



THEMATIC NETWORK PROJECT IN THE AREA OF LANGUAGES III

SUB-PROJECT THREE:

LANGUAGES AS AN INTERFACE BETWEEN DIFFERENT SECTORS OF EDUCATION

NATIONAL REPORT / Hungary

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Introduction

The Republic of Hungary, as of February 1, 2001 has 10,19,119 inhabitants. The official language is Hungarian. According to the data of the 1990 census¹, in Hungary 98.5 % of the population have Hungarian as their mother tongue. Due to this feature the country can be considered as a single-language national state. The number of people who belong to a minority group is relatively low. The most important national and ethnic groups of Hungary include the Croatian (80,000-90,000 people), the German (200,000-220,000) the Romanian (25,000), the Serbian (5000), the Slovak (100,000-110,000) and the Slovene (5000) population. According to estimates the Gypsy (Roma) population without a native language is about 500,000 and the number of those Roma people who speak and use their language is about 142,000.

¹ http://www.magyarorszag.hu/angol/orszaginfo/orszag/etnikum/nemzetisegek_a.html

The Constitution guarantees equal rights and the free use of the mother tongue to all minorities. On July 7, 1993 Parliament adopted an Action in connection with the rights of national and ethnic minorities. In 1990 an Office of National and Ethnic Minorities was established to safeguard those rights.

Administratively the country consists of 19 counties and the capital city of Budapest. 64.6 % of Hungary's inhabitants lives in towns and cities. School-age children represent 15.9 % of the country's population.

As it was the case in the pre-1989 period in most Eastern European countries, in Hungarian schools, and more generally in society, foreign languages were traditionally considered as one of the school subjects which – with some help from the language teacher -could be acquired from books and the learners' achievements were only to be tested on the basis of their classroom performance. In addition to the new needs posed by the emerging new learning environment in Europe, in which Hungary has by now become an integral part, the topic 'Languages as Interface between Different Sectors of Education' is of utmost importance because it does challenge the formerly described traditional view of how to teach and how to learn languages.

Why to learn languages – it was never asked in the former era.

In the modern world instead of the language-in-school experience language learning is becoming an ongoing - lifelong – process and due to this feature the larger part of it is done outside the official school system; many language learners today are either pre-school age very young learners, or middle age adults, occasionally seniors. Testing is also increasingly done on the job or in real-life situations.

The Hungarian school system usually valued students' factual knowledge and less emphasis was given to the application and the practical side of the knowledge acquired by them. Hungarian students traditionally used to perform well on tests evaluating factual knowledge whereas they were usually pushed into the background by self-confident and more practical-minded foreign students when the task was to apply their knowledge. Therefore the major challenge in Hungarian education in general and in language education in particular today lies in the fact how students can use their knowledge. The increased mobility within Europe, the comparability of courses, credits, programmes and degrees are features, which also require to examine the teaching and learning of foreign languages and the individuals' language skills from a broad perspective, and, primarily, from the point of view of applicability.

A major problem in this regard is that the public school system in Hungary is/was traditionally the 8+4 sytem (eight years of primary and four years of secondary education and a two-tier (college level and university level) teacher training, and thus the emerging reforms both in the new examination system and teacher training itself are in sharp contrast with the traditions; consequently, according to many, instead of radical changes more thoughtful, gradual country-and culture-specific reforms would be needed.

Previously – before 1989 -a centrally required curriculum was used in all schools, the compulsory foreign language module was also determined by the educational authorities. After the changing of the social system in Hungary in 1989 a process of liberalisation started and it created a situation in which the requirements of comparability and quality control were almost impossible to meet. As a counterreaction to this rather hectic situation the need for a National Core Curriculum (Nemzeti Alaptanterv, abbreviated in Hungarian NAT) emerged at educational institutions and following several years of professional debate over the draft curriculum the new National Core Curriculum was passed by the Hungarian Parliament in December 1996.

Instead of defining the input level the National Core Curriculum (NCC) aims at determining standards through output. In addition to this national framework all schools are expected to develop their own educational programmes (Pedagógiai program) and their local curricula in all taught subjects, (helyi tanterv) including foreign languages. Thus, beyond the minimal requirements, the National Core Curriculum gives schools some freedom to determine what to teach and how to achieve their aim. The National Core Curriculum is a combination of centrally set standards and at the same time it also grants some professional freedom for the school administration and for the subject teachers. The National Core Curriculum covers ten different knowledge areas and Modern Languages is one of them.

Part One: Description of administrative and educational structures and policies of the general education and higher education systems in Hungary

1.1. General information on the country and its educational system:

The legal background to the Hungarian system of education is provided by the Education Act, while the Higher Education Act (as of 1993) serves the same purpose in higher education. A new HE Act is now being prepared in the country in line with the Bologna-Prague-Berlin guidelines and a draft proposal dated June 2003 is being nationally debated now.

In public education following the parliamentary approval the National Core Curriculum was introduced and gradual implementation, monitoring and evaluation are now taking place. The individual schools and teams of subject teachers are required to work on individual subject-related programmes and new syllabi.

The current HE scene in Hungary is characterised by many uncertainties as far as the restructuring of the system is concerned, and unfortunately those involved in HE, staff and students are not very well informed about the direction and the modes of changes. The HE scene at present is a battlefield, where a struggle for dominance and survival is going on. Instead of considering professional matters the main point is often how to finance education. The real interests of the actors of the educational scene and the issues of renewal and quality seem to get lost behind the scenes.

