



THEMATIC NETWORK PROJECT IN THE AREA OF LANGUAGES III

SUB-PROJECT THREE:

LANGUAGES AS AN INTERFACE BETWEEN DIFFERENT SECTORS OF EDUCATION

NATIONAL REPORT / Austria

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General Introduction

Austria is a federal state (ca. 83,800 sq. km, a total of ca. 8 million inhabitants, ca. 1,5 million of which live in Vienna) consisting of 9 provinces (*Länder*). The federal president is the supreme representative of the state; the federal government is formed by the Federal Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor and the Federal Ministers. The 9 *Länder* - Parliaments (*Landtage*) serve as legislative bodies at *Länder* level. On the third level are the municipalities with the municipal council and a guaranteed right to self-administration, although they are subject to the administrative control of the *Land*.

In 2001, approximately 56% of the population aged 29 or under were in education, and there were 873 000 young people of compulsory education age. 90% of students attended state-funded education establishments. Private institutions accounted for the remaining 10%.

Part one: Description of administrative and educational structures and policies

1. Responsibilities and competences

Responsibilities for legislation and its implementation are divided between the federation (*Bund*) and the *Länder* (where it is executed by the parliaments of the *Länder* and the *Ämter der Landesregierungen*). In specific matters enumerated in the Constitution, the federation sets the framework, while detailed legislation is implemented by the parliaments of the *Länder* (*Landtage*). The Federation exercises considerable responsibility for the education system as a whole and the rights and conditions of education staff. However, educational matters are regulated by the School Organisation Act, which has the status of a constitutional law; any amendment requires a two-thirds majority in Parliament. This legislative hurdle has provided the Austrian educational system with a high degree of stability but turned general reforms into a difficult task.

As regards administration, the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture is responsible for primary, secondary and higher education and the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Labour for in-company apprenticeship training. The *Länder* (federal states) are mainly responsible for secondary legislation and the provision of public-sector compulsory education. They have sole responsibility for crèches and kindergartens.

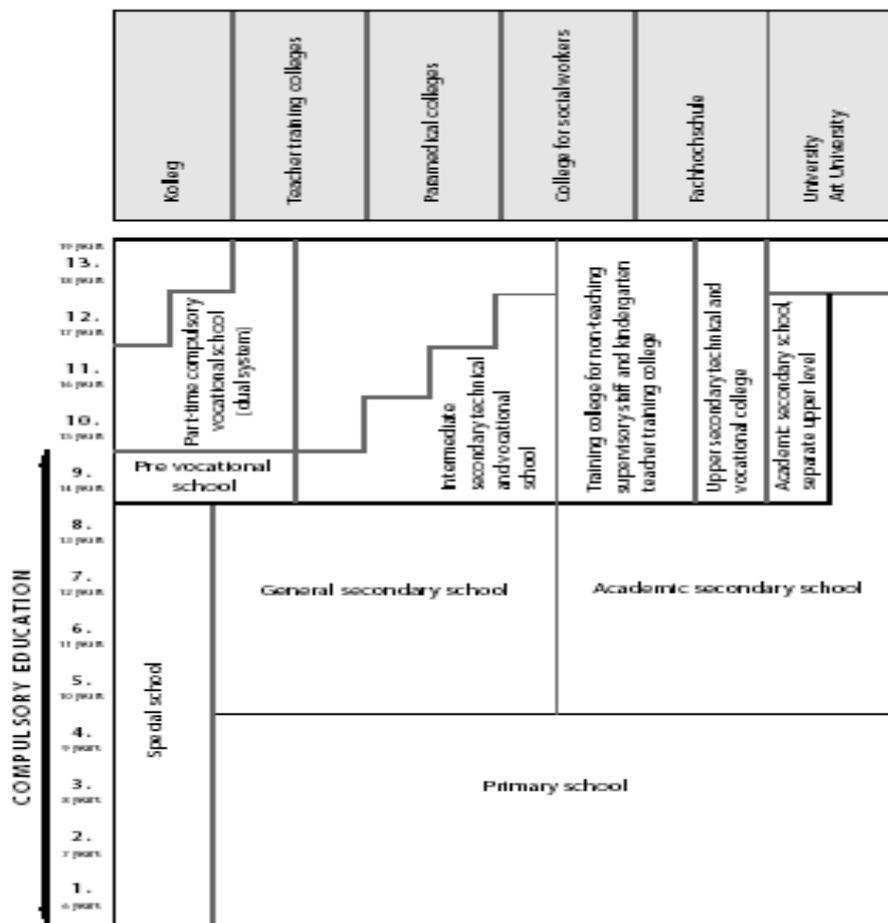
2. Mapping of institutions and programmes engaged in language provision

In Austria **schools** enjoy some autonomy in budgetary management and, up to a point, are free to adapt the curriculum to local needs. A curricular framework is established by the Ministry for Education, Science and Culture on the basis of proposals drafted by curricular task forces. The consultation process includes district and provincial educational bodies and organizations of teacher representatives. The Ministry also approves textbooks. Schools are free to make their own choice and have some freedom to adapt the curriculum to the local context.

The 2002 **University** Act transformed universities from federal institutions to public law entities which are no longer under federal administration. The 2002 University Education Act cedes almost all legal competences to the universities, which are now accountable for their own programmes, whilst having to comply with EU directives, if applicable. The 2002 Universities Act was fully implemented on 1 January 2004 and gives full legal status to universities. Newly recruited university staff will henceforth be employed under private law contracts. In the future, federal funding will consist of 3-year global budgets based on performance agreements. The role of the ministry is limited to legal supervision i.e. verifying compliance with laws and regulations. The University Council is charged with the majority of supervisory functions. It is a body of the university, examines the financial management of the Rectorate and exercises shared decision-making powers in fundamental strategic decisions. The top management is completed by a

senate, which is designed as the academic counterweight to the University Council and has a right of co-determination in final decisions on study matters. The Universities Act also created three new medical universities.

Territorial entities and private legal entities may operate **Fachhochschulen**. At present, *Fachhochschule* study programmes are mainly funded by the federal government in line with authorised study places.



