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Quality Assurance in Teacher Education

ABSTRACT. Quality in general education has been defined through aims, key qualifications, organisational standards, didactic requirements, but also learning outcomes which depend on students' proficiency in the language of schooling and their cognitive academic skills. New challenges bring about changes in responsibilities of schools and teachers and have a strong impact on approaches to quality assurance in teacher education, a complex process not devoid of controversies, the most important of which will be identified in the present text. Implications for the curricular content of pre- and in-service language teacher education will also be sought.

KEYWORDS: the European educational policy; language teaching; quality assurance; language teachers; teacher education.

1. INTRODUCTION

The European policy of the last two decades has given emphasis to education, training and the teaching profession stressing that quality assurance is indispensable in guaranteeing that desired objectives are achieved, ethical standards are met and the process is cost-effective (European Union 2006; European Commission 2007). To analyse the quality of education, a variety of domains need to be visited such as external and internal, explicit and implicit standards, curricula, teachers' qualifications and the teaching process, learning processes and outcomes, but also 'goodness of fit' between individuals and their educational contexts. The issue of quality management in SLA/FLT, however, is one of the most complex due to difficulties with defining the very concept of quality, but also because – as Heyworth points out – 'there is very little hard research on, for example, how QM affects learner achievement or teaching practice' (Heyworth 2013: 281).

Definition of quality, originating in business which equals it with meeting the requirements of the customer, links it to needs. The ISO 8402-1986 standard, for example, presents quality as features or characteristics which satisfy stated or implicit needs (ISO 1994). This implies relations between the customer and the provider, makes the definition relational and – stressing expectations – gives the defining authority to a person or an institution formulating them, thus making the concept of quality extremely subjective, dependent on power structures and conducive to symbolic violence (Bourdieu 1994). In educational systems, however, a balance is needed between top-down approaches to standards regulating the equivalence of certificates or diplomas and a bottom-up approach based on local needs.

In effect, in present approaches to defining quality, a syndromic rather than a classical definition is usually offered, that is a list of characteristics of a given object or phenomenon rather than a specification of a class of objects to which a given *definiendum* belongs and an attribute which differentiates it from other objects in the group. The main advantage of this defining procedure lies in an obligation to precisely list the required features which at least makes the direction, if not the source of power, explicit. The cost of syndromic approaches is the difficulty, if not the impossibility, of defining general concepts and a necessity to concentrate on local or contextual phenomena. The main consequence of the syndromic approach to defining quality in education is the fact that the kind and level of education has to be specified as well as aspects of it which will be taken into consideration in quality assurance.

2. THE CONCEPT OF QUALITY IN EDUCATION

Language teaching and teacher education define quality and draw procedures for quality assurance from general education, therefore concepts and procedures functioning in that field need to be addressed first.

Quality of general education is defined through its directions and goals, therefore to assess quality, aims need to be formulated at the outset. These have been identified in two reports published by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) as promoting individual development (Faure 1972) and social cohesion (Delors 1996). This short list has then been extended by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in their DeSeCo project which added employability of school leavers to the list of aims (OECD 2007a, 2007b, 2008) and then finalized by the European Union (EU) in the overarching project on *European Qualifications Framework* (European Parliament 2006, 2008).

This meant refocusing quality, and in consequence also its assurance, from knowledge to skills and from facts to competences, much in line with the social constructive theory and the communicative turn in language teaching.

In this approach each subject area of school education was supposed to contribute to the development of key competences. Integration of efforts was expected in striving for what was then called 'cross-curricular competencies' (Rychen / Salganik 2001, Dumont et al. 2010) or 'transversal competences' (Čepić et al. 2015). Overarching competences did not exclude subject-specific aims as demonstrated by the contents of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR 2001).

Further work concentrated on the specification of aims, which would add precision to the definition of quality. This was achieved by means of specifying key qualifications and relating them to contexts of linguistic and cultural diversity as well as to lifelong learning (Jarvis 2005, Looney 2009, OECD 2007a, 2007b, 2008, 2010). To assure high quality, educational institutions were then expected to address a number of other issues, e.g., to respond to social and cultural changes in the society, provide for the increasing diversity of skills, abilities and experiences in multilingual and multicultural classrooms, and to introduce learners to autonomy (European Commission 2007). Quality was also believed to be attained when the system is accessible for all learners including those coming from vulnerable social groups, promotes both universal and local values and employs qualified teachers actively engaged in continuous raising their professional skills (Council of Europe 2012).