Especially sensitive is the area of teacher training and there is the danger that instead of the more experienced teacher training institutions, the more academic HE institutions, that is the most traditional –and conservative - universities will take over the job which would definitely mean a great loss of expertise and practice. It would

also mean that the direction once again would turn toward theory instead of becoming more life-like and practical, as it would have been more desirable. Unfortunately the primary and secondary schools, local governments, parents' organisations have never been asked what kind of teacher training they would prefer in their communities and local schools.

1.2. The structure of the general education and HE:

Education in Hungary is compulsory by law for all children 6-16 years old.

The Hungarian system of education features the following forms of education and types of institutions:

- pre-school education. 1-3 years, depending on families' needs. It is organised with or without a language module.
- Primary education (4 years of lower primary and 4 years of upper primary education). Language education in specialised classes begins in the first year and it is optional. The average duration of language classes at this early age is about 30 minutes (as opposed to the 45-minute classes in other subject areas). In general classes language education is begun in the 4th year. These regular programmes have 2-3 language classes/week, while specialised language programmes are characterised by 4-5 language classes per week.
- Secondary education: secondary grammar schools, vocational and technical secondary education.
- Postsecondary vocational education (2 years) has not yet gained much popularity, although employers would need professionals with postsecondary certificates. Language skills, especially technical, business etc. language are an integral part of these programmes. The number of weekly hours is inadequate, foreign languages are most often taught in 2-3 hours a week, often in the late evening hours of the day, a fact, which highly affects the efficiency of the language learning process.
- Higher education: undergraduate programmes currently on two –college and university - levels.
- Post-graduate education: in-service training programmes and specialised Master's or PhD studies.

In *A Brief Summary and Overview of the Current Educational Objectives* by the Ministry of Education it is clearly stated that '...the government will place emphasis on programmes for the future. Such as computing skills, communications and foreign languages.'²

Language education is optional at the beginning of the scale (pre-school and lower primary level), later it becomes formal and obligatory, then, at the other end of the scale, in PhD and in-service programmes it takes place in the form of autonomous learning. According to a 1996 survey Hungarians do not fare well on the test examining the language competence of the nation. The following grid shows the percentage of participants (a total of 2000) claiming foreign language knowledge. (Minority languages excluded).

² <http://www.om.hu/main.php?folderID=137>

German	17.3
English	11.5
Russian	8.8
French	2.1
Italian	1.2

It is also important to note that when participants were asked to evaluate their own language proficiency they rated it very low-level.

As far as school-age children are concerned it was found that many children – especially in the urban areas – studied languages outside the school system, because their parents thought that the official and free language programmes were inefficient. Hungary is claimed to have the largest number of private foreign language schools in Eastern Europe.³ The high rate of private tutoring reflects on the one hand that despite the lack of adequate language knowledge Hungarians have a positive attitude to learning foreign languages, and, on the other hand it also shows parents' and students' low opinion of free language education. The new overall national language policy aims at changing this situation.

1. Responsibilities and competences

1.1. At national level:

Primary legislation in the field of education is the competence of the Parliament of Hungary. Public Education Act (LXXIX 1993) and the Higher Education Act (LXXX 1993) determine the legal framework to public and to higher education. This is the role of the Ministry⁴ of Education to coordinate the activities of different fields of education as well as to facilitate nationwide research and provide educational technology. Accordingly, the main areas of the ministry's activities include public education, vocational education, higher education, research and development and foreign relations. The Ministry is headed by the Minister of Education, who is a member of the government. The Ministry carries out its coordinating activity through the works of various departments, under-secretaries, deputy under-secretaries of state and ministerial commissioners.

In terms of language education the activities of the offices of the following deputy under-secretaries of state are the most decisive:

Deputy under-secretary of state for foreign affairs whose task is to coordinate the foreign relations in the field of education and harmonise these relations with the government's foreign policy. He is also in charge of supporting the education of Hungarian minorities abroad. Deals with equivalence issues as well, the accreditation and validation of foreign degrees and certificates. Supervises the activities of the Bálint Balassi Institute, the Hungarian UNESCO Commission and the work of the OKÉV (National Examination and Evaluation Centre).

³ In: *English Language Education in Hungary*. Ed. by Marianne Nikolov. The British Council Budapest, 1999. p. 18.

⁴ <http://www.om.hu>

The deputy secretary of state for public education participates in the elaboration, development and evaluation of the National Core Curriculum, elaborates the requirements of the Basic examination and the National School leaving examination and supervises the previously described work. In relation to Hungary's joining the European Union undertakes the tasks of foreign language teaching and is also responsible for the foreign links of schools and international competitions.

Deputy secretary of state for vocational training is in charge of all areas of vocational education, except for art education. He is to allocate national and international funds to various programmes and is in charge of performing EU-related ministerial tasks.

Deputy secretary of state for higher education is in charge of elaborating developmental strategies. Represents the Ministry in national and international meetings and supervises the work in connection with the Bologna process.

1.2 Responsibilities and competences at regional level

Administratively Hungary consists of 19 counties and the capital city of Budapest. Each of these administrative areas has a regional government (megyei önkormányzatok) and institutions of public education (pre-school institutions, primary and secondary schools) are financially maintained and professionally supervised and evaluated by the Educational Committee of these respective local governments. It is their competence to establish and close down schools, to appoint school directors and to supervise and evaluate schools' educational programmes.

