Study and teaching of German at universities
in Ukraine and Australia

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ABSTRACT

The current thesis is a theoretical and empirical investigation of the foreign language classroom, conducted from a cross-national comparative perspective. The study is based on quantitative and qualitative data which were collected from students and teachers of German in selected universities of Ukraine and Australia. The following research questions were formulated:

1. What are the structure and objectives of the German language program at Ukrainian and Australian universities?
2. What are the peculiarities of the German language curriculum and teaching methodology in the universities of Ukraine and Australia?
3. What are students’ motives to study German in Ukraine and Australia?
4. What are students’ and teachers’ perceptions of the curriculum, content and teaching?
5. How do students themselves evaluate their present language skills, and those expected to be acquired by the end of the course?
6. What are the advantages and disadvantages in both education practices?

Each country’s distinctive social and pedagogical factors, such as language policy, attitudes towards languages and pedagogical tradition were taken into account.

The research was conducted at universities in Kyiv, Kharkiv and Lviv (Ukraine) and Melbourne (Australia). A combination of quantitative and qualitative methods was adopted which included student and teacher questionnaires, interviews, classroom observations and study of departmental programs and policy documents. In general terms, it was revealed that:

- Substantial differences exist in areas such as curriculum, teaching methods and approaches, content and student motivation for studying German.
• Although education systems in Australia and Ukraine are different, learners in both countries have similar aims and expectations from their language course, and their perceptions of a good language course are also similar.

• Students in both countries expressed an urgent need for an increase in the communicative component and greater exposure to practical, up-to-date lexical and grammar material in order to be able to communicate effectively.

• In Australia there is a mismatch between the course objectives and content outlined in the program and what is really taught in the class.

• In Ukraine, a shift has occurred towards more practice-oriented and integrated language learning/teaching; however there is a great need for the creation of better conditions for acquisition of communicative skills and up-to-date vocabulary.
DECLARATION

This is to certify that

(i) the thesis comprises only my original work towards the PhD,

(ii) due acknowledgement has been made in the text to all other material used,

(iii) the thesis is less than 100,000 words in length, exclusive of tables, bibliographies and appendices.

Oksana King
Melbourne, 2009
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STUDY AND TEACHING OF GERMAN AT UNIVERSITIES IN UKRAINE AND AUSTRALIA

Educational provision could, with truth, be described as a large business, and given this starting metaphor such a description would then proceed to identify and quantify matters of finance, personnel, clientele; structures, functions, malfunctions. Again, educational practice, say, could with similar validity, be seen as a series of negotiations between those with prescribed authority (teachers) and others deemed potential initiates (children) about knowledge. Ensuing concerns would then include the nature of the institutions they inhibit, the quality of their interactions and perhaps the incongruities between the recipients’ views of the knowledge and those of dispensers.

(Nicholas, 1983, p. xi)

1. INTRODUCTION

The processes of globalisation and internationalisation have triggered many changes in language education all over the world. The new developments of the political situation since the early 1990s in countries of the former Soviet Union and those belonging to the Eastern bloc have created new imperatives and new opportunities for travel, work or study abroad. Democratisation and liberalisation of some Asian countries have also brought new agendas in market relations, establishing fresh links with the West. These factors together with the rapid growth of communication technologies and increased physical and electronic mobility have strengthened the position of English even further (Crystal, 2003; Crystal, 2004). As a result of this process, many other languages have been marginalised (McGuiness-King, 2003, p. 21).

In Australia, these changes have resulted in a restructuring and reorientation of language education according to consumer demand. The principle of “user-pays” dictates the content of academic programs or the “usefulness” of this or that subject (McGuiness-King, 2003, p. 22). Correspondingly, the “usefulness” of many European languages has begun to be questioned in the Australian English-speaking society. Asian languages, on the other hand, have begun to strengthen their positions, as applicable to
later employment in the Asia-Pacific region. After coming to power in November 2007, the Labor Party quickly put in place a $62 million Asian languages program – the National Asian Languages and Studies in Schools Program (NALSSP) - for high schools with the aim of raising the proportion of school-leavers with fluent Mandarin, Japanese, Indonesian or Korean to 12% by 2020. Several years since the abolishment of the previous program, i.e. NALSAS, in 2002 by the Howard government, and decades of inconsistency in language policy (see Chapter 4), the new strategy was welcomed by educators, scholars and professional organisations (see for instance Clyne, 2004; Lia Tadesco, 2008). This policy has already started yielding some positive results. The Australian National University (ANU), for instance, has reported a 23% surge in the number of Asian studies applicants for 2009, with growing demand for classes in Japanese, Thai, Korean and Vietnamese and Mandarin, in particular (The Australian, January 9, 2009). ANU director of the Faculty of Asian Studies Kent Anderson has noted:

"NALSSP has been putting money into the secondary system to get kids studying Chinese, Japanese and Indonesian and so we're seeing those kids come through the system and into their tertiary (…). That's making Australia the most Asia literate country in the English speaking world" (ABC News, January 9, 2009).

Before the new Asian policy had been put into place, tertiary language departments had to face several challenges such as restructuring, staff reductions, student discontinuation and even closure (Baldauf, 1996; Roever & Duffy, 2005; Schmidt, 1998; Truckenbrodt & Kretzenbacher, 2001; White, Baldauf, & Diller, 1997). With European languages this has been as strongly felt as elsewhere. In recent developments at Melbourne University “unprofitable disciplines” such as Russian and Swedish may be cut or merged with other disciplines (Morton, 2007, September 27).

On the other hand, there are other issues within the departments’ reach, which include the questions of how and what to teach. Thus, Baldauf (1996, p. 2) argued that one of the ways to attract Australians to pursue the study of languages is to “develop language plans which include more innovative thinking about how languages are organised and taught”. Similarly, Truckenbrodt and Kretzenbacher (2001) emphasised
the importance of updating teaching methods and the curriculum as one of the possible ways of improving student numbers. However, if some changes have to be made in order to attract new students and to retain existing ones, we have to be aware of what students themselves think about their language class. In the end, as Nunan (1988, p. 88) has put it, they are “the most important actor[s] in the drama”.

In Ukraine, on the other hand, German has traditionally been one of the most widely taught languages across the school and university curriculum from the mid-19th century up to the present day (Oguy, 2003). The knowledge of at least one FL in the context of globalisation, growing contact with other European countries and involvement in many international projects, is as important as never before. Most school children in Ukraine learn a foreign language (FL) from Grade 2 and a second FL from Grade 5, and at university, the study of at least one FL is compulsory in all faculties.

At the same time, Ukraine possesses a distinctive system of education (not dissimilar to other post-Soviet countries) in that it centrally administered and curriculum typically includes a broad range of disciplines and study areas on which students has little influence. Now, as Ukraine is trying to become a part of the emerging European Higher Education Area (see Chapter 3 for details) the need for revising and updating the aims, curriculum, syllabus and teaching method is as pressing as ever. This, we argue, cannot be done without careful planning, involvement of students and teachers in the decision-making process and considering the experience of other countries which have long been involved in the education “business”.

As shown in Chapter 6., very little research has been conducted or/and published in Ukraine in the sphere of German or indeed other FLs at tertiary level and even less possess some degree of breadth or depth. What is more worrying is that hardly any work has been written in recent times dealing with student and teacher perceptions on the aspects of learning. We believe it is an imperative to have this sort of knowledge considering that Ukraine is now adopting new democratic and more learner-centred principles in education (in Chapter 3 see for instance “The Bologna Process” and “The Common European Framework”).

With regard to Australia, there is also a lack of research in the area of tertiary German and indeed other LOTEs (Languages other than English). The number of such studies is relatively low compared with those dealing with English as a Foreign
Language or English as a Second Language. In the context of the great changes in the Rudd Government’s language policy and in universities’ own policy (such as the new Melbourne Model at the University of Melbourne) this study, it is hoped, will be a timely contribution to the debate about the importance of teaching European languages, German in particular, and about the most effective ways of teaching them.

Finally, very few studies of tertiary FL study and teaching adopt the comparative intercultural perspective. This is the sort of knowledge that is crucial in the context of globalisation. To compare language provision in two or more countries is, no doubt, a challenging task, even if narrowed down to just a few aspects, due to the breadth and complexity of the issue in each respective country. However, we believe, this is one of the most effective ways to highlight the problems, differences and similarities that exist in the field of German as Foreign Language in Ukraine and Australia. Naturally, the researcher’s own experience as a student and a teacher in both countries, and a great deal of interest in both systems has inspired the topic and has been a strong motivational force throughout the journey of writing the thesis.

**Aim of the study and research questions**

The considerations laid out above became the ground for the present research and defined its major aim: to examine the study and teaching of German in universities of Ukraine and Australia.

The two countries are common in the fact that German was provided with a place in the university curriculum with the aim to train qualified language experts. Graduates of German departments of Ukrainian and Australian universities find employment as language teachers, interpreters/ translators in local and overseas companies, in diplomacy, trade, mass media, etc. Given that the overarching aim of German departments of Ukraine and Australia is generally similar, there is a number of

---

fundamental distinctions in how a language program is organised and run (see Table 1.1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area where the difference occur</th>
<th>In Ukraine</th>
<th>In Australia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Number of contact hours of German per week depending on the year of study</td>
<td>6 – 12</td>
<td>3 – 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Duration of the course</td>
<td>4 – 5 years</td>
<td>3 - 4 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Curriculum</td>
<td>A wide range of compulsory subjects (both linguistic and general educational) introduced in different years of study</td>
<td>6 hours per week comprising language classes only or language classes plus cultural component</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Management</td>
<td>Ministry of Education and university policy</td>
<td>University policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Funding</td>
<td>Mainly state</td>
<td>Tuition fees and state subsidies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With such differences in the number of contact hours and duration of the course, how can both education systems target at graduating people skilful and fluent in languages? Yet, the researcher’s own teaching experience in an Australian university showed that these factors did not always result in students’ language proficiency being inferior in terms of fluency or grammatical correctness. On the contrary, many of them became quite competent users of the language, highly competitive for international grants and scholarships, such as those provided by the German Academic Exchange Service (Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst – DAAD).

Our comparative study intends to provide a deeper understanding of the differences and similarities between some of the aspects of the tertiary German language study and teaching, namely in areas such as:
• structure and objectives of the German language program,
• curriculum and teaching methodology,
• student motivation to study German
• students’ and teachers’ perceptions of the German program.

It is clear that these issues do not complete the list of components which would be relevant to a discussion of a FL provision. There are also issues such as course management and administration, funding, teachers and teacher education, textbooks, student transition, language proficiency and language assessment and many others. The issues that have been researched in this thesis are obviously highly important, but, they have not received the attention that they deserve, as the review of the tertiary FL and German language education literature (chapters 2 – 5) has shown.

The following research questions have been formulated:

1. What is the structure and objectives of the German language program at Ukrainian and Australian universities?
2. What are the peculiarities of the German language curriculum, content and teaching methodology in the universities of Ukraine and Australia?
3. What are students’ motives to study German in Ukraine and Australia?
4. What are students’ and teachers’ perceptions of the curriculum, content and teaching?
5. How do students themselves evaluate their present language skills, and those expected to be acquired by the end of the course?
6. What are the advantages and disadvantages in both education practices?

These issues will be viewed with the consideration the social and pedagogical factors which, in a unique, way have been affecting language study and teaching in Ukraine and Australia. Under “social factors” we understand the processes that have been occurring in society and the world, such as globalisation, market economy, state language policies and language attitudes and which might have been affecting the position of German in a given society and at universities.
Under “pedagogical factors” we understand factors which are more closely related to the process of teaching and study a language, that is, epistemological style in education, developments in teaching methods and approaches, traditions in language teaching, and so forth.

The scope of this study as well as the researcher’s understanding of the connections between the FL provision and social and pedagogical factors is shown in the figure below:

![Diagram of Foreign language education and the factors that affect it]

**Figure 1.1** Tertiary FL education and the factors that affect it

The top circle of the figure represents the objective of the present research: that is to examine the study and teaching of German with particular focus on the curriculum, teaching methodology, student motivation and students’ and teachers’ perceptions attitudes toward learning and teaching at Ukrainian and Australian universities. The
lower two circles represent factors, social and pedagogical that might have been affecting language education in Ukraine and Australia.

As mentioned before, external factors are crucial for understanding the peculiarities of FL provision in Ukraine and Australia and education in general. Studies on international education emphasise the importance of considering “the critical sociopolitical trends and issues that characterise contemporary times” (Mathie & Greene, 2002). Educational comparative research provides us with knowledge about foreign practices which is needed for a better understanding of one’s own system (see for example Nicholas, 1983). Mallinson (1975) noted that only by seeing the uniqueness in the way others carry on education can one genuinely appreciate the distinctiveness of education at home. One should look at particular cultural contexts, as they largely account for this distinctiveness.

Chapter 2 provides an overview of the situation with German as a Foreign Language worldwide and discusses some trends that have been affecting the position of German as a school and university discipline.

Chapters 3 and 4 discuss the position of German, this time within the immediate context of the present study: Ukraine and Australia. These chapters will serve as a context for this investigation in that they shed light on each country’s social, political and historical factors that have been influencing the position of German in the society and at various levels of education including tertiary.

Chapter 5 reviews literature regarding the aspects of tertiary language education which are in the focus of this study, namely curriculum, syllabus, grammar in language teaching, learners and teachers perceptions of language teaching and learner motivation.

Chapter 6 sheds some light on researcher’s philosophical stance, methodology and research methods.

Chapter 7 analyses and interprets data obtained through questionnaires, interviews, classroom observations and document reviews.

Chapter 8 provides synthesis of the data and discusses the findings in the light of each country’s social and political circumstances. It also positions the results within the context of the existing research.
Chapter 9 provides summary of the findings with the discussion of implications for classroom practice and suggestions for teachers and course designers. The thesis is then completed with the directions for future research.
2. GERMAN AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE WORLDWIDE

The present study is a contribution in the field of German as a Foreign Language, as it provides an insight into teaching and learning of German (as a foreign language at universities in Ukraine and Australia. In order to understand better the situation with German language education in these two countries a more global perspective is needed. This chapter fulfils this very task: it provides an overview of learning and teaching German as a foreign language in various countries of the world and outlines major factors that have been affecting the position of German worldwide.

German occupies 12th position in the world by the number of native speakers (approx. 100 - 120 million)\(^3\) (Ammon, 2008b, p. 26). It is one of the most popular FLs, that is taught all around the world in about 100 countries at schools and universities (mostly as the second or third FL) (StADaF, 2006; Stark, 2004, p. 141). In Europe, German ranks first by the number of native speakers (approximately 93 million), the number of countries where German is the official language on national or regional level (seven) and by its economic strength (these factors will be explained in more detail below).

In recent times German, which for a long time was associated with power and prestige, has started to lose its privileged status in Europe and elsewhere (see Ammon 2003, Krumm 2004, Stark 2004, Duesberg 2006, Jäger & Jasny 2007). There is no one opinion on why the process is happening, but rather various researchers have examined several different but interconnected factors that might have contributed to the decline. Stark (2004, p. 152) has suggested that since the early history of the EU German has fallen a victim to some mismanaged language policy from the side of the then German government. At the time the European Economic Community was founded in 1957, German was the second most important working language after French. As Great Britain entered the Community in 1973, English began to take the place of Europe’s first working language. The French government, meanwhile, made sure that French kept

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3 The ranking varies depending on the definition of “native speaker” and counting methods (Ammon, 2008b)
its status next to English, while the German government required no such guarantee. As a result, German practically vanished from the list of languages used in the European Community. In 1973 as the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic were admitted to membership in the United Nations, the German Federal Government, yet again, failed to secure a status for German, which may otherwise have become the seventh official language of the UN (Stark, 2004, p. 153). Stark (2004, p. 154) pointed out that these two political failures prevented German from becoming a language of other international organisations and thus have sunk its prestige and importance around the world. The successive governments, although they recognised the mistakes of their predecessors, could do little to rescue the situation. As a result, German ranks only third as an actual working language of the EU institutions behind English and French and has only “documentary language” status in the UN. On the global scale, the position of German is even weaker. In 1995 Fischer Weltalmanach (cited by Ammon, 2003, p. 241) listed German as the fourth official and working language in international organisations behind English, French and Spanish as shown in table 2.1.:

Table 2.1 Strength as official and working language in international organisations (number of organisations).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Languages</th>
<th>Official and working</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italian</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portuguese</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ammon (2003) has suggested that the international standing of a FL is defined and influenced by five major factors:

- **Numerical strength** (the number of native speakers of a given language);
- **Economic strength** (defined by the Gross National Product of the language’s native speakers worldwide);
- **Political strength** (the number of countries in which a language has an official status and the number of international organisations in which a language has the status of a working language);
- **Cultural strength** (use of language in literature, mass media, science and technology, internet, etc.);
- **Study strength** (the extent to which a language is studied as a FL).

The closer a language is associated with any of these categories the more likely it is to be used internationally or to be studied as a FL for its greater communicative potential (Ammon, 2003, p. 239; Ammon, 2007).

**Numerical strength.** With over 100 million native-speakers, German is the 12th most widely spoken language in the world (StADaF, 2006). On the world scale, German, together with Japanese and French are amongst the stagnating languages, in contrast to Chinese, English, Spanish, Hindi/Urdu, Arabic, Portuguese and Bengali, which are expanding (Ammon, 2008a, p. 13). This is happening due to the fact that the population in developing countries is growing faster than that of developed countries (Ammon, 2003, p. 234). According to Graddol’s (1997) predictions this situation is not likely to change by 2050, except for languages such as German, Russian, Japanese and Italian where the number of speakers is expected to fall, in some cases (e.g. Russian) significantly.

On European terrain, however, the situation is different. In the EU German is numerically the strongest language with approximately 93 million native speakers (Stark, 2004, p. 150).

**Economic strength.** Numeric strength is not always a reliable indicator of a language’s international standing. Chinese, for example, has surpassed English in the number of native speakers, but it is not as important internationally as English. The
factor of economic strength comes into play here, which means that the languages of the world’s largest economies are more attractive to learn than those of the weaker ones, as the former represents a wider array of opportunities (Ammon, 2003, p. 235; Ammon, 2008a, p. 14). The economic strength of a language is usually measured by the GNP (Gross National Product). German is the language of the second largest export nation and the third strongest economy (Duesberg, 2006, p. 1). Ammon (2003, p. 236) stressed that the economic factor seems to be the main backbone of German in the international scene and within the EU where German is again the economically strongest language (see table 2.2):

Table 2.2 Economic strength of official EU languages within EU (GNP of speakers in billions of US dollars) (Fischer Weltalmanach 1997, 1996, cited by Ammon 2003, p. 237)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>GNP of speakers in billions of US dollars</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>German 2,243,021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>French 1,462,394</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>English 1,151,760</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Italian 1,105,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Spanish 484,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Dutch 483,212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Swedish 202,221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Danish 146,076</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Finnish 91,594</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Portuguese 87,257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Greek 77,721</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Political strength.** A third indicator of a language’s international standing is the number of countries in which the language enjoys the status of an official language. This is an important indicator particularly in light of the rule followed by some international organisations: one country – one vote. In this category, compared to other world languages German is behind English, French, Arabic, Spanish and Portuguese, as these languages have an official status on a national or sub-national level in more countries than German. Amongst the EU languages, however, German occupies again, first position: German is the sole official language in Germany, Austria and Liechtenstein on a national level, co-official in Switzerland and Luxembourg, and
official in Belgium (which has a German-speaking community) and Italy (South Tyrol) on a sub-national level (Ammon, 2003, p. 241; Ammon, 2008b, p. 25; Stark, 2004, p. 150) (see Table 2.3).

Table 2.3 The official status of languages within EU countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Languages</th>
<th>Countries with official status on a national level</th>
<th>Countries with official status on a sub-national level</th>
<th>Total number of countries with official status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>3 (Germany, Austria, Luxemburg)</td>
<td>2 (Belgium, Italy)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>3 (France, Belgium, Luxemburg)</td>
<td>1 (Italy)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dutch/English</td>
<td>2 (Netherlands, Belgium/United Kingdom, Ireland)</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swedish</td>
<td>1 (Sweden)</td>
<td>1 (Finland)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danish/Greek/Finnish/Italian/Portuguese/Spanish</td>
<td>1 (Denmark/Greece/Finland/Italy/Portugal/Spain)</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: (Ammon, 2003, p. 240)

Despite its strength in numeric, economic and political factors in the EU, German, as we mentioned before, occupies only third position as an actual working language of the EU institutions, considerably behind English and French, although ahead of Spanish and Italian. Ammon (2003) suggested that German will probably win more support with the EU’s extension into Eastern Europe, where it is still popular.

Cultural strength. In his broad notion of “culture” Ammon has included areas such as literature, mass media, cinema, music, and the internet and has suggested that German clearly trails English here. The latest data show that English is the most frequently used language on the internet (30.5% of all users). German (1.4% of users) follows English and other four languages: Chinese, Spanish, Japanese and French and thus occupies sixth position in the ranking (Internet world stats, 2008). Ammon has also pointed out that German plays a very modest role in the international distribution of
print media, radio, TV broadcasting and popular music (2003, p. 243). On the positive side, languages other than English are starting to increase its share on the internet, as Table 2.4 shows:

**Table 2.4 Proportion of languages on the internet by homepages and web-sites**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Languages</th>
<th>1995</th>
<th>2002</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>84.3</td>
<td>56.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italian</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dutch</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: (Ammon, 2008a, p. 5)

**Study strength.** Overall, German is taught considerably less as a FL in European schools than English and French. This is particularly the case in Western Europe, whereas the situation in Eastern Europe is more favourable towards German. Ammon (2003, p. 246) therefore argues that any future extension of the EU within Eastern Europe would be beneficial for the spread of German. His predictions have been confirmed, although for a brief amount of time, by figures released by Eurostat. The 2004 expansion of the EU to include Baltic countries, Hungary, Poland, Czech Republic and others, where German is the most widely learned language after English, coincided with a slight increase in the number of pupils learning German in upper secondary general education from 20.4% in 2003 to 25.4% in 2004/2005 (Eurostat, tables "Pupils learning German" and "Pupils learning English"). The data also showed that the upward trend did not last long, and the overall proportion of pupils learning German decreased to 22.5% by 2007. The data here and in many other sources discussing the position of German in Europe and worldwide, often do not go beyond 2007. Thus a fuller picture of
how the place of German has been changing in view of the latest EU expansion is yet to materialise.

Perhaps, another factor that influences the prestige of a language is language loyalty. That is how the native speakers themselves treat their language with respect to other languages. Do they insist on speaking their own language wherever possible or do they switch into another language once the opportunity arises? Stark (2004, p. 158) has pointed out that it is rather common amongst the German elite and officials to switch into English even though their partner speaks German. This very factor damages the image of German to a large extent.

Having discussed the factors that might have affected the international standing of German, the question arises “What is the actual position of German in various countries of the world at school and university level”? The data released by the Regular Working Group German as a Foreign Language (Ständige Arbeitsgruppe Deutsch als Fremdsprache [StADaF]) in 2005 have shown that German is the mostly widely taught FL after English in around a third of all European countries. Still the trend is downward with English and other FLs taking over particularly in Western European countries. While in Central and Eastern Europe the euphoria about German, which was reflected in the relatively high student numbers in 2000, is fading, this region still remains the main stronghold for German as a FL (StADaF, 2006, p. 5). Further discussion about the situation with German in selected countries of the world will illustrate this statement.

StADaF have produced some figures on the number of German native speakers in the world and the extent (in student numbers) to which it is learned as a FL (see Table 2.5):
### Table 2.5 German around the world in absolute figures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Figures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Native speakers of German</td>
<td>More than 101 mln</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learners of German as a foreign language (includes various levels of</td>
<td>Approx. 16.7 mln</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>education and various educational institutions)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learners of German at schools</td>
<td>Approx. 14.5 mln</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students studying German at language schools (excluding Goethe-Institute)</td>
<td>424,084</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students studying <em>Germanistik</em> and other German-related disciplines</td>
<td>1,796,343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>as a major or as an additional/optional subject at higher educational</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>institutions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students studying <em>Germanistik</em> at higher educational institutions</td>
<td>146,779</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: (StADaF, 2006, pp. 5, 15)

As the table shows, the school sector accounts for the largest share of all learners of German as a foreign language. In the following two sections we will provide some insight into the position of German at school and university levels in selected English and non-English speaking countries and identify some general trends that have been emerging in the last few years.

### German in selected non-English-speaking countries

In Brazil, which is home to the largest German diaspora in the world, English is also increasingly assuming the role of the major FL, even in German-speaking regions, where German is still taught from Grade 5 to Grade 8, while English takes over the final three years of schooling (Duesberg, 2006, p. 10; Kaufmann & Alegre, 2003, p. 32). Whereas German comfortably holds its place as second FL in the German-speaking
regions, in the rest of the country it occupies only third position, behind English and Spanish, but comes level with French and Italian.

Brazil is not an exception in the global trend of decline in Humanities. This trend has put German, as well as other FLs in a difficult situation at tertiary level as well. Lack of skills and knowledge from schools is another factor which deters many school-leavers from studying German at universities and also leads to high discontinuation rates (Kaufmann & Alegre, 2003, p. 34). This situation has forced many German departments to reconsider their program and shift its focus towards more practical subjects, which are becoming more and more popular amongst Brazilian students (Kaufmann & Alegre, 2003, p. 35).

In Western Europe German is increasingly losing its position to English, securing at best the place of a second FL (Duesberg, 2006, pp. 1-4). Within this trend, however, some variations may occur. For instance, in France the number of schoolchildren studying German has decreased by 21% compared with 2000. At universities, however, the number of students taking German has grown by some 4%. In Italy, the situation is the reverse: while the school sector is gaining numbers in German language learners, at universities the numbers are dropping (StADaF, 2006, pp. 9-10). Similar inconsistencies are found in some Asian countries, such as Japan and in Eastern Europe (which will be discussed later).

In Sweden, English is increasingly occupying dominant position as the language of international communication in Swedish society, politics, and as the most popular FL at all levels of education. The fact, reported by Nyhlén (2003) that the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs has abolished the position of a German translator and not those of English, French or Spanish is one example of the weakening status of German in this Scandinavian country. A drop in popularity for German has been occurring particularly rapidly since the late 1990s. Before that time, German comfortably occupied the place of second FL behind English, ahead of French and Spanish. In 2001 the proportion of school children studying German (34.5%) was less than those studying the two Romance languages taken together (44.3%) (Nyhlén, 2003, p. 26). The situation at schools has consequences for tertiary German teaching/learning. German departments have been faced with a dilemma: to offer a traditional set of disciplines with a traditional set of goals or to transform the course according to the needs and preferences
of potential students and requirements of the market. Nyhlén (2003, p. 29) expressed the opinion that the latter option was clearly the most appropriate and many institutions are already taking such measures. One example was the creation of Beginner courses (similarly to Australia, as we will later show). In the meanwhile, more and more students in Sweden are choosing to combine German with other disciplines from the Humanities, Sociology or Economics – a trend that can also be observed elsewhere (see, for example, Carroll (Carroll, 2007) [2007] for the situation in the UK).

In Russia, English is again the most popular FL, followed by German. English language skills are the most sought after by employers in modern day Russia. However, similarly to other parts of Eastern Europe, German is still a very popular FL that firmly holds the position of second FL (Troshina, 2003, p. 31). The fact that Germany is Russia’s largest economical partner is certainly helping German to maintain its respect in Russia and its teaching across various school types and various levels of education. In the years 2000-2001 more than 3.5 mln school children were learned German annually. This number decreased to almost 3 mln by 2003 and 2.5 mln by 2005 (Troshina, 2003, p. 32; StADaF, 2006, p. 13). Paradoxically, this was occurring against a background of increasing demand for people proficient in German. Troshina (2003) has suggested that the decrease was due to the fact that more and more school children chose to learn the language at language schools or with private tutors. The opposite trend could be observed within the tertiary sector, where an increase of 20% has occurred during the period of 2000-2005 (StADaF, 2006, p. 13).

The StADaF researchers have suggested that the stark decrease for German in Russian schools is due firstly to the low birth rate in the past which has resulted in a generally low number of school children, including those learning German; and secondly, due to decline of interest in German amongst school children. On the other hand, the increase at higher educational institutions can be attributed to the traditionally high regard for German at this level of education and the growing need for language experts (StADaF, 2006, p. 13).

In Asian countries, such as Japan, where German has traditionally occupied a high position in all levels of education, it is also losing the battle to English and to the languages of Japan’s neighbouring countries Korea and China. The negative trend, however, can only be observed in Japan’s school sector, where the number of German
language learners has decreased by around 80% compared with 2000 (StADaF, 2006, p. 10). In the tertiary sector, no such decline has been reported. On the contrary, the number of students participating in German tertiary courses has grown by 40% since 2000.

In **South Korea**, where the decline in interest in German has been occurring since the beginning of the 1990s and since the education reform in 1995 when students gained the opportunity to choose tertiary subjects (McGuiness-King, 2003, p. 24; Min, 2003, p. 247). Many of them opted for more “practical” and “useful” languages, such as English, Japanese and Chinese (Chong, 2003, p. 236). Here too, the decline in German language learning coincided with general decline in the Humanities (Duesberg, 2006, p. 12). The StADaF report (2006) does not provide data on tertiary institutions in Korea, but, similarly to Japan, draws a rather grim picture of school-level language learning. Here the number of learners of German has slipped by 81% compared with 2000.

In order to survive, tertiary departments of German in countries such as China, Japan and South Korea, like in Australia, were forced to amalgamate and incorporate into larger administrative or curricular units, such as European Studies Departments or Schools of Languages and Cultures (McGuiness-King, 2003, p. 28). Some German language departments in the Asia-Pacific region managed to survive by diversifying their programs to include components such as film and media, political history, and business German. In China, for example, *Germanistik* has developed into a wide-ranging subject that includes “traditional” *Germanistik* and new courses for those majoring in German, such as foreign economics, business German, German politics and international cultural relations (Hernig, 2000, pp. 157-158; McGuiness-King, 2003, p. 30; Timmermann, 1999, pp. 484, 485).

The country, that stands out in the world arena with regard to the German language learning is **Hungary**. There German confidently occupies the place of the most popular FL (Duesberg, 2006, p. 4, Földes, 2003 p, 17). For a long time, German in Hungary was not considered a FL but rather the mother tongue due to Hungary being a part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The German language and Studies in Hungary have long been considered a “mother-tongue Germanistik”\(^4\). In fact, the first

\(^4\) (Földes, 2003)
department of German in Central Europe was founded in Pest (now Budapest) by Josef II at the end of the 18th century (Földes, 2003). German is deeply grounded in Hungarian culture and social life which did not fall under the definition of the both, widely used, albeit somewhat disputed, terms “Inlands-“ and “Auslandsgermanistik”\(^\text{5}\), hence a special term “Anrainer-Germanistik” was coined (Földes, 2003). Close historical, cultural and political links together with the geographical closeness of Hungary to German-speaking countries have provided favourable ground for the flourishing of German within Hungarian society and within the system of education. In Hungary, more schoolchildren learn German than English and the number of students enrolled in university German departments in 2001/2002 was 60% more than those enrolled in English departments ((Duesberg, 2006; Földes, 2003).

**German in selected English-speaking countries**

The position of German in the English-speaking countries, as well as other languages is precarious. In **England**, since 2004 learning a language is no longer obligatory for pupils in the last two years of their compulsory schooling (Key Stage 4). Instead it has become an option for those who choose to continue languages after their three years in Key Stage 3\(^\text{6}\). Overall, the learning of the three most popular languages in England, French, German and Spanish, by pupils in the final two years of schooling has decreased dramatically from about 80% in 2001 to 50% in 2006, while German itself has slipped from about 21% in 2001 to 11% in 2006 (Durrell, 2008; Languages review, 2007 charts 1, 2, p. 26). A similar situation can be observed throughout the whole of the UK (see, for example Grix & Jaworska, 2002). Language programs at British schools also suffer from a lack of continuity and coordination between levels underlining the fact that the UK is without a coherent national agenda for language provision (Durrell, 2003; Grix & Jaworska, 2002; The Nuffield language inquiry, 2000).

\(^5\) (see Földes, 2003 and Kretzenbacher, 2006 about the controversy of the both terms)

\(^6\) For a more detailed outline of language policy in England and the debate about languages in education see Durrell (2008).
It has been suggested that the downward trend at GCSE\textsuperscript{7} and “A”\textsuperscript{8} levels has considerably contributed to the decline at university level (Grix & Jaworska, 2002, p. 4). There has been a continuous decline in the number of applications from those willing to study German as a university subject\textsuperscript{9}(Durrell, 2003). In fact, the number of applications was down by 50% between 1994 and 2001 (Grix & Jaworska, 2002, p. 6). The Universities and Colleges Admission Service (UCAS) which provides statistics on tertiary enrolments within the UK has also showed how the numbers of applicants for “German Studies” and the other two most popular languages, French and Spanish has been changing throughout the period 1996 – 2008:

Table 2.6 Number of applicants at British universities in three most important languages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>5655</td>
<td>5743</td>
<td>5161</td>
<td>4763</td>
<td>4320</td>
<td>4077</td>
<td>4110</td>
<td>3846</td>
<td>3879</td>
<td>3964</td>
<td>3924</td>
<td>4403</td>
<td>4097</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>2288</td>
<td>2343</td>
<td>2091</td>
<td>2050</td>
<td>1807</td>
<td>1736</td>
<td>1653</td>
<td>1524</td>
<td>1384</td>
<td>1503</td>
<td>1277</td>
<td>1631</td>
<td>1551</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>2115</td>
<td>2257</td>
<td>2280</td>
<td>2400</td>
<td>2314</td>
<td>2331</td>
<td>2560</td>
<td>2333</td>
<td>2481</td>
<td>2547</td>
<td>1847</td>
<td>2049</td>
<td>1971</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: the data on years 1996-2005 were taken from Durrell (2008, citing UCAS) and the data on years 2006 – 2008 were taken from UCAS\textsuperscript{10}.