Higher education is offered at:

- Universities and Universities of art and music;
- *Fachhochschulen* (institute of technical/vocational higher education);
- University centres for continuing education (Danube University Krems);
- private university (after accreditation);
- (*Berufs*)*Pädagogische Akademien* (teacher training college);
- *Akademien für gehobene technisch-medizinische Berufe* (colleges for high-level medical/technical professions)
- moreover, there are a number of educational institutions which offer university-type courses.

A law on the accreditation of **private universities** has been in force since 1999. Post-secondary studies and private educational establishments of a quasi-university character may be officially

recognised as private universities. For this purpose, an independent Accreditation Council was set up in the year 2000 which is composed of European university experts. So far, 6 private universities have been accredited. Universities are accredited for a maximum period of 5 years. Re-accreditation requires re-application before expiry. The Accreditation Council is moreover responsible for ensuring continuous and concomitant quality control of the accredited private universities.

3. Language policies and language education policies

The official national language and also instruction language in all educational sectors is German. In the mixed-language districts of Carinthia and Burgenland, Slovene/Croatian and Hungarian are admitted as further official languages. They are taught as subjects and also used as a means of instruction in these areas. This is anchored in the Austrian school law¹.

In Carinthia, instruction in the first three grades of *Volksschule* (primary school) is bilingual for the Slovenian minority, i.e. instruction is split equally between German and Slovenian. From grade 4 of primary school onwards, and in general secondary school, instruction is in German. For members of the Slovene minority, Slovenian is taught four hours a week as a compulsory subject.

Similar rules apply to the Hungarian and Croat minorities. Instruction is split equally between German and Hungarian and German and Croatian in the first four years of primary school.

Further to the Slovenes, Croats and Hungarians, the Czechs and Slovaks (in Vienna) as well as the Roma (in Burgenland) and the Sinti (in Carinthia) exist as minorities. Therefore minority languages are also taught in secondary schools with a specific cultural background.

In addition to supporting the diversity of different official languages in Austria the promotion of all languages of migrants and children with another mother tongue than German was integrated into the mainstream system in 1992/93. In particular in primary schools native speakers work together with their Austrian class teachers furthering the integration and bilingual literacy of foreign children.

At the same time remedial measures in German were taken over into the mainstream school system at general compulsory schools to support pupils whose mother tongue is not German.

Austria prides herself on having been the first country in Europe in 1998 to introduce a foreign language from the first grade at primary school as a compulsory subject. Integrating English into the general Primary School curriculum is required by law in Austria. The curriculum for the Primary School stipulates that English should be introduced from the first class of Primary with the aim of motivating interest in a foreign language, to open the way for communicative skills in English and to lead to a greater openness towards speakers of another language. Throughout the four years the focus is on communication and the themes are to be based around everyday life. More specifically, the themes of second language teaching stem directly from the general curriculum and are to be seen as an integrative part of lessons. With the exception of German, it

¹ §16 Unterrichtssprache (1) Unterrichtssprache ist die deutsche Sprache, soweit nicht für Schulen, die im Besonderen für sprachliche Minderheiten bestimmt sind, durch Gesetz oder durch zwischenstaatliche Vereinbarungen anderes vorgesehen ist.

(2) Soweit gemäß § 4 Abs. 3 des Schulorganisationsgesetzes an Privatschulen die Auswahl der Schüler nach der Sprache zulässig ist, kann die betreffende Sprache auch als Unterrichtssprache in solchen Privatschulen verwendet werden.

is suitable to teach certain phases of all subjects using the foreign language as a means of instruction, to deal with straightforward content².

These and similar activities in schools like promoting bilingual teaching in secondary schools have strengthened the awareness of language teaching and learning from primary to secondary school level.

All pupils in secondary education learn a European modern language as a subject from entering the first class at the age of ten. One foreign language is compulsory in all types of schools, whether pupils leave at the age of sixteen or continue to take the »Matura«. In the vast majority of schools, the first foreign language is English. Most school types leading to the »Matura« (sections of Grammar Schools, Commercial Schools, Tourism Colleges) require pupils to study a second and in some cases a third European language.³

At the same time and in addition to the EU mobility programmes, Austria runs a number of bilateral mobility programmes which offer different opportunities to University students and degree holders to go abroad and teach in different European countries and the USA.

Since the implementation of the university law in January 2004, Austrian universities have enjoyed total autonomy and have thus been able to develop their own strategies in language promotion and language teaching. Apart from their language teaching within the curricula of their courses, the bigger universities have already or are about to open their own language competence centres, where different language courses are offered not only to students but to the general public.

During the European Year of Languages in 2001 networks were created by different institutions and the Ministry of education, Science and Culture, which was responsible for the organisation of the EYL. With the European Commission's Action Plan 2004-2006, Promoting Language Learning and Linguistic Diversity, published in July 2003, Austria used these networks again to create an "**Austrian Language Committee**" which helped to develop a **National Action Plan** on how to implement the European objectives within the Austrian educational system in view of national priorities and life long learning.

An important coordinating role regarding the Action Plan lies with the newly founded **Austrian Language Competence Centre** in Graz - it is an interface between the European Commission, the Austrian Language Committee and the Federal Ministry for Education, Science and Culture. Synergies with the European Centre for Modern Languages in Graz/Austria and all other Austrian institutions involved in language developments have been established.

² Die Themen des Fremdsprachenlernens ergeben sich aus der klassenbezogenen Jahresplanung und verstehen sich als integrierter Teilbereich des Unterrichts. Sie werden im Laufe der gesamten Grundschulzeit immer wieder bearbeitet und erweitert.

Mit Ausnahme von "Deutsch, Lesen, Schreiben" bzw. "Deutsch, Lesen" eignen sich im Wesentlichen alle Unterrichtsgegenstände zur phasenweisen Verwendung der Fremdsprache als Unterrichtssprache, um einfache Sachverhalte auszudrücken.

³ **English** is taught in 100% of AHS (academic secondary education) , French an Latin in nearly all AHS. 81% of AHS offer **Italian**, nearly 60% offer Spanish. 75% of all AHS graduates will have studied 2 foreign languages when they leave school. On average AHS offer five different languages.

In the long run the Austrian Language Competence centre is seen as an institute with all the expertise in the field of languages and on innovations in language acquisition and it is intended that it will create or influence language policies in Austria.

Some of the most important trends of Austrian language policy have now been laid out in the above mentioned national Action Plan.