1.3. Responsibilities and competences at local level

Each settlement in Hungary has a local government and it is their task to take care of local education. Smaller settlements do not have the financial means to maintain schools for the whole spectrum of education and due to this fact many of them provide education only for the pre-school phase of education or for the lower primary age group. It is the competence of the local government to establish and close down schools, to appoint school directors and to supervise the educational programmes of the local educational institutions. Ideally, local governments also enhance excellence or attempt to reduce inequalities in education by providing scholarship assistance to those who are in need or who deserve it. The Ministry of Education is supportive of this role of local governments and gives additional support to those local governments which provide scholarship opportunities to learners.

2. Language policies and language education policies: for foreign languages and for native languages as second or foreign languages:

2.1 Language policies for native languages

98.5 % of the country's population speaks Hungarian as mother tongue. Minorities have the legal right to learn and use their own language at school and also in governmental and public offices. In settlements local minority governments can be established upon the request of at least five members of any minority community.

The most important national and ethnic groups of Hungary include the Croatian (80,000-90,000 people), the German (200,000-220,000) the Romanian (25,000), the Serbian (5000), the Slovak (100,000-110,000) and the Slovene (5000) population. According to estimates the Gypsy (Roma) population without a native language is about 500,000 and the number of those who speak and use their language is about 142,000. Education is offered for them in educational institutions for the minorities from kindergarten to university level. It is the most prestigious Hungarian universities and teacher training colleges which train teachers for the minority schools. Romany language courses are increasingly important for the Roma and non-Roma population alike. Romology as an academic field has already been introduced at some Hungarian universities in order to teach the teachers of the future about the history, the culture and the language of the Roma population and enable prospective teachers to communicate more effectively with the Roma minority.

2.2. Language policies for foreign language education

No comprehensive language policy existed in Hungary in the 1989-1998 period. Back in the spring of 1998 a major project (Világ-Nyelv/ World – Language) was elaborated by the Ministry of Education. The programme aims at developing a comprehensive national language policy by covering all areas of language education and systematically developing people's language competences irrespectively of their age, social status and/or profession. Within the programme long-term projects are to be elaborated and at the same time the World – Language document also tries to pinpoint critical areas and outline recommendations.

In the document's introductory descriptive part⁵ it is stated that the programme is one of the most comprehensive language policy programmes ever launched in Hungary by the Ministry of Education. The main aim of the programme is to give Hungarian citizens a chance to catch up with Europe in the area of languages and it sets the aim of providing each Hungarian school leaver (at the age of 18) with the knowledge of a modern language on the intermediate level and another one on the basic level. Consequently, all secondary schools should offer at least two modern languages in their programmes. (In addition to mother tongue education...) The document also makes it clear that instead of private tutoring, available only for a few students, efficient language education should be done in the public school system, available to all. It is also important to note that in the World-Language programme the secondary school leavers are not the only target group, but other potential language learners are also addressed by it.

The programme officially started in 2003 and 2004 is already the second year when schools, teachers and various organisations and consortia of these can apply for funds.

The programmes are available for teachers and learners representing all levels and fields of education. According to the aims, outlined in the introduction to the document the **World-Language programme** has 11 sub –programmes, which are as follows:

⁵ http://www.tpf.iif.hu/pages/content/index.php?page_id=59

1. Sub-programme **Forrás (Source)**: was designed for underprivileged schools with the aim of providing them with better resources for language education. Applicants can get funds to establish and/or maintain a foreign language library and learning centre in their schools.

2. Sub-programme **Alap-osan (Basic-ally)** is aimed at supporting foreign language teaching at primary school level. It is aimed at supporting innovative teaching methods in order to improve pupils' general communicative and foreign language competences.

3. **Előre fuss- Run ahead**: this sub-programme was designed to assist underprivileged learners. Those institutions or consortia can apply for funds, which have the expertise and the necessary background to deal with this specific group of learners.

4. **Váltogató – Switch** sub-programme was designed to promote the inclusion of foreign language modules into the teaching of other school subjects. In addition to laying down the foundation for further specialised language studies, the main aim of this programme is content-based language learning.

5. **Élesztő – Yeast** sub-programme was designed to promote the teaching and learning of those foreign languages, which are at present less common and less popular in Hungary.

6. **Mesterfokon – Master Course** sub-programme supports mentor training programmes as well as the more optimal organisation and management of teacher training students' teaching practice.

7. **Mértékelés – Testing** sub-programme is aimed at regulating the language teaching processes and the testing/examinations of foreign language competences. Within this sub-programme in-service courses are to be organised for teachers who would thus become examiners. This programme also supports PhD-level research in applied linguistics and language teaching methodology

8. **Nyelv + szakma felsőfokon - Language+specialisation on top level** sub-programme assists non-language major students to acquire foreign language skills which are required for their chosen profession.

9. **Nyelv + számítógép – Language + computer** subprogramme is aimed at supporting computer-assisted language learning in all areas of language teaching from primary schools to in-service and PhD programmes.

10. **Egy életen át – Lifelong learning** sub-programme assists teachers of other subjects to learn foreign languages effectively and use them in their everyday teaching work. This programme is aimed at preparing non-language teachers for accredited intermediate-level language examinations.

