the universities have to provide their students with the possibility of learning the less spoken languages of Europe (and also the other national, co-official languages of Spain); only the knowledge of these languages will allow graduates to eventually integrate in professional life in other countries of the EU or even to have access to technical literature written in those 'minor' languages, etc.

7.4. In the training of translators and interpreters.

7.4.1. Seen in relation to the development of language studies.

The access level in the foreign language(s) selected is again of paramount importance, as the curricula cannot devote too many credits to practical language learning. Research in translation and interpretation and especially in the teaching thereof still has a long way to go in Spain although much has been done lately. The precise identification of the new needs imposed on linguistics will necessarily lead to new research in this area, too; the tendency still exists to transfer to the teaching of linguistics for translation the same linguistic methods fashionable in theoretical linguistics, irrespective of their usefulness for the particular needs and aims of translation. Very little indeed has been done on interpretation studies.

7.4.2. Seen in relation to professional requirements.

The university degrees in translation are still too young to assess how well they provide students with the tools necessary for their professional activities. Up to the present time most practising translators have received a general instruction in languages (linguistics + literature) at a philological faculty or -for specialised, technical translation- perhaps some scientific or technical training plus some general instruction in a foreign language, the number of translators trained as such being still small. Time will tell whether the new degrees in translation will succeed in their main objectives.

The convenience of separating translation and interpretation studies should be considered and studied. Some TPs, in fact, offer specialised training in one or the other and they seem to be successful. In the framework of the present curricula there is no room for a complete separation although the universities offering the degree could articulate the two specialities separately, apart from the legal need of offering the minimum of compulsory subjects, the so-called *troncales*. A majority of credits could therefore be taken in translation *or* interpretation; graduates could obviously apply for jobs of either type but the inclusion in the students' diploma of a full list of the subjects taken will furnish a good clue to their real aptitudes.

7.4.3. Seen in relation to the creation of Europe.

Translators must use the minor languages in addition to the most widely used ones; if only these are learnt the idea of a culturally varied Europe has no sense. But very few universities offer any instruction in these minor languages, with the added problem of the usual lack of any significant access level of proficiency and the scarce possibilities of acquiring it. Intensive courses should be offered in order to provide a basic knowledge of the 'minor' languages, which could then be improved through normal courses.

7.5. In language studies in non-university institutions of higher education

Although language studies are a usual offer at most institutions for adult education, they can never lead to any type of degree, and indeed to no degree which might be an equivalent to other degrees in higher education. It could be reasonable to undertake a study on the convenience of regulating these courses so that they could receive an official recognition. The reorganisation of vocational and adult training which is now in preparation could be a good moment for the analysis of this need.

8. MEASURES TO BE TAKEN TO SATISFY THE NEEDS IDENTIFIED

8.1. Measures to be taken in the areas of initial and in-service language teacher training

8.1.1. Measures within the responsibility of the institutions.

- i) Increase the number of credits devoted to foreign language learning and to specific issues of FLT methodology, in order to guarantee the training of good specialists in teaching foreign languages to elementary school children.
- ii) Articulate courses on actualization in FLT methodology for practising teachers on a continuous basis, at CEPs and other institutions providing in-service training, so that all teachers can regularly attend them. Teachers should be allowed enough free time to attend these courses inside and/or outside their working day.
- iii) Strengthen the weight of FLT methodology in the curricula of the degrees in foreign languages for those students wishing to become secondary school teachers. Include specific issues of FLT in the CAPs.
- iv) Provide students and graduates with the possibility of acquiring some knowledge of other languages in addition to the one of their speciality, basically through intensive courses and/or courses for special purposes. The role of the language centres of universities should be thus enhanced.

8.1.2. Measures within the responsibility of the regional and national authorities

- i) Guarantee a good initial level for students wishing to become specialists in foreign languages for elementary and secondary education; giving more importance to the foreign language component of the access examinations is a possible way; alternatively, allowing the institutions to articulate special access exams and/or entrance conditions for their new students.
- ii) Provide the necessary funding for continuous in-service training of teachers, including participation in language courses to improve their proficiency in the foreign language they teach.
- iii) Simplify the system of recognition of in-service courses organised by the institutions, simplifying the bureaucratic conditions stipulated by the administration.

iv) Fund the acquisition of modern media (satellite-TV, interactive computers, etc.) by the schools and the faculties training teachers. This could be done in cooperation with the European Union.

8.1.3. Measures within the responsibility of the European Union

i) Favour the participation of elementary and secondary school teachers in the European programmes of staff mobility. This could include foreign teachers of the 'minor' languages teaching short intensive courses, as a way of introducing future teachers to these languages.

ii) Favour the organisation of inter-university programmes devoted to the in-service training of language teachers.

iii) Create networks where information on language teaching, publications etc. can be exchanged. iv) Facilitate the access to the new media: satellite-TV, interactive computers etc. could be co-funded by the European Union.