Core issues on the different levels of the educational system are:

- the implementation of the European framework of reference on all levels of the educational system
- enhancing mobility for all educational levels and participants
- early language learning
- bilingual teaching CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) particularly on the secondary level
- Creation of individual language centres at 4 Austrian Universities with an overall structure in view of the Bologna process.
- Language learning in adult education has to concentrate on socially weaker parts of society in order to give them better access to employment.

Secondly, the national Action Plan will try to support the improvement of language teaching by furthering the synergies between native, foreign and migrant languages, support the development of additional courses and materials for teaching personnel and make sure that innovative products, examples of best practice, will have enough support to reach their target groups and not fade away without being noticed as it tends to happen in far too many cases.

The third important area of this national action plan deals with the attempt to create “language friendly environments” in public areas, i.e. municipals or institutions which foster the idea to incite the wider public to learn a foreign language. Already existing means of support (e.g. the Language Portfolio) and/or European programmes should be used for this purpose. This is why the National Agencies of the European Programmes Socrates and Leonardo da Vinci are involved in this process and represented in the Austrian Language Committee.

These national attempts to reinforce and implement a national language education policy are always in view of the European Action Plan to make sure that European and national objectives will be implemented in a balanced and effective way.

An important aspect in the Action Plan is bilingual education. Austria has already placed much emphasis on this concept even before the Action Plan was implemented and over the last few years bilingual education has gained in importance.

In Carinthia, Burgenland and Vienna bilingual education may mean the use of ethnic group languages, in the rest of Austria bilingual education generally means English and, in a few cases, French.

A number of bilingual schools have now been established. There are different forms of bilingual teaching in use in Austria ranging from a subject being taught throughout in the foreign language to sporadic use of the foreign language in certain phases of lessons. These different forms are recognised as possibilities, which can be employed according to the circumstances. This is also anchored in the Austrian school law⁴.

⁴ (3) Darüber hinaus kann die Schulbehörde erster Instanz auf Antrag des Schulleiters, bei Privatschulen auf Antrag des Schulerhalters, die Verwendung einer lebenden Fremdsprache als Unterrichtssprache (Arbeitssprache) anordnen,

The first bilingual state school to be established was the Graz International Bilingual School (GIBS) <http://www.gibs.asn-graz.ac.at>. Since then there have been a number of further initiatives, notably the Linz International School Auhof (LISA) <http://www.auhof.asn-linz.ac.at> and the Vienna Bilingual Primary and Middle Schools in. There are now seven bilingual primary schools and eight bilingual middle schools in Vienna (<http://www.grq23vbs.ac.at/Info-Material/15E.doc>)

This list is by no means exhaustive. Furthermore, it is an indication of the success of these schools that bilingual streams have now been established at Grammar Schools (Allgemeine Bildende Höhere Schulen) in Villach, Klagenfurt and Innsbruck. This means that every year one class is opened as a bilingual class. The schools have in common that they work intensively on language skills during an introductory phase. In Lower Secondary lessons tend to be bilingual rather than immersion and CLIL methodology plays a significant rôle. Teachers in the Upper Secondary classes from all schools remark that the fact that subjects are taught in English becomes more and more natural and it is hardly necessary to make allowances (for example by reducing speed). There are clearly some differences between the schools. Autonomy means that the schools are free to choose which subjects are taught in English and also to decide, for instance, to give an extra lesson to a subject. At the LISA, Drama is taught as an additional subject to give support to linguistic flexibility and fluency and even French is taught through English (as the school is also attended by foreign students who have not yet mastered the German language). In Innsbruck there is a focus on natural sciences being taught in English and History, for example, is taught in German. These schools are all state controlled. However, parental contributions are paid to pay for books etc. In Klagenfurt, for instance, parental contributions are also used to finance the assistance of Native Speakers in subject lessons. The LISA also works with sponsoring. The schools tend to attract students from middle-class backgrounds.

English as a Working Language (EaA) in different forms is used in many Grammar Schools (AHS), Vocational Schools (BHS) and Lower Secondary Schools (Hauptschulen) throughout Austria. In some cases, a subject is taught for most of the year in English. In other cases, a specific topic or cross-curricular project work will be carried out in English. In these cases CLIL methodology is particularly important.

In the tertiary sector, visiting lectures are frequently held in a foreign language, most commonly in English. The ERASMUS Mobility Programme, for instance facilitates this.

At certain universities courses in English are an integrated part of the general programme.

The University of Salzburg list a number of courses from various fields held in English <http://www.db.sbg.ac.at/lvz/lva.asp?lvaasprache=en&sem=&subm=anzeigen>

The majority of these are, in fact, courses directly connected to Departments teaching English. However, further courses range from lectures on Genetics and Cell Biology, European Law, International Environmental Law, Social History and world affairs.

The University of Klagenfurt lists courses held in English at <http://www.uni-klu.ac.at/uniklu/studien/lvliste.jsp?englisch=yes> Again, the majority of the course are in fact directly connected to Departments teaching English. However, the list also includes a course on English for Scientific Research and courses on business English for Business Administration.

The Vienna University of Economics and Business Administration offers over 80 courses in English. <http://isc.wu-wien.ac.at/en/englishprogram/> However, it is pointed out the courses are primarily aimed at exchange students and that the regular courses of the Wirtschaftsuniversität are in German.

wenn dies wegen der Zahl von fremdsprachigen Personen, die sich in Österreich aufhalten, oder zur besseren Ausbildung in Fremdsprachen zweckmäßig erscheint und dadurch die allgemeine Zugänglichkeit der einzelnen Formen und Fachrichtungen der Schularten nicht beeinträchtigt wird. Diese Anordnung kann sich auch auf einzelne Klassen oder einzelne Unterrichtsgegenstände beziehen. Zwischenstaatliche Vereinbarungen bleiben davon unberührt.

Training bilingual Educators

At the Pädagogische Akademien⁵ there is clearly an awareness that training for CLIL teachers must be provided in order to train teachers for the future and there is a great variety of courses offered.

In Burgenland an „Akademielehrgang“⁶ is being run jointly by the Stiftung Pädagogische Akademie, the Pädagogisches Institut⁷ and the Religionspädagogisches Institut (Training College for Teachers of Religious Knowledge). This is a two-term course, which was initiated to meet EU demands to establish a higher level in foreign language efficiency and to provide training for teachers for the growing number of bilingual schools in Austria.