11. **Satöbbi –Etcetera** sub-programme was designed to finance the publication of language teaching materials, portfolios, multimedia CDs and to organise language-teaching related workshops, conferences and symposia.

2.3. Language policies for life-long language learning

Lifelong learning, both as a concept and a practice is getting increasingly accepted in Hungary since there are more and more young and also middle-aged adults who want to get new jobs or better jobs or more pay, and also there are the elderly, who want to do something useful and who are increasingly eager to remain active members in their own community.

The Hungarian government also believes that the number of participants in adult training programmes could and should be increased. The Hungarian key institutions responsible for adult learning are as follows: National Adult Training Council, the National Training Institute and the Adult Training Accreditation Board.⁶ In 2004 the state budget and EU financial resources combined allocated a total amount of 97.4 million Euros for adult training programmes. The Human Resources Development Operational programme (HRDOP) also provides significant resources⁷ for this purpose.

Some of the main principles of the government's strategy for lifelong learning include the following:

- access to lifelong learning and its financial support should be transparent.
- lifelong learning should facilitate equal opportunities for all
- there should be no unjustified distinction between the various forms of training providers.

The acquisition of a foreign language and the improvement of language skills nowadays have become basic in the life of each individual, irrespective of age. Language courses for the adult population are mostly organised by private language schools. Accreditation and quality control is increasingly important for them as well because participants of these courses can get certain benefits (tax refunds, full or partial reimbursement of course and examination fees) if they enroll a certified and accredited programme. In 2004 approximately 20.000 learners were re-imbursed for successfully passing an intermediate-level language examination.⁸

Accreditation and quality control for private language schools is the competence of NYESZE (Professional Association of Language Schools). The job of accreditation and evaluation is done by specially trained teams of external evaluators.

General and specialist language courses are equally important for the adult learner. General courses run from survival courses to preparatory courses for advanced level examinations, sometimes for international language examinations such as TOEFL, Cambridge, IELTS etc. These latter examination types are gaining importance since going abroad with the purpose of studying or working is increasingly important for many Hungarians. The official representatives of foreign governments, including the British Council, the Alliance Francaise , the Goethe Instituut and others also play a significant role as service providers in the field of lifelong learning. As it is attested by job advertisements and job interviews, the working knowledge of one or two foreign languages is a basic requirement in many areas. With the growing number of

⁶ <http://www.fmm.gov.hu/main.php?folderID=3440articleID.....>

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Entrance Examination Information Service. In: Délmagyarország. September 1, 2004

multinational companies, especially in the field of trade, banking, logistics, communications and tourism on-the-job language programmes are also offered to employees, mostly by private language schools and not by university and college language teachers.

The role of institutions of higher education in lifelong learning is different. It includes the training of teachers who are linguistically and methodologically enabled to teach the language for specific purposes to various target groups.

Institutions of higher education are also to do research in the field of lifelong learning. It is attested by the growing number of academic papers, conferences and symposia, the main topic of which is related to this field and also by the growing number of PhD students who have chosen lifelong learning or some other related field of applied language studies as the major area of their field of research.

3. Mapping of institutions and programmes engaged in language provision.

3.1.1. Primary education

Teaching foreign languages in full time education (primary schools)⁹

Languages	1989/1990	2002/2003
English	33120	357 108
French	3337	4004
German	41889	267 868
Russian	655 218	2687
Other	2000	4363

3.1.2. Secondary education

Teaching foreign languages in full time education (vocational schools, secondary grammar schools and secondary vocational schools)

Vocational schools:

Languages	1989/1990	2002/2003
English	3191	32087
French	1257	1763
German	11928	55053
Russian	8410	883
Other	-	1160

Secondary grammar schools

Languages	1989/1990	2002/2003
English	59181	160888
French	12546	21329
German	45915	121523
Russian	97985	2115
Other	11669	31325

⁹ Statistical Yearbook of Education. Budapest, 2003. Compiled by the Ministry of Education, department of Economics, Section of Statistics.p. 20.

Secondary vocational schools:

Languages	1989/1990	2002/2003
English	34386	136941
French	6350	5983
German	30632	99792
Russian	124388	642
Other	5709	4616

3.1.3 Higher education

According to the Higher Education Act of 1993, at present the basic requirement for admission to college (non-university higher education institution) and university education is the Hungarian secondary school leaving certificate (Érettségi bizonyítvány), or a foreign equivalent of it, or in second-degree (postgraduate programmes) a degree already obtained in higher education. The secondary school leaving certificate is conferred after eight years of primary education followed by four years of secondary education in a comprehensive/academic secondary school (gimnázium) or a vocational secondary school (szakközépiskola). (The division of the twelve years of learning, eventually leading to a school leaving examination, might vary. The 8+4 system is the most common in Hungary, but the 6+6 or the 4+8 systems also exist occasionally.) The Hungarian higher education system consists of 68 state recognised institutions. They can be classified as state universities, state colleges, church universities, church colleges and private and foundation institutions.

State universities	18
State colleges	13
Church universities	5
Church colleges	21
Private and foundation institutions	11
Total	68

The number of students involved in Hungarian higher education in 2003 was 380,000.¹⁰

Student numbers by field of training are as follows:

Field of training	University level	College level
Teacher training	9539	41 146
Humanities	21 150	4225
Social sciences	25 606	16506

(IN: Statistical Yearbook of Education. Budapest, 2003. Compiled by the Ministry of Education, Department of Economics, Section of Statistics.p. 25.)

