

SIGMA Scientific Committee on Languages

LANGUAGE STUDIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN SWEDEN

Staffan Wahlén

Centre for Languages for Specific Purposes, Stockholm University
S-106 91 Stockholm, Sweden

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. The national linguistic situation

1.1.1. National languages

Swedish is the official language of Sweden. Sami is spoken by the indigenous Sami minority in the northern part of the country, where Sami schools including one upper secondary school are to be found. The largest minority language is Finnish, spoken by about 300 000 people. Major immigrant languages are Greek, Serbo-Croatian, Spanish and Turkish.

1.1.2. Language policy

There is general consensus that English should be taught from primary school, and it is reasonable to say that the vast majority of Swedes under the age of 50 have a fair command of general spoken English. A discussion has been going on as to whether English should be introduced from the very beginning of school, and experiments have been carried out to shed light on this question. However, in most areas it is now taught from the third or fourth year.

A second foreign language (German, French, or Spanish) is taught from the seventh year, but there is currently a strong movement to introduce it in the sixth year in all schools.

The only controversial aspect of language policy concerns the status of immigrant languages within the school system and whether immigrant children should attend classes in their own "home language" as well as in Swedish. A few special schools for speakers of minority languages have been established. Furthermore, all immigrant children have the right to a few hours "home language" teaching per week.

1.2. The system of higher education

The higher education sector in Sweden comprises some 70 universities and university colleges of different types. This includes 11 state universities and university colleges with permanent research resources, eight university colleges of applied or performing arts in Stockholm, a separate Institute of Education in the capital and 17 small or medium-sized university colleges in various parts of the country. The latter do not have research facilities. The total number of higher education institutions also includes 27 county colleges for health sciences (education for nursing and allied health professions).

The higher education sector is based on a *numerus clausus* system. Some 60 000 new students entered higher education institutions in the academic year 1993/94. The number of new students every year has increased by 40% since 1987/88.

The number of diplomas awarded during the last academic year was 33 500 and the number of PhDs was 1 440.

The academic year consists of two semesters of 20 weeks each: the autumn semester which runs from the end of August to mid-January and the spring semester which runs from mid-January to early June.

Studies are based on a system of credits, where one credit corresponds to one weekss full time studies (40 hours). Thus 20 credits are equivalent to one semester.

Most study programmes require a minimum of three academic years (120 credits), and several programmes (law, medicine, dentistry, engineering etc.) are considerably longer.

A number of subjects are normally studied as single subject courses and are not prescribed in study programmes. Students are free to combine these courses in order to earn either a Bachelor's degree (a minimum of 120 credits or three year's studies) or a Master's degree (a minimum of 160 credits or four year's studies). Furthermore, the Bachelor's degree requires a minimum of three semester's studies in one subject, including a 10-credit degree project (essay). For the Master's degree the special requirements are two year's studies of one subject including a one-semester Master's thesis or an extension of the Bachelor's degree project.

As a rule, languages are studied within this framework, which means that student groups can be very heterogeneous from the point of view of goals and long-term interest and investment.

Postgraduate studies require a minimum of four years, two of which are spent on advanced courses and two on the writing of a dissertation. Programmes are offered in c. 30 different languages and in linguistics and related subjects at five universities.

1.3. The impact of secondary education on language studies

As already mentioned, English is taught from primary school, which means that anyone with a diploma of secondary education will have had at least 9 years of English. In fact knowledge of English is one of the basic requirements for admission to higher education programmes.

German, French and, in a number of schools, Spanish, are taught for three years in lower secondary school, and about 60 per cent of the pupils have chosen to study one of these. Thus, most of those who go on to upper secondary school will have English and either German, French or Spanish. (the percentage of secondary school pupils who take German is 43, French 21 and Spanish 3; the remaining 33 per cent go in for other courses). However, as from next year, a second foreign language will be compulsory in lower secondary school. In upper secondary school students can then choose either to continue their studies of their second foreign language only, or take up a third, which could be German, French, Spanish, Italian, Russian, and, in a few schools, Chinese or Japanese, or do both. A new system of upper secondary school has recently been introduced, which makes individual choice and specialisation easier, and which also facilitates in-depth studies of languages other than English.

As far as language studies at university level are concerned, three categories can be distinguished: English, those languages which require previous studies, and those which do not.

It is clear that English is a special case, since most students have a reasonable command of the language. From the very beginning, classes can be given in English, and students can be asked to write essays and give oral presentations in the language.

German, French and Spanish can be subsumed under the second category, in which the requirement for admission is a minimum of three years at upper secondary school level. Lectures are usually given in the language, but the student's initial proficiency is clearly lower. Russian and Italian also belong to this category, but language proficiency at the beginning of university programmes (and still after two year's studies) is even lower than for French, German and Spanish. Admission rules are currently being changed in order to take account of the new system of upper secondary school.

Finally, there is a whole range of modern languages studied from a beginners level. These include Community languages: Dutch, Modern Greek, Italian, Portuguese and Finnish (which is also taught as a native language). The universities also offer programmes in Sami, the Baltic languages, all the Slavic languages, Arabic, Hebrew, Chinese, Japanese, Korean and many others.