Table 2.6 shows that the numbers for all of the languages have been fluctuating every year, although at somewhat different rates for each particular language. But the overall trend is negative. This table however draws only a general picture for German without providing any details on the number of students enrolled in specialist or non-specialist programs. Carroll (2007, p. 72) has found that the trends for these two streams could be rather different. In fact, she has pointed out to a paradox with regard to German at British universities. On the one hand, the demand for specialist language degrees has been decreasing steadily by about 4.5% since the 1990s resulting in many

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\textsuperscript{7} That is, the General Certificate of Secondary Education, which acts as the principal means of assessing pupil attainment at the end of compulsory secondary education at 16 (Grix & Jaworska, 2002, p. 18)

\textsuperscript{8} “A” stands for Advanced level which is studied typically between the ages of 16-18 in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and is the most popular route into UK higher education institutions.

\textsuperscript{9} The majority of students choose German in combination with another subject. Only a small number of students choose to study German as a single honours degree option (Grix & Jaworska, 2002 p. 6).

\textsuperscript{10} See the website of UCAS http://www.ucas.ac.uk/about_us/media_enquiries/media_releases/ (accessed August 12, 2008)
language departments being closed or amalgamated with other departments. On the other hand, the number of students willing to take up German concurrently with their major in other areas has been growing since the 1960s. For this purpose, new administrative units have emerged, such as language centres which often supplement or replace language departments offering full degrees. However, they do not always entail the same quality of teaching: the non-degree programes are often provided on marginal funding and sometimes rely on poorly trained staff (Carroll, 2007, p. 74). Carroll (2007, p. 75) has explained the phenomenon as follows: “Many students may fail to see the vocational value of specialist language degrees, although they can see the advantages of some linguistic capability as an “add-on” to an other subject, hence the growth in such provision”.

Another consequence of the weakening position of German at schools is the stark decline in the language skills of pupils entering university. They are less interested in studying the traditional subjects such as literature or history of language. This has forced many German departments to reduce their offer of these subjects and instead to introduce more attractive sounding subjects, such as German history, society, media, and so on (Grix & Jaworska, 2002, p. 6). As Grix & Jaworska (2002, p. 8) have suggested, the “traditional” paradigm in the study of languages in the UK is gradually being overtaken by new – and often more vocationally oriented – approaches which have emerged as a result of the changing requirements of business and employment, and due to a less literary society.

Similar restructuring and diversification has taken place in the universities of New Zealand. Since the 1990s a major in German at Auckland University began to include not only language and literature, but other disciplines such as Linguistics, Language and Society, Language History, and so on. At Canterbury University, the cultural component was strengthened and adapted in order to attract and retain students by offering literature and society courses in English (McGuiness-King, 2003, p. 30; McGuiness-King & Knüfermann, 2004, pp. 29-32). Apart from the widening of the program other incentives were created to make the course more attractive, such as the establishment of exchange programs whereby German students travel to New Zealand and vice versa (for example, The University of Waikato and The University of Canterbury).
The recently issued revised curriculum for New Zealand schools identifies languages as one of the eight key learning areas and provides an extensive promotion of languages as an important area of strategic national and international significance (The New Zealand Curriculum, 2007). At the same time languages are not compulsory at any level of schooling in New Zealand, instead, as the ministerial website states, “all schools with students in years 7-10 will offer students the opportunity to learn a second language, but it will not be compulsory for all students to learn a second language” (The New Zealand Curriculum, 2007).

Similarly to New Zealand, languages are not compulsory at any level of schooling in Canada. It is largely a matter of school administration to decide whether or not a FL will be a part of the school’s curriculum. In this respect languages are akin to Art or Music classes (Prokop, 2005, p. 64). The choice of languages as an elective varies from province to province, but the most popular languages are French (available everywhere), Spanish and German. In fact, all students learn a language in the final year of schooling (year 12) as language learning is a compulsory prerequisite for university courses such as Humanities and Social Sciences (Prokop, 2005, p. 66). In public schools, German is usually offered at secondary level. In some provinces, such as Alberta and Manitoba, where bilingual programs are available, the German program starts in Grade 1 and runs throughout secondary school.

Similarly to other countries, German at Canadian universities has had to face some challenges, including funding cuts in the 1990s. These have led to a significant decrease in staffing, courses and contact hours and, as a result, student numbers have decreased. Lower demand and increased student fees in the 1990s forced departments to reconsider their programs and offer more “applied” subjects, such as Business German, Applied Linguistics, and other subjects, with some disciplines being taught in English (Prokop, 2005, p. 78). After this downward trend culminating in 2000/01, the situation began to improve slowly. In the period 2000/01 – 2003/04 enrolments for language courses in the universities across Canada grew by 16%, and those for Literature, Translation and Area Studies by 25%, 77% and 82%, respectively.

In the USA, according to a new survey “Enrollments in Languages Other Than English in United States Institutions of Higher Education” issued in 2007 by The Modern Language Association of America (MLA), interest in language study has been
increasing steadily since 1998 and has reached its highest since the 1960 MLA\textsuperscript{11} survey (The Modern Language Association of America., 2007b). The survey found that the strength of the most popular languages, Spanish, French and German continues to grow and together represents more than 70\% of language enrolments. The survey also found that overall enrolments for languages went up by almost 13\% compared to 2002 and the trend is upwards in that more languages are being taught and more students are enrolling in language study (p. 7 of the document). The increases in German are small but steady (3.5\% since 2002), which provides some evidence to suggest that German is recovering from the decline in the 1990s. Nevertheless, with enrolments at 94,264 in 2006 there is still a long way to go to achieve the 1970 level of 202,569. Trends in language enrolments appear to reflect national and global developments, including the rise of Asian economies, the steady increase of Spanish speaking residents in the United States, and concerns about the gaps in understanding between English- and Arabic-speaking societies (MLA press release, 2007).

Summary

This chapter has shown that changing business requirements, employment opportunities and students’ demands have been affecting the international standing of German rather negatively. Both in English- and non-English-speaking countries the foundations of German have been increasingly shaken at all levels of education by other languages such as English (in non-English-speaking countries), French, and, in some instances, Spanish. This is despite the fact that within the EU German occupies top positions in terms of numerical, economic and political strengths (Ammon, 2003). The decline is particularly characteristic of many western European countries and the USA although not so much in eastern Europe. Grix & Jaworska (2002, p. 3) have noted that countries such as the UK, France, Belgium and the Netherlands “are linked by a common affliction: declining numbers of students taking German. The latter [countries of eastern Europe] are linked by the opposite: flourishing German programmes with

\textsuperscript{11} This is true for languages such as Spanish, Italian, Japanese and Chinese out of seven top languages, excluding American Sign Language, which does not appear in the survey before 1990 (see Figure 3a, p. 10 of the survey).
eager students”. There is no simple explanation why such a variation occurs. As the discussion of DaF worldwide has shown, to a great extent this variation is related to a given country’s education policy, demographic situation, economic relations to German-speaking countries and other factors.

At tertiary level students are no longer satisfied with the traditional set of presumably “boring” subjects, but demand those that they perceive as “useful”, “applicable” and “fun”. Thus, language departments have had to find ways to meet the demands of students by restructuring their programs and introducing new subjects dealing with the various aspects of the socio-political life of German-speaking countries. While this change (the turn away from the traditional Language-and-Literature model) can be perceived as both positive and negative, some changes that were introduced (and still are being introduced) have certainly had a negative impact on the study and teaching of German. One such negative change is the staff reductions which have led to large class sizes, fewer contact hours and increased load on teachers (about staff reductions in New Zealand see, for example, McGuinness-King & Knüfermann, 2004). As the present study will show this situation leads to students’ frustration and dissatisfaction with the course, which contributes to the already shaky position of languages at universities.

German as a foreign language faces many challenges which have emerged as a result of the increasingly dominant role of English as lingua franca and the growing demands of students. German, as well as other languages, particularly the European ones, can no longer rely solely on their cultural and academic importance as a tertiary subject, but instead are forced to become a “marketable product” ready to equip their primary consumers – students with practical skills. Whether it is a positive or negative development, some researchers (such as McGuinness-King, 2004, p. 36) are of the opinion that it is the future for German as a foreign language and so university departments should simply ready themselves to take on these challenges.

In the next two chapters we will move on to a more detailed analysis of the place of German and other FLs in Ukraine and Australia, as these two countries are the focus of this study. We hope to shed some light on the position of German language in education generally, and at university level in particular, and thus present the context for the present comparative study.
3. UKRAINIAN CONTEXT

Introduction

In Ukraine, as in any non-English-speaking country situated in multicultural and multilingual Europe, FLs have been perceived as very important although opportunities to make use of the knowledge of a FL have not always been available. In contemporary Ukraine, all school children start learning a FL from Grade 2 and a second FL from Grade 5, and at university, the study of at least one FL is compulsory in all faculties. The language departments are so competitive to get into, that some high-achieving school leavers only enter the course after one, two or more unsuccessful attempts. Private language tutors struggle to satisfy demand for sound practical language knowledge which has become an important pre-requisite for success in the modern day circumstances.

In this chapter, the place of German and other FLs will be discussed within Ukraine’s socio-linguistic, political and educational context. We will also shed some light on the latest reforms and global trends that have been reshaping the goals of FL education at various levels.

Ukraine’s languages

Before embarking on a discussion about German language education, Ukraine’s own linguistic context needs to be explored, as it provides clues to a better understanding of the role of FLs in Ukrainian society. The notion “foreign language” itself seems to be a controversial one particularly since Ukraine’s independence and marginalisation of Russian. Further discussion will shed some light on these issues.

Ukraine is a multicultural state. According to various sources Ukraine is home to 100 - 130 ethnic groups. The most prominent of them are: Russian (17.3%), Byelorusian (0.6%), Moldovan, Crimean Tatar (0.5%), Bulgarian (0.4%), Hungarian, Rumanian, Pole (0.3%), Jew, Armenian, Greek, Tatar (0.2%), Roma, Azerbaijani...
According to the generally accepted criteria for identifying ethnic groups, 77.8% of the population of Ukraine is ethnic Ukrainian. 85.2% of them consider Ukrainian as their mother tongue. On the whole, including the ethnic minorities, Ukrainian is the mother tongue for 67.5% of the population, while for 29.6% it is Russian (All-Ukrainian population census, 2001). These numbers also differ significantly depending on the region. Due to various historical reasons, the ethnic Russian population is concentrated predominantly in the South and the East of Ukraine and thus Russian dominates in these areas.

Ukrainian was given the status of sole official language by law in 1989. Nevertheless, Russian, which during the times of the Soviet Union was the *lingua franca*, is still viewed by many as not just a minority language in Ukraine, but a part of its past and present (for a more detailed discussion about the position of Ukrainian and Russian in Ukraine see King, 2008).

In the sphere of education, the position of Russian has changed significantly. The Ukrainian Constitution stated in 1996 that Russian should be protected insofar as it is the language of the Russian ethnic minority. As such, in many schools in Ukraine Russian has taken an equal place with other languages such as English, German, French and Spanish.

Overall, 15 languages are studied in Ukrainian schools, with German firmly occupying the second position behind English and ahead of French and Spanish. The demand for languages is greater than ever (Borisko, 2006). Further sections will provide a more detailed discussion about the position of languages, and German in particular, in Ukrainian society and education.
Reforms in education

Education – Ukraine in the 21st century, 1993

It was not only Russian that Ukraine has inherited from the long period of being a part of the Soviet Union, but practically the entire system and style of education. Soon after the proclamation of independence in 1991, it became clear that this kind of system was far from satisfactory in the new political and economic climate. The reconstruction of the education system turned out to be quite a difficult task. In the USSR the whole system of education was highly centralised and regulated by the Soviet government. The teaching staff were obliged to serve the needs of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and to “develop a widely and harmoniously educated person”. The ideological principles and political directives of the Communist Party touched upon language learning as well. There were common learning plans and common syllabi across the Soviet Union based on Marxist/Leninist ideology as the absolute requirement for the whole of Soviet pedagogy (Chomenko, 2001, p. 34). Ideological textbooks, mostly with political texts, did everything but teach how to speak a language.

The process of reformation of all spheres of society and a shift from an authoritarian and heavily centralised to a more democratic style of government was under way. In 1993, the National Program “Education – Ukraine in the 21st century” was adopted, which aimed to reform the whole education system. Namely, it pursued three major goals:

1. reorganisation of the existing education system with consideration of all the political, economical and spiritual changes, which had taken place;

2. creation of a flexible education system in order to increase the education level of the population;

3. creation of education institutes of a new type, such as education complexes, academies with a “profile”, regional universities, as well as colleges and lyceums (Chomenko, 2001).
The Concept of the Mainstream School Education, 2001

Some fifteen years into independent existence, one can say that the situation has changed and more major changes are still to come. The document titled “The Concept of the Mainstream School Education” issued by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine in 2001 criticised the existing 10-year long school sequence and proposed, indeed stressed the necessity of the introduction of 12-year long schooling starting from 6 years of age (not 7 as before). It marked the transition from the old type of schooling to the new one, whereby the 12 years are divided into 3 stages: primary (4 years), middle (5 years) and high school (3 years). The documents also marked the transition towards a more flexible system which is able to recognise and cater to the needs and abilities of learners.

The National Doctrine of Education, 2002

The National Doctrine of Education was issued in 2002 by the then President Leonid Kuchma. The aims of the Doctrine were far more broad and comprehensive than those of the previous document, which concentrated mainly on the aspects of school education. The Doctrine re-defined the goal and directions of education, stressed the importance of humanistic nature of education, and defined the place of language education and education as a whole for the prosperity of the nation. It also pointed out many areas needing further revision and development to match the new requirements and to fulfil the aim of integration into the European community and the world\textsuperscript{12}. The documents stated that within the new system of education everybody will be given an opportunity to acquire some practical knowledge of at least one FL.

\textsuperscript{12} Ukraine is aiming to join the European Union and the NATO. In May, 2008 Ukraine became a member of the WTO.
The Bologna Process

In 2005, Ukraine became a full member of the Bologna Process with the objective of becoming a part of the emerging European Higher Education Area (EHEA). The changes that are currently taking place in Ukraine in the sphere of tertiary education are affecting language education as well. First, some key aspects of the Bologna Process need to be discussed as they lie at the core of the current education reform in Ukraine.

The Bologna Process is a process of reform in European higher education that aims to create a European Higher Education Area by 2010\textsuperscript{13}. The Bologna Process is named after the Bologna Declaration, which was signed in the Italian city of Bologna on 19 June 1999 by 29 European countries. Today, 46 countries, including Ukraine, participate in the Process.

The rationale behind the creation of the EHEA is to facilitate international cooperation and academic exchange. This is expected to be achieved through:

- adoption of a system of readable and comparable degrees organised in a three-cycle structure (bachelor-master-doctorate);
- establishment of a system of credits, as a proper means of promoting the most widespread student mobility;
- quality assurance in accordance with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area\textsuperscript{14};
- fair recognition of foreign degrees and other higher education qualifications.

The Bologna Process also embraces other areas such as the links between higher education, research and innovation; equitable participation and lifelong learning.

Since 2005, a number of steps have been implemented in Ukraine in line with the Bologna Process. In 2006 the National Team of Bologna Promoters in Ukraine was


created by the Ministry of Science and Education (Nikolayenko, 2007). The team includes representatives from the leading Ukrainian universities who organise seminars on some of the major directions followed by the Bologna Process, such as

- Quality Assurance
- three cycle system of education, and
- Qualifications Framework (system of qualifications) in the European Educational Area.

The second major step towards the new model of education in Ukraine was the implementation in the 2006/07 academic year of the credit transfer system (ECTS) (Shynkaruk, 2007). The credit system represents a systematic way of describing an educational program by attaching credits to its components. Usually a minimum of 60 credits measure the workload of a full-time student during one academic year, which is 36 to 40 weeks per year and 25 to 30 working hours per week.

Adoption of the guidelines of the Bologna Process is expected to facilitate Ukraine’s participation in the common European employment market and to encourage a greater mobility of students and teachers. Against this background, FLs have acquired a whole new meaning and their importance has begun to be recognised by as many people in Ukraine as ever before (Borisko, 2006).

However, with regard to the discipline “German as a Foreign Language” Borisko (2006) has asserted that the process of transition into the new system of education has been rather problematic. For instance, in order to achieve the required number of credits per year, many universities have increased the number of study-at-home hours, often at the expense of contact hours. On the other hand, the curriculum of many institutions is too broad and inflexible with too wide a range of general educational disciplines such as philosophy, economics, law, politics, sociology, information technologies and medical studies. Borisko (2006) has shown that in her home institution (Kyiv National Linguistics University) these subjects take up about

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15 Stanislav Nikolayenko is the former Minister of Education and Science of Ukraine
16 Vasyl’ Shynkaruk is currently a Deputy Minister for Education and Science of Ukraine
24% of the total studying time. Unless some substantial changes are made in the curriculum and content of the language program, the new style of education will merely become a “modern wrapping” over the old system (Borisko, 2006, p. 88).

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment

Another project is currently shaping the appearance of Ukrainian language education: The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment, 2001 (CEFR). This project has been designed by the Council of Europe with the aim to create “a common basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, examinations, textbooks, etc. across Europe” (CEFR, 2001, p. 1). The objectives of the Framework largely resonate with those of the Bologna Process, but in the field of modern language learning and teaching, namely:

- to achieve greater unity amongst professionals working in the field of modern languages in various educational systems in Europe;
- to enhance the transparency of courses, syllabuses and qualifications, thus promoting international co-operation in the field of modern languages;
- to facilitate mutual recognition of qualifications gained in different learning contexts, and accordingly aid European mobility (CEFR, 2001, p. 1).

The CEFR is intended to be applied to all levels of education: from pre-school through to adult education in the areas such as:

- planning of language learning programs in terms of their objectives and content;
- planning of language certification in terms of the content syllabus of examinations and assessment criteria (to define learners’ positive achievements rather than negative deficiencies);
- planning of self-directed learning, including self-assessment, selection of materials, and so forth (CEFR, 2001, p. 5-6).
The CEFR has proposed common reference levels, which measure progress in language learning in three proficiency levels (A – basic user, B – independent user, C – proficient user) each of which also consist of two sublevels:

- Breakthrough (A1) and Waystage (A2);
- Threshold (B1) and Vantage (B2); and
- Effective operational proficiency (C1) and Mastery (C2).

In Ukraine, the CEFR is being adopted to a greater or lesser extent in schools and tertiary institutions, and the European language portfolio has already been implemented in the Ukrainian Derzhstandart (“State Standard”, the national benchmarking document) on language learning and teaching (Kryuchkov, 2002, p. 13). Also, the recent ministerial curriculum for German for tertiary German departments was issued on the basis of the recommendations of the CEFR (Curriculum, 2004).

Indeed, current-day circumstances in Ukraine require a new philosophy in education, new pedagogical approaches that allow the needs of students to be addressed adequately (Kyjak, 2007, p. 8). The question of modernising and re-visiting the objectives of language programs as well as the importance of looking at students’ needs are currently widely discussed by teachers and scholars in Ukraine. Nikolayeva (2002, p. 35) noted that in considering the role of the Common European Framework at more advanced stages of language learning, it is necessary to take into account changes in the nature of the needs of learners and the context in which they live, study and work.

It has to be noted, though, that these new developments in language education are significantly slowed down by a chronic lack of funding. Many Ukrainian FL departments are in great need of updated textbooks and the purchase of basic electronic equipment, such as photocopying machines. These problems will be addressed again in the Results and Discussion chapters.
FLs in Ukrainian schools

Traditionally, FLs have been amongst the most important and prestigious areas in education, due to Ukraine’s geographical position and close political and economic links with the members of the Eurasian continent. The fact that, Ukraine’s state language is not English, the world’s *lingua franca*, creates additional impetus for learning FLs. Following the fall of the Iron Curtain, as the motivation for language learning was reinforced by previously non-existent travel opportunities and a growing demand for people proficient in FLs, public interest in learning FLs reached an unprecedented scale. As we have seen, the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine initiated changes in educational provision both at school and university level. Some of the changes included the introduction from 2002 of compulsory FL learning for all school children starting from Grade 2 (not Grade 5 as previously), and the development of a new FL curriculum in all educational institutions (Tutashyns'kyi, 2006).

German occupies a strong position behind English as a first or second FL: 74% of school children learn English; 12.8% German, 4.5% French, 0.2% Spanish and 8.5% other languages. In 2004, 7,495 schools offered German classes, 759,203 school children studied German and were taught by about 10,000 teachers around Ukraine. There are 30 schools with intensive language teaching with some bilingual schools amongst them. In view of this, there is a constant lack of German language teachers in Ukraine. This is despite the fact that German language teachers are trained at 49 Universities (with 25 pedagogical universities amongst them) (Borisko, 2006; *Curriculum*, 2004). As we mentioned earlier, all school children must learn one FL from Grade 2 and may start with a second or third FL from Grade 5 depending on the will of the parents and the capacity of each particular school to find a language teacher and appropriate facilities.

Besides this, achieving an increase in the effectiveness of FL programs and teaching methodologies has become another important issue for the government. The then head of the Department of Language Policy and Education of Ethnic Minorities of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine Vasyl’ Tutashyns’kyi has noted that
acquisition of practical communicative skills ought to be the primary concern of language teachers and students (Tutashyns'kyi, 2006).

**FLs at Ukrainian universities**

The study of FLs is one of the most attractive tertiary disciplines (Borisko, 2006). A completed degree in a language not only provides access to a teaching career at all levels of education, but opens countless opportunities for gaining employment in the government and in all kinds of joint ventures, international organisations and companies working in various fields. It truly is a ticket to a successful employment.

However, language education as well as the sphere of education as a whole, has long been, and some say, still is in a deep crisis (Borisko, 2006; Hochschulen in der Ukraine, 2001; King, 2006; Oguy, 2003). Lack of funding, the decay of scientific research and the poor social status of researchers are at the core of the problem. Many scientists from Ukraine have moved to other countries, predominantly Western Europe, the USA, Australia and Russia in search of better working conditions. In the period 1990-1995 alone Ukraine lost about a third of its scientific elite, mainly to Russia and the USA. Borisko has pointed out that other, more subjective, factors hinder the reformation of education such as the lack of desire to change amongst teachers and academic staff and absence of independent thinking. Another serious problem that was mentioned is that many decisions of state officials are often detached from the grim realities of schools and universities (Borisko, 2006, p. 85).

In 2004 German was taught at 61 higher educational institutions around Ukraine. The most common qualifications are

- *Germanist* (usually a teacher of German and English, or English and German);
- Teacher of German
- Interpreter/translator in German
- German can also be taken concurrently with another major (Psychology, Economics, Law, Diplomacy, Information Technologies, Journalism etc.).
It is worthwhile noting that language teacher training is associated with Ukraine’s best traditions in education (Borisko, 2006; Oguy, 2003). Indeed, a number of pedagogical higher educational institutions exist which specifically train teachers in FLs, not linguists. Borisko (2006) has pointed out, not without regret, that during the times of the Soviet Union, in these institutions a particular accent was made on the teaching of didactic, methodological, psychological aspects of language education as well as linguistics. Such training was heavily practice based. Nowadays, since many institutions have been transformed from “institutes” to “universities”, the focus is shifting to a more linguistics-oriented study, despite the fact that many of the students do not intend to become linguists. The teaching career is not deemed to be very attractive either with one of the reasons being low pay (Borisko, 2006, p. 84). Most graduates end up working in Ukrainian or German companies as an interpreter/translator, in mass media, diplomacy, various international organisations, tourist agencies and commercial language schools (Borisko, 2006, p. 87).

The German language in Ukraine. An historical insight

As noted earlier, in Ukraine, the German language holds a strong position due to the country’s closeness to German-speaking countries. But the current situation with German and the attitudes that the people of Ukraine have towards this language have not been influenced by purely economic considerations. To a great extent, they have been determined by historical factors, which are the focus of this section.

Ukrainian-German relationships go back to the times of Kievan Rus (9th-13th century) particularly in areas such as trade, science and culture. Later Tsar Peter the Great and his successors nurtured Russia’s connections with Germany and demanded that their subordinates learn German and other FLs, in order to be able to acquire knowledge in areas such as state government, military and economic matters and many others. Subsequently, not only the experience and knowledge, but also the terminology from these fields was adopted from German (Kyjak, 2007). While French was the language of aristocracy and diplomacy, German competed with Latin in the field of science and education. Until the end of the 18th century, these two areas were heavily reliant upon German scientists. Russian students were also sent to Germany. A lot of
influence came from Germany and Austria also in the field of education during the reign of Catherine the Great, who was German herself.

By 1917 the territory of Ukraine had been split and was owned by different states: the eastern and central parts belonged to Tsarist Russia, and the western regions of Bukovyna and Galicia were under the Habsburg Monarchy. Hungary occupied the region of Zakarpattia (Transcarpathia). In Galicia, which includes the L’viv, Ivano-Frankivs’k and Ternopil’ regions, the dominant language of the urban elite was Polish; while in Bukovyna, the northern part of which includes the Chernivtsi region, it was German and Romanian. Correspondingly, language education was organised according to the education system and curricula of these states. In the parts under Russian rule, Russian was the language of education. Four FLs - German, French, Latin and Greek - were compulsory requirements in the himnasija18, in order to enter university. As for the Austrian territories, German was taught as the state language; French as a FL; Ukrainian, Polish or Romanian electively as mother tongues (Oguy, 2003, p. 448-449).

After World War I and the October revolution in 1917 Ukraine was again divided into four parts: the Russian part became Soviet; Galicia belonged to Poland until 1939; Bukovyna was Romanian until 1943 and the Carpathians remained a part of Hungary until 1944. In Bukovyna, a former Austro-Hungarian province which became Romanian after the revolution, a shift from German to French took place. Thus, one can imagine the variety of languages and school curricula in the territory of Ukraine by the time it was reunited in 1945.

In the Soviet part of Ukraine, language education went along a different path. In the 1920s until the beginning of the 1930s the school curricula only accounted for one mother tongue – Ukrainian – and another local language - Russian (four and three hours per week respectively). Learners could only learn German as a foreign language. Not only was the study of FLs not greatly appreciated by the policy of the Soviet government but a red light was shown to new teaching methods coming from overseas after Stalin’s proclamation: “We have to get rid of the old prejudice, that only Europe can show us the way!” (Oguy, 2003, p. 451).

18 In Ukrainian himnasija was, and still is, an elite type of secondary school
Amongst the FLs, German was preferred – not only as a language of science, but also as the language of the proletariat. English was considered the language of the bourgeoisie and was not compulsory during the 1930s. French was hardly given any attention at all. After World War II the territory of Ukraine was reunified and the question about unification of the school system and, of course, language education arose. From that moment onwards, the emphasis was put on Russian, often at the expense of FLs.

**The policy of facilitation of language learning**

After the defeat of WWII, German seemed to have also lost the “language war” (Ammon, 1994 as cited in Oguy 2003, p. 451). English was starting to establish itself as the dominant FL. A directive of the ministerial Council of the Russian Soviet Federal Socialist Republic (RSFSR) in 1963 prescribed quotas to each of the four most widely taught languages in secondary schools (Borisko, 2006, p. 82; Oguy, 2003, p. 451):

- English  50% (which in reality was closer to 60% - Oguy, 2003)
- German  20%
- French  20%
- Spanish  10%

Despite the fact that the Soviet Union was a country separated from the rest of the world by the Iron Curtain which did not allow easy exit abroad or entrance into the country, quite a lot of effort was made to facilitate FL education both at schools and universities. Language-oriented English, German, French and Spanish schools were created all over the country, where children would start to learn a FL in the first grade of primary school and had an overall larger number of language classes per week, than at other schools. Also, there was considerable research on language acquisition, which in the 70s led to the emergence of intensive methods. For example, Kitajgorodskaja’s “activation method” made frequent use of games and embraced a more emotional and active language class.
The search for alternative teaching methods came from the need to increase motivation in FL learning. In 1980 the Ministry of Education of the Ukrainian SSR made the study of FLs compulsory from Grade 4 at school and new learning plans were introduced. Formally, the syllabi seemed to have taken some recommendations from leading language pedagogues in terms of placing more emphasis on communication (Oguy, 2003, p. 452). However, the concentration on ideology, that is, information on the Communist party, its objectives, leaders, party meetings and party decisions overwhelmed the material which could be used for communication and could hardly contribute to the development of communicative skills in learners.

**Aims and contents of the “old” German textbooks**

At tertiary level, the ideological principles and political directives of the Communist Party touched upon language learning as well. There were common learning plans, common syllabi and sometimes even common textbooks throughout the Soviet Union based on Marxist-Leninist ideology as a single idea for the whole of Soviet pedagogy (Chomenko, 2001, p. 34).

Until the end of the 1980s, German as a Foreign Language was on the list of compulsory subjects for all students in institutes and universities in almost all the republics of the Soviet Union (Katskova, 2004). Students were required to take courses in either German, or English, or French which they would normally have started in secondary or even primary school. The Soviet Union, being a politically, economically and culturally isolated country, offered few opportunities for people to go abroad, therefore FLs were not amongst the favourite or the most necessary subjects to master. They were a part of school and university curricula more for the purposes of “general development”. The majority of students were not highly motivated towards FL learning.

Textbooks largely defined the structure and content of the language class. During the period of the Soviet Union they were the most traditional and relatively easily available teaching and learning material. They were more or less comprehensive, well structured and, most importantly, met the requirements of the centrally-defined curriculum, and end-of-year examinations. The textbooks issued before the changes of
the 1990s are interesting in that they provide some insight into the style and educational agenda of the Soviet Union (at least in relation to FLs), as well into the methods and approaches used at that time. They also shed some light on the situation with language teaching today, because to a great extent many teachers, including those representing the “new generation” are still influenced by their own educational experiences and by the language textbooks they had as learners (Larsen-Freeman, 2003, p. ix).

The majority of textbooks that were used in the departments of FLs before Independence, were designed specially for this educational level (often even specifying a particular year of study) and were approved centrally by the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Vocational Education of the USSR. The textbooks generally pursued similar goals, often had similar sets of topics and types of exercises, but most importantly the authors took a holistic approach towards language teaching and learning so that the contents included a wide array of topics and skills.

In order to illustrate some of these points, the author took a closer look at some of the aims stated in the introductory part of these textbooks and the types and format of exercises that were attached to each lesson. The examples were drawn from several textbooks written by university teachers and approved by the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Vocational Education of the USSR, including:


Whereas no attempt has been made to generalise the findings, the researcher believes they nevertheless serve as a good example of the learning/teaching materials at that time and demonstrate the ways in which the Soviet methodological doctrine manifested itself:

Textbook 1 (for students in the first year of study):
[The textbook] adopts an all-embracing approach towards teaching the German language as a major. It combines aspects of language learning such as lexis, grammar, phonetics; and four language skills: reading, writing, listening comprehension and speaking (Zhluktenko, 1977, p. 4).

Textbook 2 (for students in the fourth year of study):

- further development of skills which would enable the learner to conduct spontaneous conversations within the boundaries of the lexical and grammatical structures previously introduced;
- further mastering of lexical units in the fields of society, politics and other areas of country studying;
- further mastering of the skills of reading and understanding of fictional and political literature using unabridged excerpts from literature as well as from political texts ('Praktisches Deutsch' Popov, Dianova, & Obnossov, 1980 & 1984, p. 3).

Textbook 3 (for students in the second year of study):

The methodic principles of the present textbook are based on the traditional practice of tertiary FL departments, whereby all the aspects of teaching of a FL, such as: phonetics, grammar, vocabulary, speaking, listening comprehension, become building blocks of the complex process of teaching and learning19 ('Deutsch' Prokopowa, Melnik, Riswanowa, & Sowgira, 1982, p. 7).

With regard to the content, textbooks typically comprised several broad topics dedicated to the History of Germany, Art, Literature, Music and so on; more patriotically-oriented topics such as Moscow, Kiev, famous people of the Soviet Union; as well as those specifically dealing with the glorification of the Communist Party, its political course and the bright future that awaits all Soviet people.

A typical lesson from a textbook such as these includes a text – the central feature of the lesson, dedicated to a particular topic; an analysis of lexical units from the text, explanations on the use of certain lexical items (Sprachgebrauch und

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19 Translation provided by the author.
Vieldeutigkeit) where their meanings are explained and synonyms and antonyms are provided; word formation (Wortbildung), and so forth. Typically the exercises reflect language-centered methods, that is those that are principally concerned with linguistic forms or the use of vocabulary (see also Kumaravadivelu, 2006, p. 90). The learners were usually supplied with an exact grammatical or lexical structure which was to be followed with the rest of the given words, or phrases. Exercises on filling blanks or on substitution of lexical units, or on bilingual translation were amongst the most common. The general approach was very thorough which could be seen from the fact that a certain grammatical unit was drilled with several exercises. Thus particular care was taken so that by the end of the lesson this or that grammatical phenomenon or lexical unit had been well practiced and memorised.

In sum, the structure and the content of the “old” textbooks were consistent with the Soviet “all-embracing”, thorough, or, according to some scholars (e.g., Holmes & McLean, 1989), encyclopedic approach towards education within the stated aims.