The concept of quality was also based on the conviction that, to obtain desired results, a number of organisational and didactic requirements need to be fulfilled such as appropriate curricular content, selection of teaching materials, pupil-teacher ratio and class size. These cannot be ignored in the process of quality control and quality assurance.

3. QUALITY OF EDUCATION DEPENDS ON LANGUAGE

In parallel to the aim-oriented approach to quality, the efficiency approach has also been developed. Apart from its cost-effectiveness, quality education came to be perceived as educational provision for all, enabling learners to complete courses they had selected and enrolled in.

The issue of quality viewed as continuity and completion is growing in importance now in the face of huge drop-out reported by educational systems in various countries. Researchers point out high rates of early school

leaving, i.e., the phenomenon of quitting school before completing upper secondary education, often referred to as *Early Leaving from Education and Training* - ELET (European Union 2014a). Current EU average was assessed at 12% in 2014 which means 5 million young people, 41% of whom face unemployment. The ELET index is higher for boys (13.6%) than for girls (10.2%), though huge differences are noticed between particular member states, e.g., ELET remains at the level of 26.5% for Spain and 23.2% for Portugal, but only 5% in most of the new member states such as Croatia, the Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia or Slovenia (European Commission 2014a).

This worrying phenomenon is often correlated with language problems of the young people; high-quality education cannot be achieved without sufficient language skills of the learners, enabling them to communicate in the mother tongue as well as in foreign languages, as clearly presented in the set of eight key competences promoted by the European Union as a basis for quality education in school systems of its member states (European Parliament 2006). Awareness of the interdependence of educational outcomes and linguistic skills brought about significant changes in the approach to languages in education.

In the history of the European education the national language was considered to be the home language of the students, the official language of the country and at the same time the language of schooling. Today the situation has changed radically - students' home languages often differ from the language of schooling and - due to increasing mobility - constantly grow in numbers. Census conducted in 2008 in the city of Sheffield showed 91 home languages spoken by primary schoolchildren (Reynolds 2008), while six other European cities: Hamburg, Göteborg, Madrid, Lyon, Brussels and the Hague showed between 50 and 90 first languages spoken by their citizens (Extra / Yağmur 2004).

As a result of the huge proliferation of home languages, the language of schooling naturally plays the role of a second, and sometimes even of a third or a fourth language, in which many learners are not at all proficient. If they seem fluent, their skills are often superficial and restricted to what Cummins calls Basic Interactional Communicative Skills (BICS), while - to understand and acquire knowledge and skills in various subject areas taught through the language of schooling - Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) is indispensable (Cummins 2000, 2008). CALP is often absent even from the students' first language, let alone their second or third languages. The lack of CALP in immigrant students is usually a result of low general language skills, while a similar lack in monolingual students springs from restricted language codes used in the family (Bernstein 1990, 2001).

The language of schooling is, therefore, at least in most of the EU member states (Eurydice 2006), taught in parallel to the subject content in a dual-focus format so far typical of teaching a selected subject area through the medium of a foreign language, the so-called Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL).

The new situation calls for a change in approaches to quality in language education. Learners' proficiency needs now to become the responsibility held not only by teachers of languages, but also by teachers of other subject areas. Ten leading international institutions involved in language education decided to voice an opinion in this matter, drafting a document on the subject of quality assurance in language education. On January 7, 2010, the Graz Declaration on Language Education *Quality Language Education for Plurilingual People Living in Multilingual Societies* was adopted (Council of Europe 2010). The document points out new research directions such as the need for new methodologies appropriate for multilinguals and multicultural classrooms, new approaches to the assessment of learners' plurilingual and partial competences as well as new reference standards for academic skills indispensable to function in the language of schooling in order to acquire knowledge and skills across the curriculum. With regard to the changing role of the teacher, the Declaration states that today the quality of education needs to be based on three key principles: a) every teacher is a language teacher, b) learners' home languages are a resource schools should make use of and ought to build on while supporting students' knowledge and skills development, and c) all the language skills of the learners in their plurilingual repertoires should be put to use in the course of flexible moving between languages in their language constellations to permit code-switching, often referred to as free 'linguaging'. In this language-based approach to quality responsibility lies with teacher education.