1.4. The general impact of internationalisation on Swedish higher education in recent years

Since 1985 Swedish universities have received an earmarked "internationalisation grant" contingent on the existence of operational plans for internationalisation approved by the board of each university. This line of action, entailing the introduction of a kind of [institutional contract] between the national funding agency and the various institutions of higher education, is, in fact, very similar to the one discussed within the context of the Socrates programme. In an evaluation of the effects of these grants it has been pointed out that the Swedish experience seemed to result in internationalisation as a stepping stone to Europeanisation, with a strong side interest in linkage to the U.S.

Before joining the EU, Sweden had already taken part in three of the EC programmes in the field of higher education: COMETT, ERASMUS and TEMPUS. The ERASMUS programme, in particular, has had a strong impact on the internationalisation of universities and colleges of the country. During the current academic year almost 3 000 Swedish students are studying abroad. Fewer foreign students are coming to Sweden, but the establishment of a "trade balance" has been set as a major goal by all parties involved.

The ERASMUS programme has turned out to be very popular with Swedish students. In relation to the total number of students in the country Sweden is at the top of the league of the EFTA countries. In the academic year 1994/95 the following numbers of students are going to the various countries of the EU:

UK	853
Germany	592
France	530
Netherlands	425
Spain	250
Italy	194
Belgium	191
Ireland	130
Portugal	86
Denmark	73
Greece	66

There is, of course, a tendency for Swedes to choose countries in Northern and Central Europe, probably due to linguistic factors. The same tendency can be noticed with respect to EU students studying in Sweden.

One very concrete consequence of increasing internationalisation, including the ERASMUS programme, is the growing number of courses and even full programmes offered in English at a number of Swedish universities. This also has bearing on the situation of language teaching, since Swedish (and sometimes foreign) students attending such courses may need extra training.

2. LANGUAGE DEGREE PROGRAMMES OFFERED BY UNIVERSITIES

2.1. Traditional language/literature programmes

2.1.1. Content and objectives

Languages are as a rule not studied within the framework of established programmes, in contrast to e.g. economics, engineering or law. The student chooses the length of study and the combinations of subjects for his/her B.A. or M.A. degree.

The objectives of most degree programmes are for students to pursue the scholarly study of a language and its literature, culture, social structure etc. and to achieve a reasonable spoken and written proficiency of the language. The degree of initial (and final) proficiency will vary with the language. After one year's study of most Indo-European languages, students generally choose between specialising in language/linguistics or literature. In English this specialisation may occur as early as the second semester.

2.1.2. Structure of programmes

For a language Bachelor's degree, three semester's full-time studies of one language are required plus another three semester's studies, which must include one year spent on one subject, which could be another language. The student's major subject must contain the writing of a 10-credit (half-semester) paper on a linguistic, literary or other problem, using scholarly methods. The Master's degree requires another year's studies, one semester of which must be spent on one's major subject and include the writing of a master's thesis.

Some departments have a modular system, in which, after the first or second semester, students choose among a range of five-week courses in language/linguistics, literature, civilisation, etc. Language proficiency courses, are, however, always compulsory, as is the writing of a 10-credit paper for those students who choose to do a third semester and another 10-credit paper for those who want to do a fourth semester.

A typical two-semester programme in German, French or Spanish would contain about 40 per cent oral and written language proficiency, more in the first semester than in the second. The rest would be divided more or less equally between survey courses in literature, grammar/linguistics, phonetics, civilisation. From the third semester, there is less emphasis on proficiency (or, rather, it becomes incorporated in the other courses), and there is more specialisation and options for the students, exemplified by the writing of the above-mentioned 10-credit paper. Departments will offer courses in modern linguistics/grammar and/or literature. The emphasis is not any more on older stages but often on more recent developments.

Teaching is in the form of lectures, group work, seminars, oral and written language proficiency practice. In English, almost all kinds of teaching is in the target language from the very beginning, which means that oral, and, to some extent, written proficiency

is integrated with the rest of the programme. This is also true to a large extent of German, French and Spanish.

In most languages use is made of satellite television, language laboratory facilities and CALL. A major development programme which provides all Swedish universities with CALL programmes in French morphology, syntax and vocabulary has just been concluded. Interactive television is used in an experimental programme in French involving teachers in Orléans and students in a northern Swedish college.

Process writing is a major interest among departments of English and to some extent French and German. Other departments attempt to practise this, too, but with a certain amount of difficulty, because of the students' lack of initial language proficiency.

All courses up to and including the third semester always contain a language proficiency test, which may consist of a translation, and often a vocabulary test, a grammar test and an essay (cf. 2.1.3 above). Assessment of oral proficiency varies, but will often include a test of the students' mastery of the phoneme system of the target language and a test of his/her fluency in the language. The assessment of other courses is through written or oral examination at the end of each course, through term papers on specific topics and through continuous assessment.