On the other hand, these positive features of Soviet textbooks were counterbalanced by many serious drawbacks, namely:

- textbook writers not being native speakers themselves often did not have perfect knowledge of the language so the learners were exposed to a rather “artificial” or “translated-from-Russian” language;
- the whole pedagogical tradition of teaching FLs took little consideration of the development of communicative skills, creativity, or independent thinking; the accent was predominantly on reading and writing skills;
- despite the fact that communicative goals were often mentioned in the introductory pages of textbooks, the communicative situations offered to students were often based on vocabulary and structures that were ideologically charged, not practical, not applicable to real-life situations;
- learners were taught an out-of-date language;
- ideological texts very often created the wrong impression about the Western world;
- dogmatism in grammar teaching.
Although many of the textbooks explicitly claimed to be communicatively oriented, the topics offered to students were often restricted to the Great October Revolution, Marx, Lenin and the Communist Party. Even exercises on phonetics and listening comprehension were no exceptions, for example:

**Textbook 1:**  *Achten Sie auf die Wort- und Syntagmenbetonung* (Please pay attention to the word and syntagmatic stress)

, Kampflieder – Man höret enige “Kampflieder”,
, Dolmetscherstudent – ein Dolmetscherstudent aus dem zweiten “Studienjahr
Oktoberrevolution – der Jahrestag der Großen Sozialistischen Oktoberrevolution
Militärparade – Er möchte die Militärparade sehen

**Textbook 2** offers the following text for further discussion (an excerpt):

*Der Rote Oktober als Weltenwende*

*Von einer Weltenwende, einer Wende zum Wohle der Völker, haben die Menschen jahrtausendelang geträumt. Von ihrem Träumen künden noch heute Märchen und Sagen, aber auch utopische Gesellschaftswürfe wie Campanellas „Sonnenstaat“ oder Thomas Morus Land „Utopia“. (....)*


The Red October that changed the world

People have long dreamed of a miracle that would change the world for the good of all peoples. These dreams are recanted to us in fairy tales and
ballads, and the utopian ideas of society in works by Campanella in his “The City of the Sun”, or Thomas More’s state “Utopia” (…). However, the real possibility for change appeared with the emergence of the most revolutionary class in the history of humanity, the class of workers. Since this class adopted the views of Marx and Engels based on scientific Communism it has managed to realise its power and mission on a national and international scale under the leadership of the revolutionary party.\footnote{Translation provided by the author.}

In the 1990s, textbooks such as the ones shown above were still used in the classroom, while the most ideologically bound sections were simply skipped over by the teachers. In fact, this was one of the main textbooks by which the researcher herself was taught in the initial years of study at National Taras Shevchenko University of Kyiv. Unfortunately, as this investigation has found, textbooks like this are still being used by some tertiary departments due to the lack of funding and the fact that many students, particularly in the poorer regions of Ukraine, such as Kharkiv, cannot afford to purchase new learning materials.

The exercises given in the textbook \textit{Praktisches Deutsch} (1984) can be divided into the following groups:

1. Vocabulary exercises. These mostly deal with practising “new” words from the text, and the discussion of their morphology and semantics. For example, the learners are asked to name a few compound nouns in German (and to find their Russian equivalents); or to explain the difference between given groups of words with a similar meaning, or to finish a sentence with an appropriate word (usually found in the text).

2. The second type of exercise is more concerned with the contents of the text and with testing students’ understanding of the information provided. So a typical exercise would require students to answer some questions or formulate their own questions to another student.

3. The third type of exercise is in the minority and is considered “communicative”, as it invites students to initiate a conversation with a partner or to discuss a
certain issue. However, students’ own opinions, experiences or feelings are hardly required. These “communicative” exercises are often already very structured and preprogrammed. It is often enough to refer to the text to find the “correct” answer. A typical example of such an exercise is “Sprechen Sie zu den folgenden Problemen des Textes” (Discuss the following problems from the text). The topics for the “discussion” are the following (see Popov et al., 1984, p. 344):

1. Warum war die Oktoberrevolution in Rußland kein „Zufall”, sondern eine Gesetzmäßigkeit der geschichtlichen Entwicklung?

2. Warum öffnete die Große Sozialistische Oktoberrevolution ein neues Kapitel der Weltgeschichte?

1. Why was the October Revolution in Russia no “accident”, but a regularity of the historical development?

2. Why did the Great Socialist October Revolution open a new chapter in world history?

Naturally, such “communicative situations” could hardly motivate learners for discussion. They are far from real life situations and contain little if any practical vocabulary.

This problem to a large extent has remained in the language class even today. While the ideological component has been taken out from textbooks and course materials, the general methodological approach has survived. Darijchuk (2000, p. 79), for example, noted that communicatively-oriented language classes still lack any resemblance to real life situations and tend to use vocabulary that is not useful or outdated. The questions given in a language class often refer to old information, and the texts that are being retold have long been learnt by heart by everybody in the class.
German in the post-Perestroika period

Perestroika and the disintegration of the Soviet Union brought many changes to the political, economic and cultural relationships of Ukraine with Europe. The number of students willing to study FLs soared. The fall of the Iron Curtain and the Reunification of Germany resulted in the “Deutsch-Boom” (Katskova, 2004, p. 66; Kyjak, 2007, p. 8). However, the effect was not long-lasting. Still, the wind from the West brought some fresh air in the form of new pedagogical approaches. Already common in Western countries, the Communicative Language Teaching began to conquer the terrain of the former Soviet Union.

The opening of borders and the gradual adoption of new trends in pedagogy did not automatically mean an improvement in students’ knowledge and a healing of wounds from the somewhat stagnated Soviet pedagogy. Table 3.1 below shows the changes that occurred (to a greater or lesser extent) in the teaching/learning of FLs after the advent of communicative approaches during the Perestroika period:

Table 3.1 Changes brought by adoption of the “new” approach in language teaching

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditional approach</th>
<th>Communicatively-oriented approaches</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The balance of the language class leaned towards reading and grammar-oriented activities.</td>
<td>The first attempts were made to consider the needs of learners and to shift the balance towards speaking, especially on everyday topics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The old or traditional textbooks mainly targeted the development of reading skills with a strong emphasis on grammar. They were full of ideological texts. The language they taught was often “unreal” or “artificial”.</td>
<td>A switch to new textbooks which allowed the development of communicative skills and which generally were more attractive to students than the old ones (Themen, Themen Neu, Deutsch Intensiv and so on).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3.1 (continued) Changes brought by adoption of the “new” approach in language teaching

| Grammar occupied a central part of nearly every language class. | The importance of grammar per se started to be questioned. It began to be accepted only as an integral part of text analysis. The dialogue became dominant among other text types. |
| Texts, mainly narrative, provided little opportunity for interaction or discussion. In fact, discussion, let alone pair work, was not often practised in language classes. |

Source: (Katskova 2004, p. 66, slightly modified)

It was soon revealed that neither the dialogues, even when recorded on cassettes, nor the less explicit grammar instruction, led to an improvement in communicative competence in students.

Katskova (2004) indicated a number of reasons for this. First of all, the understanding of the keyword “communicative competence” was too narrow. It was often associated solely with listening comprehension. As a result, the teaching of underlying principles of the language system was disregarded. The lack of grammar instruction started to show in all aspects of language skills in students. As Katskova noted, the outcome was the development of “half-knowledge” in learners who could only produce some sort of “tourist-German” (“Touristendeutsch”).

Secondly, the preoccupation with new “progressive” communicatively-oriented learning materials often led to opposite results. The imported textbooks were often designed for a completely different audience with a different number of hours and different learning conditions not suitable for the Russian-speaking learners studying language in the given settings. On the other hand there were “external” factors influencing German language teaching and learning (Katskova, 2004):

- the dominant position of English in world economy and trade;
- the rapid development of information technology where English also played a leading role.

This state of affairs turned out to be not very favourable for the position of FLs other than English. For example, the number of schoolchildren studying English, as a
percentage of those studying a language in general, increased from 63.5% in 1985 to 66% in 1995. Interest in German dropped dramatically from 24% in 1985 to 17% in 1995. In the western part of the country the situation remained more stable with 22-25%. This might have been due to the old language learning traditions from the time when Bukovyna was part of the Habsburg Monarchy (Oguy, 2003, p. 454). At the same time, the established contacts with Germany and (somewhat weaker ones) with Austria, and growing possibilities for combining travel with work are gradually strengthening the position of German. According to some Ukrainian Germanists, the situation is unlikely to change significantly in the East of the country. Oguy (2003) argues that in order to improve the situation, the teaching methods and the number of classes per year must be reconsidered. Normal secondary schools offer one to four hours per week, whereas gymnasium and lyceums teach up to 12 classes per week, which creates a very strong basis for German as a second language.

With regard to tertiary education, the study of one or two FLs is compulsory for students from all faculties. For example, in the Faculty of Law and Economics, students at some state universities in Ukraine, must learn both English and German (Oguy, 2003). The full course takes two years (four semesters). At the end of the course students can choose one of the languages as an optional subject up to graduation.

Summary

In this chapter the place of German and other FLs within Ukrainian society and in education has been discussed. The array of social, economic, political and educational factors which have contributed to FL study and teaching has been explored. We have suggested that the notion “foreign language” is somewhat problematic with regard to Ukraine. Russian, which for many decades was the language of communication for the overwhelming majority of the population of Ukraine, was marginalised in the school and university curriculum to make way for Ukrainian, the official language of Ukraine, and FLs. Change in political regime, emergence of travel opportunities and increasing international cooperation have given FLs unprecedented popularity. They have become an essential skill which one ought to have in order to find
employment. At least one FL is studied by all university students and since 2002 they became a compulsory discipline for all school children from Grade 2.

Chapter 3 has shown that there have been changing attitudes towards German in Ukraine which reflected the various historical and political stages of the country. German held a strong position in western parts of Ukraine which belonged to the Austrian empire. During the Soviet Era, in the 1930s German was preferred as the language of science and as the language of the proletariat whereas English was considered to be the language of bourgeoisie. WWII created negative associations with German and English gradually started to strengthen its positions. Then another political event caused yet another swing of pendulum for German – the German reunification, which lead to a great increase in popularity of German. Now, due to close economic and political links with German-speaking countries, increased travel opportunities and the opening of borders, German is the second most popular FL after English.
4. AUSTRALIAN CONTEXT

Introduction

Australia is a fortunate multilingual and multicultural country, where about 400 languages, including indigenous and sign languages, are spoken (Clyne, 2008; Lo Bianco, 2008). Besides, 133 languages are taught in Australian schools and 29 languages are taught at university level (Clyne, 2008; Liddicoat, Scarino, Curnow, Kohler, Scrimgeour, & Morgan, 2007). Nevertheless, the position of FLs, including German, has always been rather unstable. In Australia – an English-speaking country - the connection between economic and political success and language learning has not always been seen as straightforward. As a result languages have long been considered the “poor cousins” of education (Liddicoat, Crozet, Jansen, & Schmidt, 1997, p. 20), particularly since the late sixties as languages ceased to be a compulsory prerequisite for university entry (Barko, 1996b, p. 6; Pauwels, 2002, p. 16).

As a result, recent studies have revealed that Australian schoolchildren spend less time on language learning than students in all other OECD countries: as little as 13% of school leavers across Australia have studied a language at senior school (Languages in Crisis, 2007). In universities, the number of languages on offer has dropped from 66 to 29 in the past decade, and the situation of some of these is precarious (Clyne, 2008).

The current debate about LOTEs in Australia has become particularly heated lately as the need for people proficient in languages, in view of increasing globalisation and international cooperation, is growing and political and economic imperatives demand proficiency in FLs. One such example, was the recent growth in popularity of the then opposition leader Kevin Rudd (now Prime Minister) by 8% (Grattan, 2007) after he delivered a speech in Mandarin at the APEC summit in September, 2007 which for China’s leader Hu Jintao and, naturally for many voters in Australia, symbolised friendship with China and Asia in general. In April 2008, Prime Minister Kevin Rudd, received a warm welcome by people in Beijing as he again delivered his speech in
Mandarin. (Grattan & Toy, 2008). Thus Kevin Rudd demonstrated the importance of the command of a second language and familiarity with another culture.

In this chapter we will elaborate on these and other issues concerning FL education in Australia and specifically we will deal with the questions “What is the actual situation with LOTEs in Australia at various levels of education? How have the various language policies of the Australian Government determined the place of LOTEs in education? And How have attitudes been changing concerning languages in Australian society?”

**Australia’s language policies**

Perhaps the best way to understand the current role and position of LOTEs in Australia is to see how language policies, language education and attitudes towards languages have been developing in the past.

Australia is a nation of immigrants, a multilingual and multicultural country. Some 400 languages, including indigenous and sign languages are used in Australian today (Clyne, 2008; Lo Bianco, 2008). According to Lo Bianco (2008), Australia is one of the most successful multilingual and multicultural countries in the world. Still, out of some 120 Aboriginal languages which have survived up until now, only 25 are still spoken in a variety of contexts (Baldauf & Djité, 2000, p. 231).

Despite its multilingual and multicultural character, Australia is without doubt an English-speaking country. In the last two hundred years there has been a constantly changing attitude towards languages (more about this in what follows). Lobbying by immigrant communities and language professionals in the early 1970s demanded a policy change from assimilation to multiculturalism. Since that time vivid and extensive debates have unfolded with regard to Australia’s languages policies. Clyne designated four phases of language policies (1991, p. 4-6):

Phase 1: *Accepting but laissez-faire* (up to the mid-1870)

Phase 2: *Tolerant but restrictive* (1870s to early 1900s)

Phase 3: *Rejecting* (circa 1914 to circa 1970) and

Phase 4: *Accepting – even fostering* (from the early 1970s)
In the first phase the use of LOTEs was neither encouraged nor discouraged. In fact, there was no explicit policy concerning which languages could or could not be used in the education system, in media or in business. However, Aboriginal languages consistently experienced a negative attitude. There were many bilingual primary schools and some bilingual secondary schools, mainly German and English, French and English or (Scottish) Gaelic and English. In the capital cities and on the goldfields there were various ethnic clubs, representing a diversity of language groups.

Since the 1870s the policy of monolingualism started to take shape. English-medium schools were established and limitations were placed on the number of hours of instruction in LOTE in the non-government schools of some states.

The third phase coincided with the First World War when Australia sought to affirm its status as both an independent nation and part of the British Empire. This period was characterised by xenophobia and aggressive monolingualism so that “Australia and Australians had to forget their multilingual heritage” (Clyne, 1991). Despite a large influx of migrants after World War II little was done to accommodate their needs. Interpreting and translation services were inadequate. Until 1956, ethnic newspapers were required to publish sections in English. Radio stations were only permitted to broadcast in FLs for up to 2.5% of their total broadcasting time and had to translate into English all messages in LOTE. Television was exclusively in English. Bilingual education in some states was still outlawed. In the marking of pupils’ work at schools, there was often discrimination against children from ethnic backgrounds. It was not until the late 1960s that different native languages and the needs of migrants were taken into account.

In the fourth phase the policy pendulum swung from assimilation towards multiculturalism. All languages used in the Australian community were legitimised. One of the manifestations of this was the term “community languages” which appeared in 1974. Other signs of positive changes included telephone interpreter services; SBS television, which presents programs in community languages; multilingual radio stations; introduction of various languages at schools, and so on.

Lo Bianco too, divides Australia’s language policies into 4 phases (Lo Bianco, 1990, p. 55-57):
Phase 1: Laissez-faire

Phase 2: Rights-equality

Phase 3: Culturalist or Multicultural

Phase 4: Polarisation

Lo Bianco’s first phase covers the period after World War II up to 1969. This period was marked by no intervention by Federal or State/Territory authorities either for immigrant languages or for the teaching of English as a second language for non-English speaking children. No systematic attempt to teach English as a second language was made during this period because it was assumed that English would be “picked up”.

The second phase from the 1960s to mid-1970 was marked by growing debates over the adoption of language policy measures. Ethnic and Aboriginal communities demanded their rights to language maintenance. The introduction of ethnic languages in all aspects of Australian life was seen as a “right”, not as a “privilege”.

The third phase, which began in the mid-1970s, was the period during which the “equality” argument was replaced with “culturalist” explanations of the positions of migrants in Australian society. As Djité notes: “If the previous phase was a community reaction to government inaction, this phase was governmental reaction to community agitation” (Djité, 1994, p. 7-8).

The fourth phase represents two views on the aim of language policies. Djité points out that:

Lo Bianco’s “polarisation” phase in the early 1980s has continued in debates to this day though in rather muted form. It represents a set of divergent priorities between those for whom the major aim of national language policy is to achieve equality for minorities and to enhance their educational and occupational opportunities; and, on the other hand, others who argue the case for language policy as an opportunity for “mainstream” Australians to learn other languages and learn about other cultures.
Djité (1994, p. 8) summarised Clyne’s and Lo Biaco’s perspectives on the history of language policy in Australia in Table 4.1, to which we added Di Biase’s interpretation as well. In contrast to both Clyne and Lo Bianco, Di Biase (1994, p. 5) differentiated three phases in the history of language policies:

Phase 1: “assimilationist” phase

Phase 2: “multiculturalism” phase

Phase 3: “economic rationalism” phase

The first phase begins with Federation in 1901 and continues up to the 1970s. Although writing about Italian, Di Biase argued that all minority languages and cultures were “at best ignored” in both school and university curricula. The situation began to change in the 1970s as a result of a campaign for the recognition of minority languages. This is when the second “multiculturalism” phase took place.

The third phase began in the mid 1980s. Di Biase stressed a very rationalist approach towards languages. The Government tends to support only those languages which are economically justified and “commercially useful”. Di Biase’s characterisation of the recent language policies as “rationalistic” indeed shows the Australian Government’s priorities about languages in education. Each interpretation provides a different perspective on the history of language policy in Australia, and therefore a complete picture is built up by considering the sum total as shown in Table 4.1.
Table 4.1 Major phases in the history of language policies in Australia

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) the “accepting but laissez-faire” phase up to the mid-1870s.</td>
<td>(1) the “laissez-faire” phase from 1945 until 1969.</td>
<td>(1) the “assimilationist” phase from 1901 up to the 1970s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) the “tolerant but restrictive” phase from the 1870s to the early 1900s.</td>
<td>(2) the “rights-equality” phase – from the late 1960s to the mid-1970s.</td>
<td>(2) the “multiculturalism” phase from the mid-1970s to the mid-1980s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) the “rejecting” phase circa 1914 to circa 1970.</td>
<td>(3) the “culturalist” or “multicultural” phase – beginning in the mid-1970s.</td>
<td>(3) the “economic rationalism” phase from the mid-1980s onwards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) the “accepting – even fostering phase” from the early 1970s.</td>
<td>(4) the “polarisation” phase – in the early 1980s.</td>
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What led to the National Policy on Languages?

As one can see from the previous section, changes, if not a breakthrough, occurred in Australian society in the 1960s and early 1970s. Fluctuations in the Government’s attitude towards languages in multilingual and multicultural Australia resulted in a crisis in LOTE learning/teaching. A number of research reports showed a decline in the number of students learning a FL. Between 1967 and 1976 due to the
abandonment of the language prerequisites for access to certain tertiary courses by universities, enrolments dropped in LOTE matriculation programs from 40% to just 16% (Lo Bianco, 2001, p. 14). Migrant communities demanded the recognition of the languages that children spoke at home as well as support with English language.

The Whitlam Labor government, which gained power in 1972, became an instrument in these changes (Clyne, 1991, p. 7; Djité, 1994, p. 11). Many of them were due to Whitlam’s progressive Immigration Minister, Al Grassby. He was convinced that immigrant children could benefit from instruction in their mother tongue and that language study could broaden the horizons of all individuals. Soon afterwards, the initiation of a study into migrant languages in the school system was announced (Djité, 1994, p. 11).

This highly overdue program of social justice and multiculturalism included language policies. Clyne (1991, p. 8) differentiates two stages in the push for language policies. The first stage was “a part of a larger campaign for “ethnic rights” and for institutions to reflect Australia’s cultural diversity”. Committees, councils and alliances were established to fight for “ethnic rights”. They were comprised of not only members of ethnic groups, but also academics, teachers, and trade unions. Among the demands relating to language were:

- availability of interpreters in hospitals, law courts, prisons and schools;
- improved facilities for the teaching of English as a second language;
- maintenance programs in community languages at all levels of education;
- bilingual education (where required);
- an ethnic radio station;
- films in community languages on television; and
- teaching of community languages as an integral part of the education of all Australian schoolchildren.

The second stage began in the early 1980s when the newly formed Federation of Ethnic Community Councils of Australia (FECCA) began to discuss the need for a coherent national policy on language matters to address the many reports of the previous decade (Djité, 1994, p. 15). In contrast to the first stage, this stage was more explicit. Proposals came from academics individually or on behalf of professional groups such as the Applied Linguistics Association of Australia, the Australian
Similarly to Clyne, Lo Bianco (2001) gives an overview of moving forces with their interacting interests for a comprehensive policy on languages. These clearly correlate with Djité’s outline of the events, which triggered the changes in society. Thus, according to Lo Bianco, the first interest was the “mobilisation of language professionals” (2001, p. 14). This was crucial in the context of the crisis in FL education. The second interest emerged from ethnic and Indigenous Communities, which, under the organised leadership of FECCA, formed a coalition to advocate explicit Commonwealth policies on languages. The third interest was provoked by the reorientation towards Asia. This was advocated by prominent trade officials and diplomats.

Each of these interests contributed in its own way to shaping language policy. Thus, according to Lo Bianco, language professionals produced an intellectual legitimation for public policy determinations on language; the second produced a political consistency for language policies; and the third formulated commercial imperatives (2001, p. 14).

In response, the Federal Department of Education issued, as Clyne calls it, a “pace-setting document” *Towards a National Language Policy* (Australia, Department of Education 1982). The document outlined some issues relating to languages other than English, English as a national language, English as a mother tongue, as well as literacy and plain English (Djité, 1994, p. 16). It also stressed the need for a national language policy. This document cleared the ground for a Senate Inquiry into the need for a national language policy.

The report of the Senate Inquiry, *A National Language Policy*, was published in 1984. It was not an actual language policy but raised issues to be addressed in such a policy (Clyne, 1991; Djité, 1994; Lo Bianco, 2001). The report stressed that a policy should be developed and co-ordinated at the national level on the basis of the following four guiding principles:

1. Competence in English.
2. Maintenance and development of languages other than English.
3. Provision of services in languages other than English.
4. Opportunities for learning second languages.
The report contained 114 recommendations and reaffirmed the position of English as
Australia’s “national” language. It also proposed a campaign to alleviate adult illiteracy,
and recommended pre-service English skills courses for intending teachers. The chapter
on Aboriginal languages turned out to be very sensitive to the needs and wishes of the
communities. The Committee recommended an urgent increase in resources for the
study of Aboriginal languages. On the issue of LOTE, the report argued for a “more
even distribution of activity across a broader range of languages” and suggested “purely
on an indicative basis” that Japanese, Indonesian, Chinese, French, German, Spanish,
Arabic, perhaps Russian, and two or three Aboriginal languages could be retained as
priority languages (Djité, 1994, p. 17). On the other hand, as Clyne (1991) noted, the
report only offered “encouragement” for all secondary pupils to learn a second language
for at least one year and for primary school language programs to be “substantially
increased”. Despite the fact that high expectations of the Senate report had been held by
professional associations, ethnic and Aboriginal communities and others, it was never
acted on nor was there even an official reply from the Government to it (Djité, 1994, p.
18).

The role of the National Policy on Languages in language education

The Senate report stated the need for a more definitive policy on languages. Lo
Bianco, who had been in charge of the Victorian policy, was appointed to draw up the
national policy. The National Policy on Languages (NPL) was finally released in 1987,
after it had been endorsed by Prime Minister Hawke (Australian Labor Party) and the
Senate. This document became the first official national language policy in Australia
(Djité, 1994, p. 18). It took over the Senate Report’s guiding principles but, as Clyne
(1991) describes it, was more sophisticated in philosophy and argument. In contrast to
its predecessor, the NPL was more concerned with implementing the guiding principles
and included budgetary recommendations on each of them. The scope of the National
Policy on Languages was comprehensive and aimed at:
overcoming the injustices, disadvantages and discrimination related to language;
cultural and intellectual enrichment;
integration of language teaching/learning with Australia’s external needs and priorities;
 provision of clear expectations to the community about language in general and about language-in-education in particular; and
support for component groups of Australian society (ethnic communities, the communication-impaired, Aboriginal groups) for whom language issues are very important (Lo Bianco, 1987, p. 189).

The report identified nine languages as “languages of wider teaching”, namely Arabic, Mandarin, French, German, Greek, Indonesian/Malay, Italian, Japanese, and Spanish. It was expected that these languages would be offered continuously, and be taken to matriculation level with “continuity to tertiary study being highly desirable (Lo Bianco, 1987, p. 125). The NPL emphasised that these languages were for focused attention and were not intended to displace other languages in the education system (Liddicoat et al., 2007, p. 13). While the primacy of English in the policy is emphasised, it recognised Australia’s multilingualism as a valuable enrichment, not as a burden or danger to national identity.

One of the main goals of the NPL was the “maintenance and development of languages other than English” (Lo Bianco, 1987, p. 4). The rationale for language learning comes from four social goals which include:

1. Cultural and intellectual enrichment.
2. Vocational and employment opportunities in foreign trade, economic relationships.
4. Australia’s role in the region and the world.

To ensure the implementation of the NPL, several institutes and councils were established to coordinate national activities on language issues and provide advice to the government on the implementation and further development of the national policy on languages, like for example, the Australian Advisory Council on Languages;
Multicultural Education (AACLAME) and the National Languages Institute of Australia (NLIA).

The NPL became a milestone for languages and their study at all levels of education including higher education. It also triggered a number of enquiries as well as policy initiatives in language study (Pauwels, 2004, p. 11). Enquiries and reports that specifically targeted the higher education sector included, amongst others, the Ingleson Report on Asian Studies (1989), the Leal Report (1991) on modern (mainly European) languages in higher education, the Nicholas Report (1993) on the employment and supply of LOTE teachers, the Rudd Report (1994) on Asian languages (COAG, 1994), the Baldauf Report (1995) on less widely taught languages, the Report on Subjects of Small Enrolment in the Humanities by the Australian Academy of the Humanities (2000) and the Report on Asian Languages and Studies by the Asian Studies Association of Australia (2002). Pauwels (2004) noted that the reports dealing with Asian languages had a substantial impact on the provision of university study in Asian languages. In the 1990s many universities introduced or expanded their offerings in Asian languages, and, as a result, a majority of universities currently offer Chinese, Indonesian or Japanese. On the other hand, European languages did not profit much from the reviews dealing with European languages, with the possible exception of Spanish.


Both documents have been widely discussed and criticised by various scholars. Clyne (1991, p. 16), for example, pointed out that the Green Paper basically deleted the

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21 Kevin Rudd is now the Prime Minister of Australia
guiding principle of previous documents on provision of services in languages other than English. “Literacy” was given precedence over “language”, rather than being seen as part of it. The paper also misunderstood the work of the National Languages Institute of Australia, and initiated some changes which would have deprived the country of decades of expertise in migrant English training and created instability in the profession. Moore in her article “Enchantments and Displacements: Multiculturalism, Language Policy and Dawkins-speak” described the Green Paper as “a reversal of achievements [...] since the early 1970s” (as cited in Djité, 1994, p. 22). The same view was held by Scarino and Papademetre who noted: “In the 1991 policy, pluralism was replaced by economic rationalism which boldly prescribed a move towards what has been described as “economic assimilationism” for the common good” (Scarino & Papademetre, 2001, p. 307).

Pauwels (2002, p. 17) on the other hand described the early and mid-1990s as the “golden age” for language policy and for the teaching of languages at university level. She points out that despite the fact that the language policies issued in 1991 “set the scene for an economic rationalist approach to language learning and a more instrumental or vocational view of language study, it nevertheless meant a continued focus on language issues and targeted funding for specific language initiatives”.

The White Paper is considered to have an imbalance towards literacy, and the motives for second language learning are economic rather than anything else. It identified fourteen languages as priority languages, including the nine Languages of wider Teaching included in the NPL. The priority languages include languages of significant ethnic communities such as Aboriginal languages, Italian, German, Greek, Spanish and Vietnamese, and eight languages of regional and economic importance: Arabic, Chinese, Indonesian/Malay, French, Japanese, Korean, Russian and Thai.

In 1994 a report was issued on Asian languages in Australia initiated by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG), the Rudd Report. The COAG report became de facto language policy with a focus on the importance of learning Asian languages, namely: Chinese, Indonesian, Japanese and Korean. As Scarino and Papademetre (2001, p. 309) noted, the justification for learning Asian languages in the report was based on “ever-changing trade figures”, not on “intellectual and cultural
benefits”. Giving a “dollar-value” perspective on the languages, it proclaimed them as “strategic[ally]” important.

In 1996 the political scene changed as the Coalition came into power. This change resulted in another series of reviews, reforms and cancellations of policies that had been introduced by the Labor government (Pauwels, 2002, p. 17).

Recent policy developments

**National Asian Languages and Studies in Australian Schools Strategy (NALSAS), 1994**

The late 1990s early 2000s was a period of cancellation of projects dealing with languages at schools and universities by the Liberal government. One of them was “The National Asian Languages and Studies in Australian Schools Strategy” (NALSAS) that was created in 1994 with the aim of improving participation and proficiency levels in four Asian languages – Japanese, Mandarin, Indonesian and Korean. The target of the project was to achieve the level of 60% of students studying one of the four Asian languages at year 10 and 15% at year 12 (Liddicoat et al., 2007, p. 15). In 1996, when the NALSAS strategy was still in force, Year 12 enrolments in the four Asian languages soared, particularly for Japanese (from 2,541 in 1990 to 5,381 in 1996), whereas some of the priority languages, such as Italian and German showed decreases. From 1990 to 1996, the percentage of students studying an Asian language to Year 12 increased from 3.84% to 6.43%, but the percentage studying a non-Asian language remained virtually unchanged at about 8% (Baldauf, 2005, p. 136; Baldauf & Djité, 2000, p. 236).

The NALSAS strategy was endorsed by the COAG for the period 1995 to 2006 and was provided with AU$70 million for its implementation in 1994-1995. Further funding of AU$42.6 million was allocated in the 1998-1999 budget for the consolidation of this program (Baldauf & Djité, 2000). Altogether, the Australian Government provided over AU$208 million to support the Strategy. The NALSAS strategy was specifically funded on the basis that it would not be ongoing and that it
would be self-sustaining in schools by the end of 2002 (Liddicoat et al., 2007, p. 16). The document says:

The original strategy was based on the projections through to 2006. The Commonwealth has agreed to continue its funding at the rate of approximately $30 million a year to the end of 2002. (The NALSAS Strategy, 1994).

The cancellation of projects supporting language teaching and learning throughout the school and university curriculums put under threat the existence of small enrolment languages unable to generate large student numbers. In his talk (presented jointly with Gvozdenko in the Faculty of Education, The University of Melbourne on October 6, 2006) Lo Bianco underlined the erroneous approach of the Liberal Government towards languages where the market will supposedly encourage language teaching. He suggested that what should be taken into account is “the national interest that transcends the market value perspective towards languages in education”.

School Languages Programme (SLP), 2005-2008

At a Languages Education National Seminar that took place in Canberra in October, 30-31, 2006, the former Education Minister Julie Bishop (Liberal Party) recognised the importance of learning FLs in Australia, in that they facilitate potential global engagement and improve cultural understanding. At the same time she expressed her concern about the fact that more than 85% of Australian school students graduate from high school without having studied a language at year 12 level. It was recognised that a lot of this is due to the lack of language teachers, lack of coherence and repetitiveness of the language program, which turns students off language study. To combat these problems the Liberal Party was making an attempt to increase national coordination of languages for the school sector through the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) (Bishop, 2006), and agreed the National Statement for Languages Education in Australian Schools: National Plan for Languages Education in Australian Schools 2005-2008 (National Statement for
Languages Education in Australia schools - 2005-2008). This Plan was a part of the larger School Languages Programme (SLP). It provided $112 million in funding for languages over the four years from 2005 to 2008, the majority of which was given to State and Territory education authorities to support the teaching and administering of Asian, European, indigenous and Auslan languages in schools (Australian Government SLP 2005-2008).

Various professional organisations and parents’ committees, such as The Australian Council of State School Organisations (ACSSO) and the Australian Parents Council (APC) have also been involved in the ongoing language education debate to provide input on the development of the Government’s National Statement and Plan for Language Education 2005-2008. Part of their commitment was to provide insight into students’ and parents’ attitudes towards FL learning. In 2006 a survey was conducted which dealt with a vast range of issues such as usefulness and relevance of languages, the place of language in the school curriculum (whether it should be a compulsory discipline), confidence in language programs and teaching in Australian schools, co-ordination and leadership, and other issues. The results were based on 3,500 respondents representing students, teachers, principals, parents and other stakeholders (Macgregor, 2007). It was found that the majority of students and parents considered languages useful for many reasons, such as better employment opportunities, better understanding and appreciation of other cultures and that of their own. At the same time as many as 66% of parents expressed the view that many parents, students and Australians in general do not see the relevance of learning a language. Many respondents expressed their concern with regard to co-ordination of language programs. They agreed that coordination and continuity “is pretty appalling” (Macgregor, 2007, p. 2) across the country between primary, secondary and tertiary sectors. As mentioned previously, the same concern was expressed by some scholars with regard to the German language, such as Truckenbrodt and Kretzenbacher (2001, p. 1654) who argued that there is a lack of coherence and continuity in the curriculum at all levels of language education.