The admission procedure to HE institutions will change from the academic year 2004/ 2005. No entrance examinations are organised by the HE institutions themselves; these examinations are replaced by the new two-tier National School leaving examinations. This system is a great step toward standardising and

¹⁰ In: *Come and Study in Hungary. Education Programmes for Foreign Students in Hungary.* Ministry of Education, Budapest. Academic Year 2004/2005. p. 2.

measuring candidates' knowledge of the chosen language as well as of institutional requirements. For the foreign language programmes (except for the less popular foreign languages) Advanced level language certificates are needed. For those candidates, who passed the traditional 'old' type of school leaving language exam, a regional branch of the National Examination and Evaluation Centre (OKÉV) will organise Advanced level examinations and will test and evaluate them within the framework of the new requirements. The test results will enable these candidates to apply for admission into foreign language programmes at Hungarian universities and colleges.

When applying for admission to a programme other than foreign languages in a HE institution a foreign language certificate is not a requirement, but it is a requirement when getting the degree. At university level the requirement is one intermediate level Type C (including all language skills) language certificate and one Basic level Type C language certificate. At college level the foreign language requirement is one intermediate level Type C language certificate.

3.1.3.1 Traditional language and literature degree programmes

Traditional language and literature degree programmes are offered by the language departments of the faculties of arts of the major Hungarian universities. Students of these programmes can also combine their philological studies with another subject or a teacher training module and thus they will become secondary school teachers of the given language. Most philological language programmes consist of a preparatory phase, a core phase and a specialisation phase. In the initial period there are more obligatory courses offered to the students and in the second and third period of the programmes students are increasingly free to make choices according to their chosen field of specialisation.

The programme, especially in the initial phase is aimed at improving students' language skills and competences. In this field the reading and (academic) writing skills as well as study skills are in focus because only the adequate level of these skills can grant that students cope with the challenging tasks of taking notes, reading academic works, writing essays and preparing a dissertation in the end. In the initial phase students are also given introductory courses in linguistics, literature and cultural studies. In literary courses students complete a survey course which covers the development of literature in the given country (or countries) and they also deal with literary theory and literary criticism. Eventually they can specialise in certain periods, authors or a literary trend within the framework of optional courses.

In linguistics they cover the areas of phonetics and phonology, morphology, syntax, history of language, applied language studies, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics.

Courses in history and lectures and seminars on various concepts and aspects of culture are also integral parts of the university curricula.

Several courses in foreign language programmes (especially language skills and culture-related seminars) are given by native speakers, who are also representatives of the given culture.

Hungarian higher education is based on the credit system, which was fully introduced in Hungarian higher education in the academic year of 2003/2004, although some institutions had already experimented with it in the middle of the 1990s. According to the governmental decree on the introduction of the credit system one credit corresponds to 30 hours student workload. The minimum number of credits for a college-level degree is 180 for a three-year training, 240 credits for a four-year training and 300 credits for a five-year training. For a further specialisation another 60 credits is needed. For doctoral studies the required number of additional credits is 180.

According to the credit system studies are no longer organised around standard groups of students and fixed timetables, but rather in a more flexible system in which students' individual needs also play a role. If students prolong their study period by more than two semesters they are required to pay tuition fee. Study periods abroad are granted to those students who gain a scholarship from a foreign institution or from a national or foreign organisation.

At the end of their studies students are to complete a dissertation (or thesis work) of high academic quality; they are to defend it and they complete their education with a final examination, the requirements of which are prescribed in national, institutional and departmental qualifications requirements.

3.1.3.2 Alternative (non-language) degree programmes

The country's prestigious universities (Budapest, Debrecen, Szeged, Pécs) offer alternative degree programmes in foreign languages, mostly in English, German and French. The most widespread of these programmes are related to the medical or pharmaceutical profession (General medicine, dentistry and pharmacy). Social sciences and engineering are also popular fields. The University of Szeged, Faculty of Law offers a French degree.

3.1.3.3. Traditional language and literature programmes at postgraduate level

Non-degree programmes in languages and literature mainly exist in the form of preparatory courses for university studies. These courses are usually offered by private language schools, occasionally by foreign language centres or foreign language departments of universities and colleges. These preparatory courses can also function as parts of the promotional campaign of HE institutions, within the framework of which they want to attract more applicants to their programmes. The other form of non-degree programmes is the in-service training of teachers. These training programmes are offered by HE institutions or Pedagogical Institutes. The programmes are most often of modular structure. Each module consists of 30 hours of teaching and the content of these modules varies from aspects of the language through literature to methodology. Language preparatory courses exist at secondary level as well. In September 2004 preparatory programmes (mostly English) were launched in 407 secondary schools all over Hungary. The number of participants nationally is 11 834.¹¹

¹¹ ¹¹ Entrance Examination Information Service. In: Délmagyarország. September 1, 2004

3.1.3. 4 Alternative programmes at postgraduate level

The main task of the Hungarian Language Institute is to prepare foreigners to university studies in Hungary. The preparatory course lasts for a school-year: the first semester is an intensive course (28 language lessons a week), while in the second semester students specialise in their chosen fields and study specialist language and subjects. The Institute is also an accredited examination place, so the students of the institute can take state-approved language examinations four times a year. In addition, the staff of the institute also do research and develop teaching materials. Every year hundreds of foreign students attend the language programmes of the Hungarian Language Institute; in 2003 they arrived from 35 countries. More than 80 % of them successfully passed the language exams.