2.1.3. Impact of Community programmes to date

Sweden has entered the ERASMUS programme comparatively recently, and there have not as yet been a great many opportunities for it to have an effect on either the organisation, contents, teaching or assessment. In fact, no instances of changes of curricula and syllabuses as a result of student or teacher exchange have been reported. The number of exchanges has, however, increased rapidly, and seems to be increasing even further during the current year. Some universities report that languages represent a minor part of the total number of exchanges. There is also, as has been intimated above, a problem of reciprocity in the exchange between Sweden and other EU countries. However, a number of English, German, French, and Spanish students have spent a semester in Sweden studying their own language, at the same time as studying Swedish and in some cases another subject (e.g. social work). They will then mostly choose advanced courses in modern or historical linguistics, or in literature, or sometimes write a term paper under a Swedish supervisor. Their perspective is often that of their own languages as a second or foreign language.

Generally speaking, the experiences reported have been very positive on the individual level, both with regard to the Swedish students going abroad and EU students coming to Sweden. It has been pointed out that the teaching methodology used at Swedish universities is appreciated by EU students coming to Sweden..

The major importance so far of EU language students coming to Sweden and of Swedish language students studying in other member states is the implicit quality comparison (benchmarking) of our own system vis-à-vis the systems of other countries.

2.2. Alternative programmes

2.2.1. Content and objectives

The aims of these programmes are usually for students to be able to use the target language for professional purposes as well as to get an understanding of aspects of the country of the target language related to other areas included in the programme (economics, engineering, social science, etc). They will therefore focus on global language proficiency and on the study of various aspects of the country of the target

language. Sometimes language study is integrated with the study of other subjects; thus, the literature, instruction and exams would be in the target language.

Because of the flexible system of most of higher education in Sweden today, students are free to build their own alternative programmes. Thus, they can easily include e.g. French, sociology and political science in a B.A. degree, provided that one of the subjects is studied for a minimum of three semesters and includes a 10-credit project, and that another of the subjects is studied for a minimum of two semesters.

However, a number of programmes, especially those leading up to a professional degree, are less flexible. Some of them include a major language component. This applies e.g. to the 4-year international economics programme, which includes a minimum of two and a half semesters of specialised language studies (usually a minimum of half a semester of English plus two semesters of one other language, French, German, Spanish, Russian, Italian). Usually also the degree project is written in the language studied. This programme will normally also involve studies in the country/countries of the target languages.

Similarly, there are engineering programmes at some universities with a major language ingredient, which also includes one year's studies in the country where the language studied is spoken. Special agreements have been made with British, French, German and even Japanese Schools of Engineering. The programme will contain a minimum of two semesters of language studies in Sweden, integrated with engineering studies.

2.2.2. Structure of programmes

The structure of these programmes will vary immensely. In some (fairly rare) cases language studies will form a separate part of the programme; in most cases they will be integrated into the subject studies (e.g. law, engineering, economics, political science). Thus, the course literature will be studied and seminars will be held in the language in question. This applies particularly of course to English, but also to German and French in some cases. Occasionally two teachers are present at seminars, one a subject specialist and one a language specialist. They will then comment on relevant aspects, particularly as regards the written and oral contributions by the students.

An interesting example can be quoted regarding a two-year, non-degree programme integrating Spanish, Business Studies and Ethnography at Stockholm University. After graduating the students are expected to have an excellent command of Spanish, a good knowledge of ethnological/social anthropological aspects of the Spanish-speaking world and, finally, an overview of the field of business administration.

2.2.3. Impact of Community programmes to date

Since these programmes vary a great deal, it is impossible to gauge the impact of Community efforts. Programmes which involve an integration between non-language studies and language studies, should, however, be ideal for exchange both with regard to the language component and the other components.

2.3. Postgraduate programmes (up to and including PhD)

2.3.1. Content and objectives

Postgraduate programmes in languages are offered at five of the universities.

The objectives include the scientific study of a language and/or its literature. A Ph.D. degree will require a minimum of four years' full time studies, half of which are normally

spent on advanced courses in linguistics or literature and scientific method and half on the writing of a dissertation. A licentiate degree, which is offered at most of the five universities, takes about two years.

Candidates will usually concentrate on either linguistics or literature. A recent survey (Brandell - Wahlén in preparation) shows that the overall distribution is about 50:50 for the six languages with the largest production of theses (English, French, German, Spanish, Russian, Finnish). There are few dissertations dealing with older periods of language and literature.

Applied linguistics is not a major concern of language departments. One of the few examples is a master's course at Stockholm University run jointly by the linguistics department and the English department. A few dissertations deal with problems of language teaching, but they are the exception rather than the rule. Postgraduate programmes in translation and interpreting do not exist.

There are two major problems in postgraduate language education. One is the age of the graduates; the other is the length of the studies. The average age of those who start a doctoral programme is nearly 30. The average age of men awarded a doctor's degree is 40 and for women c. 44 (Brandell - Wahlén, in preparation)

2.3.2. Structure of programmes

The courses will normally run as seminars meeting once a week for half a semester or a semester. Students' achievements are most often assessed in an oral examination, although in the early stages of the programme, written examinations may occur.

Throughout the four years there will be seminars on method and discussions of chapters of dissertations. A supervisor, who follows the progress of the student, is appointed for each Ph.D. candidate.

For the public discussion of the dissertation the faculty appoints an examiner whose task it is to scrutinise the thesis and put forward his/her criticism in an exchange of ideas with the examinee.