With the change of government in November 2007, the National Plan initiative still remains significant with regards to language education (Tadesco, 2008, p. 2). The following section provides an outline of the situation with language teaching in
Australian schools and policies of the new Government to address the needs in language learning.

Languages other than English in Australian schools

A remarkable feature of Australian language education is the multitude of languages offered at schools. The 2003 MCEETYA Review of Languages\textsuperscript{22} reported that 146 languages were offered in Australian schools, including ethnic schools (Absalom, 2008, June 20; Tadesco, 2008). This included 103 languages (embracing 68 Australian indigenous languages) taught in government, Catholic and independent schools; and 69 languages taught through after hours ethnic/community languages schooling. By 2005, according to the report “An investigation of the state and nature of languages in Australian schools” by Liddicoat et al. (2007), the number of languages on offer had dropped to approximately 133 languages. Of the 133 languages taught in Australia, there were:

- 45 Indigenous Australian languages (which were taught in mainstream schools only);
- 88 non-Indigenous languages (foreign or community languages);
- 77 languages taught by ethnic schools (of them 22 language were taught only in ethnic schools);
- 11 languages available only in mainstream schools (classical languages, Auslan\textsuperscript{23} and a small number of languages of specific communities mostly taught through government schools of languages or independent schools associated with particular communities) (Liddicoat et al., 2007, p. 30).

Both the 2003 and 2005 reports have shown that:

- Japanese, Italian, Indonesian, French, German and Mandarin Chinese in that order are the most popular languages learnt by over 90% of learners;
- in government schools, 50.9% of students were studying a language in 2001, and 47.5% in 2005;

\textsuperscript{22} Which covered 2000-2002.
\textsuperscript{23} Auslan stands for the Australian sign language
• approximately 13% of students learn languages at senior secondary level.

The president of the Australian Federation of Modern Language Teachers Associations (AFMLTA) Lia Tadesco has raised a question: “how will we be the clever country when many of our students are missing out on a key learning area?” (Tadesco, 2008). Table 4.2 shows the status of the language education requirements in the various states and territories of Australia.

Table 4.2 Status and duration of study languages at schools across Australia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State/Territory</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Extent of study</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACT</td>
<td>not mandated</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW</td>
<td>Mandated</td>
<td>100 hours</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NT</td>
<td>not mandated</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queensland</td>
<td>mandate being revised</td>
<td>Years 4–7</td>
<td>Under regional language plans the level of mandating for individual schools has been reduced.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>implied mandate</td>
<td>R–10&lt;sup&gt;24&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Year levels not explicitly stated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasmania</td>
<td>not mandated</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria</td>
<td>expectation of teaching</td>
<td>P–10</td>
<td>Expectation expressed in terms of provision of programs rather than study by students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WA</td>
<td>implied mandate</td>
<td>Years 3–10</td>
<td>Students expected to reach Level 3&lt;sup&gt;25&lt;/sup&gt; by Year 9.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Liddicoat <i>et al.</i> (2007, p.17)<sup>26</sup>

<sup>24</sup> P and R stand for the pre-year first year at school (Prep(aratory) and Reception) for Victoria and South Australia, respectively.

<sup>25</sup> Level 3 in the Outcome Listening and Responding, and Speaking (Liddicoat <i>et al.</i>, 2007 p. 20)

<sup>26</sup> The data presented in the project “An investigation of the state and nature of languages in Australian schools” by Liddicoat <i>et al.</i> (2007) was collected during the period of 2000-2005 (as stated on p. 5 of the document).
As seen from the table languages are not compulsory in all states and territories and the debates for and against compulsory language learning is still continuing. According to the study undertaken by Liddicoat et al. (2007, p. 21) the main reasons why languages should be compulsory are:

- languages will not be offered by schools or taken by students unless they are compulsory
- mandating languages shows clearly that language education has value;
- mandating languages gives direction in a context of general apathy or ignorance about languages.

The most common rationales against language study are:

- language study should not be made compulsory for people who simply do not want to study them as this only means that students are disengaged;
- other important subject areas are not mandated so languages should not get special treatment;
- the community does not want compulsory language study; and
- languages should be offered only if the quality of the programme is assured.

**Victoria.** In Victoria, there is no explicit statement that languages are compulsory from Prep to year 10. Instead, it is expected that schools provide a language during these years of schooling. Schools are required to report student achievements in LOTEs only from level 4 commencing in 2008. It is recommended that a minimum of 150 minutes a week be allocated to language study at all levels of compulsory schooling. A 2002 review of languages in Victoria, however, noted that this minimum was not achieved in many schools (Liddicoat et al., 2007, p. 20). According to a recent report by the Victorian Government (LOTEs in Government schools 2006) the situation with LOTEs provision at government primary and secondary schools of Victoria was as follows:
Table 4.3 Language provision at Victorian primary and secondary schools 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schools</th>
<th>Primary schools</th>
<th>Secondary colleges</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>82.9% (or 1,045 of the total of 1,260) of all government primary schools provided some form of LOTE program in 2006. Across all schools, language study is most commonly offered at Years 5 and 6 (80.7%);</td>
<td>92.9% (or 289 of the total of 311) of secondary colleges provided language programs at one or more levels. 54.5% of them provided a continuous sequence from Year 7 to Year 12. 12.8% provided a LOTE continuously from Year 7 to Year 10.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>79.5% of government primary school students studied a language in 2006, a decrease of 6.5% compared to 2005. LOTE provision was lowest at the Prep level, where 68.9% of students studied a language, while the highest concentration of students studying LOTE was at the Year 6 level, at 88%;</td>
<td>48.2% of all full-time students at Victorian government colleges were studying a LOTE. Enrolments figures were relatively stable across most year levels, but declined 6.7% at the Year 11 level, while increasing 3.8% at the Year 10 level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Languages taught</td>
<td>A total of 23 languages were offered in government primary schools in 2006 (excluding VSL languages). The most widely studied languages were as follows: Indonesian (27% of all schools); Italian (26.9%); Japanese (19.4%); French (9.9%); German (9.4%); Chinese (4.2%) and Auslan (3.7%).</td>
<td>19 languages were taught in secondary colleges of Victoria in 2006. The highest enrolments were in Indonesian, French, Italian, Japanese, German, Chinese, Greek and Vietnamese.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact time</td>
<td>Contact time ranged from 10 minutes to 11 hours per week, with an average of 62.5 minutes per week. Only 2.2% of LOTE programs provided a minimum of 150 minutes of LOTE education per week as recommended by the Department of Education. In immersion/bilingual programs, where students learn curriculum content through the medium of the target language, the average contact time was above the specified minimum at 495.4 minutes per week.</td>
<td>70.5% of Year 7 students were in programs that ran for a minimum of 144 minutes per week (slightly lower than the recommended minimum of 150 minutes per week). At Year 12, 95% of students studied for a minimum of 200 minutes per week.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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27 VSL stands for the Victorian School of Languages
28 Although Indonesian was the language most widely offered across primary schools, Italian registered the highest number of student enrolments at 71,560 (LOTEs in Government schools 2006)
Table 4.3 (continued) Language provision at Victorian primary and secondary schools 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program type</th>
<th>54.3% of primary schools students studied LOTE through language awareness programs which focus chiefly on culture. 45.1% of students studied through LOTE programs, and 0.5% of students in immersion/bilingual programs.</th>
<th>95.4% of the secondary programs were LOTE programs focusing specifically on the target language, while language awareness programs accounted for 4.6% of programs. One school program was classified as a bilingual program with the recommended minimum of 450 minutes per week of classes taught in the target language.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Target group</td>
<td>93.3% of students were in classes primarily targeting second language learners. Classes, which incorporated students with and without a background in the target language, dropped to 6% in 2006, while first language classes represented 0.6% of primary students.</td>
<td>91% of LOTE students were in classes primarily targeting second language learners. Students in mixed classes represented 7.7% of enrolments, while 1.4% of students were in classes targeting first language learners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>There were 787 primary LOTE teachers in 2006 with some sort of LOTE qualification. 52.4% of LOTE teachers represented Asian languages, with the largest proportion of these (28.8%) being Indonesian teachers. 45.2% of teachers represented European languages, with Italian teachers comprising 24% of European language teachers. 43.8% were fully qualified teachers with a tertiary degree and LOTE methodology training. 52% of teachers were employed for a time fraction of less than 0.8 (an average of 0.35, or just under two days per week).</td>
<td>There were 1,226 secondary LOTE teachers in 2006, an increase of 53 teachers since 2005. 42.3% of LOTE teachers taught Asian languages, while 56.2% of teachers taught European languages. 70% of LOTE teachers were fully qualified.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.3 shows that LOTE provision at primary and secondary schools varies to a great extent. At primary schools, LOTEs is predominantly offered at levels 5 and 6, with programs being characterised as language awareness programs, with a focus on culture rather than the target language. Since 2005 a shift has been happening in primary schools in favour of language awareness programs from teaching the target language, which used to be the most common program prior that time (LOTEs in Government schools 2006, p. 30). On the other hand, the target language program is the most common type of language program at secondary level. Unlike primary schools, immersion/bilingual programs are almost non-existent in secondary schools, with only
one such program being reported in 2006\(^{29}\) (p. 67). The enrolments in 5 of the 6 most widely taught languages (French, German, Indonesian, Italian, and Japanese) in primary schools decreased during the period of 2000-2006, with Chinese being the only language out of the 6, which enjoyed growing numbers (p. 24). In secondary colleges the number of enrolments have particularly dropped in Indonesian, which nevertheless remains the most widely taught language at this level of schooling, followed by French, Italian, Japanese, German and Chinese (the latter language enjoying a slight growth in student numbers particularly since 2003). An interesting feature of secondary language learning is that enrolments in LOTEs peaked in Years 7 and 8, due to the largely compulsory nature of LOTE programs, and decrease dramatically to the Year 12 level. For instance, the number of Year 7 students studying German in 2006 at approximately 5,500 is relatively high compared to the number of Year 12 students at just 500 (LOTEs in Government schools 2006, p. 63). The report has found that overall 13.8% of all Year 12 students in government schools and at the VSL studied a LOTE in 2006.

A document issued by the association of the leading Australian Universities (The Group of Eight, [Go8]) argues that Australian students now spend less time learning a second language than students in all other OECD countries. Also, the percentage of Year 12 students graduating nationally with a second language has fallen from 40% in the 1960s to 13% today (Armitage, March 13, 2008; Clyne, 2008). This is despite the fact that 86% of parents and 60% of students recently surveyed by the Australian Council of State School Organisations (ACSSO) said language study should start in early primary school and 65% of respondents recognised that studying a language helps with English (Armitage, March 13, 2008).

At the same time, the draft of a new curriculum that has been proposed by the Primary Principals Association does not include LOTEs in the list of subjects in a move to “unclutter” the school curriculum. Such an approach towards curriculum has been described by some academics and language educators as “narrow and limiting” (Clyne, Puszka, & Brown, 2007). Lo Bianco also dismissed the opinion that Australia’s academic standards would decline if a lot of time was spent teaching languages. He mentioned Finland, where students take at least three languages throughout their

\(^{29}\) This was a German immersion/bilingual program.
schooling. Nevertheless this country performs best in the PISA\textsuperscript{30} international comparative assessments of learning (Lo Bianco, 2008).

The recently elected Labor Government has vowed to improve the situation. The Education Minister Julia Gillard has developed the Schooling Working Party, which amongst other things is aimed at supporting the teaching of Asian languages. Also the Australian government has committed $62.4 million to the National Asian Languages and Studies in Schools Program (NALSSP) to promote the study of four Asian languages: Chinese (Mandarin), Indonesian, Japanese and Korean in high schools (Absalom, 2008, June 20; Armitage, March 13, 2008; Astle, 2008; Tadesco, 2008). Over four years the funding will provide:

- additional Asian language classes in high schools
- teacher training and support to increase the number of suitably qualified teachers
- development of specialist curriculums for students who display advanced abilities in Asian languages and Asian studies programs (Tadesco, 2008).

The plan was implemented from the beginning of 2009 and the consultation and information-seeking period is still continuing.

This decision, however, has already evoked some criticism from sociolinguists and language educators. Clyne (2008) noted that while the expansion of the four Asian languages is a step in the right direction, other languages, including European languages, should not suffer. Clyne (2008) and Lo Bianco (2008) also emphasised the importance of using Australia’s community resources as a guiding principle for making decisions about which languages should be taught at schools. In other words home grown bilingual children should not be made monolingual at school, but should have an opportunity to cultivate and expand home language skills.

Further calls were made to make language learning compulsory from Prep to year 10, and choices for which languages to teach in primary and secondary schools should not only be shaped “by remote or abstract reasoning on national security, economics or trade” (Lo Bianco, 2008), but by proven facts that learning languages helps improve literacy skill in one’s first language, intelligence, problem solving,  

\textsuperscript{30} Programme for International Student Assessment (see http://www.pisa.oecd.org/pages/0,2987,en_32252351_32235731_1_1_1_1_1_00.html, accessed June 30, 2008)
reasoning and general study skills (Absalom, 2008, June 20; Clyne, 2008), as well as open the world to Australians and position Australia closer to such high achieving countries as Finland, who have long realised the importance of learning languages.

Lo Bianco (2008) has suggested a concrete plan of action for language learning in Australia:

- first, we should support children’s home languages whenever we can
- second, we must plan continuous, articulated and compulsory second language education for all
- third, we must insist on high academic standards at all times, and
- fourth, we should offer a rich variety of second language choices: Asian, European and other “world” languages.

Lo Bianco (2008) asserted that millions of Australians are already “comfortably and efficiently multilingual”, and are a massive resource currently neglected in the policy debate. Using these resources would be the quickest and the cheapest way to facilitate LOTE learning in Australia.

German is currently taught at many primary and secondary schools across Australia. In Victoria in 2006, German was taught at 99 government primary schools with 18,423 students and at 66 government secondary schools with 16,182 students (LOTEs in Government schools 2006). It is also taught at many non-government schools with 10,411 students and Catholic schools with 1,025 students in 2005 (Liddicoat et al., 2007). Although the numbers of school children studying German has been fluctuating in recent years, the general trend is downward, and Table 4.4 below shows how enrolment figures for German in primary, secondary schools as well as the VSL have been changing during the period 2000-2006:
Table 4.4 Trends in German in government primary, secondary schools, and the VSL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>German</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government primary</td>
<td>23,452</td>
<td>22,082</td>
<td>20,056</td>
<td>22,084</td>
<td>20,704</td>
<td>18,628</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VSL government primary</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government secondary</td>
<td>17,008</td>
<td>16,179</td>
<td>16,714</td>
<td>16,534</td>
<td>16,187</td>
<td>15,764</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VSL government secondary</td>
<td>394</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>358</td>
<td>267</td>
<td>294</td>
<td>241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>40,882</strong></td>
<td><strong>38,643</strong></td>
<td><strong>37,162</strong></td>
<td><strong>38,924</strong></td>
<td><strong>37,225</strong></td>
<td><strong>34,665</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: LOTEs in Government schools 2006

Although in Australia as a whole, German appeared amongst the top six language learnt accounting for over 90% of learners, preceded by Japanese, Italian, Indonesian and French and followed by Mandarin Chinese languages, the number of enrolments in government schools decreased from 107,695 in 2001 (10.6% of all languages) to 92,433 in 2005 (9.8% of all languages) (Liddicoat et al., 2007, p. 35). Similarly, other researchers have expressed their concern with regard to the present and future place of German both within the Australian community and in education. Kretzenbacher (2006, p. 16), has pointed out that German has already lost some of its significance as a community language and is threatening to lose even more which in turn might negatively affect German’s good standing in the education sector.

With regard to the delivering the German language programs in Australian schools, there has been a lack of coherence and continuity in the curriculum on all levels of language education (Kretzenbacher, 1998, p. 2; Truckenbrodt & Kretzenbacher, 2001, p. 1654). First of all this is because teachers of German in Australia are relatively independent in the development and implementation of language teaching plans. This applies to other FLs as well throughout all levels of education. The recent report on language provision in Australian schools by Liddicoat et al (2007) found that at all levels of schooling there are problems that hinder successful learning of language. The study found that at primary school level

- language programs start at different levels (language study may begin in the first, middle or even last years of primary school);
• time allocated for language learning varies across schools (the time ranges from 35 to 150 minutes per week and many schools do not comply with the minimum recommended by the State policy [see also the document “LOTEs in Government schools 2006” with regards to Victoria]);

• discontinuity of language study (languages take turns with other subjects during one year; or provision of “taster” programs in which learners are exposed to several languages, later electing one language for ongoing study) (Liddicoat et al., 2007, p. 82).

The conclusion to which the authors of the report arrived with regard to language provision in primary schools is that language programs and the quality of the language learning experience do not appear to relate to the policy context in a particular State or Territory, but rather result from local decision-making in individual schools. Liddicoat et al. (2007) also pointed out that in order for State policy to be effective and to have an impact on learner’s learning experience, its implementation at the local level must be assured.

At secondary school levels learners generally have more time for language learning than at primary school, although the state recommendations are not always met. Secondary schools tend to be more consistent with States and Territories and respond more directly to government policies relating to language learning (Liddicoat et al., 2007, p. 86). In many secondary schools across Australia languages are compulsory for a period up to 4 years. In many cases the compulsory period last for 1-2 years after which languages become electives. Once language learning becomes optional, the enrolments start to decline sharply (Liddicoat et al., 2007, p. 87). This occurs due to various perceptions of languages, of which the most common are:

• languages are not useful to Australian secondary school learners or to their parents;
• can negatively affect the university entrance score;
• languages are more difficult than many other study areas such as sciences and mathematics;
• languages are not “cool” (see numerous works cited by Liddicoat et al. 2007, p. 87).
Another important reason why students do not take up a language is that it clashes with other core disciplines, or vice versa it stands next to “fun” subjects, such as sports, craft and art, which do not have a reputation of being demanding subjects.

All these problems lead to the question of coordination of language programs and continuity of language learning across all education levels. These problems, however, are not new and were already identified several years ago, for instance, by Truckenbrodt et al. (2001, p. 1654). The authors stressed that the lack of coordination in language programs both between states and territories and between school levels has lead first of all to the large difference in language skills among schoolchildren and university students, and has made the transition from one level to another continuously problematic.

As an attempt to achieve a consistent national approach to language education at all levels of education, the group of eight Australian universities (Go8) have proposed an incentive scheme. School leavers would automatically receive bonus points for entry to any of the eight universities if they successfully complete a LOTE in senior school (Go8 LOTE Incentive Scheme 2008).

The centre of the language debate that was described above is mainly concerned with school (primary and secondary) level language learning. But where do universities fit within the current debate? What implications does schooling have on studying a language at tertiary level? The following section will shed some light on the past and current situation with language education, including German, at the university level.

**LOTEs at Australian universities**

In the universities of Australia there is even greater variety in the provision of language programs than at schools. This is due to the fact that universities in Australia are rather independent and are free to create and to implement their own policies, also with regard to languages (Baldauf & Djité, 2000, p. 237). Such a variety in the provision of languages at universities makes it difficult to compare universities not only across the states and territories of Australia but even within one state. Victoria is considered to be the most significant state with regard to German as it has the largest number of those who study and teach German both at school and university levels. This
fact, however, does not make Victoria more representative for Australia than any other state or territory due to the great diversity between them (Kretzenbacher, 2006, p. 12).

The second feature of Australian universities is that they are, to a great extent, self-reliant in terms of funding (see Universities Australia, 2007). Although there is a number of schemes through which the Government provides financial support to universities, this funding is not always unconditional, but requires the university to perform well in a number of areas, such as international and national rankings, number of students, and other areas. The current Labor Government is still developing its higher education policy, including funding arrangements (Armitage, March 13, 2008 2008). However, certain conditions have already been set out. According to the research quality framework of the previous government, only universities that perform well would get additional funding, which could be used improve their position further. Those institutions that perform poorly would have resources withdrawn, which would only make them weaker (Kretzenbacher, 2006, p. 20; Schwartz, May 2, 2007 2007, p. 39). That means that universities, in order to survive in the competition, fight for students and prestige. Disciplines that are more market-oriented, or, so to say, more “breadwinning” attract more students and thus more support from the university and the government. Disciplines that appear less attractive, such as some natural sciences and humanities face funding cuts, restructuring, or in some cases complete closure (Kretzenbacher, 2006, p. 20).

The next section discusses the past and present of university language education and provide insights into how government language policies have influenced language teaching and learning.

A historical insight into university language teaching

We have seen that the attitudes towards other cultures and languages that have been reflected in numerous government policies and decisions were far from stable in the last 150 years. So was the situation with language teaching in universities as well.

Barko (1996a, b) reveals ups and downs in the 150-year-old history of language education at universities in Australia, a history, which was described by Pauwels (2002,
p. 16) as a “never-ending roller-coaster ride”. German and French were introduced into the University of Sydney curriculum in 1853 and gained the status of “degree courses” in 1866, which was five years before Oxford. At the University of Melbourne, language courses were not set up until 1884. The study of German and French was meant to be an important part of university education firstly, because it was a valuable means of reading literature and secondly, it facilitated communication with the large foreign population of Victoria.

The situation with teaching methods and approaches since the establishment of language courses in Sydney and in Melbourne can be characterised as a spiral movement, which has implied simultaneous repetition and advancement (Barko, 1996a, p. 7). The role of language in the university curriculum, teaching methods and its relationship towards the literature was very much dependent on the personal views of people in charge of the language program as well as influences from Europe.

In the second half of the 19th century the scholarly and analytical approach of the highly qualified philologist Dr. Anselme Ricard at Sydney University was replaced by that of the wine and spirits merchant Ambroise Dutruc who emphasised practical language skills. Soon afterwards, with the creation of the Chairs of Literature at the University of Melbourne and at the University of Sydney, a new focus was added to language study. It was now seen as part of a general humanistic philological education and the teaching of “living languages” was somewhat neglected. Subsequently, the appointment of Nicholson in Sydney in 1903 shifted the balance yet again. This happened against the background of the emergence of the so-called “Direct Method” – an influence from Europe – which stressed the importance of the living language for the purpose of communication. The proponents of the Direct Method believed that the grammar is taught after acquiring some proficiency in the language, not before, and that languages are not learnt, they are assimilated (Barko, 1996a, p. 7).

The appointments in Melbourne of a Belgian scholar Augustin Lodewyckx and A.R.Chisholm for German and French respectively put an end to the emphasis on language study and the Direct Method. In the emerging model “Language-and-Literature”, as Barko put it, “the balance tends to tip towards the latter, language being seen as the utilitarian servant of literature-the-mistress”. The model “Language-and-Literature” was dominant up until the mid 1960s.
Latin, Greek, French and German were the only languages on the list of Melbourne University’s degree courses until after the Second World War, although some instruction in Russian and Japanese was offered during the First World War. As the Australian borders were opened for migrants after WWII, many higher education institutions were created throughout the country, and new language courses were introduced in the newly established universities.

The decade from 1956 to 1965 was the time of unprecedented growth in student numbers. The number of enrolments for the oldest language department (French at Sydney University) soared up to 400% during. The influx of migrants from Europe and Asia also brought new impulses towards the democratisation of education. The traditional grammar-translation approach began to be questioned. The undergraduates no longer represented a highly-motivated, highly intelligent elite, but as Quinn (1973, p. 176) put it: “a very ordinary group of young people after a job ticket”. The decrease in language enrolments both at schools and universities which started in the late sixties was due to school curricula reorganisation and the removal of language prerequisites for entry into universities (Barko, 1996b, p. 6). On the other hand, these factors led to the rise of beginners’ programs at universities. The beginners often preferred to concentrate on the language, study of contemporary society, politics and history, leaving no place for literature. Thus, literary studies began to lose their privileged status, becoming one option among many others (ibid.).

The recent past and today

Liddicoat, Crozet, Jansen & Schmidt (1997, p. 20) noted that languages have long been considered as the “poor cousins” of the academic world. Despite the fact that university language departments have come closer to recognising the centrality of language study, there is still little evidence that they have genuinely accepted the status of language learning as, described by Quinn, “a high-level intellectual activity which calls for the development and exercise of creativity, imagination, willingness to take risks” (as cited in Barko, 1996b, p. 7).
With regard to tertiary language programs, Liddicoat et al. (1997, p. 21) stressed that universities ought to teach not only language skills such as grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, writing and pragmatics, but also cultural and cross-cultural understanding:

(...) a language program needs to include content which is ideally taught through the target language. (....) Successful completion of a language course, therefore, requires not only competence in the mechanics of language, but also a general understanding of the structure and working of language, competence in using the language in a range of contexts to achieve a range of purposes and also knowledge about the language and the cultures in which it is used.

The authors argued that one of the important factors in assessing the place of languages in tertiary education in Australia was the students’ motivation for language study. The key point in Liddicoat's et al. (1997, p.23) argument is that whilst students realise the importance of socio-cultural exposure in language learning, most language departments fail to supply it and that is why they fail to attract students.

Schmidt (1998) considers the abolition in the mid-70s of the university requirement for language knowledge at matriculation level as one of the factors which negatively affected the study of German in university language departments. In view of the fact that students do not have any previous knowledge of German and that they mostly want to acquire communicative competence, the greatest part of the learning program consists of language-for-proficiency classes (Schmidt, 1998, p. 473). No time remains for such subjects as lexicology, stylistics, history of language, and country studies which most of all contribute to students’ metalinguistic knowledge.

Previous policy decisions, such as NPL, ALLP, NALSAS first of all targeted schools and did not have a direct impact on university language education. Universities did not develop their own complementary holistic language policies but rather set up a variety of specific problem-oriented solutions (Baldauf & Djité, 2000). The government initiatives increased enrollments for Asian languages, whereas the demand for European languages remained largely unchanged. According to a review undertaken in 1997 by
White, Baldauf and Diller, 49 languages were offered at Australian universities (White et al., 1997, p. 3). This number has increased compared to 1990 when only 35 languages were on the list.

In 1997, according the report for the Academy of the Humanities by White, Baldauf and Diller, German was still amongst the most commonly taught languages preceded by Japanese (taught at 33 universities), Mandarin (25), Indonesian (22), French (21) and Italian (15). The overall trend in language offerings during the period from 1990 to 1997 showed that Chinese, Indonesian, Japanese, Spanish, Thai and Vietnamese all had increases in the number of universities offering these languages, while Arabic, Croatian/Serbian, French, German, Modern Greek, Hindi, Italian and Russian suffered losses (White et al., 1997, p. 4).

A 2000 Report by the Australian Academy of the Humanities registered a slight increase in the range of languages offered at universities - 53 languages. However, recent reports, such as by White and Baldauf (2006) again showed a decrease in the number of languages – down to 33\(^{31}\); or according to Clyne (2008) down to 29. Table 4.5 shows the range of languages available for tertiary study during the period of 1981 to 2005.

\(^{31}\) LOTEs are offered by 37 out of 39 Australia’s universities (exceptions are Southern Cross University and Charles Sturt University) (White and Baldauf 2006).
Table 4.5 Languages available for tertiary study during the period 1981-2005

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Table 4.5 (continued) Languages available for tertiary study during the period 1981-2005

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Source: (White & Baldauf, 2006)

As seen from the table, the languages were divided into four categories:

1. seven languages which are taught widely across the university sector;
2. six languages which are taught moderately in a restricted number of institutions and sometimes with restricted programs in Australia;
3. languages which are taught in only one or two institutions in Australia, and
4. a group of languages offered only on an occasional basis, most of which appear not to have been offered in recent years.

The number of institutions where German was taught decreased from 24 to 17 until 2003, when one more university offering this language was added to the list. Since that time German has been taught at 18 universities at various levels in Australia and is
one of the “widely taught languages”, together with French, Italian, Spanish and Asian languages (White & Baldauf, 2006, p. 8) The majority of these universities offer both undergraduate and postgraduate degrees. Some universities that do not have their own German departments have agreements with other institutions which allow them to offer courses in German. For example, the German language program at The University of Newcastle and James Cook University is organised by the University of New England that supplies the other two universities with online course materials, teachers and study guides. Similarly, the University of Adelaide offers language tuition to students at Flinders University under the Language Outreach Program (see http://www.arts.adelaide.edu.au/humanities/ge). Also, students enrolled at the University of Technology Sydney can attend German classes at Sydney or Macquarie universities for a fee; and The University of Western Australia offers a 1st year German elective to Curtin engineering students (White & Baldauf, 2006, p. 19).

Collaborative arrangements are rather widely exercised by Australian institutions. Currently, 22 universities collaborate with others in relation to 14 languages32. Collaboration is seen as a better alternative to closure of small enrolment language programs (Pauwels, 2004, p. 14). However, as Pauwels noted these collaborations have developed and are run on an ad-hoc basis as there is no national framework for their enhancement and/or regulation.

Other measures taken by universities in order to increase student numbers have been the introduction of beginners’ programs, the creation of the Diploma of Languages and study-abroad units. Beginners’ programs have become very popular as the army of school leavers with little or no knowledge of LOTEs has increased dramatically following the abolition of language prerequisites for entry to university. Today, a German beginners’ program is offered at nearly every university where there is a German department.

The Diploma in Languages has allowed students to undertake language study concurrently with their major degree, such as Commerce, Education, Science, and so on. Thus, the Diploma has facilitated the spread of language study across “non-

32 Until 2008 the German language program was available at La Trobe University by special arrangement with the German department of The University of Melbourne for accreditation towards a La Trobe University degree.
language” majors at university (Pauwels, 2004, p. 12). Some degrees, mostly business and international relations require language study, generally up to year 3, and in some cases, even more (White & Baldauf, 2006, p. 33). In the University of Melbourne, for example, the Diploma in Languages adds a year to a student’s course, and the diploma is awarded together with the student’s Bachelor degree (Roever & Duffy, 2005, p. 4). A study conducted at the University of Melbourne in 2000-2004 has shown that the Diploma in Languages (then Diploma in Modern Languages) was seen by students as a convenient way to access to language studies, while doing a degree or a double degree in other areas without having to engage in a range of arts subjects beyond their language interest, as they would if taking a combined degree with Arts (Roever & Duffy, 2005). Although the DML has been popular amongst students willing to do “something different” (p. 18) from their regular studies or to pick up languages abandoned at high school, this program has discontinuation rate of about 60% (p. 3). Amongst the major reasons for discontinuation were the workload from language study, inappropriate level placement, dissatisfaction with language instruction, timetable conflicts, large class sizes and uneven teaching quality (Roever & Duffy, 2005, p. 3). A similar situation occurred with regard to German, where 2 out of 3 students did not complete the course (p. 11)33.

Currently, nearly every university in Australia offering LOTEs, including Melbourne and Monash universities, also provides opportunities for participation in numerous exchange and study-abroad programs that can be credited towards the completion of the course at the university. This is very much the case with German language programs too.

33 It should be noted however that the study did not take into account that some of the “drop-outs” were in fact students who simply switched from doing the DML to Bachelor of Arts, or who deferred their study or went for an exchange program overseas (personal communication with language convenors of the School of Languages, The University of Melbourne, August 1, 2008)
Response of Australian universities to the world challenges

The changes that are now taking place around the world, such as the Bologna Process are affecting not only European countries, but Australia as well. The Bologna Process and the Lisbon Strategy are seen as key drivers of improved standards in teaching, learning, research and innovation in Europe (Armitage, March 13, 2008; The Bologna Process and Australia, 2006a). Australian universities too came closer to realising the need for rapid improvement over a broad spectrum of issues in order to be competitive and to continue to occupy high world rankings. In the early 2006, the then federal Education Minister Julie Bishop released a discussion paper “The Bologna Process and Australia: Next Steps” which became “the first step in a consultation process on the opportunities and challenges presented by the Bologna Process” (DEST, 2006). In her discussion paper, Julie Bishop stressed the importance to maintain alignment with the developments in Europe, otherwise a significant proportion of the current 32,000 European enrolments in Australian institutions may find other destinations more attractive. Similarly should Asian countries or institutions choose to align with the Bologna Process, Europe may become a more attractive destination for those students (The Bologna Process and Australia, 2006b).

Dr Glenn Withers, Chief Executive Officer of the vice-chancellors association, Universities Australia, noted that “[a]ny sense of urgency that may have existed has dissipated with Julie Bishop now in Opposition” (reported by Maslen, 2008, March 09). A similar opinion was expressed by Richard James, the director of the Centre for the Study of Higher Education at the University of Melbourne. He suggested that the

34 The Group of Eight universities (the University of Adelaide, the Australian National University, the University of Melbourne, Monash University, the University of New South Wales, the University of Queensland, the University of Sydney, the University of Western Australia) all positioned in the top 100 in the THES world rankings (The Bologna Process and Australia, 2006a).
Bologna Process has not been a prominent issue in Australian higher education. He also noted that

[n]otably the terms of reference for the recently announced review of Australian higher education make no mention of Bologna. The US and the developing higher education systems of Asia must also be reference points for Australia. Nonetheless, the Australian sector would be unwise to ignore Bologna trends (reported by Contractor, 2008, March 26).

One way or another, it appears that the race for students and profit negatively affects many humanities disciplines, languages in particular. This problem will be discussed in the sections that follow. Two universities will be examined - The University of Melbourne and Monash University - where the Australian part of this study was conducted.