Summer schools are also important in teaching foreign languages and culture, especially teaching Hungarian as a foreign language. The Debrecen Summer School, the Summer University at Pázmány Péter Catholic University, the Summer School at the University of Pécs and the Hungarian and East-Central European Studies programme at the University of Szeged are the most notable of these.

3.1.3.5 Language teacher training

The teacher training colleges of the country train language teachers for the primary schools, mainly for the upper primary level. With the introduction of foreign languages at an earlier age (sometimes at pre-school level, in one of the first three years of primary school education), some Colleges of Education introduced specialised language programmes in six hours a week.

In teacher training colleges in addition to the foreign language itself, history, culture, linguistics and literature are also systematically taught. (The average number of weekly hours is 10-12). Methodology and teaching practice are fully integrated into the programme from the very first year of education. Students study psychology, didactics, the history of education, the theory of education and also acquire classroom skills, courses, which enable them to teach language classes for the very young learners as well..

Universities prepare their students for a secondary school teaching job. While students of teacher training colleges take two subjects parallelly, university students are most often trained to become the teachers of one single subject. Teacher training is an option for them; they can study toward a non-teaching degree as well. The pedagogical subjects here are not integrated into the programme and all the courses are offered by non-language departments. This way teacher training is more formal and more general, less subject-specific than in the programmes of teacher training colleges. University teacher training programmes pose more academic demands, while college teacher training programmes are more practical and skills-oriented.

3.1.3.6 Language courses integrated into programmes in other disciplines and language options offered in combination with non-language programmes

Some students who attend universities and colleges already have intermediate-level language certificates in one or two languages. The following table¹² shows the percentage of students according to their specialisation, who already have a language certificate at the point of entering higher education. During their higher education studies these students are exempted from attending language classes.

specialisation	Percentage of students with language certificates
medicine	38
humanities	36
law	33
technology	31
economics	29
science	28
Agrarian studies	26
Communication studies	24
informatics	21
art	19
military	17

For those who do not have the necessary language certificates the universities offer language education. It is free up to a certain number of hours and credits. If students need more tuition, they are to pay for their own language classes. Students are to pass standardised national language examinations. More recently the specialist language examinations are increasingly popular. (Foreign languages for business, for tourism, for medicine etc.) Language teaching to non-language majors is the task of foreign language centres (Lektorátus, Nyelvi Intézet). Some of them are accredited language examination centres. The best known language examination centre in the country is the Centre for Foreign Languages in Budapest. It has been operating in the capital for over 30 years and it performs more than one thousand examinations per year in 52 foreign languages, with the help of about one thousand examiners.¹³ The centre also conducts Hungarian as a foreign language examinations. In the past all examinations were bilingual exams, that is the mother tongue was also included. As of January 2004 monolingual examinations are also available. The traditional language levels – basic-intermediate-advanced) is increasingly substituted by a more up-to-date four level system. The new examinations have been worked out for the following levels: Waystage User, Threshold User, Independent User and Competent User.

The centre is a Budapest-based institution but it administers exams at various locations in Hungary.

¹² Entrance Examination Information Service. In: Délmagyarország. September 1, 2004.

¹³ <http://www.itk.hu/lang/en>

In addition to modern languages there are special language requirements in certain training programmes. Some of these include Latin for medical and pharmacy students or history majors, Latin and ancient Greek for students of philosophy, or Finnish for students who major in Hungarian language and literature.

3.1.3.7 Translator training programmes

Translation studies and skills represent an integral part in all foreign language degree programmes and teacher training programmes in Hungary, since the Hungarian language is not a commonly spoken and understood foreign language in the world. International organisations, companies, international commerce, even individuals need more and more documents to be translated from foreign languages into Hungarian and from Hungarian into a widely spoken foreign language. In addition to the previously mentioned small-scale translation and interpretation-oriented programmes within the framework of foreign language programmes; certified translators and interpreters are trained by universities in postgraduate form at Master's level. The most prestigious institutions in this field are the Translator and Interpreter Training Centre (FTK) in Budapest, the Technological University (BME) Budapest and the University of Szeged, Translator and Interpreter Training Centre. More recently PhD studies are also available in the field which is offered by the Translator and Interpreter Training Centre in Budapest.

3.2. Horizontal axis: including other language providers (adult education institutions, language schools, cultural institutes, publishing, broadcasting etc.)

Language education and teacher training done within the framework of the formal educational system is based on uniform standards. Institutions and programmes regularly go through a process of accreditation and external evaluation, the teaching staff is professionally prepared for the job. The language providers of the horizontal axis, on the contrary, are most often private schools and institutions and they are more business, than profession-oriented. In order to fight incompetence and the lack of professionalism these organisations more recently also tend to establish their own organisations to protect themselves from amateurism and work according to the same high professional standards. (NYESZE: Professional Association of Private Language Schools).