2.3.3. Impact of Community programmes

The effect of Community programmes is difficult to assess yet. Few language students have studied abroad with the assistance of such programmes. It is quite common for postgraduate students to spend some time in the country whose language they study, most often to work on their dissertations. Most of them will, however, find funding from other sources for these purposes. It would be desirable to develop exchange programmes on a larger scale.

2.4. Career prospects for graduates of language programmes

The only obvious careers for language graduates are teaching and translation/interpreting, students in these programmes are a minority. Few follow-up studies have been conducted, and those that exist, e.g. Sedighzadeh (1989) indicate that they are to be found in a large variety of occupations including secretary, foreign office official, airline officer and accountant. It is thus clear that many of our language students are recruited among those who have a general interest in and need of language training, and that some of these become interested in pursuing further studies and research. It is clear that in this light, language proficiency and a general cultural aspect become important elements of an undergraduate language programme. For those who earn a doctor's degree career prospects are currently fairly bright, since a number of posts both in higher education and the public school system will become vacant in the

next few years. At least, this applies to English, French, German and, perhaps, Spanish, whereas graduates with other languages may still find difficulties in finding jobs.

3. INITIAL AND IN-SERVICE TRAINING OF LANGUAGE TEACHERS

3.1. Initial training

3.1.1. Institutions responsible for training

The universities and university colleges offer programmes for the training of language teachers. In most, if not in all, cases the main responsibility rests with departments or schools of education, which also teach the didactics and methodology of language teaching. Language departments are normally in charge of language studies. Only in Stockholm is there an independent Institute of Education, which has the overall responsibility, whereas Stockholm University language departments are in charge of language training proper.

3.1.2. - 3.1.3. Structure and content of programmes

In the current system of teacher training for the Swedish school system there are two major programmes, one for compulsory school, and one for upper secondary school. The former programme has two partly overlapping strands (for teachers in year 1 — 7 and for teachers in year 4 —9).

The diagram below illustrates the general structure of language teacher training.

Forms 1 - 7 (3,5 years)

English (1 semester)

Other subjects including education, didactics and practical teacher training (6 semesters)

Forms 4 - 9 (4 years)

English, German, French or Spanish (2 semesters)

Other subjects including education, didactics and practical teacher training (6 semesters)

Upper secondary school (5 years)

Language studies: 4 semesters in language one

Language studies: 4 semesters in language two

Education, didactics, practical teacher training: 2 semesters

The detailed structure of programmes varies with the university, department and language. The typical programme for teachers for forms 1 - 7 would, however, include courses in spoken and written proficiency, often based on text or other media and integrated into the more factual courses; literature, civilization and general culture of the country in question, phonetics, grammar/ linguistics, history of the language and didactics. Finally, a two- to three-week study visit to England is usually required.

The programme for teachers for forms 4 - 9 is similar, but there is often room for more flexibility.

For upper secondary school teachers a minimum of two yearss studies each of two languages is required. Often, students are allowed a fair amount of freedom of choice after the initial year. There is, for example, the choice of a specialisation in language, literature and sometimes other fields such as history or social issues. Students must

furthermore do a one-semester, or in many cases half-semester, research project within a field of their own choice. The programme also includes one semester's studies in the country of the target language (where the research project could be carried out).

The target language is most often also the language of instruction, which means that oral and written proficiency practice is integrated with the teaching of other aspects of language studies (literature, government and institutions etc).

Assessment of language proficiency varies between languages, departments and institutions. A common procedure during the first two semesters in English, German, French and Spanish is a package consisting of test of grammatical structures; a translation and/or a short essay marked for language rather than content and sometimes vocabulary tests based on word frequency lists; oral proficiency (phonemes, intonation patterns, fluency and general oral [correctness]) is often assessed in special pronunciation tests and/or oral tests or continuously in class. After the first two semesters various kinds of essays and reports are often required, which are assessed for language as well as content.

3.1.4. Impact of Community programmes to date

Too short a period has elapsed since Sweden's joining the Union for these programmes to have had a real effect on the training of language teachers. Nor has Sweden participated in the Lingua programme, which is especially designed for these purposes. The above-mentioned study visits and study period spent abroad are most often done within the framework of bilateral agreements or on a commercial basis and not as a result of Community action.

Thus, most teacher candidates now participate in locally arranged study visits or in longer periods of study (for upper secondary school teacher candidates). There are no such programmes for the academic staff, who teach the candidates. To a very limited degree, they have been able to participate in academic teacher exchange programmes. Most often, however, their visits for study and research are financed by the faculties or research councils or foundations.

3.2. In-service training

3.2.1. Institutions responsible for training

The in-service training of all teachers including language teachers is the responsibility of the local education authorities in each municipality. Consequently, there is no uniform system. In many cases the universities or colleges will be asked to provide courses on the basis of a contract, or individual university lecturers will agree to lecture on various topics related to language teaching. In other cases local authorities will send language teachers abroad for studies or study visits to the country whose language they teach.