<http://www.pa-ei.asn-bgld.ac.at:8085/lehrang/index.htm>

In Carinthia there is a bilingual tradition for historic and ethnic reasons and thus the Pädagogische Akademie des Bundes in Kärnten (State Teachers' Training College in Carinthia) offers two training to teachers to teach Slovene. One course qualifies teachers to teach bilingually in German/Slovene Primary Schools and the second qualifies to teach Slovene in Lower Secondary and also to teach through Slovene. Both are „Akademielehrgänge“ and last six terms. The aim of the courses is to ensure proficiency in written and spoken Slovene and to qualify teachers to teach the language and cultural background to first, second and third language speakers.

There are a further „Akademielehrgänge“ for English and Italian as Working Languages with the aim to equip teachers to teach at bilingual schools. The courses last three and four terms respectively. <http://www.akademie.klu.at/>

The Pädagogische Akademie des Bundes in Niederösterreich also offers an „Akademielehrgang“ for Englisch als Arbeitssprache as a four-term course. Successful participants are then able to qualify for an MA post-graduate degree course at the University of East Anglia. The Akademielehrgang constitutes 45 of the 180 credits necessary for the Master's Degree.

<http://www.pabaden.ac.at/akademielehrgangenglisch.html>

The Pädagogische Akademie der Diözese St. Pölten offers a two-term course including teaching practice.

The Pädagogische Akademie Salzburg offers a course in French as a means of instruction in Primary Schools. This is a three-term course.

The Pädagogische Akademie des Bundes in der Steiermark offers a three-term course in the basics of English across the Curriculum including language proficiency to students training to teach in Primary, Lower Secondary and Special Needs.

<http://www.pa.asn-graz.ac.at/lehrang/index.htm>

In co-operation with the Pädagogisches Institut, Pädagogische Akademie der Diözese Graz-Seckau offers a three-term course on content based teaching and learning to qualified teachers.

http://www.pze.at/studien_r/index_files/Englisch_Arbeitssprache.htm

The Curriculum Development at Initial and Intermediate Level for Bilingual Integrated Teaching project (2000-2003)

<http://www.phedw.at/intnati/sokrates/cdibit/index.php>

developed modules to train bilingual educators. The project was co-ordinated by the Pädagogische Akademie der Erzdiözese Wien and the Pädagogische Akademie des Bundes in Tirol was a partner. It is envisaged that the modules will be integrated into the College programmes.

⁵ »Pädagogische Akademien« are the Austrian Initial Teacher Training Colleges. Hereafter, for pragmatic reasons, the German term will be used.

⁶ An »Akademielehrgang« is a course offered to students and graduates of the »Pädagogische Akademien«, which are taken in addition to regular courses and lead to a further qualification although not to a qualification in its own right. Hereafter, for pragmatic reasons, the German term will be used.

⁷ The »Pädagogische Institute« are institutions providing inservice training to teachers. Hereafter, for pragmatic reasons, the German term will be used.

Another such project is the Memo COMENIUS 2.1 project in which the Training Colleges of Pädagogische Akademie der Diözese Graz-Seckau and the Pädagogische Akademie des Bundes, Linz are partners.

A course on methodology is now offered by the Internationales Sprachenzentrum der Universität Innsbruck/ ISI http://www2.uibk.ac.at/isi/spezielles_angebot/spezielles_angebot.html The first part of the course is now running and offers CLIL methodology to subject teachers who are not qualified English teachers. The second part of the course will include both trained English teachers and non-English teachers.

At the University of Innsbruck, there is also a CLIL course held as an optional part of methodology training for future English teachers.

At present no specific qualification is stipulated by Regional School Boards.

At present numerous courses of various length and intensity are offered by the Pedagogical Institutes (Pädagogische Institute) responsible for Inset training in Austria. In general, the courses offer methodology.

Since 1997 the IFF www.iff.ac.at/schule, a faculty of the University of Klagenfurt has offered a two-year postgraduate university course on English as a Working Language based on an Action Research approach. Participants obtain a postgraduate certificate on successful completion of the course.

Part two: Mapping of interfaces on the vertical and horizontal axes

1. Structure for co-operation in the educational sector and between the different language providers

As has already been pointed out, responsibilities in the educational sector in Austria are divided between the federation and the *Länder*.

On the federal or ministerial level different commissions are established to work on the creation of new or the amendment of existing curricula (Lehrplankommissionen), taking into consideration both national and European objectives. The consultation process includes district and provincial educational bodies, universities and organizations of teacher representatives. The coordinator of the commission reports back to the ministry, the final recommendation is then presented to the Sozialpartner, LEAs etc. and in the end approved by the minister.

Thus the ministry implemented the Common European Framework of Languages in the new Curriculum for upper secondary as a recent amendment to the curriculum for the general education sector in July 2004. The language portfolio is recommended and for the final exams (Matura) of the upper secondary level candidates will have the opportunity to take one of the exams in a foreign language.

On the level of the *Länder* the local education authorities make sure that the curriculum is followed in all the schools. Similarly, on this level, institutions for the further training of teachers (Pädagogische Institute) provide the relevant courses to enable new implementations to be put into practice.

At the same time teacher training institutions for primary and lower secondary level (Pädagogische Akademien), as well as universities offering teacher training courses for lower and upper secondary level, are supposed to consider - within their autonomy - to take the changes in school legislation and curricula on board.

2. Forms of co-operation

2.1. Vertical Axis: Bridging Gaps

Firstly, it should be pointed out that over the last few years there have been very clear developments towards establishing a linear framework for language learning from the start in primary to the tertiary level. These developments can be observed in different areas. Current curricula include references to learning continuity. In addition to this, there are numerous examples of teachers' initiatives to ensure that problems, which might occur when pupils change from one level of schooling to another, are minimalised.

a) The Curricula

The following will attempt to give a brief overview of language learning in the curricula for Systems Austrian schools from Primary to Lower and Upper Secondary Schools. There are certain threads running through the different levels.

- At every level, it is made clear that language teaching and learning are to be built around the two receptive and two productive skills.
- It is stressed throughout that communication is the first and foremost aim and that formal grammar is to be regarded as a support to aid language acquisition rather than an aim in itself. It is to be introduced successively and in accordance with the level of acquisition.
- Language teaching and learning at school are to be seen within the wider context of intercultural awareness.
- An important aim of language teaching and learning at school is to lay the foundations for lifelong language learning.