4. QUALITY OF EDUCATION DEPENDS ON TEACHER EDUCATION

The concept of quality in language teacher education differs across countries and contexts due to the fact that quality is assessed against criteria set by local or national administration boards in the process of institutional accreditation. In most of the EU countries general standards for teacher education are laid out together with specific requirements for qualifications to teach languages. Guidelines refer to organisational aspects of teacher education and to its curricular content.

Quality control and the role of evaluation grew in importance when the European language policy laid solid foundations for the international significance of ways in which teachers are professionally trained to work in the school systems in member states of both the Council of Europe and the European Union. The European Union explicitly stated that high-quality teaching is a prerequisite for high-quality education and training, which are in turn powerful determinants of Europe's long-term competitiveness and capacity to create more jobs and growth in line with the Lisbon goals and in conjunction with other relevant policy areas such as economic policy, social policy and research (European Parliament 2006).

4.1. Institutional and organizational factors in assessing quality of teacher education

In all the EU member states teacher education is provided by tertiary institutions which function within the legal framework of higher education. Legislation of the *European Higher Education Area (EHEA)* based on the SCORECARD planning and management system in its recent regulations requires both internal and external quality management to be provided. *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG)* recommend that quality assurance should focus on two main groups of factors, i.e., a) interests of the society, students and employers, and b) the autonomy of the academic institution. External evaluation should concentrate on assessing how comprehensive the institution's system is, what teaching is offered, what kind of student services are provided and if and what kind of internal quality management has been set up (European Commission 2015). As external evaluation takes place at predetermined intervals, internal assessment needs to be carried out continuously by the institution itself.

Only institutions which have been evaluated favourably by accreditation bodies can offer teacher development programs. The way such a program should be constructed is regulated in Europe by both international and national regulations which have been in force for the last decade, although full-fledged evaluation procedures designed for language teaching and teacher education were first implemented in the 1980s (Beretta 1986a, 1986b, Mackey et al. 1995). Rapid development came at the beginning of the 1990s (Alderson, Beretta 1992, Scriven 1991; Rea-Dickinson, Germaine 1992), especially when differences between academic research and evaluation studies were identified, analysed and described to highlight explanatory and predictive

functions of the former and the decision-making orientation of the latter (Kiely, Komorowska 1998; Weir, Roberts 1994).

In the European educational policy quality assurance in teacher development was first officially tackled in 2006, when the European Union issued an important document entitled *Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, Meeting within the Council, on Improving the Quality of Teacher Education* in which basic principles of quality management in teacher education were formulated (European Union 2006).

Institutions responsible for pre- and in-service teacher development were reminded to ensure quality by means of activities such as

- providing assistance in the induction of novice teachers into the profession,
- providing novice teachers with access to mentoring and guidance or other early career support programs,
- ensuring possibilities of further training and skills development,
- coordinating all the above activities and resourcing them properly,
- ensuring sustaining, and improving teacher qualification throughout their professional career,
- cooperating with other institutions in the field, and
- supporting mobility programs (European Union 2006).

4.2. Curricular content in assessing quality of language teacher education

For the last three decades in most of the European countries it has been accepted that quality teacher education at BA level colleges includes professional training embracing language teaching with phonetics and grammar, EFL methodology, psychology, pedagogy and the reflective teaching practice based on the Schön's model, but also the so-called background studies embracing culture, literature and linguistics (Schön 1985, Wallace 1990, Wright 2010). The structure of the curriculum is based on the conviction that, as Phipps (2015: 246) puts it, 'academic and professional qualifications need not be mutually exclusive, that theory and practice can be thoughtfully integrated and that reflective approaches to teacher education need not mean sacrificing academic rigour'. The choice of subject areas is dictated by the requirement to keep educational alleys open and in this case to ensure possibilities to continue university education up to at least the MA level. It is also determined by the type of skills to be developed in the course of pre-service teacher development programs. The most important of those are envisaged as being able

- to teach transversal competences,
- to create a safe learning environment,
- to cope with linguistic, cultural and needs diversity,
- to engage in reflective practice to collaborate with other stakeholders in the educational landscape,
- to make use of new technologies, and
- to become autonomous in their professional development.