There is an In-Service Training Department at Uppsala University which has a certain amount of government support to organise courses and seminars abroad and, to some extent, in Sweden, primarily for language teachers, and cooperates with various organisations in Sweden and Europe, e.g. ZFA (Zentralstelle für Auslandsschulwesen) and Goethe-Institut. In collaboration with the Council of Europe they also arrange seminars on various aspects of teaching methodology in a development perspective (e.g. learner autonomy). Furthermore, the In-Service Training Department arranges courses within the framework of the CDCC Teacher Bursaries Scheme of the Council of Europe and channels applications for participating in such courses abroad. Those who participate in these seminars are responsible for disseminating results and information to colleagues, and the programme thus has multiplicatory effects throughout Sweden.

3.2.2. Content of training programmes

Since there is no uniform model of in-service training, very few generalisations can be made in this respect. However, it can be assumed that courses and programmes will include the following aspects: language proficiency training, language teaching methodology, research in language acquisition, language change, culture, civilisation and literature.

3.2.3. Structure of programmes

All teachers are obliged to participate in in-service training activities during a specified number of days each year. The organisation and structure of these activities vary from local authority to local authority, and, in fact from individual school to individual school, and may cover a vast range of topics. For language teachers programmes may vary from a series of seminars to three-week courses in the country of the target language, depending on the resources allocated for these purposes by the local authorities. The impression given is that these activities are sometimes planned on an ad-hoc basis.

3.2.4. Impact of Community programmes to date

Community programmes have had very little impact on in-service training of teachers so far, mainly because Sweden has not been involved in Lingua until recently.

3.3. Training of teachers of second language

This category is not relevant.

3.4. Training of teachers of "home languages" or immigrant languages

Immigrant children are normally entitled to a certain amount of instruction on their own language. "Home language" teachers are normally native speakers of the languages they teach and follow a special two-year study programme to obtain qualifications to teach. Community action is hardly relevant here, since the vast majority of languages taught are spoken in countries outside the Union.

4. LANGUAGE PROVISION FOR STUDENTS OF OTHER DISCIPLINES

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

What has been said under 2.1 applies to this section, too. It should again be emphasized that under the new Higher Education Act of 1993 the individual student has vast opportunities to include greatly different subjects in his/her degree. To what extent this is done is impossible to say at the moment.

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

4.2.1. - 4.2.2. Content, objectives and structure

A variety of such courses are offered, and it is impossible to generalise. They are offered as the need arises, and the content and scope will vary with the underlying subject matter, and the student's familiarity with the language.

However, four general types of service courses may be discerned:

a) short general courses for special purposes included in non-language programmes (a five-week course in German for law students, a 3-week course in Spanish for engineering students etc)

b) reading courses for students who are more or less beginners and who need to have a sufficient knowledge of the language to be able to read titles, abstracts and short articles (or, at least, to be able to ascertain whether the article in question is worth having translated). More advanced reading courses will include reading strategies etc. The length will vary between 20 and 40 hours

c) writing courses for advanced, normally postgraduate, students. These courses are, in the vast majority of cases English courses will address issues such as writing strategies and structure, sometimes on the basis of the principles of text linguistics.

d) Courses in oral proficiency. Most often they are included in postgraduate programmes to help students improve their proficiency with a view to conference and seminar presentations and the like.

4.2.3. Impact of Community Programmes to date

Community programmes have had little effect on these types of courses. It may be mentioned, however, that they may have been useful to students who are going away on exchange programmes under the auspices of Erasmus etc., and can be developed to meet such needs.

5. THE TRAINING OF TRANSLATORS AND INTERPRETERS

5.1. Institutions responsible for training

The emphasis of language training in Sweden has been on a high level of language proficiency both at school and at university, but regular programmes for the training of translators and interpreters have not been on the agenda of universities until some 10 years ago. The only training available was non-academic programmes for interpreters in immigrant languages and sign language interpreters.

The National Institute for Interpretation and Translation Studies, attached to Stockholm University, was founded in 1986 primarily to cater for the needs of trained interpreters in immigrant languages. It is the responsibility of the Institute to identify needs and allocate resources for training. Since its creation, the number of activities undertaken by the Institute has grown rapidly and today it includes training at university level as well as training of community interpreters all over Sweden in adult educational associations and folk high schools.

5.2. - 5.3. The content and structure of training programmes

Until recently the resources for university courses have been limited, which means that programmes offered have varied with each year and with needs identified annually. Since 1986 undergraduate courses varying from two to four semesters depending on the language and specialisation have been offered in the following areas:

Interpreting: Diploma in conference interpreting: EU languages (Swedish, English, German, French, Spanish).

Diploma in conference interpreting: Scandinavian languages (Finnish and one of the following actively: Swedish, Danish, Norwegian; passive knowledge of the other two).

Diploma in court interpreting: Finnish, Spanish, Persian, Arabic

Diploma in medical interpreting: Finnish, Persian

Diploma in general immigrant language interpreting: Arabic, Kurdish, Finnish, Persian, Polish, Serbo-Croatian, Spanish.

Translation: Diploma in translation: English, Finnish, French, German, Italian, Russian, Spanish.

Various further education courses for professional translators and interpreters.