**Melbourne policy directions**

In 2008, the University of Melbourne introduced a new model of higher education known as the Melbourne Model. Melbourne degrees are now based around six generalist three-year undergraduate programs (Arts, Bioscience, Commerce, Environment, Music and Science) that will either lead to employment, or to a two-year professional training at graduate level culminating with a Masters degree (*Growing esteem: The University of Melbourne strategic plan*, 2006). The Melbourne Model is an Australian university’s attempt to keep up with the latest developments in Europe and elsewhere, a step which is perceived by many as necessary in order for the university to be a successful player in the international arena. The Vice-Chancellor Glyn Davis noted that it is critical that the University keep in touch with developments in higher education in Europe – centered around the Bologna Process – as well as in North America and in Asia. The creation of mutual recognition of degrees and subjects is definitely an advantage of the standardisation process in Europe, and one that “seriously interests the University of Melbourne” (Davis, 2006).
Similarly, former federal Education Minister Julie Bishop expressed her support for The Melbourne Model and noted that it has “sparked a review of curriculum”, fashioning courses to better meet the skills demands of employers of Melbourne graduates (Buckridge, 2007). She noted that Australian universities should be looking at overseas trends and seeing themselves as a part of the global play: “We must have our eyes on the international market as much as the domestic. Therefore, focusing on the Bologna Process is not to mirror it but to not be disadvantaged by it” (ibid.). Similarly, Vice-Chancellor Professor Glyn Davis and Deputy Vice-Chancellor Professor Peter McPhee, who have led the planning and design of the new curriculum, revealed that “the [Curriculum] Commission had riding orders to bring the University into closer alignments with existing North American practices and those foreshadowed for Europe under the Bologna Process while retaining a distinctly local flavour” (The making of the Melbourne Model, 2007, April 16-30).

The transition to the new educational model coincides with serious challenges which language departments and the whole of the Arts faculty have had to face. First of all there are financial problems which have already led to significant staff reductions, less contact hours, the abolishing of certain subjects and increases in class sizes. The world’s seventh-ranked Arts faculty is facing a projected AUS12 million deficit by 2010 (Morton, 2007, September 27; Rout, 2007, September 30). As a result, eight disciplines, with Russian and Swedish amongst them, are threatened to be cut or merged with other disciplines. Another 12 – including Asian studies, Australian indigenous studies are listed as vulnerable and must be developed to survive (Morton, 2007, September 27).

**Monash policy directions**

In 2004 a new strategic framework *Excellence and Diversity* was approved by the Monash University Council. The framework states the university’s major goals that are to be achieved by 2008. Some of them include: to be established as a leading international university, recognised for its excellence in research and scholarship and as

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36 To date Russian and Swedish programs are still running at the University of Melbourne
a destination of choice for students from all over the world and to have achieved greater self-reliance. The position of the university does not show much optimism in terms of government funding, but realises that self-reliance is the only way to be prosperous in the increasingly competitive world:

It is very unlikely that there will be increases in public funding for Australian universities of sufficient magnitude to allow them to become competitive with the top rank of overseas universities. Yet if Australia is to become a significant international player in innovation, industry and in the global economy it is essential that there is a substantial increase in the funding available to our universities. While continuing to argue for increased public investment in tertiary education Monash recognises that it has the capacity to improve its financial position steadily and to become progressively more self-reliant (Monash University, Strategic framework 2004-2008).

In terms of teaching and learning, the objectives of the University include to further implement the principles of student-centered, flexible learning “emphasising the discovery, analysis and integration of information, problem-solving, communication and preparation for a lifetime of learning” and to further develop effective methods to ensure quality of teaching and learning “for our own quality improvement cycle and to demonstrate to others that we are performing at an excellent level” (Monash University, Strategic framework 2004-2008).

In February 2005 another document was issued – Monash Directions 2025 - that defines the university’s aims over the next 20 years. It is hoped that the university will become one of the best in the world which will be achieved mainly through “a research-intensive, international focus”.

91
Summary and conclusions

In this chapter we have discussed the circumstances under which language learning has proceeded over the course of one and a half centuries since they first became part of the university curriculum. From the very beginning, languages were perceived as a valuable means for studying literature and communicating with the large foreign population of Australia, and therefore they were meant to be an important part of any university education (see Barko 1996a).

In Australia, the place of languages in university education and the way they have been taught has very much depended on impulses coming from overseas on the one hand, and, on the other, on the individual beliefs of the people in charge of language departments. In terms of teaching methods the scales have alternately tipped towards “living language” or towards “Grammar-translation”. Impulses from Europe brought a new method - “The Direct Method”, which emphasised the importance of the living language. Its motto was “Languages are not learned they are assimilated”. The following phase brought with it a new emphasis on literature. The “Language-and Literature” model was dominant up to the 1960s. After that language courses came in vogue, as the number of beginners at university language departments soared. Many scholars, especially in the last decade or so have recognised other problems affecting language study at universities, namely:

- the absence or insufficiency of professional training for academics engaged in language teaching which affects the quality of language teaching;
- the absence of coherence and continuity of the curriculum, which results in difference in language skills;
- changes in Government policy and shift of priorities for economic reasons.

We have also shown how attitudes towards languages have changed during the course of the century. They were “distinctly negative and defensive at the end of World War II” (Ozolins, 1991, p. xii). During and after the war, ideologies of assimilation and Anglo-conformism determined attitudes towards LOTEs. The situation began to change in the ‘60s as Aboriginal communities and the growing number of immigrants raised
debates over the adoption of language policy measures and demanded their rights for language maintenance. Non-discriminatory language policy was finally forged in the 1970s and signified the transition towards multiculturalism. All languages used in the Australian community were legitimised. One of the manifestations of this was the term “community languages” which appeared in 1974 (Clyne, 1991, p. 6). The awareness of Asia triggered new developments in language policies which Di Biase described as the “rationalist approach”, where priority was given to “economically justifiable” languages, particularly in education. The adoption of the first comprehensive “National policy on Languages” put an end to constantly fluctuating decisions about languages in Australia. Nine languages were recognised as “languages of wider teaching” and the importance of study of FLs was emphasised. The subsequent documents placed an emphasis on ESL and literacy, marginalising LOTE education, and thus neglecting the principles of the National Policy on Languages (1987). This trend was perceived by many scholars as a step backwards in language policy sequence (see for example Clyne 1991). The “market-value” approach towards language learning has been dominant in the last decade or so, affecting first of all university language education. Baldauf and Djité (2000, p. 237) described government’s pragmatic approach towards funding to universities as follows: “The economic imperative is to make do with less teaching – regardless of the pedagogical consequences – and to close relatively expensive programs that do not pay their own way”. There was also widely reported reduction in class contact hours, from 6 hours a week to 4 or even 3. Currently some language departments are suffering staff reductions and even the abolition of some language programs.

With regard to the school sector, the debate about LOTE learning seems to be going in two directions. Firstly the language learning should be dramatically enhanced at all levels of education, and made compulsory from prep to year 10 (see, for example, Clyne, 2008). Secondly there is some dispute about which criteria should be taken into account when the decisions about the repertoire of languages at Australian schools are made: should these decisions be guided by the economic benefits or reflect Australia’s multiculturalism (see Clyne, 2008; Lo Bianco, 2008). The fate of German in Australia greatly depends on such decisions as well as on the cultural and political climate within Australia and overseas.
5. ISSUES OF LANGUAGE EDUCATION OF IMMEDIATE CONCERN TO THE STUDY

Previous chapters have provided social, political and educational context of tertiary FL education in Ukraine and Australia and shed some light on the position of German in these two countries and worldwide. The present chapter explores the theoretical foundations of the aspects of tertiary language education which are immediately in the focus of the present investigation such as curriculum, syllabus, teaching methodology, the problem of grammar, student and teacher perceptions of language learning and learning motivation.

The notion of curriculum and content in language teaching and learning

One of the central questions that this study addresses is the question of the German language curriculum. Specifically we want to explore the nature and distinctions of the German language curriculum in Ukraine and Australia, and to examine students’ and teachers’ views on it. The term curriculum is used in this study to mean the aspects of language study which form the basis of the German language program, such as the study of grammar, communication, phonetics, and so forth. As mentioned earlier, the language program in Ukraine, unlike in Australia, is imbedded in a wide range of mostly compulsory linguistic and humanities disciplines not directly related to language study, but which nevertheless form a part of a Bachelor or Master language degree. Thus the researcher’s primary focus in this study is on the language program in a more narrow sense of the word, that is, on those aspects/disciplines which focus on the development of students’ German language skills. The review of the literature that follows will shed some light on both the notion of curriculum and syllabus, as the latter forms a part of any curriculum (Allen, 1984; Rodgers, 1989).

Literature elaborating on the notion of curriculum and syllabus has shown that neither in theory nor in practice has either term reached a single, universally agreed-
upon definition. Allen (1984, p. 61) has suggested that in North America, the terms *curriculum* and *syllabus* were often used interchangeably. The author, however, was more inclined towards the view that *curriculum* is a general concept which involves consideration of the whole complex of philosophical, social and administrative factors which contribute to the planning of an educational program, whereas *syllabus* is a part of curriculum which is concerned with a specification of what units will be taught (as distinct from how they will be taught, which is a matter for methodology). A similar definition of the terms has been provided by Dubin & Olshtain (1986, p. 3), who suggested that *curriculum* or *program* are used to describe the broadest context in which planning for language instruction takes place. The term syllabus is identical to course outline, but had increasingly been used to mean language content alone (Dubin & Olshtain, 1986).

Johnson (2008) theoretically agreed with such distinctions which, as he noted are more of a feature of British English. Johnson however admitted that “I simply do not, in practice, distinguish the two terms” (p. 215).

Most researchers agree that a curriculum is affected by broader issues, such as the needs of learners and the social settings in which a language is taught (Allen, 1984; Dubin & Olshtain, 1986; Johnson, 1989). Dubin and Olshtain (1986, p. 3) asserted that “a curriculum which is not in line with the broader community’s concepts of language education, certainly one which does not accommodate the immediate audience’s expectations – those of teachers and learners – may just gather dust on a shelf. Curriculum designers must constantly juggle and balance the aspirations, opinions, and beliefs of teachers and learners.

Before creating any language program, one should first of all establish who the learners are, why the program is necessary and how it will be implemented. For a program to be successful, one should pay particular attention to assessment of needs just as in the world of business, market research has become an essential ingredient for commercial success (Dubin & Olshtain, 1986, p. 5). Dubin & Olstain proposed a diagram which specifies four key factors that have to be considered when designing a language curriculum:

1. Language setting – the position of the target language in society
2. Patterns of language use in society
The figure shows that all four elements play key role in the decision-making process about a language curriculum. The first component – the language setting – means that the program will be different depending on whether the target language is the language of the community or a foreign language.

The second component – patterns of language use in society – suggests that curriculum planners ought to take into account all the areas where the target language is used in the given society. In the worst case, a gap occurs between the results of the existing program and the needs of learners (Dubin & Olshtain, 1986, p.11). A large
number of flourishing language schools and short courses is an indication of an imperfect official program which does not provide the learner with the skills and knowledge needed in their field of employment.

The third component in the wheel of factors—group and individual attitudes—implies that learners’ attitudes towards the target language and toward the learning process itself can affect the language program in a positive or negative way. Course designers need to be aware of learners’ negative attitudes and help change them by creating more attractive learning materials and more interesting content (Dubin & Olshtain, 1986, p. 15).

The fourth component - the political and national context – deals with the ways each particular regime or administration views languages in general. The questions that need to be answered here are: Do they define learning this particular language as a national priority? And do they allocate funding for language programs?

These societal needs and expectations need to be translated into operational and attainable goals (Dubin & Olshtain, 1986, p. 24). Thus, a curriculum deals with abstract, general goals while a syllabus, or the instructional plans guides teachers and learners in everyday concerns (p. 40). The chief task for course designers is to turn abstract curriculum goals into concrete objectives in the syllabus. In fact, the authors elaborated how general goals represented in the curriculum become concrete syllabus objectives, as Table 5.1 shows:
Table 5.1 The link between curriculum goals and syllabus objectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General goals which are influenced by the views on</th>
<th>Syllabus objectives</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The nature of language</td>
<td>1. What elements, units, or themes should be presented in the syllabus?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2. In what order?</td>
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<td>3. What are the criteria for deciding on the order of elements in the syllabus?</td>
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<tr>
<td>The nature of language learning and Educational-cultural philosophy</td>
<td>1. How should language be presented to facilitate the acquisition process?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. What should be the roles of teachers and learners in the learning process?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. How should the materials contribute to the process of language learning in the classroom?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expected achievements</td>
<td>1. What knowledge is the learner expected to attain by the end of the course?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2. What specific language skills do learners need in their immediate future, or in their professional lives? How will these skills be presented in the syllabus?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3. What techniques of evaluation in the TL will be used to assess course outcomes?</td>
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</table>

Adapted from (Dubin & Olshtain, 1986, p. 43)

Similarly, Allen (1984) established that curriculum is a very general concept, which includes six aspects or levels:

1. Concept formation
2. Administrative decision-making
3. Syllabus planning
4. Materials design
5. Classroom activity (methodology).

All these levels are comparable with the notion of curriculum elaborated by Dubin and Olshtain (1986). The first level includes the establishment of the general principles of second language education, of what constitutes L2 proficiency, and of the role of language in society (Allen, 1984, p. 61). The second aspect deals with the specification of general objectives of the course in view of the particular social, political and financial circumstances. At the third level the specific objectives are defined, that is, what is to be
taught, planning timetables and other subjects on the curriculum, and establish basic principles of selection and grading. Level 4 includes creation of texts, games, exercises and other activities which provide the context within which teaching and learning takes place. Level 5 is concerned with the ways an individual teacher presents, interprets, and adapts a given set of materials to fit the needs of a particular student group.

Widdowson (1984, p. 23) suggested that a curriculum, and the different syllabuses within it, is a projection of educational policy and ideology. As such, they can be oriented either towards socio-economic well-being - “position-oriented”- or be more concerned with learners’ individual development - “person-oriented”. As opposed to curriculum, which has been described by Widdowson as an educational construct, syllabus is also a pedagogical one. It provides a framework within which the actual process of learning must take place and represents a device by means of which teachers may achieve that aim. Widdowson also asserted that the nature of syllabus is inextricably linked with the nature of education itself. Where education is position-oriented, a person-oriented syllabus can not be successful and vice-versa. Learners can hardly be allowed to negotiate their own progress through communicative activities with minimum teacher intervention if educational policy requires strict control from the teacher and adherence to a pre-designed syllabus. In other words, the design of a syllabus and its implementation by means of methodology can never be solely a pedagogic matter (ibid: 25).

Similarly to Widdowson, Candlin (1984) emphasised the connection of social, educational and other settings and syllabus. He offered a two-fold definition of syllabus: a broad and a more narrow one. The former include issues such as: learners, their needs, their state-of-knowing, situational context of teaching and learning, detailed analysis of the subject-matter content, methods of presenting material and evaluation. Narrowly defined, syllabus includes items of content, derived from a special view of the subject-matter in question.

Stern (1992) described curriculum as a never-ending process of research and development, implementation, evaluation and, again, research and development, as figure 5.2 shows:
Curriculum research and development → Curriculum implementation → Curriculum evaluation → Renewed research and development

**Figure 5.2** Stern’s cyclic process of curriculum design

Source: (Snow & Kamhi-Stein, 2006, p. 3) based on Stern (1992, p. 41)

More recent literature does not contradict the earlier conceptualisations of curriculum and stresses the important role played by social factors, educational and institutional policies, teachers’ beliefs and understandings, and learners’ needs and goals (Graves, 2006). Graves pointed out that curriculum is not a set of documents or a textbook, but rather a dynamic system that includes three interrelated processes: planning, enacting (i.e., teaching and learning), and evaluating, as figure 5.3 shows:

**Figure 5.3** Curriculum as a dynamic system

Source: (Graves, 2006, p. vi)
• Planning processes include issues such as analysing the needs of learners, availability of resources, deciding on steps needed to achieve learning aims or goals and translating the aims and steps into materials and activities.

• Enacting (i.e., teaching and learning) includes using the materials and performing the activities in the classroom and adjusting them according to learners’ needs, abilities and interests.

• Evaluation processes include assessing learners’ progress towards and achievement of the aims, adjusting the aims in response to learners’ abilities, and gathering information about the effectiveness of the aims, organisation, materials and activities, and using this information in planning and teaching (Graves, 2006).

In sum, the notion of curriculum is rather complex. It can be defined as specific ways of planning and fulfilling a language course. The needs of students and particular social, political and cultural factors play a key role in the nature of curriculum and syllabus. The investigation into students’ perceptions of the language curriculum is not only relevant but indeed crucial for a fuller understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of any given language program. In the end, as Graves has recently suggested “Curriculum development may not be the sexiest of topics in language teaching, but it is surely one of the most vital: at its core, a curriculum is what happens among learners and teachers in classrooms” (2006, p. v). In this study we intend to shed some light on the peculiarities of Ukrainian and Australian tertiary language curricula and to establish their major differences and commonalities, and the problems that arise in this area.

Teaching methods: two countries, two paths

The language curriculum problem is closely connected with the question of teaching methodology as they both help achieve the objectives of the language program (Johnson, 1989). Apart from the issues of curriculum, this research also focuses on teaching methods. As this is a broad area, the scope for this investigation had to be
defined more specifically, and hence the investigation was directed towards the grammar and communicative activities, their place in the German language class and student perceptions of them. The author’s interest in this particular question had been triggered by the awareness that teaching methods (with their distinctive attitudes towards grammar) in Ukraine and western countries, including Australia, had been taking different paths, that is, until recently, when the acquisition of communicative skills and practical vocabulary also appeared on agenda of the language curricula in the new, independent Ukraine (see, for instance, Curriculum, 2004).

The path, along which language methodology has developed, contrasts greatly with the West. Ukraine, like many other countries belonging to the former Soviet Union, were separated from the rest of the world by the “Iron Curtain” and thus was not affected by the developments in language teaching methodology that were occurring in the West, although, as mentioned earlier in Chapter 3, attempts were made by Soviet language pedagogues to introduce new innovative approaches in language teaching. The pedagogical doctrine, which mainly favoured the Grammar-translation method, was however hard to modify. There was also lack of motivation amongst researchers, teachers and learners alike to part from the traditional way of teaching when opportunities to use the language outside the classroom were extremely hard to come by (Katskova, 2004; Medgyes, 1997).

Now, as Ukraine aims to become a member of the European Union and is already a member of many international projects in the sphere of education, including the Bologna Process, the objectives of language programs increasingly emphasise the importance of acquisition of communicative skills (see Curriculum, 2004, p. 11).

In Australia, on the other hand, formal approaches to language learning began to be reconsidered in the 1960s-1970s in order to meet the demand of students within the given socio-political situation. There was a growing need for more practical knowledge. Australian universities, in order to attract students, were forced to make their language programs more “down to earth” with “hands on” experience of language learning. Despite the fact that the term “communicative” was sometimes misunderstood by many teachers and was overused just like any other modern “buzz-word” (Truckenbrodt & Kretzenbacher, 2001, p. 1656), the general methodological paradigm was altering in response to the changing socio-political situation and needs of students.
In view of this situation it was interesting to see what methods and approaches are currently being used in the FL class in Ukraine and Australia, and particularly, what prominence teachers give to grammar and communicative activities and what opinion students have on the use of those methods.

**The notion of grammar**

A great deal of disagreement exists regarding the nature of grammar. In the last fifty years grammar has been viewed “as rule-governed behaviour and as a phenomenon operated in a highly systematic way” (Newby, 2004, p. 248). It has also been viewed as a tool for communication, and for conveying and creating meaning. In linguistics, grammar has often been regarded as one of four levels of language, the others being phonology, lexis and semantics (Newby, 2004). Based on this view, grammar can be further divided into morphology, which deals with the internal structure of words and morphemes, and syntax, which is concerned with the patterning of morphemes to form sentences. Similarly, *Webster’s Dictionary* defines grammar as:

a. the study of the classes of words, their inflections, and their functions and relations in the sentences, and

b. the study of what is to be preferred and what avoided in inflections and syntax (Webster's new encyclopedic dictionary, 2002)

Also, *The Dictionary of Cognitive Science* (Houde, 2004) describes grammar as the “set of all phonetic, morphological, and syntactic regularities observable in a given language, along with the representation of those regularities”.

Newby (2004) has argued however that “syntax” has been used in a wider sense, as a synonym to “grammar” in general as it is reflected in expressions such as “text grammar”, “grammar of advertising”, and so on (p. 249).

These definitions of grammar are similar to what Helbig (1991, p. 11) has referred to as “Grammatik im herkömmlichen und engeren Sinn” and “Grammatik im
In the first instance, grammar limits itself to two of its major components – morphology and syntax, excluding other areas, such as phonology, lexis and semantics. Helbig himself, however, leaned towards the second interpretation of grammar, which suggests that grammar includes all the aspects of language. Semantics, he argued, unites grammar and lexis, not separates them: the same meaning in one language can be expressed by means of morphology and syntax, while in another language it can be expressed with the help of lexis (Helbig, 1991).

The place of grammar in various teaching methods and approaches

The discussion that follows will outline some major developments in teaching methodology in the last few decades with a particular focus on grammar teaching. This background helps provide some understanding of the teaching methods that are currently employed in the German departments of Ukrainian and Australian universities. Australia, as we mentioned earlier, was to a greater extent sensitive to the trends described below and, together with other countries of the Asia-Pacific region, contributed a great deal to research on language acquisition.

Grammar analysis and the translation of written texts for more than 2,000 years were the primary means of studying a second language (Hinkel & Fotos, 2002, p. 1). The importance of grammar instruction was first challenged in the 1960s-1970s with the advent of communicative language teaching (Ellis, 2002). In Krashen’s Natural Approach grammar was even given a “zero position”, that is, the explicit grammar instruction or correction of learner errors was thought not to be needed as learners would arrive at an intuitive “correctness” of their language through exposure to meaningful input (Krashen & Terrell, 1983, p. 58). Kumaravadivelu (1993; 2006) suggested that all methods basically belong to one of the three major categories:

- language-centered;
- learner-centred; and

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37 “Grammar in the traditional and narrower sense of the word” and “Grammar in the more recent and broader sense of the word” (translated by O. King).
learning-centered.

This categorisation is helpful with understanding how grammar is placed with various methods. With **language-centered** methods, as the name suggests, the attention is on linguistic forms (e.g. Grammar-Translation Method or Audiolingual Method). Learners are expected to achieve mastery of the target language by practicing preselected, presequenced linguistic structures through form-focused exercises (Kumaravadivelu, 2006). Language learning is perceived here as a linear additive process, whereby units of the language are “accumulated” in learners’ consciousness. Grammar occupies the primary position here and is taught explicitly.

**Learner-centred** methods emerged in the 1960s-1970s as a reaction against the prescriptiveness and inflexibility of previous methods which took little consideration of learner needs and abilities (see also Krumm, 1994). In addition, the whole theoretical framework of language-centered methods began to be questioned. In his paper “How not to interfere with language learning” Newmark (1966, cited by Kumaravadivelu, 2006, p. 114) suggested that

> if each phonological and syntactic rule, each complex of lexical features, each semantic value and stylistic nuance (…) had to be acquired one at a time, proceeding from simplest to most complex (…), the child learner would be old before he could say a single appropriate thing and the adult learner would be dead (p. 79).

Thus the 1970s marked the beginning of the so-called communicatively-pragmatic overhaul in linguistics (kommunikativ-pragmatische Wende - Helbig, 2002, p. 252) as linguists went beyond the analysis represented by structuralists who “were preoccupied narrowly with syntactic abstraction [and] paid very little attention to meaning in a communicative context” (Kumaravadivelu, 2006, p. 117). Hymes (1972) suggested that the notion of grammatical competence had to be viewed not from the point of view of the “ideal” native speaker, as Chomsky (1965) had proposed, but from the point of view of the “real” speaker-hearer who operates in the concrete world of interpersonal communication. A speaker has to produce not only grammatically correct, but communicatively appropriate sentences, that is, a person has to learn what to say, how to say it, when to say it, and to whom to say it (Kumaravadivelu, 2006).
Similarly, Halliday (1973; 1978) distinguished three macrofunctions of language;

- textual (dealing with phonological, syntactic and semantic signals);
- interpersonal (deals with sociolinguistic features of language), and
- ideational (expressions of modality).

Hallidayan work stresses that language cannot be dissassociated from meaning and context.

In addition to Halliday and Hymes, Austin, with his speech act theory, has provided an immense contribution to the emerging learner-centred pedagogy and into the *kommunikativ-pragmatische Wende*. Austin (1962), as we know, asserted that human speech is not only a collection of linguistic items put together, but an act which allows us “to do things with words”, that is, to command, to describe, to agree, to praise, to ask something, and so on.

By stressing the importance of the communicative and functional aspects of language, learner-centred approaches do not neglect the importance of grammar learning, as the meaning is encoded in form (Widdowson, 2003, p. 88). The emphasis is supposed to be on both accuracy and fluency with conscious learning of grammar and development of communicative skills. Activities that are typical of a learner-centred pedagogy are those that help activate learner’s communicative potential, convey an intended message effectively and in a specific context (e.g., information gap, problem solving etc).

The third type of method, learning-centred, is premised on the view that language development is incidental, not intentional. That is, by engaging learners in a variety of communicative activities, whereby learners’ attention is on meaning rather than form, they will acquire the necessary vocabulary and grammatical knowledge. There is however a slight distinction between how various learning-centred methods treat grammar instruction. The Communicational Approach, for instance, maintains that learners pick up grammar rules exclusively incidentally, that is, without being explicitly exposed to grammar. The Natural Approach, on the other hand permits some restricted exposure to explicit instruction of grammar, for instance, as a part of homework given to the learner (Kumaravadivelu, 2006). The types of activities in learning-centred pedagogy include open-ended topics, tasks, situations, role-plays, and so on. The
teacher plays an important role by offering meaning-focused activities, providing comprehensible input, integrating language skills and making incidental correction (Kumaravadivelu, 2006).

In the area of German language pedagogy, the trends were not much different. The 1970s were the time when German pedagogues were looking for more effective ways to teach German than structuralist linguistics could offer. It became clear that the objectives of the linguistics of the day were not necessarily identical to those of language learners, who not only wanted to know the abstract rules of grammar, but also how to communicate in German effectively. Hacker (1994, p. 125) has pointed out that “[t]he attention [in the German language class] was now shifting from the scientific system of linguistics, which had to be mastered towards the functions of the linguistic elements in communication”. German textbooks that were produced in the 1980s-90s, such as Deutsch aktiv neu, Themen, or Stufen show that the underlying pedagogical objective was to transport learners to real-life situations and to make them act linguistically (Huneke & Steinig, 2005). Grammar topics are ordered so as to match to the preceding communicative component and are analysed from the functional point of view.

Another realisation of the communicatively-pragmatic approach in the field German as a Foreign Language was the project by the Council of Europe Kontaktschwelle Deutsch als Fremdsprache (first issued in 1981). Kontaktschwelle describes itself as “a powerful and practical tool for a communicatively-oriented language class” (Kontaktschwelle, 1985, p. 5). Kontaktschwelle was an attempt to provide a common basis for language learning and teaching for language teachers, curriculum designers and textbook writers dealing with adult learners. The resource provided a broad spectrum of communicative situations ordered by topic with a choice of relevant vocabulary and expressions. This part was followed by a supporting grammar bloc which mainly dealt with the explanation of language structures rather than separate rules of grammar (p. 319).
Renewed focus on grammar teaching

In the previous section, we showed how views on grammar have been changing throughout the 20th century and examined some of the schools of thought that have emerged in the past few years. It has become clear that some amount of explicit grammar instruction is inevitable. There are several reasons for the renewed interest in grammar instruction (Ellis, 2002; Nassaji & Fotos, 2004). Firstly, studies conducted in the 1980s and later found that some learner awareness of language forms plays an important role in L2 learning (see, for instance, Bialystok, 1994; DeKeyser, 1998; Ellis, 2002; Fotos, 1993; Schmidt, 1990). Secondly, Pienemann (1984) found that while grammar teaching cannot alter particular developmental sequences of the learning process, it can favourably affect learning if learners have reached a certain developmental stage.

The third reason for the renewed interest in grammar teaching comes from findings that naturalistic approaches have failed to prove their effectiveness, as even after a long period of exposure to the L2, learners were not able to reach an advanced level of language proficiency. For instance, learners in Canadian immersion programs managed to achieve high levels of discourse and strategic competence but frequently failed to acquire even basic grammatical knowledge (Ellis, 2002; Swain & Lapkin, 1989).

Further, it was found that production alone without any formal grammar instruction is not sufficient for learners’ acquisition of implicit knowledge of grammatical structures. Grammar instruction is required for the development of both implicit and explicit knowledge (Ellis, 2002).

That is not to suggest that communicative language teaching, with its emphasis on meaning rather than form has been rejected. Rather, many proponents of traditional and communication-centred approaches have been trying to answer the same question: How does one find the right balance between meaning- and form-focused components to help learners acquire both communicative competence and grammatical accuracy? This problem however is not new and has been preoccupying the minds of language educators since the 1980s. Content-Based Instruction, for instance, emerged at that time and is characterised by its dual commitment to language and content learning objectives.
(Stoller, 2004). Some approaches that first emerged as purely meaning-focused were later modified to include Focus-on-Form, such as, for instance, task-based approaches (Skehan, 2003). Skehan has suggested that inclusion of Focus-on-Form assumes that “a) interaction in itself is not enough and b) insinuation of a focus on form into interactions is vital” (p. 2).

In the field German as a Foreign Language similar ideas have been expressed. Huneke und Steinig (2005), for instance, have suggested that grammar instruction is essential in language learning. Similarly to Ellis (2002), they have asserted that explicit grammar instruction aids the development of explicit and implicit knowledge (p. 152). Explicit knowledge helps the learner to notice certain linguistic phenomena as they arise and, perhaps, transform them into his/her implicit knowledge. It also provides the learner with opportunities for self-learning and fosters an ability for self-correction. Secondly, considering that the number and duration of language classes is limited, explicit grammar instruction is more advantageous in that it saves time: it draws the learner’s attention to linguistic phenomena, unlike with other, more “natural”, approaches where learners are expected to pick them up by themselves (Huneke & Steinig, 2005).

For some German language pedagogues, such as Rott (2000), for instance, the question is not whether or not explicit grammar instruction should be a part of language curriculum, they already see great value in it, but in finding the most effective ways to teach it. Rott has suggested that a gap exists between students' initial rule comprehension and correct language production the following day, week, or month (p. 125). This gap, she argued, might be closed by integrating a focus on grammatical form and meaningful, contextualised communicative interaction (p. 132).

**Mixed syllabi**

In order to create “the right balance” between form- and meaning-focused components, linguists and pedagogues nowadays advocate mixed syllabi, where both components complement each other. For example, Ellis (2002) suggested two options for curriculum design. The first, *integrated*, approach includes communicative tasks
designed to focus on “specific properties of the code”. Communication occurs for the sake of receiving feedback on errors from the teacher. The feedback can be instant (i.e. while communication is taking place) or delayed (after the communicative task has been completed). Ellis warns, however, that explicit feedback endangers the “naturalness” of communication and that implicit feedback might not be noticed at all.

The second approach is *parallel*. Here, communication and focus on form occur independently, not integratively. The main component of this kind of syllabus is the performance of communicative tasks in order to develop learners’ receptive and productive skills. The second component includes systematic grammar instruction carried out separately from communicative tasks. The author stresses that the earlier stages of language acquisition, as we mentioned earlier, should consist of communicative tasks only. Grammar should not be introduced earlier than intermediate level by which stage students have already acquired some lexical basis for grammar instruction. Then the proportion of time given to grammar would grow progressively, until it occupied close to a half of the total time available with advanced learners (Ellis, 2002).

Other researchers also strongly support including both form-focused and meaning focused components. Clyne (1996) argues that “focus on form should be alongside the very fruitful focus on meaning”. He particularly stresses the importance of output in L2, as it “enables the pupils not only to obtain practice but also to receive the vital feedback to modify their hypotheses”. The necessity in combining these functionally and structurally oriented approaches also comes from the fact that there are different types of learners: some who are interested in communication, and others who want to know how the language works. When the scales lean towards one particular approach, the proponents of another become demotivated and vice versa. Therefore, both types of learners need to be considered (Clyne, 1996, p. 7).

As the previous discussion has shown, the question about the place of grammar remains open, as does the issue of effective ways to teach it. In this regard, Ukraine and Australia represent some very interesting material for comparison, as both countries belonged to different educational styles and had distinctive approaches to teaching. Thus the questions that we are going to deal with in this comparative study are not dissimilar to those outlined in the preceding theoretical discussion, namely: What is the
place of grammar and communicative activities in Ukraine and Australia? What are the peculiarities of the teaching approach in each country? Also, how do learners themselves perceive the role of grammar in their language learning?

**Learners’ perceptions of grammar in the language class**

Amongst the questions that this study intends to discuss are: “What are the students’ and teachers’ perceptions of the teaching methodology and grammar in particular?” and “What are the major differences or similarities in perceptions held by Ukrainian and Australian students and teachers?” The answer to these questions will provide an insight into the subject matter from the perspective of the recipients of the educational service – students. Also, the results will shed some light on students’ and teachers’ opinions about studying and teaching German at Ukrainian and Australian universities and thus contribute to the field dealing with differences and similarities in students’ and teachers’ perceptions and beliefs about learning and teaching languages.