Procedures implemented to achieve these aims need to be operationalised. In language teacher education this process was facilitated by the fact that somewhat earlier two documents had been published, i.e., *EPLTE – European Profile of Language Teacher Education* (Kelly, Grenfell 2004) providing a framework for the evaluation of teacher training institutions as well as the *EPOSTL – European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages* (Newby et al. 2007) providing a framework for self-assessment of didactic competences in the process of teacher development. Other forms of practical guidance in the process of quality assurance have also been offered such as, for example, *QUALITRAINING – A Training Guide for Quality Assurance* (Muresan 2007).

Great emphasis in all the European guidelines for quality assurance in language teacher education is given to peer learning and collaboration developed in the course of a variety of school, interschool and international projects. This additionally calls for a set of criteria for project evaluation. Quality of a project is seen as based on several factors: the overall objective, specific objectives, target groups, activities, results and impact, time and cost estimates as well as ongoing, built-in internal evaluation measures – all those against the background of a needs analysis (www.ecml.at). This means that end-of-project evaluation, predominant at the end of the 20th century, is now combined with the process oriented approach where evolving objectives are treated as important modifications in the life of the project. In this way evaluation paradoxically becomes a part of what is to be evaluated. Even the project's planning phase becomes a subject of evaluation with its recommended steps including the setting of short- and long-term goals, justifying them, identifying tangible outcomes, identifying earlier work that can prove useful for the project, conceiving a detailed action plan, planning budgets and designing a human resources plan together with a communication strategy. In the overall evaluation of small scale teacher projects still more criteria are taken into consideration, i.e., the strengths of the project, its sustainability, transferability to other contexts, as well as threats to both (Komorowska 2009, Muresan 2007, Szpotowicz 2011). Projects completed within the frames of the *European Language Label* or *eTwinning* as well as those completed in the European Centre for Modern Languages 4-year programs are evaluated against this set of criteria.

Quality assurance in teacher education can, therefore, make use of a variety of individual and institutional, internal and external, on-going and final evaluation procedures.

5. CONTROVERSIES AND METHODOLOGICAL CONCERNS IN ASSESSING QUALITY OF LANGUAGE TEACHER EDUCATION

Assessing quality in teacher education, language teacher education included, tends to concentrate either on input or on outcomes. Input analysis is more common in accreditation procedures, outcomes are usually analysed in research projects undertaken by training institutions or by individual researchers.

Input is obviously much easier to analyse as it includes measurable factors such as the number of contact hours, the length of the teaching practice, curricula and syllabi for particular subject areas and methods applied. What, however, remains beyond the scope of research is a set of crucial aspects which, as Fuller (2014: 65) points out, 'differentiate quality preparation from poor preparation'.

When it comes to the analysis that is considered extremely important, but is undertaken much less often, i.e., that of output – the most common aspects examined in the evaluation of educational programs are job placement rates, longevity in the profession and the effect of teachers' approach on students' achievement. The informative function of these variables, however, is varied.

In the process of evaluating teacher preparation programs, placement is not always a valuable index as it depends on the situation on the labour market rather than on graduates' skills and competences. Qualifications are less important in times of teacher shortages, a shift best illustrated by the change of the political system in Poland when English replaced Russian and the country found itself in need of 20,000 teachers of English (Komorowska 2012). Teachers' professionalism becomes a significant indicator only when the saturation point is reached – the situation now observed in the domain of English language teaching in Polish state schools. Yet even then placement rates are worth measuring only if transparency of recruitments has been ensured, which is not always the case.

Longevity in the profession again is not always a factor which reflects the quality of teacher preparation programs as it often depends on contextual variables. Studies on stress and burnout (Maslach, Leiter 2011, Pitura 2012) demonstrate that teachers' decisions to leave their workplace are often a consequence of tiresome bureaucratic procedures, misplaced microman-

agement and long-term coping with technical difficulties. Tracing career decisions back to teacher preparation programs is, therefore, difficult and often unfounded.