With the accession of Sweden to the European Union the need for competent interpreters and translators to serve in the various institutions of the EU has been fully recognised, and the government has allocated special funds to implement a complete revision of the programmes for interpreter and translator training in major European languages. The new programmes in translation will be mainly postgraduate courses leading to a Master's degree. The Diploma in conference interpreting is already given at postgraduate level.

Admission to undergraduate courses is by entrance test, and on a competitive basis, which means that only the best applicants are admitted to any one course. Graduates of general immigrant language interpreting programmes are eligible for accreditation as registered interpreters.

Admission to the course in conference interpreting (EU languages) is through an oral entrance test assessed by active conference interpreters on a selection committee.

The performance of each student in the final examination is judged by an examination committee consisting of one teacher and two external examiners.

5.4. Impact of Community Programmes to date

Community programmes have so far had little impact on translator's and interpreter's programmes. The Institute is a member of a recently created network for research and university training of TV translators. It has also already established close contacts with various EU institutions and schools in different EU member states. The first programme in conference interpreting in EU languages was set up with the assistance of S.C.I.C. of the European Commission and of the Centre for Conference Interpreting at the Copenhagen Business School. During the programme the Institute received visits from the European Court and the European Parliament. The graduates of the programme have been offered practice and positions with the European Parliament, which has also approached the Institute to establish guidelines for future cooperation. Similar procedures are under way with the Commission. There are also close contacts with the Institute's counterparts in Finland in order to promote cooperation in the field.

Furthermore, relations with the Nordeuropainstitut at Humboldtuniversität zu Berlin and with the University of Mainz (Germersheim) have been established with regard to cooperation in the fields of training of both interpreters and translators. A budding exchange programme for the development of the teaching of interpreting is underway with the University of Trieste.

5.5. Career prospects outside the areas of translating and interpreting

No investigations have been conducted as to the careers of translation and interpreting programme graduates. It would seem, however, as if the majority are active within the

areas of translation and interpreting, and that for those who are not, the same thing applies as for other language programme graduates (see 2.4).

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

Not applicable.

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

There is a great deal of flexibility in the Swedish university system, which applies also to language studies. As described above under 2.1.1, the student chooses his/her length of study, and also the context in which the studies are to take place. For a degree the study of a language could be combined with the study of another language or a different subject altogether. From the point of view of language departments it is desirable that students should pursue studies at a higher level, so that recruitment to university posts could be facilitated. In the next decade or so a great number of posts will be vacant, and for the moment there does not seem to be a sufficient number of Ph.D.s to fill them.

There is thus a need for qualified university teachers and researchers in the years to come in order to fill vacancies in schools and universities and colleges.

There is a need to develop better testing procedures and methods both as regards language proficiency and other components of language studies. It is a commonplace observation that it is the examination system and examination procedures that decide the orientation of students' efforts.

There are several proficiency tests which have been developed by British, American (TOEFL), German (Goethe-Institut) and French organisations (CAPES), which are often used to determine student's suitability for studies in the country in question. However, these tests are often geared towards general knowledge of the language and not towards academic requirements. It would thus be important to discuss testing methods and also to develop tests which could be used and recognised in different countries in order to facilitate mobility and recognition of studies.

There is a need to improve cooperation in the field of IT and the use of technology including cable television and interactive television for language learning. This would also help to improve the methodology of distance learning in languages, especially as regards language proficiency, but also other aspects of language programmes, in the light of recent and future financial cutbacks.

Research on language acquisition is an important contribution to the development of language teaching and learning. While a great deal has been done in the last few years, much remains to be done, in order to create an understanding of these mechanisms. The results need to be disseminated and applied in actual teaching. In this context I would like to argue that the dissemination of such research results are only one aspect of the pedagogical training of teachers of languages in higher education. While teachers at school are given many opportunities for participating in in-service training, this is less true for university and college teaching staff. They are expected to do their own in-service training, mostly in the form of research; the discussion and trying out of new and unorthodox methods of teaching either language proficiency or other components of traditional language programmes are not always given priority, especially not in periods of financial cutbacks.

7.1.2. Seen in relation to professional requirements

It could be argued that apart from teaching, translation/interpreting and a university career there is no natural professional future for language students. However, if the professional career of students is going to involve international work, which seems reasonable to assume, there is a substantial need for increased opportunities for studies in the country of the target language, not least for the cultural experience.

If the career is that of a university teacher, there is a need for more structured programmes with a scholarly approach from the start. The development of methods to teach writing is essential in this context, since upper secondary school, for obvious reasons, does not always provide opportunities for extensive writing (with the possible exception of English).

7.1.3. Seen in relation to the creation of Europe

Cooperation in the field of development of methodology for distance learning and for other kinds of teaching and learning is desirable. For a few years Sweden has had a Council for the Renewal of Undergraduate Teaching, modelled on the structure of the research councils with highly selective procedures, using prominent Swedish and international referees. Several language projects have been awarded substantial grants on a competitive basis to develop ideas, methods and material. Support of a similar nature for projects on a European basis could help to develop teaching methodology in a wide range of countries.

7.2. In initial and in-service training of language teachers

7.2.1. Seen in relation to the development of language studies

Better language proficiency is required, especially as regards languages other than English. This will be particularly relevant in connection with the possible introduction of German and French into the 6th year of school and the fact that German or French are going to be compulsory in lower secondary school.