All Primary and Lower Secondary state schools in Austria work on the basis of the same basic framework curricula. However, in the Upper Secondary area there are a large number of vocational schools, which all have a somewhat differing curriculum. Therefore, for pragmatic reasons, in the section on Upper Secondary only the curriculum for Grammar Schools will be considered.

Primary

Language learning is integrated into education throughout the four Primary years whereby the essential aspects are the encountering of a foreign language in a positive way and the raising of interest in other languages. The main emphasis is on building up oral communication skills with reading and writing to be introduced as a support only after the children have internalised the spoken word. There are clear goals to be reached by the end of Primary: the ability to understand and communicate information from the child's experiential world in a simply structured way.

The acquisition of the receptive and productive skills is at the core of the Primary curriculum. It is specifically stipulated that the meta language of grammar should not play a rôle at this level.

Lower Secondary

The current Austrian curriculum for Lower Secondary sees language teaching as being a basis for later independent language learning. The Lower Secondary curriculum is valid for Modern Language teaching in general and not for a particular language only becoming differentiated to specify grammatical and lexical functions. It is based on the acquisition of receptive and productive skills and the primary aims are oral and written communication. It is specifically stated that language accuracy is only one criterion of language learning and that the functional aspect of grammar is far more important than the formal aspect. Contrastive and comparative methods should not be used before the third and fourth classes of Lower Secondary and then only when they contribute directly to a heightened linguistic awareness.

Grammatical and lexical elements are to be acquired and learnt in context and it is only in this part of the curriculum that there is differentiation between different languages.

Furthermore, the acquisition of a modern language should also serve to broaden horizons and break down prejudices. The curriculum also foresees that language learning makes contributions to general educational aims such as creativity, health and movement, social competences etc. The threads running through language teaching and learning within the formal education system are apparent and the competences that should be practised in every class from the first to the fourth are expounded in some detail. However, there is neither direct reference to what takes place in the Primary School nor to the expectations in Higher Secondary. Nevertheless, these references are to be found in the textbooks. A case in point: textbooks used at the beginning of Lower and Upper Secondary levels open with references to already known lexical items.

Upper Secondary

Whereas the curriculum for Lower Secondary deals with modern languages in a homogenous way, the Austrian curriculum for Upper Secondary differentiates according to different modern languages. Important elements from the Lower Secondary curriculum are to be found in the Upper Secondary curriculum with additions leading to further insights. Thus, here again the basis is the receptive and productive skills and language learning is at the basis of cultural awareness. In the passages on methodology there is specific reference to the fact that work in the Upper Secondary is to build on the skills acquired in Lower Secondary in the areas of phonetics and intonation, expression (including lexis and grammar) and cultural understanding. At this level formal grammar is deemed to be especially useful for analytic learners. Thus, the Upper Secondary is to concentrate on a progression on from what has already been learnt, more extensive communicative (receptive and productive) skills, a greater differentiation in expression, a more conscious use of language and a more comprehensive and in-depth cultural understanding.

Draft Statute

The draft statute to be introduced in September 2004 deals with general educational issues and also concerns itself in detail with school subjects at Upper Secondary level. Here it is stipulated that teachers of all subjects are to pay particular attention to stages when pupils change schools. They should be informed about the curricula and learning forms.

In the section on Modern Languages, first and foremost, communication skills are stressed. Languages competences are to be built around the receptive and productive skills. Again, language learning is to be seen not as an isolated activity but within the framework of social and intercultural competences. Language learning at school should also contribute towards life-long autonomous language learning.

Moreover, there are specific references to the continuity that should be upheld to ensure that within the area of creativity, for example, the achievements of the Lower Secondary are to be seen as a foundation.

In the draft statute there are direct references to the **Common European Framework** of Languages. These references mean that teachers are obliged to look at learning progress and achievements in terms of overall progress and no longer at isolated phases at the level of a particular school. In connection with the CEF, a differentiation is made between the first and second and third modern languages. It is interesting to note that although a foreign language (nearly always English) is integrated in Primary education from the first class, here we find that the Upper Secondary begins with the fifth year of language learning. In the case of the first modern language, level B1 should have been reached by the end of Lower Secondary and level B2 by the end Upper Secondary. For the second modern language, in the course of Upper Secondary, learning is to progress from A1 to B1 in the areas of oral communication and writing and to B2 in Reading.

To conclude, it seems important to stress once again that there are clear strands running through the concepts of language teaching from the beginning of Primary to the end of Secondary.

Moreover, the developments in this direction are clear. Whereas curricula from past decades made no references whatsoever to the framework of language learning as a whole, the embedding of the CEF now heralds the end of isolated steps.

b) Initiatives

In recent years, there have been many Interesting Practice examples of teachers and schools working together to ensure that learning is a linear progression from Primary to Tertiary and not a series of isolated phases with learners being either over or under-challenged at the beginning of each. It is to be noted with regret that these initiatives, which were the result of energetic idealism on the part of those involved, have not been collected. There seem to be no networking structures.

Therefore, here references can only be made to random examples from the Austrian Bundesland, the Tyrol.

Whereas previous attempts at co-operation between English teachers at different school levels had often resulted only in the heightening of tensions between the levels, in more recent years positive initiatives have emerged.

In the early 1990's, English teachers in the small town of Telfs were very active in this respect. English teachers from the Lower Secondary school and from the Upper Secondary Grammar school met on a regular basis for several years to discuss content and to gain an overview of teaching and learning in the reciprocal areas. The initiative was considered successful by all. However, as the town grew and more schools were opened, the framework no longer functioned and the meetings between English teachers ceased completely.

In Innsbruck, there were attempts at co-operation between English teachers at these two levels by bringing teachers together to exchange perspectives. The meetings resulted in some mutual classroom visits, which proved to be most enriching and enlightening for all those involved. Such co-operation, however, can only reach a few teachers and ceases according to the professional commitments of those involved.

On a larger and more organised scale, German, English and Mathematics teachers from Primary and Lower Secondary and from Lower Secondary and Upper Secondary met in different locations in the towns of Hall in Tirol and Innsbruck in the Autumn of 2003. The meetings were organised by the TLI (a Tyrolean teachers group). Interest and the awareness of the need to co-operate were raised. However, this again, was not an official structure and it is difficult for teachers to maintain contacts on an entirely voluntary basis as a free-time activity.