The existing body of research dealing with students’ attitudes and beliefs about learning and teaching has stressed the importance of this sort of knowledge in avoiding or at least in minimising the problems arising as a result of the mismatch between students’ and teachers’ (or course administrators’) perceptions of the curriculum, syllabus, teaching methods, certain classroom activities, and so on. Even before starting their language course at university, most students already have preconceived notions of different aspects of language learning which as Horwitz (1988, p. 283) noted “seem to have obvious relevance to their understanding of student expectations of, commitment to, success in, and satisfaction with their language classes”. Similarly, Lightbown and Spada (2006) have asserted that all learners, particularly older learners, have strong beliefs and opinions about how their instruction should be delivered. These beliefs are usually based on previous learning experiences and the assumption (right or wrong) that a particular type of instruction is the best way for them to learn (p.67).
Nunan (1989) has argued that “the effectiveness of any language program will be dictated as much by the attitudes and expectations of the learners as by the specifications of the official curriculum” (p. 176). He also stressed that “no curriculum can claim to be truly learner-centred unless the learners’ subjective needs and perceptions relating to the processes of learning are taken into account” (p. 177).

Other researchers, such as Kern (1995, p. 71) stressed that the knowledge of learners’ beliefs about language learning is important in order to predict student frustration, lack of motivation and even quitting FL study. The latter concern was looked at in more detail by a small scale survey conducted by one of the language departments at an Australian university in 2004-2005. The study revealed that amongst the reasons for students abandoning their study of language was large workload, wrong placement level and clash of timetables as well as dissatisfaction with the teaching methodologies and content of the language class (Roever & Duffy, 2005). Many students pointed to the overuse of traditional teaching techniques, such as translation and exercises from textbooks, rote learning, dominance of the teacher in spoken activities and the playing of videos without discussion afterwards. Some students would have preferred the teacher to use English when they had difficulties understanding grammatical points. Error correction, if used in an encouraging way, was welcomed by students. They generally valued integrated and relevant content in the language class, where a range of materials is used and they are directed towards the development of all four language skills, speaking in particular. In regards to the content of the language class, many students gave preference to contemporary topics drawn from various sources, such as newspapers, the internet and television. The importance of learning colloquial and useful ‘survival’ language for everyday situations was also emphasised by students.

Only a few studies deal with the FL learning context, but those available showed that students taking courses in FLs highly valued both communicative and grammar-oriented activities (see, for example, Horwitz, 1988; Kern, 1995; Rao, 2002). Horwitz described a paradox arising with regard to using communicative approaches in language teaching. On the one hand, many students supported communicatively-oriented activities and strategies (for example, their willingness to guess). On the other hand, when the communicative approaches are used, students complain if their every mistake
is not corrected or if they are expected to say something they have not practised. At the same time, if the mistakes are corrected in oral production, this too is likely to lead to students’ indignation.

Ellis (2002) found that many learners expect grammar in the L2 curriculum. He pointed out that:

Adult learners typically view “grammar” as the central component of language and, irrespective of the type of instruction they experience, are likely to make strenuous efforts to understand the grammatical features they notice (p. 20).

Ellis (2002) speaks about his astonishment at how strongly learners of German at a London university were concerned about “mak[ing] sense of the grammar of German”. This resonates with my own experience with learners of German at a private language school in inner Melbourne who, despite the school’s strict “no-grammar” policy, demanded certain linguistic phenomena to be explained to them.

Studies dealing with cross-cultural differences in student and teacher perceptions of the aspects of language learning are also rare. Littlewood (2001) looked at the perceptions of students from 11 Asian and European countries of their classroom English learning from the point of view of their belonging to collectivist or individualist cultures. Littlewood found that in all countries, most students

1. questioned the traditional authority structure of the classroom;
2. would have liked to have seen themselves as active participants in the classroom learning process, and
3. had a positive attitude towards co-operating in groups (p. 21)

The study was able to conclude that the degree of variation between countries or cultures was considerably less than the degree of variation between individuals within each country.

McCargar (1993) examined the role expectations held by ESL students from seven countries and ESL teachers from the USA. The study found that the majority of students expected a more teacher-oriented environment. Also, students wanted more error correction than the teachers were willing to give. There was some evidence of the existence of a regional culture because few differences in views were found between the
views of Chinese and Koreans and Persians and Arabs, but each ESL student group differed significantly from the ESL teacher group.

Schulz (2001) examined attitudes towards grammar activities and error correction held by US and Colombian FL students and teachers. Similarly to McCargar, Schulz found that differences between students and teachers within the same culture were generally more frequent than between either US and Colombian students as a group or their teachers as a group. Both groups of students were inclined to think, to an extent much greater than their teachers (i.e. with discrepancies higher than 10%), that
- the formal study of grammar was essential for eventual FL mastery,
- students liked the study of grammar,
- students kept grammar rules in mind when writing in the FL.

Also, both US and Colombian students were typically less supportive of the idea that communicative activities are more important than grammar practice: 69% of students versus 80% of teachers in the US and 66% versus 82% in Colombia. With regard to error correction, a similar picture emerges. Students generally perceived grammar correction both in written and spoken language as a more important and desirable component of language learning than the teachers did. Disagreement between students and teachers was particularly strong in the item “students should be corrected when they make errors in speaking”. Ninety percent of the US students agreed with the statement as well as 97% of the Colombian and only about a third of all teachers.

A recent study of ESL learners in an Australian university has found that even within one educational setting, learners from many different countries tended to value the teaching of grammar and pronunciation more than did their teachers (Bernat, 2007). The results of these two studies show that mismatch between students’ and teachers’ perceptions of classroom practices and teaching methods is a problem persisting in various cultures.

It is also obvious that students, regardless of cultural origin, appear to have similar beliefs about the functions of formal education. They tend to see the teacher as an expert whose role is to explain and provide feedback (Schulz, 2001). This study also examines the attitude of students and teachers in Ukraine and Australia towards different kinds of activities and to see where the gaps occur between the participant groups from the two countries.
One of the central issues that this project sets out to explore is: “What reasons do Ukrainian and Australian students have for studying German at university?”. The present chapter thus provides some theoretical basis for research in this area.

Gardner, whose social psychological theory has dominated the language learning motivation scene for about four decades, presented a complex construct of second language learning motivation (Gardner, 1985)\(^\text{38}\). He suggested that language learning motivation consists of three variables: effort, desire to learn a L2 and favourable attitudes towards learning the language. “That is”, Gardner continues, “motivation to learn a second language is seen as referring to the extent to which the individual works or strives to learn the language because of a desire to do so and the satisfaction experienced in this activity” (p. 10). The three components are measured in the Attitude/Motivation Test battery by three subtests: Motivational Intensity, Desire to Learn (the language), and Attitudes towards Learning the Language (Gardner & Tremblay, 1994, p. 361; Tremblay & Gardner, 1995, p. 506). This set of variables in its turn is affected by two factors: Integrativeness and Attitudes towards the Learning Situation. Integrativeness was described by Gardner as a complex of variables comprising Integrative Orientation (reasons), Interest in FLs and Attitudes towards the L2 Community. “Attitudes towards the Learning Situation” consists of attitudes towards the language course and towards the teacher. The complex of these three variables has been interpreted as characterising an integrative motive (Gardner, 1985, p. 18). The integrative orientation is highlighted in this Socio-Educational Model, and stands for a desire for learning the language for the purpose of cultural/linguistic integration (Oxford, 1996, p. 2). Later in the 2000s, other studies have emerged (Irie, 2003; Lamb, 2004; McClelland, 2000; Yashima, 2000) suggesting an expansion of the notion of integrative motivation to account for the desire to integrate in the global community and not just in the target language community.

Developed within the Canadian second language context, Gardner’s construct of integrative language learning motivation was reported to be not appropriate for some FL

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\(^{38}\) The social psychological model was developed by Gardner as well as his colleagues (Gardner & Lambert, 1959; Lambert, 1963a; Lambert, 1963b).
learning contexts. Schmidt, Boraie et al. (1996, p. 13) found that learners of English in Egypt were not interested in assimilation into the American or British communities and in fact found the cultural values of these countries alien. Thus other motivational factors must be at work in the FL learning context.

Other researchers have found that even FL learners who may not have met a single native speaker or been to the target language country can display a powerful integrative motive (Dörnyei, 2003, p. 6). Therefore in the FL learning context, integrative motivational orientation can be interpreted not as the learner’s desire to be fully identified with the target language community, but rather to be aware of the cultural and intellectual values of this community and the L2 itself. Also, as Dörnyei and Csizér (2002) argued, the term Integrativeness should be expanded to include an important line of research in social psychology about possible and ideal selves. The possible selves represent individuals’ ideas of what they might become, what they would like to become, and what they are afraid of becoming, and thus provide a conceptual link between cognition and motivation (as cited in Dörnyei, 2003, p. 6; Marcus & Nurius, 1986, p. 954).

It has to be noted that Gardner’s model does not completely ignore the instrumental variable. In 1994 Gardner and Tremblay emphasised that other factors apart from Integrativeness and Attitudes towards the Learning Situation can influence language learning motivation, namely: instrumental orientation or need achievement. Gardner stated that an integrative motive appeared in all of his twenty-one samples, and no instrumental motivation factors were identified, while an instrumental orientation factor was found in three of the samples. However the insignificant place that was given to instrumentality was due to the fact that the majority of Gardner’s studies were conducted in a second language learning context (in Canada with regard to French) and not in a FL learning environment.

Researchers working in FL learning settings have emphasised the importance of the instrumental side of L2 motivation (see for example, Dörnyei, 1990; Oxford, 1996). Dörnyei maintained that instrumental motivation might be more important for FL learners than integrative motivation: and instrumental goals contribute significantly to motivation for FL learners.
Oxford (1996) held that factors affecting motivation are profoundly different in people learning a language in an FL environment from those in second language settings. FL learners, she maintained, have to go out of their way to find stimulation and input in the target language. These students receive input in the new language predominantly in the classroom and by rather artificial means, whereas second language learners are surrounded by stimulation, both visual and auditory that has many motivational advantages (ibid.). FL learners are likely to be more instrumentally driven, that is, have more practical reasons for studying languages than those studying language in the second language environment, such as improving their employment and travel opportunities, earning more money, and so forth.

Macro and micro context of motivation

The Routledge Encyclopedia of Language Teaching and Learning defines motivation as that which “provides the primary impetus to embark upon learning, and later the driving force to sustain the long and often tedious learning process” (Dörnyei, 2000). One of the objectives of this study was to establish what constitutes the driving force for students from Ukraine and Australia to study the German language. At the same time, an attempt was made to determine whether and to what extent each country’s distinctive socio-cultural, political, and economical context shapes language learning motivation and attitudes towards FLs. Figure 5.4 below shows that the motivation itself is greatly shaped by contextual factors, for example, individual, social and pedagogical (Schneider, 2004, p. 100).
It is not surprising then that motivation has been defined as a highly complex issue. The relationships between motivation and other factors are generally consistent with macro and micro perspectives described in the literature. The macro perspective was offered by Gardner (1985) and included issues of multiculturalism, language globalisation, language contact, and power relations among different ethnolinguistic groups. This approach “allowed researchers to characterise and compare the motivational pattern of whole learning communities and then to draw inferences about intercultural communication and affiliation” (Dörnyei, 2003, p. 11). Dörnyei argued, however, that the macro approach, by its nature, did not account for the more immediate language learning context – the L2 classroom. The author emphasised that L2 learning/teaching is a socially and culturally bound phenomenon (p. 4). The social dimension in most comprehensive constructs of L2 motivation includes issues such as multiculturalism, language globalisation, language contact, and power relations between different ethnolinguistic groups (Dörnyei, 2003, p. 11).

In the 1990s the attention of researchers shifted towards classroom environments. The motivational impact of issues such as teaching materials,
appropriateness of teaching methods, teacher’s personality started to be explored. This came to be known as the micro perspective of motivation.

In 1986-87 Ammon (1991) conducted a study of Australian students’ motives for studying German. The survey included every university that offered German language courses. The participants were students in their 1st to 3rd years. Each of the 20 motives was marked on a scale from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree”. The list represented a rather heterogeneous group of motives that can roughly be divided into the following categories:

- improving one’s reading, writing, listening or speaking skills for use both within and outside Australia;
- family background and previous experience of studying German;
- the position of German around the world;
- going to a German-speaking country for travel-, study- or work- related reasons;
- German as a useful addition to one’s professional qualifications;
- General enjoyment of studying German.

The findings revealed that the majority of students strongly agreed that they studied German in order to be able to communicate with German-speakers abroad, to travel and improve their professional qualifications. The next most frequent responses were “to work in a German-speaking country”, “to read non-scientific literature”, “to understand German films”, “German is an international language”, and “the language of culture”.

More students agreed than disagreed with the statements that they were studying German in order to communicate with German-speakers in Australia, or in order to study in a German-speaking country. “Family German-speaking background” or “had learned German at school” appeared to be amongst the least popular motives in students’ choice of tertiary German language study.

Overall, Ammon’s findings showed that the main driving force behind studying German for the majority of students was their desire to communicate in German outside Australia and to go to a German-speaking country for work- or travel-related reasons. On the other hand, students also recognised the cultural and professional value of the
German language and, to a lesser extent, the ability to utilise their knowledge within Australia. Family background or previous language learning experience at school played a motivational role for only a small proportion of students (p. 33).

Some 15 years later another study was conducted at Australia’s Monash University that, amongst other aspects, sought the opinions of 66 tertiary students on a range of motives for German language study, broadly defined as “for study reasons”, “for occupational reasons”, “for cultural reasons” and “for personal reasons” (Schneider, 2004, p. 274). The students surveyed were enrolled in three different FL programs: German (intermediate and advanced levels), Spanish (beginners) and Chinese (beginners). The results showed that, despite the directions given in the questionnaire to select only one option, almost all of the students chose 2 or more. This suggested that students’ choice of FL study represented in fact a complex mosaic of motives. No single motive dominated in this study, however a slight leaning towards personal reasons was found. In the category “personal reasons” Schneider included “having a family or friends in the target language community”, “the wish to travel overseas” or “some kind of vague personal interest” (Schneider, 2004, p. 274).

The second most popular motive was “for occupational reasons”, that is, the eventuality of working abroad or working in companies of the target country. Cultural reasons such as to learn the language in order to be culturally better informed when visiting the country or because of an interest in cultural studies, took third place. The study-related reasons, a category that included the prospect of going abroad and studying at a German university, to pursue postgraduate study, or to become a FL teacher, came last on the list of learner motives.

The two studies show somewhat different results. Some of these differences can be attributed to different methodologies of data collection and calculation techniques and some to the difference in time settings in which the studies were conducted: the years 1987 and 2004. Nevertheless, it is remarkable that both studies achieved almost entirely opposite conclusions about the influence of a student’s family background. In Ammon’s all-Australian study, the motives “My family speaks German at home” and “My family comes from a German-speaking country” were strongly rejected by the majority of students, whereas in the later study, these reasons were the most popular.
It has to be noted that Schneider’s category “personal reasons” appears somewhat problematic as it includes too broad a range of motives from “family background” to “travel” as well as “some kind of vague personal interest” (Schneider 2004, p. 274) which could be understood differently by students. In Ammon’s study, travel-related reasons were amongst the most popular, thus showing that the motives relating to family background and travel may have potentially scored a very different result and therefore ought not to be amalgamated into one category.

In Ukraine, research on FL learning motivation has been almost non-existent. This is despite the fact that one of the principles upon which the New German Curriculum, designed by the Ministry of Education and science of Ukraine and by the National Linguistic University of Kyiv, is based is learners’ “motivational potential”, that is “the priority will be given to the content and topics that are relevant and interesting to students” (Curriculum, 2004, p. 20). However, we believe that the results of a study conducted in Hungary, a country that in many respects is similar to Ukraine, are both interesting and relevant for us as well.

Hungary is a former Socialist-bloc country that for a long time was colonised by various empires, Ottoman, Habsburg and finally Soviet, and suddenly found itself free in 1989. Politically and economically Hungary has covered the distance from being a closed Communist society to a western-style democracy and became a member of the European Union in 2004 (Dörnyei, Csizér, & Nemeth, 2006, p. vii). This is also the direction in which Ukraine is currently moving. The Hungarian survey involved over 13,000 language learners and was conducted in three phases during 1993, 1999 and 2004. The main focus of the study was to establish learners’ attitudes and motivations for learning 5 FLs: English, German, French, Italian and Russian. Some of the findings were:

- Hungarian teenage learners appraise different target languages largely through the same mental framework based on five broad and interrelated dimensions: Integrativeness, Instrumentality, Attitudes towards the L2 speakers/community, Cultural interest and Vitality of the L2 community;
- English obtained the top and Russian the bottom scores in all the L2-specific variables;
• While Global English has maintained its high educational profile, the other languages have become increasingly marginalised.

German, the traditional *lingua franca* of the region, occupied second position behind English with a tendency towards increasing decline like other “non-world-languages” (Dörnyei et al., 2006, p. 143).

The literature review has shown that studies on FL learning motivation with regard to Australia and Ukraine are scarce, as well as those comparing two or more different countries. By providing some insight into language learning motivation of Ukrainian and Australian learners of German, this study, will hopefully, contribute to the field.

**Concluding remarks**

This chapter has provided some insight into academic discussion on curriculum, syllabus, teaching methodology, grammar in language teaching, student and teacher beliefs about language learning and student motivation. We have established that the notion of language curriculum can potentially include a broad range of issues such as the content of the program and a complex of philosophical, social and administrative factors affecting the planning of an educational program such as language setting, patterns of language use in society, group and individual attitudes and the political and national context (Dubin & Olshtain, 1986). Each of these factors defines curriculum goals and syllabus objectives. We also showed that teaching methods are closely connected with the curriculum goals, and if these goals used to be quite different in Ukraine and Australia, then the kinds of methods were also distinctive, including the place of grammar and communicative activities. Conversely, these differences may eventually diminish as course objectives and students’ needs and motivation in language learning are drawing closer in the two different settings.

The literature review has also revealed some gaps in the current understanding of certain issues within these areas. Evidently, very little research has been conducted and/or published on Ukraine, particularly which covers more than just one facet, in the sphere of German or other tertiary language education. Also, the researcher has not
come across a single study dealing with the opinions of teachers and students, who are indeed the main stakeholders in the area of education. Quite a lot of the published work, that the researcher was able to avail herself of, are unfortunately rather short in size (two to three pages long) and are thus hardly insightful or revealing. While this study does not claim to be comprehensive, our several-months-long fieldwork in Ukraine and Australia involving multiple means of data collection allowed the researcher to obtain some interesting results on the issues of curriculum, teaching methods, language learning motivation, students’ and teachers’ perceptions, and to try to make sense of them within each country’s broader context.

Regarding Australia, the review of the literature has shown that although research into the aspects of language learning is more vivid in Australia than in Ukraine, many of these studies are in the field of English as a Foreign Language or English as a Second Language and a relatively little proportion is dedicated to German or indeed other FLs at tertiary level.

Finally, fewer studies yet have adopted the comparative intercultural perspective for examining the aspects of tertiary FL learning, which we believe, is one of the most effective ways of identifying the problems that need to be addressed and learning about the differences and similarities in education provision in other countries. This sort of knowledge is crucial nowadays in the increasingly globalised world.

The next chapter will elaborate on the design of this research, methodology and will explain some of the author's philosophical considerations that governed the choice of the methods.
6. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The previous chapter has provided the theoretical context and background to language teaching and the German language in Ukraine and Australia and identified major issues that need to be examined. These have been formulated in the following research questions, which we believe need to be repeated at this point and kept in mind while discussing research design and methodology:

1. What is the structure and objectives of the German language program at Ukrainian and Australian universities?
2. What are the peculiarities of the German language curriculum, content and teaching methodology in the universities of Ukraine and Australia?
3. What are students’ motives for studying German in Ukraine and Australia?
4. What are students’ and teachers’ perceptions of the curriculum, content and teaching?
5. How do students themselves evaluate their present language skills, and those expected to be acquired by the end of the course?
6. What are the advantages and disadvantages inherent in both sets of education practices?

This chapter will shed some light on the researcher’s philosophical stance and methodology, responsible for the choice of research methods.

**Researcher’s stance**

Cohen and Manion (1994, p. 7) asserted that assumptions and adherence to certain world views influence the choice of research methodology and methods. Hence, the discussion about methodology and methods used in this study will be preceded by a short outline of major philosophical worldviews and the statement of the researcher’s
own philosophical stance. Following this, the mixed method approach, as the methodology underlying this study, will be discussed.

Four dominant worldviews have been identified by Creswell and Plano Clark (2007, p. 22), namely: post-positivism, constructivism, advocacy and participatory and pragmatism. It has to be noted, however, that this seemingly rigid differentiation is somewhat debatable as worldviews continue to evolve, and there is no one universally agreed definition for any of them (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007, p. 21). However, all these worldviews can be looked at from the point of view of ontology, epistemology, axiology, methodology and rhetoric. Such an analysis is shown in table 6.1:

Table 6.1 Common elements of worldviews and implications for practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Worldview / Element</th>
<th>Postpositivism</th>
<th>Constructivism</th>
<th>Advocacy and Participatory</th>
<th>Pragmatism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ontology</strong> (What is the nature of reality?)</td>
<td>Singular reality (e.g., researchers reject or fail to reject hypothesis)</td>
<td>Multiple realities (e.g., researchers provide quotes to illustrate different perspectives)</td>
<td>Political reality (e.g., findings are negotiated with participants)</td>
<td>Singular and multiple realities (e.g., researchers test hypotheses and provide multiple perspectives)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Epistemology</strong> (What is the relationship between the researcher and that being researched? How does the researcher gain knowledge of what is being researched?)</td>
<td>Distance and impartiality (e.g., researchers objectively collect data on instruments)</td>
<td>Closeness (e.g., researchers visit participants at their sites to collect data)</td>
<td>Collaboration (e.g., researchers actively involve participants as collaborators)</td>
<td>Practicality (e.g., researchers collect data by “what works” to address research questions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Axiology</strong> (e.g., what is the role of values in research?)</td>
<td>Unbiased (e.g., researchers use checks to eliminate bias)</td>
<td>Biased (e.g., researchers actively talk about their biases and interpretations)</td>
<td>Biased and negotiated (e.g., researchers negotiate with participants about interpretations)</td>
<td>Multiple stances (e.g., researchers include both biased and unbiased perspectives)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6.1 (continued) Common elements of worldviews and implications for practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methodology (What is the process of research?)</th>
<th>Deductive (e.g., researchers test an a priori theory)</th>
<th>Inductive (e.g., researchers start with participants’ views and build “up” to patterns, theories, and generalisations)</th>
<th>Participatory (e.g., researchers involve participants in all stages of the research and engage in cyclical reviews of results)</th>
<th>Combining (e.g., researchers collect both quantitative and qualitative data and mix them)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rhetoric (What is the language of research?)</td>
<td>Formal style (e.g., researchers use agreed-on definitions of variables)</td>
<td>Informal style (e.g., researchers write in a literary, informal style)</td>
<td>Advocacy and change (e.g., researchers use language that will help bring about change and advocate for participants)</td>
<td>Formal or informal (e.g., researchers may employ both formal and informal styles of writing)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Creswell and Plano Clark (2007, p. 24), slightly altered

Pragmatism underlies the current comparative research in that it allows to

- take multiple perspectives on the matters to be researched (students’, teachers’ views, classroom observations, and documents analysis), and
- collect both quantitative and in-depth qualitative data.

**Pragmatism and mixed method research**

Pragmatism tends to be viewed as the most suitable philosophical underpinning for mixed method research, although there is still some ongoing debate on this (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2003). Tedlie and Tashakkori (2003, p. 21) made a number of points regarding pragmatism and mixed methods, some of which we have discussed earlier:

- pragmatism supports the use of both qualitative and quantitative research methods;
- a pragmatist considers the research question to be more important than either the method used or the paradigm underlying the method;
- pragmatists also reject the forced choice between post-positivism and constructivism with regard to logic, epistemology, and so on. Pragmatism embraces both points of view (or a position between the two opposing viewpoints);
- pragmatism avoids the use of metaphysical concepts (e.g., “truth”, “reality”) that have often caused much endless (and often useless) debate;
- pragmatism presents a very practical and applied research philosophy.

**Considerations of the comparative approach**

As stated previously, this investigation adopts a comparative perspective on the tertiary FL class. According to Nicholas (1983, p. 4), the term “comparative” requires the identification and detailed explication of both the similarities and differences between certain features of education in selected countries or regions. Thus comparison is embodied in both the aim and in the methodology of the present study. It seems logical to mention the comparative approach in the context of our discussion of methodology as it also contributed to the decision making about the choice of methods.

The comparative method was broadly used and indeed originated from the need to examine and, possibly, to borrow some features of foreign education systems. The pioneers or precursors of comparative education were the 19th-century scholars whose task was to develop their own national system of education using the best examples from abroad (Holmes, 1981, p. 19). As administrators they wanted to know if anything of practical value could be learned from the study of foreign systems of education. During a period of growing nationalism in Europe, rivalry and competition between nations encouraged imitation. Advocates of cultural borrowing believed that foreign systems should be studied, preferably first hand by visits and observation.

The period after World War II was a time of reorganisation of secondary education and of rapid growth of higher educational institutions (Holmes, 1981, p. 22). American scholars who came to Europe to learn about European schools where particularly impressed with the Prussian system: the richness of the curriculum, effective teaching methods and good discipline without resorting to corporal punishment. Not everybody agreed however that foreign examples should be followed as “many parts of this [Prussian] system of public instruction are not adapted to the spirit and feelings of the American people nor to their form of civil government” (Taylor, 1836 as cited in Holmes, 1981). Other educators in the 19th century also agreed
that education systems to a great extent reflect each country’s national character and therefore cultural borrowings are not always viable or desired (Harris, 1891, p. xxiii as cited in Holmes 1981, p. 25). If comparison is to be made, one should separate what is peculiar and incidental to local needs from what is of universal application and useful to all educational systems. The comparative study of foreign systems of education might make possible the formulation of certain universally applicable principles (ibid.).

Nicholas (1981, p. 5) asserted that the point of adopting a comparative approach is to augment our understanding of our own cultural context (in our case Australian) by comparing it with others. Thus, by examining the language learning process in Ukraine and Australia we will shed some light on these broadly formulated questions: What is similar and what is distinctive in German language education in Ukraine and Australia? What are the advantages and disadvantages of both educational practices? And how have the country’s social factors been affecting the language learning process? Although, of course, the answer to these questions can only go as far as the scope of the present investigation allows.

Nicholas (1981) conducted a comparative analysis of educational provision of five countries that to a greater or lesser extent differed from each other politically, economically and culturally: the USSR, the USA, France, the German Federal Republic and England. The author included in the discussion a broad spectrum of issues related to all levels of education, from pre-school to tertiary, such as teaching styles, theories of learning, roles of teachers and learners, modes of assessment and curriculum. Inevitably implications for the author’s domestic educational settings (England) were drawn. Thus, a comparative perspective, Nicholas asserted, has been shown to be “uniquely useful, because it has highlighted England’s educational peculiarities” (1983, p. 45). The author does not ignore the broader context which shaped the distinctive character of educational provision in each of the countries, and accounts for issues such as political system, educational ideologies, patterns of administration of educational institutions, and equality in education.
Research methods in comparative studies

Various methods can be adopted in the exploration of the aspects of education and the differences and similarities in language provision in different countries. Most studies that compare educational provision in several countries tend to take a descriptive approach (e.g., Holmes & McLean, 1989; Nicholas, 1983). In other words, they provide a more or less systematic description of various aspects of education in each particular country. Nicholas (1983), for example, focused on issues, such as: epistemological styles of education, the roles of educational institutions, structure of the education system in each country, the degree of centralisation, division into various types of schools, student funding at universities, curriculum, roles of teachers and students, and so forth. Holmes & McLean explored aspects of curriculum in the education systems of countries including the USSR, the USA, India, Japan and others, also taking a descriptive path through use of documents, statistics and personal observations as a source of data (see Holmes, 1981, p. 89-110).

For the present investigation, which is primarily concerned with issues of curriculum, content of the language course as well as teaching methods, we believe the data should be obtained not only from formal documents, reports and statistics but also from those directly involved in the process of teaching and learning, that is, teachers and students. In this way, we believe a complex mosaic of FL provision in both countries can be put together. These considerations set the ground for employing mixed method approach (i.e., quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques). Theoretical underpinnings of this relatively new methodology as well as its practical implementation in this study will be discussed in the following section.

Mixed method research

Our philosophical stance (pragmatism), discussed earlier, as well and the nature of our comparative study, its scope and research questions formed the basis for the choice of the mixed method approach that combines both quantitative and qualitative
research techniques (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007, p. 6). Creswell & Plano Clark asserted that

[mixed methods research] is a methodology with epistemological and theoretical perspectives as well as methods. (....) For mixed methods research, in which the investigator collects both qualitative and quantitative data, the methods involve multiple forms of data collection and analysis (p. 26).

This type of research methodology is relatively new. Despite the fact that researchers have collected both qualitative and quantitative data for many years, the idea of mixing the data, the specific types of research designs, the terminology, and the challenges and issues in using different designs simultaneously are features that achieved legitimacy only about a decade ago (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007).

On the quantitative side, we used structured questionnaires containing close-ended questions (with the exception of one section where students were asked to fill in some biographical data). The qualitative tools included semi-structured interviews, classroom observations and a review of language programs and curricula. Creswell & Plano Clark (2007, p. 7) asserted that by mixing the datasets, a better understanding of the problem may be provided than if either data set is used alone. Mixed methods research eliminates individual weaknesses of quantitative and qualitative research. For example, it allows room for consideration of the context or setting where the problem has arisen (unlike purely quantitative research). On the other hand, unlike qualitative research, it does not rely as much on the researcher’s personal interpretations of the problem and helps diminish the influence of his/her personal bias (Creswell & Plano Clark, p. 9). Finally, mixed method research reflects the ways that problems are solved and decisions are made in real life: by collecting both numerical data and the thoughts of individuals, by employing inductive and deductive thinking, or by observing people and recording behaviour. It is natural, then, for individuals to employ mixed methods research as the preferred mode of understanding the world (Creswell & Plano Clark, p. 10).
Mixed methods design

Tashakkori & Teddlie (2003) have suggested that determining the typology of mixed methods designs (i.e., identifying basic procedures for using both qualitative and quantitative strands in a single study) is among the most complex and controversial issues in mixed methodology. Tashakkori & Teddlie have identified 40 types of mixed methods designs, including triangulation, transformative, integrated, component, sequential, parallel, concurrent, simultaneous, branching, nested, explanatory, exploratory, confirmatory, developmental, and so forth. The multiplicity of types of mixed methods research suggests that this methodology is still developing. Creswell & Plano Clark (2007) have come up with just four major types of mixed method designs based on similarities that all the various types share:

- the Triangulation Design
- the Embedded Design
- the Explanatory Design, and
- the Exploratory Design.

The aim of the triangulation design is “to obtain different but complimentary data on the same topic” (Morse, 1991, p. 122 cited by Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007, p. 62).

The embedded design is a mixed methods design in which one data set provides a supportive, secondary role in a study based primarily on the other data type (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007, p. 67).

In the explanatory design (also called sequential explanatory design) qualitative data help explain or build upon quantitative data, which were collected first. The emphasis is usually on quantitative rather than qualitative methods (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007, p. 72).

The exploratory design (or sequential exploratory design) is similar to the previous design in that it involves two phases of data collection. However, this type of mixed method design starts with the collection of qualitative data, which becomes the main data in the research. They are then supplemented with quantitative data. Unlike the sequential explanatory design, which is better suited to explaining and interpreting
relationships, the primary focus of this design is to explore a particular phenomenon (Creswell, Plano Clark, Gutmann, & Hanson, 2003, p. 227).

Triangulation was chosen as the most suitable mixed method design for this study. The next section will provide rationale behind the choice of this research design.

**Triangulation**

Creswell & Plano Clark (2007, p. 62) maintained that the triangulation design is the most common and well-known approach to mixing methods. The purpose of this design is to obtain different but complimentary data on the same topic to best understand the research problem. The triangulation design involves the concurrent, but separate, collection and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data, hence it has been referred to as “Concurrent Triangulation Design” (Creswell et al., 2003, p. 229). Neither method assumes any priority over the other, as Figure 6.1 shows:

![Figure 6.1 Concurrent triangulation design](source)

The concurrent triangulation design was chosen as the most suitable for this study. Unlike other types of mixed methods design, this method allowed both data sets to be collected during one phase of the research at roughly the same time (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007, p. 66) – a valuable feature when the fieldwork is to be conducted on several sites and in different countries within a limited timeframe. Table 6.2 shows how triangulation was implemented in the present research.
Table 6.2 Methodological tools for data collection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tools</th>
<th>Information to be obtained</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student questionnaires and interviews</strong></td>
<td>Motivation to study German</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Perceptions of the curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Perceptions of grammar and communicative activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Attitudes towards the contents of the language class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students’ self-reported skill deficiencies and expectations from the language course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teacher questionnaires and personal communication with teachers</strong></td>
<td>Teacher perceptions of students’ motivation for studying German</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Perceptions of grammar and communicative activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teaching methods and approaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Marking of students’ work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Classroom observations</strong></td>
<td>Teaching methods and approaches,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Content of language classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Place of grammar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher’s and students’ role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Departmental handbooks /Language programs</strong></td>
<td>Aims of the language course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Contents of the language course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Guidelines regarding curriculum and teaching methods</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It can be seen, that several methods cover similar areas. In this way, phenomena that are being examined by the study acquire several dimensions through the use of multiple research methods.
Reliability and validity of the methods

Quantitative and qualitative researchers view the notion of “validity” rather differently. Crotty (1998) has pointed out that the notion of validity applies to objectivist positivist research where the reality or truth is “confirmed” or “validated” through quantitative methods. The non-positivist perspective opposes the view that it is possible to obtain valid or generalisable conclusions on the nature of reality. At best, the outcomes will be suggestive rather than conclusive. They may be plausible, perhaps even convincing, ways of seeing things, but certainly cannot arrive at any “one true way” of seeing things (Crotty, 1998, p. 13). There is a great variety in terminology that refers to the property of high quality research. For this some researchers use the term “trustworthiness” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 290) while others use “validity” as an overarching term that refers to other similar nomenclature in literature, such as authenticity, goodness, verisimilitude, adequacy, trustworthiness, plausibility, validation, and credibility (Creswell & Miller, 2000, p. 124; Johnson & Turner, 2003, p. 300). There is however a general consensus, that research ought to be credible.