A teacher's effect on student achievement seems to be the best candidate for the status of the touchstone of quality of pre-service teacher training programs, yet even here researchers face validity problems. Many educational institutions explicitly or implicitly apply streaming and setting procedures. Depending on trends in the national educational policy, schools of various levels either admit large quantities of students or introduce strict admission procedures to enrol elitist groups of candidates. Interschool testing and the resulting ranking tables concentrate on the final outcome of the learning process rather than on the amount of progress students make in the course of their school education. What is more, student achievement is measured by means of written tests, a measure grossly inadequate in the context of language teaching which focuses on oral, interactive skills. In this situation, especially in the field of language teaching where the learning process is now at least as important as the product of instruction – student achievement does not seem to be a valid source of information related to teachers' skills, let alone to the quality of programs which had once prepared them to function in the profession. Problems are often noticed by administration only when students drop out of the system. Before that moment, teachers just take the blame for low attainment levels without getting much support from the authorities (European Commission 2014a).

The problem of assessing the quality of pre-service teacher education by means of evaluating learning outcomes of students taught by graduates from teacher education programs becomes a burning issue in contexts with low family-oriented indices of parental support, knowledge of languages or the level of education, but also in the context of countries with large numbers of migrant students. The first type of context has been widely discussed and publicized in research and study on educational failure in general and on language learning failure in particular (*SurveyLang* 2012), the second one – much less so.

Teachers in countries which have so far been predominantly monolingual now face new challenges, e.g., teaching mixed ability and mixed proficiency students in multilingual and multicultural classes where student achievement is not always correlated with the teacher's effort (Florian, Linklater 2010). Reasons are being analysed underlying the situation whereby the Early Leaving from Education and Training index (ELET) is dramatically higher for foreign-born students (22.6%) than for native-born students (11%). Serious difficulties arise when the country's educational system has to cope with large numbers of new arrivals, usually emergent bilinguals, especially students with inter-

rupted formal education (SIFE). SIFE students are refugees who received short and/or inadequate education in their home country, had no access to education for a long time due to wars and conflicts and later, after traumatic experiences, had to enrol in a school with another official language. Equally serious problems are faced by schools with high percentages of local students from immigrant groups with no more than basic communicative skills in the language of schooling – learners often referred to as 1.5. generation (Menken 2013). National high-stake competence tests and external examinations rank these schools low in the hierarchy and in consequence teachers are unfairly considered inadequate, unprofessional and badly trained. This problem is shared by many countries as demonstrated in the United States by controversies over the *No Child Left Behind Act* of 2001, signed into law on January 8, 2002, on the force of which all students, emergent bilinguals included, have to take high-stakes exams in English. In areas with large numbers of second language learners not only teachers get the blame, federal funding is also endangered and schools might even be closed (Menken 2013).

One can always maintain that teachers could be better trained for these kinds of context, but pre-service teacher education, which has to accommodate all kinds of prospective professional needs of trainees, cannot focus solely on the teaching of multilingual classes. What is more, as can be seen from the above, sources of difficulties can be seen in a variety of fields: insufficient budget, class size, mistaken administrative decisions, social and economic problems of families and, last but not least, in objective difficulties inherent in teaching mixed ability and linguistically differentiated groups.

So far administrative steps taken in various countries to ensure high quality of education and to facilitate the educational situation of migrant learners are grossly insufficient. Schools and teachers feel they are not helped by government institutions which fail to offer professional assistance in the form of in-service consultancy, but – first of all – fail to guarantee financial provision which would permit smaller class size and enable individualisation of language teaching. With no budgetary and training provision for systemic support of teachers and learners either learners and their families are unjustifiably blamed or low academic achievement is equally unjustifiably traced back to teachers and teaching.

Blaming learners and their families is not only unfair, it also threatens social cohesion and counteracts the promotion of tolerance. The fact that in Europe the risk of dropout is twice as high for foreign-born students than it is for native-born ones has officially been confirmed to give fuel to xenophobic attitudes instead of promoting more efficient measures to prevent social exclusion resulting from language difficulties (European Commission 2014b). Blaming teachers is mistaken in the situation of a lamentable lack of

help they receive from educational administration legally responsible for providing means to help schools and educators in coping with difficulty.

All this means that assessing quality of pre-service teacher education or the quality of teacher's work by means of evaluating educational achievement is not a reliable method. What therefore remains as a possibility of fair quality assessment of language teacher education is observation of teachers' behaviour in the classroom, a variable for which research, though feasible, is extremely expensive and time-consuming (Creemers et al. 2013).