2. Forms of co-operation

2.2.i. Horizontal Axis: Courses

There are a number of institutions in Austria offering language courses to the public. Whereas pupils and students in regular education programmes sometimes take advantage of these, the majority of course participants are adults who are learning a modern language for professional or recreational reasons. In all cases there are course fees, although these may be covered by companies in some instances.

German as a foreign language is offered widely. English, Italian, French and Spanish are also offered by most institutions at every location. The languages of new member states, especially those bordering on Austria are growing in popularity.

a) Austria's Volkshochschulen offer various courses all over Austria, which are often held in the evenings. Over 25% of the courses are language courses and these range from beginners courses to courses preparing students for European language examinations in French, Spanish, Italian, English, Russian and German as a foreign language. During the academic year 2001/2 there were 122,589 participants in these courses. Further training courses for languages trainers is an integral part of the concept of the Volkshochschulen.

<http://www.vhs.or.at/>

b) The Austrian Chamber of Commerce's Institute of Business Promotion (WIFI) is the top training and further education institute in Austria with a market share of 20%. Courses are offered at locations in all of the Austrian provinces for English, French, Italian and Spanish. The English courses range from beginners course to courses leading directly to Cambridge Proficiency Certificate or the Cambridge Business English certificate. French and Italian courses also range from beginners to specific, individual courses for business people. Spanish courses are offered for beginners to advanced students. Super Learning features in the languages programmes and in all foreign languages courses are offered for pupils in school needing extra training to pass exams. There are German courses from beginners to advanced and specific courses to prepare candidates for the German examination now compulsory for those applying for Austrian nationality. In addition to these languages, at specific locations especially introductory courses are available in a wide range of other languages with clear evidence of a focus on the languages of countries in the east of Europe such as Czech, Polish, Russian, Slovene and Slovak with certain locations also offering Arab, Japanese and Chinese.

www.wifi.at

c) The Austrian bfi Vocational Training Institute (Berufsförderungsinstitut) is an institute with 140 locations all over Austria which aims to promote the personal and occupational development of Austrian employees and to support unemployed people to re-enter employment. The institute has developed the European Language Licence as a basis for language courses offered for English, German, French, Italian and Spanish and in future for Czech and Hungarian and the certificates are based on the European Common Framework of Languages up to the level of A2.

www.bfi.or.at

d) There are Instituts français in Vienna, Graz and Innsbruck, which give services such as a French library, cultural events and a range of courses. The Vienna institution gives students the opportunity to prepare for the DELF : Diplôme d'études en langue française and the DALF : Diplôme approfondi de langue française. These are examinations which are recognised by the French ministry of education and range from BICS to a proficiency level enabling students to study at French-speaking universities.

www.ambafrance-at.org

e) The international Berlitz Schools have locations in Feldkirch, Graz, Innsbruck, Linz, Salzburg, Vienna and Wiener Neustadt. The main principle is the Berlitz method, i.e. working in small groups, working with native speakers and beginning with what might be termed as the communicative approach. German courses are advertised to students from outside Austria as German "on location" and there are also courses tailored to the needs of business people and politicians. It is possible to learn German, English, French, Italian and Spanish at all locations. Slavic languages are increasing in importance. Berlitz also offers a service to companies in the tailor-made courses in any of the language can be run for companies where specific language competences are required of employees.

www.berlitz.at

f) Apha Institut offers intensive German courses with seven course levels following the European Framework/ Goethe-Institut levels. It is announced that the courses will provide preparation for internationally recognised diplomas, University admission, German Language Diploma of the Goethe Institut, Austrian German Language Diploma and other European language certificates. The same institute also offers English courses, which are also based on the European Framework of Reference for Language Teaching and Learning and prepare students to take European Language Certificates. The levels and contents of the examinations are given on the homepage of the institute.

www.alpha.at

g) The Amerika-Institut, offers various courses including beginners and advanced courses and courses for children. There is a focus on business English and further courses to prepare students specifically to take the TOEFL examinations, for example. www.amerika-institut.at

2.2.ii. Horizontal Axis: Certification

As evident from I ii b some courses offered by institutions outside schools are also tailored to the requirements of certification. It will be seen in the following that whereas most institutions offer some kind of certification in at least the most commonly learnt languages, a variety in the certification is evident. However, the development towards levelling is evident in that many of the examinations use the European Framework as a basis.

a) Course participants at the Volkshochschulen have the possibility to take TELC (The European Language Certificates), which are structured at different levels to correspond to the Common European Framework. Licensed locations are examination centres. A1 and A2 level examinations can be taken in Turkish and Danish, for example, and examinations up to B2 can be taken in German, English, French, Italian and Spanish.

b) Cambridge Proficiency Certificates or the Cambridge Business English Certificates can be taken at the WIFI centres and centres also offer the German examination now compulsory for those applying for Austrian nationality.

c) The BFI has developed the European Language Licence, which is offered exclusively to BFI course participants. The examinations can be taken up to level A2 and the BFI claims their usefulness in employment in Austria. At present examinations can be taken in English, German, French, Italian and Spanish and in future for Czech and Hungarian.

d) At the Institut Français in Vienna French examinations can be taken, i.e. DELF: Diplôme d'études en langue française and the DALF: Diplôme approfondi de langue française. These examinations are recognised by the French ministry of education and range from BICS to a proficiency level enabling students to study at French-speaking universities.

e) At the Berlitz schools students can take the Berlitz international "Four Language Diploma" choosing from English, Italian, Spanish, French and Russian and this now includes an optional business module. Berlitz also offers the Cambridge BEC Vantage.

f) The Alpha Institute is a centre for TELC and course participants can also register through the centre for Cambridge KET, PET, First Certificate and the Business English Certificate Preliminary.

g) The Amerika-Institut is geared towards American certification offering four levels of examinations. The **Examination for the Certificate of Proficiency in English** is an examination to certify advanced proficiency and held by the University of Michigan. The test consists of essay, grammar, lexis and interview. The Amerika-Institut has offered courses to prepare for the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) examination necessary for admission to an American University for the past 25 years. The third certificate is the **TOEIC Test of English for International Communication**, which is of a similar level to the TOEFL test but built around technical vocabulary.