Creswell & Miller (2000) maintained that the choice of validity procedures (like the methods themselves) is based on the lens researchers choose to validate their study and researchers’ paradigm assumptions. Thus, it is then logical to suggest that the researcher’s understanding of validity is inherent in the methodology and methods used.

The validation procedure for this study is triangulation across methods, both quantitative (questionnaires) and qualitative (interviews, observations, and document analysis). We believe that this approach helps answer our research questions in the best possible way as it allows multiple and different perspectives on the themes of the present study.

The results obtained through these methods as well as the researcher’s understanding of the issues covered by this research were presented to her colleagues through articles, conference presentations, and personal communications that took place in Ukraine and Australia as the thesis was being written. This was useful in that we managed to obtain feedback which helped modify the presentation and interpretation of the results. As an additional measure to ensure the credibility of our findings and the
coherence of the narrative account two individuals (other than our supervisors) working in the field of language education and external to the project, were approached to assume the role of external readers for the study.

The following section will provide the theoretical basis and elaborate on the practical implementation of each of the methods used and will discuss potential problems regarding the use of the methods.

**The study (September 2004 - April 2006)**

**Settings**

The field work for this study was conducted at three universities in Ukraine: National Taras Shevchenko University of Kyiv, Karazin Kharkiv National University, and Franko National University of Lviv, and two universities in Australia: the University of Melbourne and Monash University\(^{39}\). Table 6.2 illustrates the issues that each particular method intends to address.

The rationale behind the choice of the Ukrainian universities was that they are three of the largest and most well known state universities in Ukraine, situated in the central, eastern and western parts of the country. It is worthwhile noting that tertiary FL education is similar in many aspects throughout the country due to the formerly centralised system that unified and standardised many aspects of all levels of education, including tertiary. However, the researcher’s assumption was that each of these three institutions might be affected by factors such as: location (capital city versus elsewhere, eastern versus western Ukraine), various historical factors and the economic background of students from the respective regions.

\(^{39}\) Further referred to as Kyiv University, Kharkiv University, Lviv University, Melbourne University and Monash University, respectively. I would like to express my gratitude to all academic staff of German departments of these institutions for granting permission for and facilitating the collection of the data. I would particularly like to thank my supervisors: Dr. Leo Kretzembacher (Department of German, Russian and Swedish Studies), Dr. Michele de Courcy (Department of Language Literacy and Arts Education) both from The University of Melbourne, and Dr. Ivan Sojko (Department of German Philology, National Taras Shevchenko University of Kyiv) for helpful comments and advice.
Australian tertiary institutions, on the other hand, are common in their different-ness. Their relative independence from any central authority in terms of funding and administration makes them each unique (in Australian terms) in how the language program is administered and conducted.

**Questionnaire. Theoretical underpinnings**

Questionnaires, interviews, observation and document analysis are amongst the major data collection strategies in mixed method research (Johnson & Turner, 2003). With questionnaires a researcher constructs a self-report data collection instrument that is filled out by the research participants. Johnson & Turner (2003, p. 298) have shown that all of these methods can be purely qualitative, purely quantitative or mixed. A qualitative questionnaire is an unstructured, exploratory, open-ended and typically in-depth questionnaire, where participants have the freedom to answer each question in their own words and in any order they like.

A quantitative questionnaire, on the other hand, consists of structured and closed-ended questions. This means that all participants are provided with a list of possible responses. The response categories often take the form of rating scales (i.e., 4-5 point rating scales), rankings, semantic differentials and checklists (Johnson & Turner, 2003).

The third type of questionnaire, mixed, as the name suggests, contains a mixture of both open- and closed-ended questions. In addition, a single item may also be “mixed”, for example, if a set of response categories is followed by an option “other” as is sometimes the case in our questionnaire (e.g., Question 9):

Indicate your reasons for studying German

- a. to teach German
- b. to work in a German speaking country
- c. to study abroad
- d. to get to know German culture
- e. for travel
- f. to balance out my technical course
g. German-speaking partner
h. liked the sound of German
i. enjoyment

Other (please specify) ________________________________________________

Potential problems regarding the use of questionnaires and interviews

Belson (1986: 36 cited by Foddy, 1993, p. 2) found that the principal causes of error in the gathering of data through survey procedures (questionnaires and interviews) are:

a. respondents’ failure to understand questions as intended;
b. a lack of effort, or interest, on the part of respondents;
c. respondents’ unwillingness to admit to certain attitudes or behaviours;
d. the failure of respondents’ memory or comprehension processes in the stressed conditions of the interview; and,
e. interviewer failures of various kinds (e.g. the tendency to change wording, failures in presentation procedures and the adoption of faulty recording procedures).

Foddy (1993, p. 3) discussed a number of factors that represent a threat to the validity and reliability of data obtained through questionnaires and interviews. Most of these factors are socially and psychologically determined:

- factual questions sometimes elicit invalid answers (even with such simple questions as “age” one can elicit inaccurate data);
- the relationship between what respondents say they do and what they actually do is not always very strong;
- respondents’ attitudes, beliefs, opinions, habits, interest often seem to be extraordinarily unstable;
- small changes in wording sometimes produce major changes in the distribution of responses;
- respondents commonly misinterpret questions;
• answers to earlier questions can affect respondents’ answers to later questions;

• changing the order in which response options are presented sometimes affects respondents’ answers. Respondents are more likely to endorse the options that they see first when they are able to read the items for themselves, and more likely to endorse items that they hear last when the items are read out aloud to them (Krosnick and Alwin, 1987 cited by Foddy, 1993, p. 7);

• respondents’ answers are sometimes affected by the question format per se. Open ended questions (i.e. questions that allow respondents to supply their own answers) often produce quite different results from closed ended versions of the same questions (i.e. questions that force respondents to select a response from a pre-set list of alternatives);

• respondents often answer questions even when it appears that they know very little about the topic. Instead of answering “Don’t know”, respondents often volunteer to provide an answer that is not well grounded in knowledge;

• the cultural context in which a question is presented often has an impact on the way respondents interpret and answer questions.

These shortcomings should not lead to the rejection of this method. Rather, the researcher should be aware of them and minimise their effect, by, for instance designing the wording more carefully.

Indeed, a researcher can hardly be insured against some degree of participants’ miscomprehension of questions; hence particular care was taken in this project to formulate the questions in the questionnaire. In their turn, the participants given the opportunity to ask questions about the questionnaires or to reconfirm their understanding of the questions directly from the researcher herself who was present in the class at all times.
Student questionnaires

Choice of participants and administering of the questionnaires

The participants for this project were chosen on the basis of their having experienced at least one semester of university. This criterion was matched by second- to fifth-year students in Ukraine and first- to third-year students in Australia. At the time the survey was undertaken, first-year students in Ukraine had just begun their study at the university and therefore were not included in the project. Australian first-year students, on the other hand, had already reached the middle of their second semester in the university and therefore participated in the project. Students who were doing their Honours degree in the fourth year at an Australian university were not available: some of them had individual timetables and others were overseas for their “Study abroad” unit.

Due to the large number of students in German departments at the universities, the present study does not cover all of the students enrolled in the German course. Instead, we randomly chose one of several parallel groups from each year as a representative sample (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2000, p. 99).

The questionnaires were distributed and collected by the researcher herself. Students were advised at least 25 minutes should be allocated for the questionnaire. In order to secure a high return rate, participants were asked to fill out their questionnaires in the class. It was up to the teacher to decide whether time would be given at the beginning of the class, at the end or during the break. This strategy of administering questionnaires (i.e., “here and now”) proved to be rather effective, as the return rate was as high as 100%. Table 6.3 shows the number of students from each country that took part in the survey40:

40 It should be noted, that the number of participants in the table represents different percentage from the total number of students in the departments.
Table 6.3 Research tools used in the study and number of participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country/tools</th>
<th>Student questionnaires</th>
<th>Interviews</th>
<th>Teacher questionnaires</th>
<th>Classroom observations (hrs)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ukraine (Kyiv, Kharkiv, Lviv)</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia (Melbourne, Monash)</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Structure of the student questionnaire**

The final format of the questionnaire was developed with the help of two successive pilot tests, which were conducted with two student groups at the University of Melbourne. Analyses of responses that followed these two tests showed that some questions needed to be reformulated or added in order to obtain the desired data.

The questionnaire that resulted (see Appendix A) consisted of 16 questions which covered the following areas:

1. Student’s background, for example, native tongue, previous FL learning experience, and other items (questions 1-8);
2. Motives for studying German (questions 9, 10);
3. Reflection on the deficiencies of the tertiary FL curriculum and one’s own language skills (questions 11, 12);
4. Attitudes towards grammar instruction (questions 13);
5. Perceptions on the use of classroom activities (questions 14, 15); and
6. Expectations from the course (question 16).

Almost all the questions (with the exception of those dealing with students’ background) were presented either in the form of multiple choice items or rank ordering in order to capture the likely range of responses (Cohen et al., 2000). Additionally, the respondents were given some extra space to provide their own answers in the option...
“other”. The questionnaire represents the mixed type as it includes a mixture of completely open- and closed-ended items.

**Student interviews**

Interviews are another major method of data collection, whereby the interviewer establishes rapport and asks the interviewee a series of questions (Johnson & Turner, 2003). As with questionnaires, interviews can be constructed qualitatively, quantitatively or in a mixed manner. The first type of interview is unstructured, exploratory, open-ended and typically in-depth so that various topics can be explored effectively. On the qualitative side there are

1. informal conversational interviews,
2. the interview guide approach, and

The first type of qualitative interview is completely unstructured and the flow of conversation and questions that emerge is natural. With the second, interview guide approach, the topics are pre-specifed and are on the researcher’s list. However, the questions can be reworded and their order is not strictly determined. The third type in Patton’s classification is standardised open-ended interviewing which still results in qualitative data, however, the wording and the order of questions is strict and is constant across all participants. In Johnson’s and Turner classification this type of interviewing occupies a position between qualitative and quantitative interviews. Another form of mixed interview for Johnson and Turner would include open- and closed-ended items (2003, p. 306).

It is clear then what is understood by quantitative interviews. This type of interview consists of closed-ended questions, with all response categories pre-specified by the researcher who simply reads the questions and records the answers (Johnson & Turner, 2003, p. 306).
The second stage of this study consisted of student interviews. They were conducted partly during the course of fieldwork in Ukraine in 2004 and partly upon arrival back to Australia through to April 2006. The main goal in obtaining qualitative data was to gather more in-depth information about aspects of tertiary language learning from students. Interviews emphasise the social situatedness of research data (Kvale, 1996 as cited in Cohen, Manion et al., 2000). Interviews enable both the researcher and the students to discuss their interpretations of the world in which they live, in our case the world of teaching and learning German at the university, from their own perspective. Thus experience was the key criterion which governed the choice of participants. All the ten interviewees from the five participating universities were students in their final years. It was important that students had had a few years of tertiary language study behind them and experience in the target language country to be able to confidently assess various aspects of their study and their experience of using the language in real life situations. Teachers were helpful in identifying several of their students that could match this criterion. The interviews were conducted either via telephone (this was often the case with Ukrainian students) or in person. The low number of interviews compared questionnaires, can be explained by the intention to provide an additional in-depth dimension to the issues being investigated.

Each interview covered the same issues as the questionnaires. The interview-guide approach was chosen as we had a list of topics to be discussed; however, neither the wording nor the order of questions was pre-specified to allow for a natural flow of conversation.

Teacher questionnaires

Eleven teachers in Ukraine and six in Australia took part in the study. The difference in the number of participating teachers in Ukraine and Australia was due to the fact that German departments in Ukraine consist of much larger numbers of academic staff than their Australian counterparts to cater for a larger number groups spread across five years of study. Only those teachers were approached whose student group participated in the survey. Although the number of Ukrainian and Australian student participants was more or less equal (102 and 120, respectively), the number of
level-groups to which Ukrainian students belonged was larger than for Australian students, due to the difference in levelling system and general structure of the course (explained in more details in Chapter 7). Each of these level-groups was taught by a separate teacher. Consequently, the study included more Ukrainian teachers than Australian, as shown in Table 6.3.

Unlike students, teachers often chose to take their questionnaire home. This was understandable as the teacher questionnaire included overall more questions with a greater number requiring a detailed and explanatory answer.

The aim of the teacher questionnaire was to obtain insight into teachers’ opinions on the content, curriculum, teaching methods and students’ skills and to determine in which areas the opinions of teachers and students coincide or differ the most. Hence, the largest part of the teacher questionnaire contained similar questions to those in student questionnaires. For example, question 6 dealt with teachers’ awareness of students’ motivation to study German; in question 8 teachers were asked to nominate their students’ best and worst mastered skills (see Appendix B). Thus, teachers’ opinions were important in that they provided an additional dimension on the aspects of tertiary language study being investigated and sheded some light on their perceptions of students’ motivation, skills and expectations from the language course.

**Structure of the teacher questionnaire**

The questionnaire consisted of questions which covered the following areas:

1. Teacher’s background, for example, native tongue, FL learning experience, details of teaching German at the university, and other items (questions 1-5).

2. Students’ motives for studying German (questions 6, 7).

   1. Assessment of students’ language skills (questions 8).
   2. Attitudes towards grammar instruction (questions 9, 10).

3. Teachers’ perception on the use of classroom activities.

4. Teaching methods and approaches:
- characteristics of methods/approaches;
- motivation behind the choice of methods/approaches;
- general principles used in language teaching;
- frequency of use of the students’ mother tongue in the class and motives for doing so;
- frequency of error correction in oral and written language;
- use of audio-video equipment in the class.

5. Marking of students’ work:

- areas of language that play the most important role in marking students’ written work, for example, grammar, vocabulary, orthography;
- areas of language that play the most important role in marking students’ oral performance.

6. Results students are expected to achieve by the end of the course in areas, such as:

- oral production,
- listening comprehension,
- reading comprehension,
- written production.

Teachers’ questionnaire adopts mixed design, in that it includes completely open-ended and closed-ended questions (Johnson & Turner, 2003). Similarly to students’ questionnaire, teachers’ questionnaire also contained mixed-type questions, which give both a range of answers to choose from and an option “other” to allow respondents to formulate the answer in their own words.

**Teacher interviews**

It was the intention of the researcher from the outset of the field work to conduct several interviews not only with students but with teachers as well. In reality, however,
many Ukrainian teachers were reluctant to express their opinion for a recorded or unrecorded interview even though the issue of confidentiality and anonymity had previously been discussed. On the other hand, the teachers seemed to have had no reservations in discussing their work in an informal free conversation with the researcher. The difficulty in conducting interviews with teachers was perhaps due to the fact that many of the teachers were not used to discussing “internal” issues or problems with an “outsider”, even though the researcher was a former student of one of the participating German departments. Also, research such as ours exploring aspects of tertiary language learning in Ukraine by collecting views of students and teachers is extremely rare as some teachers themselves have admitted and the review of literature has shown. Although it was impossible to systematise, and thus to report, the information obtained through such informal conversations with teachers, they nevertheless improved the researcher’s overall understanding of teaching and study German in Ukraine.

Classroom observations

Drew (2008, p. 195) has suggested that while interviews (and questionnaires) provide data embedded in the interpretations, perceptions, and experiences of respondents, observation provides a direct method for qualitative researchers to record human behaviour and events as they occur – by watching. The task and significance of observation in educational research is best illustrated by Cohen and Manion (1994 p. 110):

(... the subject matter of the world in which the educational researcher is interested is composed of people and is essentially meaningful. That world is subjectively structured, possessing particular meanings for its inhabitants. The task of the educational investigator is very often to explain the means by which an orderly social world is established and maintained in terms of its shared meanings.)
In the fulfilment of this task, observation has many advantages over other methods of data collection. Bailey (1978) has suggested that:

1. Observation studies are superior to experiments and surveys when data are being collected on non-verbal behaviour.
2. In observation studies, investigators are able to make appropriate notes about salient features.
3. Data obtained through observations are collected in a more natural environment than those collected through experiments and surveys.
4. Data obtained through observation are less reactive, less dependent on bias which can be embedded in verbal responses to structured questions.

The observation method is not without weaknesses. The accounts that typically emerge from observations are often described as subjective, biased, impressionistic, idiosyncratic and lacking in the precise quantifiable measures that are the hallmark of survey research and experimentation (Cohen & Manion, 1994).

Observation for qualitative research is often divided into participant and non-participant observation, depending on whether the researcher actually participates in the setting or activity being observed (Cohen & Manion, 1994, p. 107; Drew, 2008, p. 195). The structure of field notes can vary, but commonly includes three categories, namely:

- a description of the setting, time, grouping, materials
- events, actions, activities, and
- the researcher’s reflective notes (Drew, 2008).

A similar format of observation protocol was used in this study as well (see Appendix C).

As Table 6.3 indicates the Ukrainian and Australian parts of the data collection involved an almost equal number of hours of classroom observation: 38 and 35 hours respectively. Indeed, classroom observations helped create an additional perspective on the issues that this research focuses on. Self-reported data are not always sufficient

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41 By “hours” we mean standard hours (=60 min), not “academic” hours (=45 min). The latter meaning of the term “hours” is frequently used in Ukrainian universities by course designers and teachers. In Ukrainian German departments a class normally runs for 1 hour and 30 minutes (two 45 minute sequences), frequently referred to as “para” (a double-period).
as people do not always do what they say they do, thus observing human behaviour is an important way of collecting information (Johnson & Christensen, 2008, p. 211). The researcher played the role of a complete observer, that is, she did not participate in any of the classroom activities, but observed the action of teachers and students from the back of the classroom. It was however impossible to keep the intentions of researcher’s presence in the class a secret, as the definition of the term “complete observer” requires (e.g., Johnson & Christensen, 2008; Johnson & Turner, 2003). Ethical concerns required prior agreement of the teacher for the researcher to be in the class. Students also were often curious about the reasons for the researcher’s presence in the class. Many of them had already participated in the research by completing a questionnaire or attending an interview. Hence the researcher simply could not make herself “invisible” in this study. Although, both students and teachers who were being observed seemed relaxed in the presence of a visitor, it is likely that the participants demonstrated some “frontstage” behavior (Johnson & Christensen, 2008).

Field notes were being taken concerning the major research themes, such as teaching methods and approaches, content of the class, the place of grammar and communicative activities and roles (and behaviour) of students and the teacher (see Appendix C). However, other issues that were considered informative and relevant were also taken note of. It was, for instance interesting to see how and whether the classroom activities were structured; how many students were in the class; what equipment was used if at all; what proportion of the class was taken by correcting the homework; how the correction was done; what proportion of the class was taken by the discussion of administrative issues, such as changes in the timetable, reasons of failing to do homework, provision of textbooks, absentees, and so forth; arrangement of desks and chairs in the class, and so on. Some of these issues, obviously, were not central to the current investigation, and were not analysed formally, however they helped create a fuller picture of the study and teaching of German in Ukraine and Australia. The next section will deal with the discussion of the last data collection instrument – document analysis.
Document analysis

Official documents, personal documents, physical data, and archived research data belong to secondary data or “existing data” (Johnson & Christensen, 2008; Johnson & Turner, 2003). The distinctive feature of this type of data is that the researcher uses already existing information, which was collected earlier and sometimes for a completely different purpose. The rationale for choosing this type of data collection in this study was based on the benefits summarised by Johnson & Turner (2003, p. 317):

- it is useful for corroboration (provides an additional dimension on the issues that are being researched);
- grounded in local setting, and
- useful for exploration (the documents that we have collected improved our understanding of the aspects of teaching and study of German at the five universities, at least according to how it is stated on paper).

Similarly to other data collection techniques, document analysis has its limitations. Firstly, the information which can be found in departmental documents does not fully reflect the reality of the language classroom. It tells us what the course, curriculum, content should be like, and not what it actually is in day-to-day life. Fortunately, we were able to partly offset this drawback by other methods, such as classroom observations and survey procedures.

Secondly, the data obtained through this kind of documents provides information characteristic of the given department only. This is particularly true for the Australian universities, where every language department develops its own policy regarding course structure, curriculum, and other areas.

The types of documents we used for the present research were as follows:

- undergraduate handbooks
- departmental programs, and
- “working programs.
Undergraduate handbooks (2003 – 2008), were available on departmental websites of The University of Melbourne and Monash University and in printed form. The handbooks as well as other information on departmental websites were particularly helpful (to a greater or lesser extent) in providing information relevant for this project, namely:

- the aims of the German language course,
- skills that students were expected to acquire by the end of the course,
- structure and duration of the course,
- curriculum (what core subjects and electives were offered),
- aims, content and outcomes of each subject,
- number of contact hours.

The undergraduate handbooks were a feature of the two Australian German departments. Equivalent information regarding the German departments in Ukraine was obtained via other documents such as: The Curriculum für sprachpraktischen Deutschunterricht an pädagogischen Fakultäten der Universitäten und pädagogischen Hochschulen (Curriculum for German for pedagogical departments of universities and other pedagogical higher educational institutions), 2004. The document was issued by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine and The National Linguistics University of Kyiv and, as an official document, bears a considerable amount of power. The Curriculum describes itself as a “typical program”, a guide to teachers and students of German departments that takes into account the recommendations of the Council of Europe regarding language education (Curriculum, 2004, p. 5) (see Chapter 7. Results for more details).

Departmental programs (Kyiv, Kharkiv and Lviv Universities). Departmental programs were issued by the German departments themselves based on ministerial guidelines. Such programs might have some distinction in presentation, but typically follow a similar template which covers:

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• the overarching aim of the course,
• level of skills that students are expected to reach by the end of each of the 5 years of study;
• content of the course, divided into three key study areas: phonetics, grammar, lexis and syntax;
• a list of conversation and grammar topics;
• types of texts to be read;
• tasks for examination.

Typically, departmental programs are very structured and contain a detailed description of each of the listed aspects. A more detailed discussion about such programs will follow in Chapter 7.

“Working” programs. “Working” programs are each teacher’s or lecturer’s adaptation of the departmental program, where he/she states concrete aims and writes a plan of conversation and grammar topics to be covered by his/her group of students during the course of a year or a semester. “Working” programs are required to be approved by the head of the department at a departmental meeting.

Limitations of the study

The study compares German language provision in Ukrainian and Australian universities and the factors that have been affecting it. Clearly, this is a challenging task as the topic potentially implies a wide range of issues that could be relevant to the discussion. Some perhaps will rightly suggest that FL education covers many more issues than curriculum, content, teaching methods and students’ motivation. No doubt, FL education is an extensive field embracing many areas such as acquisition processes, language assessment, teacher training, exchange programs, course management and administration, funding, and other areas. However, given that the present research was conducted by an individual researcher with limited time and resources, strict boundaries had to be set on the range of issues to be dealt with, the depth of analysis and methods
used. The range of issues that this study focuses on is a consequence of our research questions and scope.

Secondly, some might suggest that the discussion about the content and teaching methods cannot be complete without an analysis of textbooks and other teaching materials used in the class. We believe that this topic – the analysis of textbooks – deserves a separate investigation as the issue is rather problematic. In Ukraine, for instance, a German language course is rarely taught from any one textbook. There is a widely acknowledged shortage of appropriate updated textbooks and funding to outfit the department with a complete set of new course materials. Instead, as the fieldwork has shown, the teaching and content of the class was based on selected photocopied pages from various sources. Thus systematic analysis and the drawing of conclusions about the content and teaching methodologies based on a particular textbook was rather difficult. On the other hand, classroom observations, information obtained through departmental handbooks as well as students’ and teachers’ voices, provided enough data on the content of and methods of teaching to be able to draw conclusions on these issues.

Thirdly, there are, no doubt, a greater number of people, not just students and teachers, who may have been able to inform the present study. These are, for instance, curriculum makers who are involved in the decision making regarding structure, content and outcomes of the language course. However, it is students and teachers whose opinion is frequently overlooked and overheard in the commotion of departmental life. It is the researcher’s hope, that this study will correct this situation.

Summary

In this chapter we discussed the philosophical and methodological foundations of this research, and explained the aims, practical implementation, benefits and weaknesses of the research methods. The mixed method approach is the methodology underlying this study. Although this type of methodology is relatively new, it addresses the weaknesses of using a purely quantitative or qualitative approach by allowing various combinations of method-mixing, with triangulation being one of them (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). The mixed method approach is characteristic of comparative
studies, which tend to use both already available data, such as documents, and empirical data, such as personal observations. This study builds upon this and adds to it the perspectives of students and teachers as “the main actors in the drama”. In this way, we believe, issues such as curriculum, content, teaching methods, students’ motivation and expectation from the course are examined from various angles, thus creating a fuller picture of tertiary German language education in Ukraine and Australia and achieving a greater credibility and objectivity. The next chapter reports on the results obtained through student and teacher questionnaires, interviews, classroom observations and document analysis.
7. RESULTS

Introduction

One of the aims of this study was to examine the aims and the structure of the German language course at Ukrainian and Australian universities. This was not an easy task to fulfill in Ukraine. On the one hand, even before the new Curriculum for German appeared, all language departments possessed a copy of a program issued by the Ministry of Education and Science which laid out the aims, content, outcomes of the German course, skills to be acquired by the students, recommended methods of teaching and so forth. On the other hand, few teachers and course designers ever based their teaching on this program, instead preferring to issue their own, adapted version of the program. There are a few reasons for this situation. First, is that language programs issued by the Ministry have traditionally followed the principle “one model fits all”, which was not attuned to classroom realities, learner needs and requirements of the changing world. Hence, language teachers themselves opted to design programs which would address these issues, although still keeping in mind the ministerial document. Both the old programs and those adapted by the teachers’ could not be easily accessed by anyone interested in the objectives or the content of the course, but could only be obtained through the special permission of the Head of Department and the teachers.

In 2004 a new curriculum for German was issued by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine which took into account recent global developments and the recommendations of the Common European Framework. The problem with this document was that it did not immediately reach language departments and teachers all over Ukraine. Many teachers had heard about the newly issued curriculum, but few had seen or read it, let alone based their teaching on it. A lecturer in the Department of German Linguistics at Kyiv University explained the role the new Curriculum played in language teaching:

At the moment we do not have to follow it [the new curriculum] completely. But I think that once we enter the Bologna Process it will become compulsory. What is
taught comes from the textbooks we have, common sense and of course the requirements of the state examination (T1, personal communication, November 2004).

The information about the aims and content of the German language courses in Ukrainian universities was obtained partly through departmental programs, developed by teachers themselves and partly through the new curriculum for German issued by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine together with the National Linguistic University of Kyiv.

The situation with Australian German departments was the opposite. There was no common program for the departments to follow. Instead each department designed, administered and ran the language course independently of any central authority. The aims and content of the language course in each language department was formulated with the consideration of a variety of factors that had come into play at that particular time, such as funding, student enrolments, availability of teachers, to name a few.

In this section we will report on the results of the investigation of the aims and structure of German courses as described in departmental programs, centrally issued curriculum and course descriptions.

**Structure of the German course at Melbourne University**

In chapter 4. (Australian Context) we have mentioned the new model the University of Melbourne introduced in 2008. The so called “New Generation” degrees are based in six major fields: Arts, Bioscience, Commerce, Environment, Music and Science. A distinctive feature of the “New Generation” degree is that 25% of any such degree should include a “breadth” component, that is, subjects not related to one’s major area of study. The breadth subjects are expected to “enable [a student] to tap other bodies of knowledge, methods of enquiry, personal and professional skills, and ways of knowing” (see www.ba.unimelb.edu.au/ugrad/breadth.html accessed November 25, 2008). But where do languages fit within the new model? Languages can be studied as a major or a minor subject, as a breadth component for students enrolled in the five non-Arts degrees. Language study can also be undertaken concurrently with another major
degree (Diploma in languages - DL). The Diploma consists of a three-year sequence of first-, second- and third-year language study and may add up to one year to the duration of the student’s degree course\textsuperscript{43}.

There are three streams in the department of German and Swedish Studies: Beginners’, Intermediate and Advanced/Post-VCE. Students in the Beginners’ stream start learning language at an \textit{ab initio} level. Upon successful completion of the program, they may proceed to Intermediate German. Later in the third year, once a certain level of language proficiency is acquired, they merge with the Post-VCE stream. Following the third year of study, students can be admitted to the Honours Course, provided they have accumulated a certain number of points and completed all the necessary requirements for the pass degree. The number of contact hours fluctuates from year to year, which to a great extent depends on departmental funding and university policy. While the number of weekly contact hours for beginners has remained stable in the last few years – six hours per week, the number of classes in some other levels, such as Intermediate and Post-VCE has slipped to just four in 2007 (see http://www.german-swedish.unimelb.edu.au/study_areas/german_streams.html).

The subjects offered in the department concentrate on the following three broad aspects of German Studies:

1. Linguistic Studies, where contemporary and historical aspects of the German language are dealt with.
2. Background Studies, where topics such as Germany, German life and traditions are discussed.
3. Literary Studies, covering aspects of German literature from the Middle Ages to the present (Melbourne University Undergraduate Handbook, 2006).

Depending on the level of language study, the program includes not just language tutorials but also seminars on German and Austrian culture, history and literature. Besides core units, Special Studies units offered every semester allow students to specialise according to their interests.

\textsuperscript{43} see http://www.arts.unimelb.edu.au/futurestudents/programs/concurrent.html\#1 (accessed November 25, 2008)
Structure of the German course at Monash University

The German department at Monash University is no exception when it comes to creating all possible opportunities for students from all around the university to study German. Similarly to the University of Melbourne, the German program at Monash University is arranged into streams, catering for different levels of language proficiency. German can be studied from an absolute beginners' level up to a level of near-native language proficiency. Depending on the entry level, the subject sequences may lead either to an introductory minor (which usually takes up to two years) or major degree or to an advanced minor or major degree (which takes three years of study) (see http://arts.monash.edu.au/german/ugrad/index.php, accessed December 2, 2008).

At Monash, as at the University of Melbourne, German may be studied no matter what degree is being undertaken. It may be taken as an Arts subject, as a part of a double degree with Arts or as an additional subject while studying another degree (see http://www.arts.monash.edu.au/german/about/index.php, accessed December 2, 2008). For those willing to teach German the completion of an Advanced major is required.

The course has been designed to include three areas: language, culture and linguistics. The information for potential students reads that practical language study and culture are amongst the integral parts of the core curriculum of the German language program (http://www.arts.monash.edu.au/german/ugrad/index.php, accessed December 2, 2008).

Study abroad units

We mentioned previously that courses taken in the target language countries are an important part of the curriculum in practically every Australian language department. The department of German, Russian and Swedish Studies at the University of Melbourne awards around eight language scholarships to students of German and Swedish. These scholarships provide assistance towards the cost of going to Europe either to undertake an eight-week intensive language course or a program of study at a university (Melbourne University Undergraduate Handbook, 2006).
The German department at Monash University also encourages its students to apply for scholarships offered by Monash International and the German Academic Exchange Service. The Study Abroad units thus can be undertaken at a German, Swiss or Austrian university and credited towards the completion of the degree (Monash University Undergraduate Handbook, 2006). The program is particularly popular amongst 4th year (Honours) students some of whom spend up to two semesters at an overseas university, others up to eight weeks in intensive language courses.

**Extra-curricular support**

A common feature of the German departments at The University of Melbourne and Monash University is the creation of opportunities for students to be exposed to the target language outside the classroom. Students at the University of Melbourne have the opportunity to attend *Stammtische* and other social events involving native speakers and those interested in German language and culture. They also receive regular information mainly provided by the academic staff on German films, performances and concerts and art exhibitions taking place in Melbourne. Similarly, the Monash University German Club holds weekly “Kaffee und Kuchen” sessions and other activities such as Film Nights, Pub Nights and an annual dinner at a German restaurant. These activities are believed to be particularly beneficial not only for improving students’ language proficiency and to reduce the language barrier, but for creating positive attitudes towards language learning in general “outside the four walls”.

**Structure of the German course at the Ukrainian universities**

As in Australia, German departments in Ukraine provide training to people who wish to become proficient in languages and who, after completing their studies and obtaining a degree, will be able to work with the language in various areas or simply effectively communicate in a variety of contexts. The study of any FL in Ukrainian language departments within the context of a language degree, for the majority of students, takes place on a full-time basis. It means that unlike at Australian universities,
students in Ukraine generally only concentrate on the study of usually two FLs (one of which is the major), and on a wide range of other linguistic and humanity disciplines, that have been “packaged” for them by the university and department administration. The “package” is roughly the same across all the universities, whether they are in the central, eastern or western parts of Ukraine. The number of contact hours per week varies slightly depending on the institution and the year of study. For example, second-year students at Kyiv University have eight hours per week, which are divided by the teacher into “Grammar”, “Home reading” and “Textbook” components. In the fourth year, students have ten contact hours per week, including “Textbook”, “Newspaper”, “Business German” and “Home reading”. Forth-year students at Kharkiv University have 8 weekly hours that include “Home reading”, “Grammar”, “Oral practice” and “Analytical reading”.