No wonder most exercises in quality assessment restrict their scope to the analysis of academic documentation. In consequence, the validity of evaluation reports on the quality of teacher education programs is often called to question (Fuller 2014). The NCTQ report (AACTE 2013) serves as an example of controversial issues and difficulties inherent in evaluation procedures. The report was based on many sources – state regulations, institutions-district correspondence, syllabus documents, obligatory and further readings used, library provision, textbooks for students, student teaching evaluation forms, project guidelines, graduate and employer surveys, state administration data on institutional performance, demographic data. It also included institutional websites and self-reports. Yet, the abundance of data did not seem to help a lot and the validity of the conclusions reached on the basis of all the above has been seriously questioned mainly due to the predominant role of the analysis of the syllabus content (Fuller 2014).

In spite of those negative experiences, evaluation and accreditation procedures in higher education still focus mainly on the curriculum. It should be admitted, however, that quality control is now being enriched by other factors such as classroom observation as well as student and teacher focus group discussions. Other indices of quality are also constantly being added to the list of assessment criteria. In the European Union the amount and kind of mobility programs for pre-service teacher education is also stressed very strongly as factors which should be considered in evaluating the preparation of future teachers for their profession (Kelly, Grenfell 2004). Recently internalisation of teacher education programs is also emphasized, therefore factors such as recruitment of international students as well as research and education partnerships tend to be included in evaluation schemes (European Commission 2015, de Witt 2011). Whatever the efforts, quality assessment remains a controversial issue.

This difficult situation is not at all helped by not infrequent clashes between official regulations and local conditions, the more that a degree of institutional fear and human anxiety is also at play as evaluation in the form of quality control is often carried out for the purpose of deciding whether to maintain, drop or modify the program.

6. IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHER EDUCATION

Although the first signals of interest in external quality control appeared in the 1980s and aspects of participatory evaluation in the mid-1990s, it was the beginning of the 21st century that brought a wide promotion of the social-constructivist approach with its emphasis on interaction and negotiation between evaluators, principals, teachers, students and other stakeholders in the educational landscape. It also brought new methodological concepts such as triangulation, qualitative and not only quantitative research paradigms as well as mixed method approaches.

The social turn in language education (Block 2003) resulted in expansion of evaluation projects which since that time have been embracing more and more aspects such as teaching various age groups, leadership, examinations, assessment, resources, accreditation procedures, but also sectors and levels of education (Heyworth 2013). The multilingual turn (Conteh, Meier 2014) oriented evaluation and quality management toward education of migrants, whole school education, language teaching in multilingual and multicultural contexts. Yet language teacher education remains a prominent part of studies in quality management.

All these developments pose new challenges for pre-service teacher education which is now supposed to prepare teachers for all kinds of social contexts, types of institutions, age groups, educational and proficiency levels. Considering the multitude of situations in which teachers can now find themselves, evaluation of pre-service teacher education programs which is based on overly demanding expectations is useless for stakeholders. A reasonable line of demarcation needs to be drawn between what can be justifiably expected from pre-service teacher education and what has to be left to be dealt with in the course of in-service teacher development.

It seems reasonable to suggest that specific competencies such as teaching young learners, teaching senior citizens, teaching language for specific/occupational purposes or teaching adult refugees should be developed in narrowly focused in-service teacher development courses, while the psychological and pedagogical foundations of education in general and language education in particular as well as didactic aspects such as lesson planning, syllabus design, summative and formative assessment procedures, etc. ought to form the core of pre-service teacher education programs. Primary emphasis, however, should be given to the learning to learn competences as no teacher educator can predict the type of context in which trainees are likely to find themselves in their future professional life.

The present attempts to build all-purpose pre-service teacher education programs seem not only unrealistic, but even counterproductive from the

point of view of the ability to analyse professional needs in the future and to autonomously engage in self-development. Designing a realistic curriculum for pre-service teacher education does not, however, justify a lack of adequate training for practicing teachers who work in multilingual contexts or teach groups of special educational needs. Tailor-made in-service courses, guidance and consultancy services and, first of all, sufficient financing of schools is a *sine qua non* condition of high quality language education.

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