Part three: Needs, obstacles, opportunities, measures, facilitating instruments:

1. Identification of needs, obstacles, opportunities and measures to be taken to improve communication and co-operation:

- There is a need for the co-operation between the levels of schooling now recognised at the curricular level to be facilitated. There is a need for clearer, workable structures and for Inset in this area. Initiatives coming from schools and teachers should be more strongly supported.
- There is a need for closer co-operation between the Secondary and Tertiary level. Here there are no curricular structures foreseeing co-operation. Language teachers at Secondary level have little opportunity to gain insight of current developments at tertiary level.
- There is a need for a more structured European accreditation system, which would enable students in secondary and tertiary education to complete periods of education in another country more easily. There is a need for more short term mobility (see below).

2. Identification of facilitating and reporting instruments for lifelong learning in the field of Modern Languages, including for example:

In June 2004 the Österreichisches Sprachen-Kompetenz-Zentrum was established as a legal body in Graz, initiated and funded through projects for the Bundesministerium für Bildung, Wissenschaft und Kultur to deal with the concerns of language learning in Austria taking into consideration national and European objectives.

In autumn 2004 all language competence centres at the different Austrian universities are going to establish an umbrella association for all units. Both institutions are supposed to work together in different areas of languages from awareness raising measures to certification. However, some of the most important objectives are certainly:

- CEF
- European Language Portfolio
- Accreditation
- CLIL
- ESIS / ESIS network (Europasiegel für Innovative Sprachprojekte)
- the European and national action plan for language learning
- language indicators

Part four: Recommendations

- As above, in the majority of Upper Secondary Schools in Austria leading to University Entrance two Modern Languages are obligatory. The only exceptions are Grammar Schools focussing on the classics and the technical schools. In many of these schools, a second Modern Language is optional. This policy should be continued and a second Modern Language offered more widely in a more structured form to all those in Upper Secondary education and also, in due course, in Lower Secondary.
- It is to be hoped that initiatives towards implementing the CEF and towards ensuring that there is continuity in the language learning process from Primary to Tertiary will be carried through.
- The European Language Portfolio should be used on a broader basis.
- The ERASMUS Programme is popular amongst Austria's students. However, in not all institutions are courses taken in other countries fully recognised. This is, in some cases, leading to a decrease in students' willingness to take part in the programme. Accreditation across Europe should be more clearly structured and more strongly implemented.

- There should be more opportunities for short-term mobility. Such COMENIUS II Projects as MET (Mobile European Teacher) and TIR (Teachers in Residence), for instance, enable students from the partner universities to attend two-three week courses including classroom observation and short teaching sequences. There should be more such opportunities.
- Mobility programmes (bilateral as well as European) for school as well as university teachers should be made easier accessible
- more effort on national as well as on European level should be undertaken to disseminate findings and products in the area of language studies/projects
- Close co-operation between universities and schools not just referring to curricula and teacher training but on the level of language testing and the implementation and the use of the Portfolio as well as CEF