3.2.1. Hungarian centres abroad

The Ministry of Cultural Heritage operates a number of Hungarian cultural centres or institutes abroad. The task of these institutes is to ensure the presence and the popularisation of Hungarian language, culture and science in foreign countries. These centres operate libraries, organise cultural programmes and also offer language courses upon demand. Some of the best known institutions are as follows: Hungarian House Berlin, Cultural Institute of the Republic of Hungary, Bratislava, Hungarian Cultural and Academic Centre Helsinki, Hungarian Cultural, Academic and Information Centre Moscow, Hungarian Cultural Centre New York, Hungarian Institute Paris, the Collegium Hungaricum Vienna and the Hungarian Academy Rome.

3.2.2 In-service training

Postgraduate degree programmes at Universities and colleges are the most important forms of in-service training for many teachers. Upgrading their existing degrees is essential for most of them since it will enhance teachers' employability and they become competent teachers for all age groups and all types of learners.

Regional pedagogical institutes organise in-service programmes for teachers, the duration of which might vary from shorter weekend courses to one-year comprehensive programmes.

The centre for Advanced Language Learning (ITK) has currently set up post-graduate courses for teachers, which were entitled Measuring Foreign Language Competence. The Institute organises regular in-service training programmes and in-service programmes for language examiners. The in-service training consists of more theoretical and more practical parts. In the practical part video materials are analysed, participants mark the written papers together and participate as interviewers or evaluators in mock-examination situations.

Publishers also organise training sessions, but these programmes often lack consistency and depth. The sole aim of these sessions and workshops is the promotion of their own teaching material. Though, it should be noted that for many teachers, especially for teachers of small country schools this is the only available form of self-improvement and of keeping up with the latest news in the profession. It is also an important incentive for them that during these sessions teachers are given sample copies of books and ready-made lesson plans or visual aids to complement the programmes. These materials then can be used in the foreign language programmes of small and ill-equipped country schools.

Foreign cultural organisations and institutes (British Council, Alliance Francaise and Goethe Institute) also offer in-service training programmes for teachers, often with the participation of outstanding foreign experts or textbook writers.

The Scholarship Committee of the Ministry of Education (MÖB) annually calls for applications to attend in-service training programmes by foreign universities. Since spending a few weeks in the target country is of utmost importance for language teachers, these programmes are highly competitive and it is not easy to get financial support from the Ministry to in-service programmes organised by foreign universities and colleges.

The new two-level school leaving examination has necessitated a growth in the number of in-service teacher training and examiner training programmes. These are organised by the regional pedagogical institutes.

3.2.3 Publicly Recognised Language Programmes

Publicly recognised language programmes are those which prepare student for accredited language examinations. The most traditional state language exam is the bilingual ORIGO, administered by the Centre for Foreign Language Learning. Monolingual examinations are gaining popularity including the ECL (European

Consortium for the Certificate of Attainment in Modern Languages) as well as the Pitman Qualifications, and the Cambridge examinations. Special foreign language examinations are administered by many universities and these exams test applicants' knowledge of the language of businesses, of the military, of tourism and trade and many more. An increasing number of secondary school students plan to sit for intermediate level language examinations. According to a recent survey¹⁴ 42% of them wish to pass a language exam in one foreign language, 40% in two languages and 13% in three languages. Private language teaching is also very popular in Hungary.

3.2.4. Publishing

Hungary is an ideal market for many foreign publishers. The Budapest-centred Textbook Publishing House (Tankönyvkiadó) specialises in publishing textbooks for school and classroom use. Several other publishers are experimenting now with textbook publishing for the market of foreign language learners because it is a well-paying business and a growing market. These publishers include Corvina, Kossuth, Európa and many others. Institutions of higher education usually have their own publishing house and they publish their own materials.

3.2.5. Broadcasting

The cable television system, available for the majority of households in Hungary broadcasts several foreign channels including BBC, Sky News, CNN, ZDF, RTL, RAI etc. Those programmes, which are broadcast on the Hungarian channels are unfortunately all dubbed.

Part Two: Mapping of Interfaces on the Vertical and Horizontal axes.

1. Structures for co-operation in the educational sector and between the different language providers: at ministerial level, regional level and local level.

The new school leaving language examination requires cooperation between all sectors of education, especially between the secondary schools and the institutions of higher education. (With the Advanced level certificate applicants get into foreign language programmes of the universities WITHOUT entrance examination.) Examiners are currently being trained by the National and Regional Examination and Evaluation Centres. Participants of these training programmes come from secondary schools and also from the language departments and language centres of institutions of higher education. The school leaving language exam is also equal with the current intermediate and advanced level state language examinations, so it requires co-operation between the formal educational institutions, pedagogical institutes (OKÉV centres conduct it) and the private language schools as well as other language teaching organisations and examination bodies.

The new teacher training system (university level only) and the Bachelor and Master levels in higher education also mean a stronger cooperation on the one hand between public schools and universities and on the other hand between universities

¹⁴ Entrance Examination Information Service. In: Délmagyarország. September 1, 2004

and colleges. Professional coordinating bodies have been set up by the Ministry of Education which are responsible for elaborating and coordinating the new degree programmes. Representatives of these bodies are from all levels (college and university) and they represent all forms of institutions of higher education including state, foundation and church-financed institutions.

Currently there are no structures in place to officially link the business sector, the world of labour and the institutions of higher education. Higher educational institutions are financed by the Ministry of Education, while the public schools are financed by the local governments. This duality of the system of finances means that there is no close link between local governments and the educational committees of the local government and the institutions of higher education.