Better relationship between research and curricula, as well as between teaching and research. In this context, this applies to research on second language acquisition, which could be rewarding not only for the student's future career as a teacher but also for his/her learning of the foreign language. Research on and development of language teaching methodology are other aspects important for improving student's proficiency.

The introduction or increased use of up-to-date language material in the form of video tapes, cable television and information technology is desirable. The building up of text corpora in many languages including English (for which there are several text corpora built on scientific principles as well as newspapers available on CD-ROM), French and German makes it possible to ask students to make their own investigations into e.g. the frequency of a word or expression, collocations, grammatical entities, etc. The introduction or increased use of such functions as e-mail for communication between learners and native speakers is something that would contribute to better language proficiency. These aspects could be introduced and used at school level, but would assume that teachers have a thorough familiarity with the technology. The same applies to the use of interactive television for language students.

Thus, the development of teaching and learning material using the above-mentioned technologies is a major desideratum. A problem in this context is that currently in many languages a contrastive approach is used, which makes cooperation in this field somewhat problematic.

7.2.2. Seen in relation to professional requirements

Curricula will have to emphasize the integration between language studies, research and language teaching. In this context, technologies such as those mentioned above under 7.2.1 would have to be made use of.

7.2.3. Seen in relation to the creation of Europe

There is a clear need for Sweden to exploit the possibilities of the Lingua programme.

It is obvious that in order to improve the training of language teachers, facilities for language teacher trainees to pursue some of their programme abroad are absolutely essential. Such possibilities already exist in most language teacher training programmes, but would need to be extended for teacher candidates for the compulsory comprehensive school. Also collaboration for the development of material within the sphere of information technology and video would improve the situation. Finally the development of joint programmes for teacher candidates from different countries would be an interesting challenge.

7.3. In language provision for non-language university students

7.3.1. Seen in relation to the development of language studies

The development of teaching and learning material for various LSP courses is desirable. It is true that there exists a fair amount of material in English and German and, to some extent, in French, but for other Union languages there is a shortage of useful books and material for computers, video and other media. Also, existing material is often for proficiency levels (at least where English is concerned) which are too low for the students concerned. It would seem that the use of such media, including interactive television, would be particularly interesting in the context of language studies for specific purposes.

In view of increasing internationalization efforts at all Swedish universities and university colleges, it is important that courses should be offered in English, German and French for Swedish students as well as for visiting students and exchange students. For Swedish students this is a way of integrating in a natural way their subject studies with language studies. This integration is already taking place at most of the major universities, above all from third-year level and masterss and postgraduate levels in a variety of faculties and departments. In order to make further headway in this direction, there is a need for further training for university lecturers in lecturing in English, German and French.

The courses will have to be integrated better into the non-language programmes by using course literature written in the target language more consistently. Also, from the point of view of teaching methodology, other forms of teaching than the traditional ones will need to be developed. Examples are team teaching, the use of case studies as the basis of analysing problems in the field of study chosen. In this area, too, it is essential to develop testing methods in order to be able to provide information to both students, teachers and future employers (cf. 7.1.1).

7.3.2. Seen in relation to professional requirements

This area covers a wide range of professions, so it is difficult to generalise. However, the development of authentic language material relevant to the professions in question is indispensable. This applies not least to material for oral communication, i.e. role plays, simulations and the like.

The material should be developed both in the form of text, case studies for law, business studies, engineering studies, medical studies etc. and in the form of problem-solving exercises which would require the use of information technology (Internet, database search, e-mail etc.). For this purpose the development of testing procedures is also highly relevant.

7.3.3. Seen in relation to the creation of Europe

In a European perspective this is probably the most important aspect of language studies in higher education. If professionals from different countries are going to be able to collaborate on a larger scale, a knowledge of languages at advanced level with an emphasis on one's profession is indispensable. Thus, cooperation between universities to develop methods and material would be of great value.

What is stated above under 7.3.1 applies to this section as well. It could be added that the opportunity of pursuing a period of study of one's subject area (e.g. economics, engineering, political science) in the country of the target language is probably the most efficient way of improving relevant language proficiency.

7.4. In the training of translators and interpreters

7.4.1. Seen in relation to the development of language studies

First of all, it should be pointed out that the training of translators and interpreters in Sweden is based on the assumption that students have a high degree of language from the start. Thus, nearly all programmes are strictly professionally oriented. As a consequence, programmes for translators and interpreters are comparatively short, since some of the basic training given in the programmes in other countries is assumed to be unnecessary.

In this light, there is a clear need to develop syllabi and curricula as regards the training of both translators and interpreters. However, the training of conference interpreters has not been a prominent part of higher education language programmes for very long in Sweden, and consequently this area is more likely to require support for development.

As explained above, there are no full four-year undergraduate programmes for the training of either interpreters or translators. Such programmes are now in the process of being developed for translators, and have, indeed been tried out, still based on the assumption that advanced academic studies of the language are a prerequisite. The Institute for Interpreting and Translation Studies has thus financed a programme requiring a minimum of three semester's full-time studies of one language plus two semester's studies of a subject other than a language for admission. These courses will then be included in the degree programme together with a three-semester intensive training programme in translation.