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APPENDIX

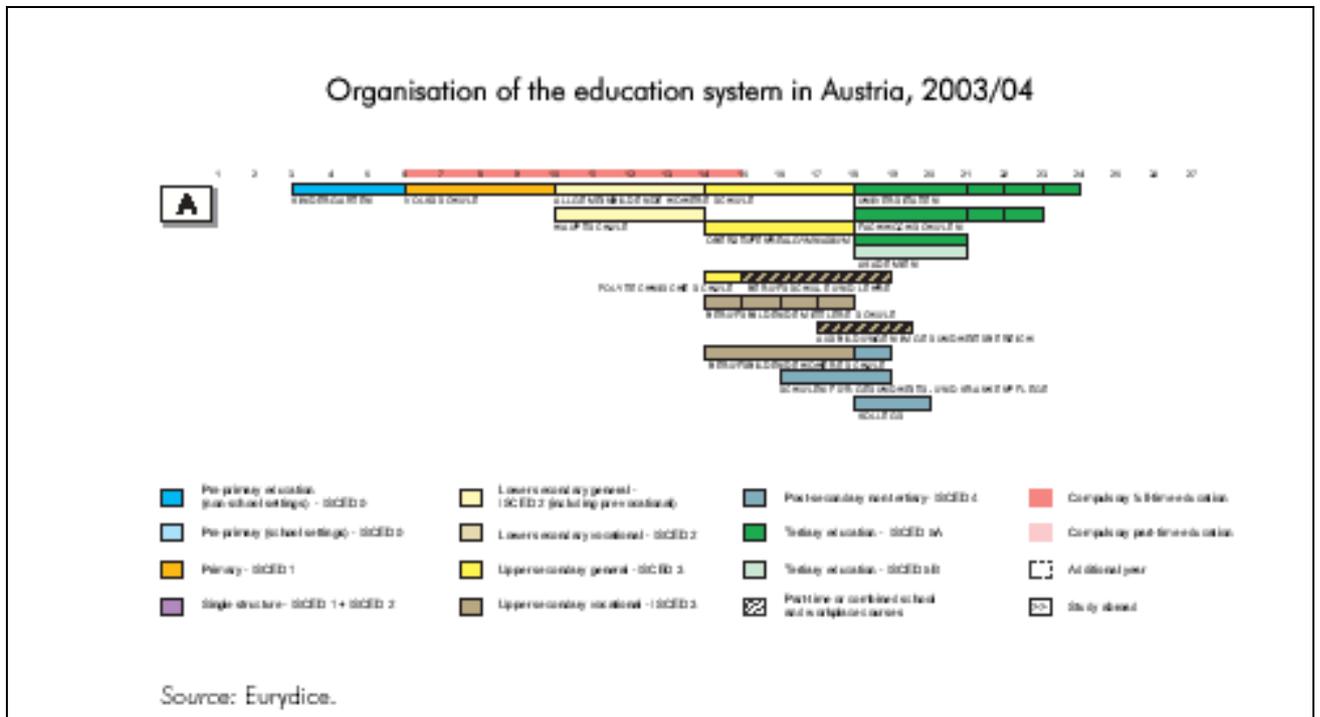


Table 1

Main Foreign Languages in Primary and Secondary Schools 2001/02

languages	sex	Burgenland	Kärnten	Niederösterr	Oberösterr.	Salzburg	Steiermark	Tirol	Vorarlberg	Wien	Österreich
Englisch	<i>male</i>	18.607	42.205	108.594	109.146	40.481	84.673	51.952	28.786	99.187	583.631
	<i>female</i>	17.767	40.034	101.773	101.892	38.629	78.369	49.291	26.852	94.223	548.830
	<i>total</i>	36.374	82.239	210.367	211.038	79.110	163.042	101.243	55.638	193.410	1.132.461
<i>in %</i>	<i>male</i>	98,2%	96,2%	94,3%	95,3%	94,0%	95,9%	94,1%	95,8%	95,3%	95,2%
	<i>female</i>	98,8%	98,0%	97,6%	96,9%	97,6%	97,7%	96,8%	97,4%	96,8%	97,3%
	<i>total</i>	98,5%	97,0%	95,9%	96,1%	95,7%	96,8%	95,4%	96,6%	96,0%	96,2%
Französisch	<i>male</i>	1.615	1.004	7.978	6.718	2.991	5.084	3.039	2.960	9.283	40.672
	<i>female</i>	3.914	2.603	17.386	16.059	5.736	11.266	5.651	5.631	15.888	84.134
	<i>total</i>	5.529	3.607	25.364	22.777	8.727	16.350	8.690	8.591	25.171	124.806
<i>in %</i>	<i>male</i>	8,5%	2,3%	6,9%	5,9%	6,9%	5,8%	5,5%	9,9%	8,9%	6,6%
	<i>female</i>	21,8%	6,4%	16,7%	15,3%	14,5%	14,1%	11,1%	20,4%	16,3%	14,9%
	<i>total</i>	15,0%	4,3%	11,6%	10,4%	10,6%	9,7%	8,2%	14,9%	12,5%	10,6%
Italienisch	<i>male</i>	216	6.605	904	1.089	1.981	3.435	3.067	222	1.961	19.480
	<i>female</i>	556	11.363	2.028	3.057	3.326	6.961	6.284	560	3.731	37.866
	<i>total</i>	772	17.968	2.932	4.146	5.307	10.396	9.351	782	5.692	57.346
<i>in %</i>	<i>male</i>	1,1%	15,1%	0,8%	1,0%	4,6%	3,9%	5,6%	0,7%	1,9%	3,2%
	<i>female</i>	3,1%	27,8%	1,9%	2,9%	8,4%	8,7%	12,3%	2,0%	3,8%	6,7%
	<i>total</i>	2,1%	21,2%	1,3%	1,9%	6,4%	6,2%	8,8%	1,4%	2,8%	4,9%
Spanisch	<i>male</i>	43	48	965	1.332	424	560	157	309	1.332	5.170
	<i>female</i>	133	308	1.847	2.878	1.203	1.089	659	670	2.686	11.473
	<i>total</i>	176	356	2.812	4.210	1.627	1.649	816	979	4.018	16.643
<i>in %</i>	<i>male</i>	0,2%	0,1%	0,8%	1,2%	1,0%	0,6%	0,3%	1,0%	1,3%	0,8%
	<i>female</i>	0,7%	0,8%	1,8%	2,7%	3,0%	1,4%	1,3%	2,4%	2,8%	2,0%
	<i>total</i>	0,5%	0,4%	1,3%	1,9%	2,0%	1,0%	0,8%	1,7%	2,0%	1,4%
Russisch	<i>male</i>	65	19	402	69	244	46	19	-	692	1.556
	<i>female</i>	71	22	585	87	571	71	14	-	788	2.209
	<i>total</i>	136	41	987	156	815	117	33	-	1.480	3.765
<i>in %</i>	<i>male</i>	0,3%	0,0%	0,3%	0,1%	0,6%	0,1%	0,0%	0,0%	0,7%	0,3%
	<i>female</i>	0,4%	0,1%	0,6%	0,1%	1,4%	0,1%	0,0%	0,0%	0,8%	0,4%
	<i>total</i>	0,4%	0,0%	0,4%	0,1%	1,0%	0,1%	0,0%	0,0%	0,7%	0,3%

Tabel 2

Number of pupils and living foreign languages studied in 2001/02

	sex	Burgenland	Kärnten	Niederöster r.	Oberösterr.	Salzburg	Steiermark	Tirol	Vorarlberg	Wien	Austria
no for. lang.	<i>male</i>	338	1.484	6.492	5.306	2.511	3.557	3.199	1.247	4.750	28.884
	<i>female</i>	211	627	2.467	3.247	918	1.679	1.524	712	2.915	14.300
	<i>total</i>	549	2.111	8.959	8.553	3.429	5.236	4.723	1.959	7.665	43.184
one for. lang.	<i>male</i>	15.463	33.455	98.434	100.040	35.392	76.000	46.202	25.502	86.570	517.058
	<i>female</i>	12.006	25.450	81.276	81.872	29.317	60.672	38.632	20.797	73.544	423.566
	<i>total</i>	27.469	58.905	179.710	181.912	64.709	136.672	84.834	46.299	160.114	940.624
two for. lang.	<i>male</i>	3.084	8.546	9.836	8.632	4.663	8.283	5.409	3.038	11.948	63.439
	<i>female</i>	5.402	13.532	19.003	17.592	7.881	16.185	9.075	5.188	18.484	112.342
	<i>total</i>	8.486	22.078	28.839	26.224	12.544	24.468	14.484	8.226	30.432	175.781
three for. lang.	<i>male</i>	68	394	360	487	465	462	402	245	779	3.662
	<i>female</i>	353	1.215	1.518	2.438	1.397	1.622	1.606	865	2.332	13.346
	<i>total</i>	421	1.609	1.878	2.925	1.862	2.084	2.008	1.110	3.111	17.008
four or more lang.	<i>male</i>	1	-	1	5	28	4	12	3	24	78
	<i>female</i>	13	41	38	5	85	25	91	5	74	377
	<i>total</i>	14	41	39	10	113	29	103	8	98	455
number of pupils	<i>male</i>	18.954	43.879	115.123	114.470	43.059	88.306	55.224	30.035	104.071	613.121
	<i>female</i>	17.985	40.865	104.302	105.154	39.598	80.183	50.928	27.567	97.349	563.931
	<i>total</i>	36.939	84.744	219.425	219.624	82.657	168.489	106.152	57.602	201.420	1.177.052