2. Forms of co-operation

External examiners (entrance examinations and final examinations of colleges and universities, school leaving examinations of secondary schools) are often teachers, experts from various types of schools; this way they ensure co-operation between different sectors of education.

Teachers from primary and secondary schools are trained to be mentor teachers for various teacher training institutions of higher education. Mentor teachers are trained and assisted by experts from Hungarian or foreign institutions of higher education. Mentoring teacher trainees requires all sorts of cooperation between the primary/secondary schools as well as institutions of higher education in field of organisation, management, evaluation, curricula and teaching and assessment methods. There is a cooperation via staff, in policy development and methods. If students of a teacher training institution choose to write their thesis work in the field of foreign language teaching methodology, one of the assessors – usually the second reader – is a primary or secondary school language teacher who can assess the work from a more practice-oriented point of view.

In-service training programmes as well as ERASMUS teacher mobility schemes provide opportunities for linking up primary and secondary school teachers with staff in higher education. In addition to teaching a set number of lessons to teacher training students foreign guest lecturers, regularly meet teachers from primary and secondary schools as well. They often give a workshop, disseminate teaching materials, give teaching ideas or observe classes and discuss the similarities and differences of the two systems with the language teacher.

The current system of applications for project funding also encourages the establishment of consortia from different spheres of life and types of educational institutions. (Schools often cooperate with the business sector or some type of managerial organisation). Projects with the aim of writing/developing teaching materials, workbooks, practice books, portfolios or multimedia CDs also include the elements of piloting and evaluating the new material. This phase of project work requires a close cooperation between language- often subject- teachers at primary and secondary schools and materials writers who work in institutions of higher education.

Joint conferences and symposia organised for representatives from different sectors of education can also create opportunities for cooperation and they often result in exchanging teaching ideas and teaching materials. The number of conference opportunities is increasing, but joint publications of primary and secondary school teachers and methodology teachers of institutions of higher education are unfortunately rare examples, and more of them would be needed to 'marry' theory and practice in language education.

The current system of teaching practice for students of teacher training colleges often uses external schools (other than the university or college practice school) as venues for the teaching practice. Students often go back to their own regional or local school for their teaching practice and this way a broader cooperation can exist between different schools and school types within one location or between schools in different locations.

In-service training is a good example of interfaces between different sectors of education since language departments of institutions of higher education, regional or local pedagogical institutes, as well as the private educational sector all offer in-service training programmes. Informal links exist between these sectors; more guidance, more formal bodies and dialogues would be needed to coordinate the events, materials and programmes in in-service teacher training.

Language teachers' associations in – smaller – local communities are the best examples for cooperation between different sectors of education. In small-town communities all parties and stakeholders know each other informally as well and forms of meaningful and useful cooperation develop in a natural and informal way between them.

Quality-oriented private language schools often work in close cooperation with consultation bodies which include experts from the business sector as well as from language departments or language centres of institutions of higher education.

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

1. Identification of needs, obstacles and opportunities and measures to be taken to improve communication and cooperation

- 1.1. Language studies need to be integrated into the primary school curricula considering the needs. The programmes of different types of schools need to be made transparent to grant transferability of language learners from one school to another (general to specialised) and further to ensure the smooth transition of learners from the primary to the secondary level.
- 1.2. Class sizes and group sizes should be made more optimal, the distribution of language lessons should be balanced throughout the week.
- 1.3. Comprehensive and transparent language policies should be implemented on all levels of education.

- 1.4. It is necessary to grant the comparability of the different private language schools and their programmes.
- 1.5. Higher education language teaching is to be adjusted to students' needs. Tailor-made and flexible programmes and examinations are to be offered to students. Consultation bodies from different sectors need to be established to improve language education.
- 1.6. In Hungary the older generation needs more encouragement to learn – including foreign languages. Special programmes need to be organised for them; lifelong learning should be given more emphasis both in initial and in in-service teacher training programmes.
- 1.7. The European Language Portfolio and the Common European Framework need to be consistently implemented on all levels.
- 1.8. More research projects and more support –both financial and moral -are needed in the field of languages, applied language studies and testing. (Currently research into language studies is often seen as 'inferior' to the seemingly more academic literary, culture studies or theoretical linguistic research projects)

Part Four: Recommendations

1. Develop and implement an integrated action plan for foreign language study in the Hungarian school system.
2. Elaborate and enhance language studies –related and applied language-related research projects and assist the dissemination and the practical utilisation of research outcomes.
3. Create more opportunities for teachers and students of foreign languages to study and work temporarily abroad.
4. Help the adult+ population in their foreign language acquisition programmes within the framework of lifelong learning projects. Elaborate special teaching materials and methods to meet the special needs of this age group.
5. Widen the opportunities in in-service teacher training and consider teachers' actual needs in it. More systematic governmental, business and institutional participation in in-service training programmes needs to be strengthened.
6. Create a comprehensive and clear system of supervision and assistance for teachers of foreign languages by involving external bodies and experts.
7. Organise more in-service training courses for university language teachers and tailor them according to their special needs.
8. Consider schools' as well as communities' needs and create a balance of theory and practice in language teacher training programmes as well as in in-

service courses. More joint publications by authors from different sectors need to be published, more conferences and meetings need to be organised with the participation of teachers, students, researchers and experts representing various sectors.