8.2. Measures to be taken in universities

8.2.1. Measures within the responsibility of the institutions

i) Guarantee a good entrance level for students of foreign languages. This could be done through special entrance examinations at the faculties involved or through the creation (and its necessary funding) of special intensive courses for those students whose level is not enough to pursue their studies.

ii) Guarantee that all students and graduates may acquire a working knowledge of at least one or preferably two foreign languages, including the co-official languages of the Spanish ACs. This can be articulated in the following ways:

(a) Establishing within the universities special institutes devoted solely to teaching foreign languages and doing research in the methodology of their teaching to university students and professionals; they should be open to students of all Faculties and ETS (and to members of staff).

(b) Favouring the inclusion of foreign languages as a part of all curricula; this could be done by recognising some credits taken through examinations in foreign languages, regular courses not being a necessary condition; students could prepare for these examinations at the language centres of the universities. This could be regulated as a special part of the CLE of the curricula which could therefore be split in two groups: (1) CLE proper, devoted to any subjects the students may want to take, and (2) a foreign language section. The idea is not so much to teach a certain number of hours in one or more foreign languages as to enhance the students' interest and motivation to learn them. The university will assume the responsibility to provide its students with the means to acquire that knowledge. The courses offered need not be 'general language courses' developing all four basic skills, specialised courses, perhaps even limited to one or two skills, being of great importance to this objective.

(c) Favour learning the 'minor' languages, including the co-official languages of the ACs, instead of concentrating exclusively on English and secondarily on French and/or German.

iii) Promote the development of comparative European studies integrating languages and other disciplines. This could best and most easily be done in the form of TPs and interdisciplinary doctoral studies.

iv) Advance towards the homogeneity of the foreign language curricula in Spanish and foreign universities, as a way of favouring the students' international mobility. Existing and future inter-university relations can be used to achieve this aim.

8.2.2. Measures within the responsibility of the regional and national authorities

i) Guarantee a good entrance level by strengthening the foreign language component of the access examination or alternatively allowing the universities to articulate special access exams and/or entrance conditions for their new students.

ii) Create new Fields of Knowledge such as: Dutch, Nordic Languages, Celtic Languages, so that these languages can be incorporated as the Second Compulsory language for students of Philology and to allow the creation of the corresponding degrees.

iii) Create the possibility of integrated studies combining a non-language degree and intensive and comprehensive learning of a foreign language and its culture.

iv) Redefine the Credit system in order to allow more room for the students' individual work, reducing the excessive number of contact teaching hours.

v) Provide the funds necessary in order to allow the universities to articulate the types of language instruction sketched in 8.2.1.

vi) Provide the funds necessary for the instruction and hiring of well-prepared language teachers in order to satisfy the needs identified.

vii) Establish general guidelines for courses in Spanish and the other co-official languages for speakers of other languages, including some criteria for language certificates to be obtained through examinations.

viii) Analyse possible changes to be introduced in the curricula of the degrees in foreign languages, so as to be able to define:

(a) the usefulness of the curricula for the professional activities the graduates are expected to engage in;

(b) the needs imposed by the new European situation;

(c) the changes to be introduced;

all this could be done through a debate in which the affected institutions (Ministry of Education, both of the central administration and the ACs; National Council of Universities; the individual universities; the professional organisations etc) should take part. The result should be the definition of the framework for the changes that have to be introduced in the new curricula after the first 4/5 years of their establishment.

8.2.3. Measures within the responsibility of the European Union

i) Study the possibility of homogenization of the curricula of the degrees in foreign languages in order to enhance the students' and staff's inter-state mobility. Proposals could then be forwarded to the member states and, through them, to the European universities offering degrees in languages.

ii) Favour staff mobility allowing it a wider place inside the new European programmes. This would include larger funding.

8.3. Measures to be taken in non-university institutions of higher education

A study should be carried out concerning the possibility and need of recognising as officially valid the courses offered by the institutions of adult education. The institutions themselves, the universities and the national/regional and European authorities should co-operate in this study. The possibility of having access to some higher language degrees acquired outside the regular university system seems interesting, especially in the present (and unfortunately also future) context of high unemployment and the need to find new types of job in an internationalised world. The mixed degrees mentioned earlier, which should include language and non- language subjects, could also be taught at this level, perhaps by professional associations and the like.

Regulate the criteria/set up criteria leading to the acceptance and/or classification of courses in foreign languages taught at private centres outside the state system, including the conditions/requirements to be met by the teachers hired by these schools.

MAIN ABBREVIATIONS USED

1C: First Cycle

2C: Second Cycle

AC: Autonomous Community, the administrative units in which the Kingdom of Spain is organised since the 1978 Constitution.

CAP: *Certificado de Aptitud Pedagógica* (Course on pedagogy for graduates, which enables them to teach in the state teaching system)

CLE: *Crédito de Libre Elección* (Free Optional Credits)

EOI: *Escuela Oficial de Idiomas* (Official Language School)

ETS: *Escuela Técnica Superior* (Technical High School)

FLT: Foreign Language Teaching

TP: *Titulación Propia* (University own degree)

U.N.E.D.: *Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia* (Open, non-presential University)

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