Also, distance courses for translators are now being tried out. This needs to be done on a larger scale, and methodology for this kind of teaching could be useful both for programmes of this kind and for the development of working methods used by professional translators.

For the programmes which are now being launched it is necessary to produce teaching material and exercises in various aspects of translation and interpreting. Further, the development of easily accessible databases for vocabulary is highly desirable. The existing databases are either difficult to access or too specialized to be useful for educational purposes.

Those who teach our courses are often either academic teachers with an interest in the problems of interpreting and translation or professional translators or interpreters with a limited academic background. We need professional academic teachers of translation and interpreting. For this purpose we must develop teacher training in the field, and for this we require the development of efficient teaching and examination methods for teacher training and in-service training of active teachers. This training should include the pedagogy of translation and interpreting teaching (there is a fair amount of material on the teaching of translation, but less on interpretation), lexicography etc.

Our courses for translators assume that there is a clear distinction between the teaching of translation as a professional activity and translation taught as a tool for improving grammar and written proficiency. We need to work out better methods of teaching the specific skills needed by professional translators

The most obvious problem in Sweden in the area of interpreting is the lack of qualified conference interpreters with specialist knowledge in various fields. The development of programmes for the training of such interpreters is badly needed.

7.4.2. Seen in relation to professional requirements

There are difficulties in getting opportunities for practising interpretation in authentic situations, and the development of cooperation in this field is thus a priority. There is a need for teaching aids which could be used to develop professional skills; interactive television, computer simulations etc would be excellent tools.

7.4.3. Seen in relation to the creation of Europe

Mutual exchange programmes for student interpreters and active interpreters as part of in-service training programmes would be highly desirable. For future European cooperation it is, of course, necessary to develop skill for interpreting both into and from Swedish. In this context it will be necessary also to consider the needs of interpreting services into the Baltic languages and Russian. This is especially important for Sweden with its growing contacts with these countries, which are also of interest for the Union.

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

Not relevant.

8. MEASURES TO BE TAKEN TO MEET THE NEEDS IDENTIFIED

8.1. Measures to be taken in universities (outside the area of teacher training)

8.1.1. At the level of institutions

In 7.1.1 it has been argued that there is a need to develop testing methods both as regards language proficiency and other aspects of language studies. At the institutional level this is a means of assuring the quality of language programmes, and needs to be done continuously with a view to improving the precision of teaching and student learning.

8.1.2. At the national level

Developing language proficiency test methods nationally, would help to start a discussion of what should be taught and learned. As an example, it could be mentioned that the German departments at Swedish universities and colleges have a joint language proficiency testing programme. This has led not only to fruitful discussions between

representatives of departments but also to facilitating student mobility within Sweden. Because of the level of autonomy of the individual universities, regional and national authorities cannot enforce such cooperation, but could lend monetary support for such projects, if they are well substantiated (see 7.1.3 above).

8.1.3. At the level of the European Union

I propose that the union should lend support to the development of language proficiency testing methods in order to facilitate both mobility and recognition of studies and degrees, and improve the quality of testing. Joint projects for the development of testing methods and procedures would also be an excellent way of focussing the discussion on what should be learnt and what should be taught in a European context, and the ultimate goal would be a series of tests in all the Union languages which would measure proficiency in similar ways, so that a person's mastery of different languages can actually be compared.

It is obvious that development in this area would have to begin on a fairly modest level, perhaps in the form of working groups comparing testing methods in different countries, followed by experimental work based on the theories developed by Davies (1990) and others.

The establishing of joint programmes between European institutions has not yet been tried out except in a very few cases. It would, perhaps, be most interesting in the case of programmes which combine language studies with the study of other fields.

8.2. Measures to be taken in the area of initial and in-service language teacher training

8.2.1. At the level of the institutions

Institutions should establish working groups including teachers of education and university language teachers to explore how current ideas (see e.g. Ellis 1994) on language acquisition could be incorporated in curricula. The groups should explore the possibilities of research and development in this area, with special reference to the situation of both university students and school children.

Institutions should continue to explore the possibilities provided by the new media in order to generate natural language learning situations both for their own students, and for them to use in their careers as school teachers.

8.2.2. At the national level

The national authorities should make interuniversity cooperation in the areas mentioned under 8.2.1 possible by providing resources for research and development in the area of language pedagogy with special reference to language learning. Also, the use of new media will have to be developed through cooperation at the national level to become effective. In this context it is, of course, a commonplace to point out that the new media actually facilitate cooperation, so that the mere fact that they are used contributes to the development of ideas.

8.2.3. At the level of the European Union

The establishment of joint teacher training programmes between two or more member states would be an interesting experiment. It would not only improve the understanding of each other's educational systems (both at school and university level), but would also facilitate teacher mobility within Europe.

The provision of funds for the development of teaching and testing methodology and teaching and learning material which makes use of new media worked out in cooperation between researchers/educationalists would also be of great value for the improvement of language teaching throughout Europe, and creating a better understanding for the educational systems of other member states.

Finally, seminars between researchers/educationalists interested in development on the above principles would be a way of starting important joint development in the area.

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

Not applicable

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