Overall, the structure of the degree is similar at all three universities: Kyiv, Kharkiv and Lviv, in that it provides training at three levels: Bachelor (8 semesters), Specialist (10 semesters) and Masters (10-12 semesters for more outstanding students). Enrolment at German language departments, as at all other university departments in Ukraine, is based on the results of entrance examinations that take place approximately one month before the start of the first semester. Candidates are generally required to sit three exams: one on a FL that comprises a written and oral part, one on the Ukrainian language and one on Ukrainian literature. The competition varies from university to university and from year to year, but is generally of the order of a few persons per place. University policy allows certain groups of the population, such as rural residents, Chornobyl victims, orphans, candidates with disabilities, winners of various awards and those who have excellent results from school to be exempt from the examinations or to go through a simplified testing procedure in the form of an interview (see http://www.philology.kiev.ua/abitur2.shtml and http://www.lnu.edu.ua/faculty/inomov.new/1eng.htm accessed March 2007). This also contributes to the already high level of competition. The FL entrance examinations are

44 An overview and a critical discussion of FL curriculum at Ukrainian institutions will be provided in Chapter 8.
45 The information on number of classes and aspects was true at the time the study was being undertaken in 2004-2005 years.
46 It should be noted however that transition towards two-level system is currently being considered to suit the recommendations of the Bologna Convention.
usually rather tough and often require school leavers to go through some extensive preliminary preparation, which they normally obtain from private language tutors or at specially designed preparatory courses, often run by university teachers. Candidates also have the option to apply for study on a fee-paying basis which is less competitive and less demanding.

In the FL examination a wide range of competencies is tested, namely: morphology and word formation, phraseology, syntax; grammatical categories of verb such as tense system, mood, voice; listening comprehension skills, oral skills, etc (see http://www.philology.kiev.ua/student/ang.shtml). There is no doubt, then, that those who come to FL departments already have a rather high level of language proficiency. However, some lecturers have been somewhat concerned that the level of newcomers is gradually deteriorating mainly due to the fact that the quota of fee-paying students, who are less prepared, has increased (T1, Kharkiv University, 077, January 2006)\textsuperscript{47}. One normally starts his/her German language study from the first year either in the beginners’ group or the group for those who have previously learned German at school. Later in the course the two groups may merge, once the beginners achieve a similar language proficiency to the other groups, but the student composition of the two groups remains rather stable during the entire four or five years of study. Unlike in Australia, the number of students leaving the course or those joining the group along the way is minimal\textsuperscript{48}.

The class sizes also differ depending on the year of study and on how the tuition of groups is organised, however the number of students in the classes were the data were collected ranged between 6 to 16 in the Ukrainian universities, and between 16 to 30 in the Australian universities.

\textsuperscript{47} The names of lecturers with who interviews were conducted are confidential.
\textsuperscript{48} More precise figures on student attrition rate were not available.
Aims of the German language courses at Ukrainian and Australian universities

The following table shows the aims of the German language course as stated by the German departments at Ukrainian and Australian universities in programs and undergraduate handbooks. Although most of these documents address each level of study, it seems reasonable to concentrate only at the final year which provides the fullest information on students’ expected mastery of the language.

Table 7.1 Excerpts from the course programs and methodical recommendations for study and teaching of German for fifth-year students from Kyiv, Kharkiv and Lviv universities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kyiv and Kharkiv Universities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subject description</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical acquisition of language following all the grammatical, lexical and stylistic rules of language in all aspects: oral, written speech, reading, listening comprehensions, translation/interpreting and text analysis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aim(s) and content of the course</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The aim of the German language course at universities is to train highly qualified philologists, teachers of German at higher educational institutions, professional institutes and schools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Final target</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By the end of year 5 students must be able to:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• read correctly a text of any genre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• speak eloquently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• understand language of any style</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• acquire knowledge of every-day, formal, political, literature and linguistic vocabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• communicate orally in written form on a wide range of topics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• make a short summary of a report or presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• translate/interpret correctly from German into Ukrainian and vice-versa, including unfamiliar texts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• comment on current political events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• write dictation (4000 letters) and retell a text (in 4500 letter) in 2 academic hours (45 min each)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• lead a discussion on a text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• provide the lexical and stylistic characteristics of a work of fiction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• write an essay on a political, pedagogical or literature topic.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 7.1 (continued 1) Excerpts from the course programs (Ukrainian universities)

Phonetics:

acquire knowledge in various styles of pronunciation (*Bühnendeutsch*, *reine Hochlautung*, *gemäßigte Hochlautung*, *reine Umgangssprache*, *gemäßigte Umgangssprache*).

Acquire knowledge of phonetic features of different literature genres: fable, scientific text, report, poetry and features of oral speech.

**Conversation topics.**

By the end of the fifth year students must be able to converse on the following topics:

- Tertiary education in Ukraine
- Important days and holidays
- Culture and art
- Social security and health
- Law and rights
- Literature and society
- Pedagogy.

Important issues in literature studies, language studies, stylistics, culture and art.

The fight for freedom, peace and democracy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lviv University</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subject description</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Aim(s) and content of the course** | **Communicative competence:** 1. students must be able to talk about general social, literary and political topics; 2. to be able to lead discussions about current political events in Ukraine and abroad; 3. to speak spontaneously; 4. to express his/her opinion on a text or a message; 5. to participate in dialogues. **Lexical material:**  
  - die Europäische Union;  
  - die Vereinten Nationen;  
  - Verfassung und Staatsaufbau;  
  - die Ukraine als souveräner Staat;  
  - Deutsch-ukrainische Beziehungen. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject description</th>
<th>Aim(s) and content of the course</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Students deepen and expand their knowledge of German in all aspects, they enlarge their vocabulary and recapitulate the material from the previous four years. The development of oral and written competences occur by integrating all aspects of language. | **Communicative competence:** 1. students must be able to talk about general social, literary and political topics; 2. to be able to lead discussions about current political events in Ukraine and abroad; 3. to speak spontaneously; 4. to express his/her opinion on a text or a message; 5. to participate in dialogues. **Lexical material:**  
  - die Europäische Union;  
  - die Vereinten Nationen;  
  - Verfassung und Staatsaufbau;  
  - die Ukraine als souveräner Staat;  
  - Deutsch-ukrainische Beziehungen. |
Table 7.1 (continued 2) Excerpts from course programs (Ukrainian universities)

Reading:
Students must be able to read excerpts from literature and newspaper articles correctly in terms of pronunciation, intonation and rhythm whilst comprehending the content of the text.

Writing:
Students must be able to write essays and reports on literature, social and political topics orthographically and grammatically correctly.

Text analysis:
- be able to provide short information about the author, the epoch, style and his/her work;
- be able to break up the text in logical pieces;
- provide characteristics of the main characters, opinion of the author and the main ideal of the work;
- discuss the usage of synonyms, antonyms, etc.;
- discuss peculiarities of the author’s style: choice of words, neologisms, archaisms, phraseology, etc.

Grammar:
Students deepen and expand their knowledge of morphology and syntax of the language and practice them in written oral language use.

Grammar topics:
- das Feld der Möglichkeit;
- das Feld der Kausalität;
- das Feld der Temporalität;
- Ausdrucksmittel der Raumverhältnisse;
- das Subjekt und seine Ausdrucksmittel;
- das Prädikat und seine Ausdrucksmittel;
- das Objekt und seine Ausdrucksmittel;
- das Adverbiale und seine Ausdrucksmittel;
- das Attribut und seine Ausdrucksmittel;
- das prädikative Attribut;
- Infinitiv und seine syntaktischen Funktionen;
- Partizip und seine syntaktischen Funktionen.

It has to be noted, however, that at the time the study was being conducted, many departmental programs were being revised to match the latest recommendations issued by the Council of Europe. One such document, the *Curriculum für sprachpraktischen
Deutschunterricht an pädagogischen Fakultäten der Universitäten und pädagogischen Hochschulen, which we have mentioned earlier, had already been issued by that time. However, only few teachers were aware of, or interested in it.

The new Curriculum for German emphasises practical acquisition and communicative use of German within the context of intercultural communication, unlike previous programs and plans that gave priority first of all to linguistic knowledge. It outlines its own distinctiveness from other language programs in that it:

- emphasises the need to communicate effectively within the context of multiculturalism and -lingualism, and dialogue of cultures;
- takes into account modern theory produced by research and practical experiences of creating curricula for other FLs;

The level of graduates should correspond to level C2 on the CEF global scale. By the end of the study students must:

- be able to use German freely and effectively for professional, academic and other purposes;
- acquire the four language competences at a level corresponding to the C2 level (see Appendix E “The Common European Framework. Common Reference Levels: Global scale”);
- acquire knowledge of all morphological, syntactic, semantic and phonological rules and use it appropriately;
- acquire knowledge on intercultural communication and use it appropriately;
- acquire knowledge on German-speaking countries;
- become an independent learner who is able to analyse an evaluate his/her own learning experience and learning strategies;
- be able to improve his/her own communicative competence by learning independently with authentic materials;

_____________________

49 Translation from German is provided by the author
• demonstrate a positive attitude towards and motivation for usage and teaching German (Curriculum, 2004, p. 17).

Table that follows outlines German course objectives in the two Australian universities. As with Ukrainian universities the data provided here are from the final level of study in order to show the level of knowledge and skills students are expected to achieve once their undergraduate study is complete.

Table 7.2 Excerpts from the undergraduate handbooks in department of German at the Australian universities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Melbourne University</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Beginners stream Level 3</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description and aims of the course</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Final target** | • have furthered their skills in written communication on more abstract and demanding topics;  
• be able to deliver oral communication on more abstract and demanding topics;  
be able to deliver oral presentations with ease and confidence;  
• be able to work efficiently as a team member and have developed skills in cross-cultural analysis. |

| **Intermediate/Advanced streams Level 3** |
| **Description and aims of the course** | This subject is a comprehensive study of both the formal structures and the functional varieties of contemporary German in a wide range of text and discourse forms. Students should develop a refined use of idiomatic and conversational forms and the capacity to use them freely; a level of proficiency in complex written structures and the capacity to command their use freely and confidently. Students should also cultivate the ability to interpret messages independently at all levels of language use, including those occurring in a variety of audio-visual media and individual and group spoken forms. |
| **Final target** | • have refined their skills in written communication on complex topics;  
• be able to deliver oral presentations with ease and confidence;  
• be able to work efficiently as a team member;  
• have developed skills in cross-cultural analysis. |
Table 7.2 (continued) Excerpts from the undergraduate handbooks (Australian universities)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monash University</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Beginners stream level 3 (Basic German major entry points 1 and 2)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description and aims of the course</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Advanced German major (entry point 5) level 3** |
| **Description and aims of the course** | 1: Spoken and written German. Areas covered will be politics, history, social issues, environmental issues, humour, literature and literary figures. Attention will also be given to general aspects of daily life, including colloquial language and proverbs, and technical language. 2: An examination of the cultural and social history of the German-speaking world through lectures and selected readings, along with an introduction into the basics of text analysis. |

| **Generic objectives stated at all levels** | Upon successful completion of this subject students should have further extended and deepened their knowledge of the German language and German culture; improved their knowledge of the finer points of German grammar; extended their vocabulary as much as possible through wide reading of various types of texts, including television and radio materials; acquired practice in using German in both spoken and written form to discuss topics of current interest, based principally on the reading of a wide range of newspaper articles; become familiar with language containing varying degrees of dialect influence; acquired the ability to translate complicated, non-specialist German texts into idiomatic English, and to translate fairly complicated English texts into German. Students should also have gained a knowledge of the relationship between the German language and its speakers, a knowledge of the differences between dialect and standard German, a knowledge of the phonetics of Modern Standard German and a knowledge of the International Phonetic Alphabet as applied to Modern Standard German. After completion of component 2 students should also have further gained: 1. an overview of the main periods, styles, genres, intellectual preoccupations and socio-historical trends in modern German literature; 2. the ability to recognise and analyse a variety of texts in accordance with the categories of genre, style and epoch; 3. reading skills necessary to understand advanced German; 4. essay-writing skills, an ability to engage in informed discussions of literature and culture, using appropriate terminology and applying the range of language skills pertinent to component 1. |


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The excerpts from undergraduate handbooks show that the German language courses at both institutions, at least on paper, have a balance of grammar and communicative activities, and focus on both written and oral communication while developing the four major skills: speaking, writing, listening and reading.

The compulsory language component is typically complemented by a cultural component where aspects of modern German literature, linguistics, and cultural studies are discussed. Students choose two area studies options, including a range of representative texts, authors or approaches in key areas of German literature, linguistics and cultural studies from the Enlightenment to the present (see https://app.portal.unimelb.edu.au/CSCApplication/view/2008/126-006 accessed November 27, 2008).

Naturally, it is hardly possible to provide a full account of the author’s findings from the analysis of departmental programs and handbooks as they cover many issues which are best viewed in conjunction with other data sources such as questionnaires, interviews and classroom observations.

**Student questionnaires**

**Students’ background**

The following two tables provide the characteristics of the students with respect to their native tongue. It can be seen that the Australian cohort of students represented in fact a larger range of ethnic minorities than the Ukrainian cohort, which is not surprising considering the multilingual and multicultural character of the country. Still for the overwhelming majority of students in Australia (83.3%) English was the sole native tongue. Ten percent of students indicated a language other than English as their only native tongue and almost 7% considered both English and a LOTE their native tongues.
Table 7.3 Students’ native tongue. Ukraine (n=102)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Languages</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ukrainian</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkmenian</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University</th>
<th>State language only (Ukrainian) %</th>
<th>A minority language only %</th>
<th>2 native tongues %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kyiv</td>
<td>47.9</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>43.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kharkiv</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>52.4</td>
<td>38.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lviv</td>
<td>97.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>55.9</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>29.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.4 Students’ native tongue. Australia (n = 120)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Languages</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese (Mandarin)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greek</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkish</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cantonese</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dutch</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaelic</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hebrew</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindi</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesian</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University</th>
<th>State language only (English) %</th>
<th>A minority language only %</th>
<th>2 native tongues %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Melbourne</td>
<td>81.4</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monash</td>
<td>85.4</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>83.3</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tables 7.3 and 7.4 include data from each university despite the researcher’s earlier claim that it is not the aim of this thesis to concentrate on tertiary institutions.
individually. However, when discussing the question of students’ native language(s), the difference between student responses in the eastern, central and western parts of Ukraine becomes most obvious, and to some extent also illustrates the socio-linguistic situation in the country. Ukrainian is spoken more widely in the western regions of Ukraine and Russian in the south and eastern parts. This explains to some extent the significant differences in students’ L1 depending on the location of the university. For example, the majority of Lviv University students (97%) indicated Ukrainian as their only mother tongue, with just 3% Ukrainian-Russian speakers and no Russian-only speakers.

Kharkiv University is located in the east of Ukraine, and the situation with L1 there is almost the reverse of that amongst Lviv University students. Only about 10% of students indicated Ukrainian as their mother tongue, whereas Russian worked out to be L1 for approximately 50% of students. Kyiv occupied the middle position with 47.9% of students indicating Ukrainian-only and 43.9% electing both languages as their mother tongues.

Table 7.5  Number of FLs (including German) studied at school by Ukrainian and Australian students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of languages learned at school</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ukrainian students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>48.0</td>
<td>44.1</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>35.8</td>
<td>31.7</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is obvious that prior to university, students generally have already learned some FLs. The majority of Ukrainian students had learned one or two FLs at school and very few ended up missing out on languages altogether or learning more than two. As mentioned before, an examination in a FL is one of the conditions of entry to the majority of tertiary departments, not to mention, to the department of FLs. If an applicant desires to study a FL at ab initio level then he or she must sit an English exam.

50 The other almost 3% are represented by two Chinese students (2%) and a Turkmenian student (1%).
The somewhat lower figures for Australian students are indicative of the problem with FL learning at schools in Australia. Currently, LOTE teaching in Australian schools is not compulsory. Rather “it is expected” that schools will provide LOTE tuition from Prep to Year 10. In fact, as we mentioned in Chapter 4. (Australian Context) not all schools are able to do that. Also there is no coherence in this subject between schools or even between years of study (Macgregor, 2007; Truckenbrodt & Kretzenbacher, 2001). That is, the provision of LOTE at school largely depends on availability of funding at this school, availability of a teacher and in the end, sufficient number of students interested to study the language. That means that with the change of school, there is no guarantee that the learner will be able to continue learning the same language at an appropriate level.

Current public discourse on the matter of FL learning suggests that the situation is about to change. Australia’s leading universities “The Group of Eight” called state and federal governments to reconsider the status of FLs at schools and to make them compulsory from primary school to year 10. The initiative was triggered by the extremely low level of year 12 students graduating with a second language – 13%, down from 40% in the 1960s (Tomazin, 2007, June 2).

The next table specifies exactly which languages had been studied by students at school and for how long.
### Table 7.6 FLs studied at school and duration. Ukraine

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Students %</th>
<th>Average years of study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>72.5</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>German</td>
<td>68.6</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Polish</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Bulgarian</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Hebrew</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Italian</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Yiddish</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 7.7 FLs studied at school and duration. Australia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Students %</th>
<th>Average years of study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>German</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Italian</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Indonesian</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Hebrew</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Afrikaans</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Latin</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Malay</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Cook Islands Maori</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 7.7 (continued) FLs studied at school and duration. Australia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>FLs Studied At School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Croatian</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Danish</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Dutch</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Javanese</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Polish</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Romanian</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Zulu</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One would expect that the majority of students enrolled at a German department would already have taken the subject at school. The table shows that this was the case with over a half of Ukrainian and Australian students. Still, an even greater number of Ukrainian students (72.5%) learned English at school. The table shows that approximately 69% of Ukrainian students and 60% of Australian students enrolled in German departments had studied German at school.

Visits to German-speaking countries

Even without any empirical investigation, but just by glancing at an undergraduate textbook or a course program one notices that the German language programs at Australian universities rely to a great extent on “study abroad” units. Schools and universities alike offer to FL learners overseas trips to partner institutions, with the reasoning that such study abroad trips are beneficial for language learners. The researcher’s initial estimate was that far fewer Ukrainian students would have visited a German-speaking country while at school or during the initial stages of their tertiary study mainly due to financial and visa problems. Table 7.8 compares the results obtained from the respondents.
Table 7.8 Students who had visited German speaking country(ies)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration of the visit</th>
<th>Ukraine %</th>
<th>Australia %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Out of those questioned %</td>
<td>Out of those who gave a positive answer %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up to 1 mth</td>
<td>24.5</td>
<td>47.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up to 3 mths</td>
<td>15.7</td>
<td>30.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 to 6 mths</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 mths to 1 yr</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>11.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 3 yrs</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 yrs +</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As seen from the table, the number of Australian students who had been to German-speaking countries was indeed higher compared to Ukraine, though probably not as high as we had expected. In Ukraine, out of those students who gave a positive answer, almost half have been abroad for up to one month. The same answer was given by only a third of Australian students. However, the proportion of those who had been overseas for longer periods, for up to three months or three to six months was somewhat higher amongst Australian students.

**German as a major**

Ninety-six percent of Ukrainian participants were taking German as a major, whereas in Australia this was 46%. It is worthwhile noting that the proportion of students majoring in German at Australian tertiary institutions increased with the advancement of the year of study. For example, at Melbourne University, 19% of students in their first year indicated that they were majoring in German. This proportion grew to 63% in the group of second and third year students. Similarly at Monash University, the data showed an increase from 46% to 65% respectively. This is due to the fact that the decisions about majoring in German could only be made in the senior years of study when major-appropriate subjects were available to students.
Background of students who participated in an interview

The participants represented a rather homogeneous group in terms of age (early twenties), sex (all females), school degree and level of language study at university. The majority of students had visited German-speaking countries and could confidently talk about their experience of using their language skills in the German-speaking environment.

Table 7.9 Information about students who took part in the interview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Main field of expertise by which the study is being undertaken</th>
<th>Year of study at the university</th>
<th>FL learned at school and duration (where available)</th>
<th>Visit to German-speaking countries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>U1^51</td>
<td>German</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Summer school after year 3 at university</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U2</td>
<td>German</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>German (9 yrs)</td>
<td>12-14 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U3</td>
<td>German</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>German (7 yrs)</td>
<td>1 month after year 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U4</td>
<td>German</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>German</td>
<td>1 month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U5</td>
<td>German</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>German</td>
<td>More than 2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A1</td>
<td>Music</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>German</td>
<td>Approximately 6 months at different times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2</td>
<td>Arts/ major in German</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>German</td>
<td>Data missing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A3</td>
<td>Arts/Law</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>German (9 years)</td>
<td>6 weeks at the end of year 10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

^51 The capital letter at the front of each student identification number stands for either Ukraine or Australia. Hence U1 and A1 mean Ukrainian student #1 and Australian student #1, respectively.
Table 7.9 (continued) Information about students who took part in the interview

<p>| | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A4</td>
<td>Arts/Law</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>German, French, Indonesian, Vietnamese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A5</td>
<td>Arts/ major in German</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>German</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus, questions 1 to 8 dealt with students’ background, their experience of studying German and other FLs. The next two questions will shed light on their personal motives for studying German at the university and the meaning of German language study in their home country in general.

Motives for studying German

Figure 7.1 Students’ motives for studying German

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The data in Figure 7.1 show that the motives “enjoyment”, “for travel”, “to work in a German-speaking country”, “to study abroad” and “to get to know German culture” were the most popular amongst both groups of students with some differences which will be discussed below. These five motives stand out as they scored 40% of students or more. The largest difference in responses between Australian and Ukrainian students was associated with the motive “to teach German”. This option was amongst the least popular with the Australian students (17%) and amongst the most popular with Ukrainian students (55%). We will provide a more detailed explanation of this observation in Chapter 8. Discussion.

**German language knowledge for enjoyment and for going abroad**

With regard to the “enjoyment” factor and the desire to use the acquired knowledge in the target country, Australian students outscored their Ukrainian counterparts. 70% of Australian students, compared with just 41% of Ukrainian students, marked “enjoyment” as a reason for studying German. Also a larger proportion of Australian students indicated that they want to use their language knowledge in German-speaking countries for work-, study- or travel-related reasons.

The majority of Ukrainian students (65%) selected “to get to know German culture” as one of their motives to study German. This item was followed by “for travel” and “to teach German”.
Table 7.10 Distribution of motives by ranking and countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Ukraine</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Australia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To get to know German culture (64.7%)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Enjoyment (70.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For travel (55.9%)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>For travel (67.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To teach (54.9%)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>To work in a German-speaking country (65.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To study abroad (46.1%)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>To study abroad (52.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyment (41.2%)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>To get to know German culture (47.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To work in a German-speaking country (40.2%)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>Liked the sound of German (27.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liked the sound of German (23.5%)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>Other (21.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (15.7%)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>To teach (17%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German-speaking partner (11.8%)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td>To balance out my technical course (11.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To balance out my technical course (2.0%)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td>German-speaking partner (2.5%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Option “other” yielded some rather interesting results which deserve particular attention.

Table 7.11 Details of the option “other”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option “other”</th>
<th>Ukraine 15.7%</th>
<th>Australia 21.7%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>for occupational reasons</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>family background</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German-speaking friends</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am good at languages</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FLs are important</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>started as a child and wanted to continue</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>enjoyed my stay in Germany</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to continue what I learned during the exchange</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to teach English in Germany</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
During an interview a student recalled the enormous impact a school teacher of German had made on her choice to continue with German at the university:

A2: I had a fantastic teacher at school. She made it so much fun… She’s actually inspired me to become a teacher myself. And I want to teach German when I finish (Monash University, 053).

The reasons behind studying German in Ukraine and Australia

In contrast to Question 9, where students’ personal reasons for studying German were explored, the present question sought to establish students’ views on the importance of learning German in general. The participants were able to tick as many items as they wished. The results are shown in Table 7.12:

| Q10 Why do you think German language should be studied in Ukraine/Australia? |
|------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------|----------------|
|                   | a               | b              | c               | d               | e                 | f               | Other           |
| To maintain cultural connections to German-speaking countries and the rest of Europe | 77.5% | 60.8% | 19.6% | 43.1% | 23.5% | 0.0% | 2.0% |
| German-speaking countries are important trade and economic partners | 60.8% | 60.8% | 54.0% | 35.0% | 30.0% | 15.0% | 2.5% |
| Learning German will help people to get around in Europe | 19.6% | 19.6% | 15.0% | 10.0% | 5.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Learning another language is a key to understanding another cultures and mentalities and broadens one’s outlook | 43.1% | 43.1% | 35.0% | 25.0% | 15.0% | 5.0% | 0.0% |
| To prevent English becoming the world’s lingua franca | 23.5% | 23.5% | 20.0% | 15.0% | 10.0% | 5.0% | 0.0% |
| Because German, as one of Australia’s community languages, should be preserved (for Australian students only) | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Other | 2.0% | 2.0% | 2.0% | 2.0% | 2.0% | 2.0% | 2.0% |

Ukrainian students were particularly partial to the view that study of German is valuable due to the maintenance of cultural connections to German-speaking countries and the rest of Europe (77.5%), and also due to the fact that German speaking countries are
important trade and economic partners with Ukraine (60.8%). These results resonated with those of the previous question dealing with students’ reasons for studying German, where the majority of students acknowledged the cultural and instrumental value of the German language. More than 40% of students pointed to the general cultural and educational value in studying the language (item d.). Considerably fewer students (19.6%) thought that German was a helpful language for getting around Europe. Approximately a quarter of both Ukrainian and Australian students expressed the view that German should be studied in order to counterbalance the dominance of the English language.

A particularly large number of Australian students (80%) chose item d, agreeing that learning a language such as German is a key to understanding other cultures and mentalities and broadens one’s outlook. More than a half of all Australian students agreed that German facilitates cultural connections with German-speaking countries and Europe in general. For slightly fewer students (40.8%) the partnership with German-speaking countries in economy and trade was seen as an important argument for studying German.

**Issues of the curriculum design**

The aim of the next question was to obtain students’ opinions on the design of the language curriculum. Specifically the researcher was interested in finding out whether the students perceived the need for more classes in areas such as: conversation, grammar, phonetics, translation/interpreting, business German, history of language, or other. The students were also able to choose the category “all areas are adequately covered”. The results are shown in the table that follows.
Table 7.13 Overall distributions of students’ responses indicating the need for more classes in Ukraine and Australia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students’ perceived need for more classes on (Q11)</th>
<th>Ukraine</th>
<th>Australia</th>
<th>p-value for Fisher’s Exact test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Ranking</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conversation</td>
<td>88.1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>66.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translation/interpreting</td>
<td>65.3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>34.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business German</td>
<td>46.5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>25.7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>24.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phonetics</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History of language</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All areas are adequately covered already</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table shows that the majority of students in both countries expressed the desire for more conversation classes. The proportion of Ukrainian students with this item was larger by 22% than that of Australian students (88% and 66% respectively). The difference was significant as evidenced by the low *p*-value (<0.001, Fisher’s exact test).

The second most popular item in both groups was “translation/interpreting”. Interestingly, the proportion of Ukrainian students who chose this area was 30% higher than that of Australian students (*p*-value <0.001). It was not uncommon amongst both groups to mention translation and interpreting classes in the interviews as well. Ukrainian students felt they needed more of these classes because they had had very few of them in the previous years and because interpreting/translation was perceived as a useful skill in their future employment. Student U4 from Ukraine reported to have already been engaged as an interpreter/translator in an international project in Ukraine and regretted that little attention had been paid to the development of translation/interpreting skills at the university:

U4: The only thing that I wish we’d done a bit more of, was business translation – exactly what I am working with
now. I feel like I have a gap in this area. Yes, we had some of it, but only in the final years and only once a week (Kharkiv University, 080).

Australian students also expressed the desire for more translation/interpreting classes. In fact, 4 out 5 students interviewed explicitly mentioned the lack of this particular discipline:

A1: Translating / interpreting – is one of the ways that you can use German professionally. Without these skills it would be difficult to even explain to someone in Australia what is in a letter that someone has sent from Germany. So it is a very useful skill to have and a good way to learn the language (Melbourne University, 260).

A student from Monash University noted that there was a considerable number of people in her class who would have liked to study translating/interpreting (A2, 179).

“Business German” turned out to be also amongst the most popular answers. 47% of Ukrainian students and only 20% of Australian students chose this item ($p$-value 0.001). Student U1 from Kyiv University, who at the time was embarking on a career in journalism and advertising while aspiring to obtain her second tertiary degree in politics and economics, noted that a one-year course in Business German at the university was not sufficient, and the vocabulary that was taught was old and irrelevant (U1, 177).

Almost a quarter of students from both groups expressed the opinion that there should be more classes on grammar (more about this below). The need for more phonetics classes was expressed by 22% of Ukrainian students and only by 10% of their Australian counterparts ($p$-value 0.02). However, in the interviews Australian students were more prone to mention the lack of phonetics classes:

A1: It would have been helpful to do phonetics thoroughly in first year instead of doing it in third year. I didn’t even know that there were short and long vowels until the last semester (Monash University, 260).

A2: I find phonetics would have been very useful… Sometimes I find it quite difficult pronouncing things...
We did actually have a linguistics component in the first year that covered a bit of that, semantics, sentence structure, but … [it wasn’t enough] (Monash University, 179).

12% of students in Australia thought that there should be more classes on the history of language (compared with just 7% of Ukrainian students). With “all areas were adequately covered”, 16% of Australian students and only 2% of Ukrainian were in agreement (p-value <0.001).

**The role of grammar in language learning**

Table 7.14 shows students’ opinions on the importance of grammar in language learning. The four-point scale provided a more robust picture of students’ perceptions of the importance of grammar in the class. The majority of students in Ukraine and Australia perceived grammar as a very important component of language study (57.8% and 66.7% respectively). In fact, the general index of “importance” (categories “rather important” and “very important” combined) was close to 100% for both groups of students:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Ukraine</th>
<th>Australia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>not essential</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rather important</td>
<td>40.2%</td>
<td>30.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>very important</td>
<td>57.8%</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not sure</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 7.14 Students perceptions on the importance of grammar in the language class**
“Ideal” proportion of grammar and communicative activities in the class

Table 7.15 “Ideal” proportion of grammar and communicative activities in the class as perceived by the students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mainly grammar</th>
<th>Mainly conversation</th>
<th>Equal amount of both</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
<td>84.3%</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
<td>75.8%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The previous two questions showed that students do consider the grammar component of their language study essential, notwithstanding the fact that only about a quarter of them said that they would like to have had more of it (Question 11). On the other hand, the majority of students would have liked to have seen an equal amount of both grammar and communication activities in their language class. Further in this chapter we will see whether teachers had the same opinion about the ideal proportion of grammar and communicative activities.

Similarly, in the interviews, grammar was generally perceived by both groups of students as an important and necessary component of FL study. However, some variation existed in opinions even within the groups as to where the greater emphasis should be: grammar or communication:

A1:  I suppose there should be a weighting towards communicative stuff just because you can’t do it at home and you can do grammar at home. But as a total of what you’re expected to do I think they should probably be fairly equal (Melbourne University, 215).

A3:  I really like that they push the grammar a lot [at the university]. Because I find grammar really hard and they never pushed it at school for us past year 10 (Monash University, 098).

U3:  I know some people who say that grammar is the thing of the past, but I think it’s extremely important. You can
practise communication over there [in Germany], but not grammar. Even Germans themselves don’t have a full grasp of it. Therefore one should study grammar at the university (Kharkiv University, 130).

Imbalance between grammar and communicative activities

The majority of students in Ukraine and Australia expressed the need for an increase in the communicative component of their university language course. Despite the fact that Ukrainian students were generally more positive about their course compared to their Australian peers (more about this below), they also indicated that more communicative activities were needed:

U5: Well, I honestly think that all aspects were covered. The only thing I can say is that we did not have many conversation classes. But I think if you learn a FL in your own country it is always rather theoretical … Our teachers used to tell us to speak German to each other … Nobody did. Maybe, more attention should have been paid to the communicative aspect (Lviv University, 338).

A similar opinion was expressed by student U3:

In the past five years we have had separate classes in grammar and oral practice. In reality, in those “Konversation” classes we did not learn any colloquial lexis… In fact, we again learned grammar… But to me, a conversation class is for getting to know all sorts of colloquial and youth words, which we were never taught. Theoretically, grammar and communication should have been something like 50/50, but in fact, there was only about 10% conversation (Kharkiv University, 139).

The Australian students tended to be more critical about their course. The main criticism was directed towards the imbalance between grammar and communicative
activities, or sometimes even the absence of the latter. A student from an Australian University disagreed with the change that occurred in the senior years of her study. She noted that the program became more grammar-focused as she progressed through to more advanced levels of the university course:

A2: I liked the way it was all structured when I was in the first year. That was level five and six when I started in the post-VCE group, where it was almost 50/50 and they tied it together. Then it became more and more grammar focused. In that level [5 and 6] they used language and grammar to complement each other. So you’re looking at both within each other. It was a lot more practical. They are trying to turn us into academics, rather then German-speakers. In my experience, and in the experience of many people I spoke to about it, that’s not why we chose this course. It’s still important and we still want to have this aspect of it in there, but we want to speak and we are not speaking, especially not at my level, where it’s all grammar-focused. We have a grammar book and a sheet which you have to read through and than analyse the grammar (Monash University, 114).

Here is another student’s opinion on grammar from the same university:

A5: When I got here we just focused completely on grammar: adjective endings, prepositions, those sorts of things. I already knew all of that. In the first year I got something like 95% high distinction. I didn’t struggle, I didn’t even have to work, but I couldn’t have gone up a level because I can’t speak. But we were not learning to speak the level I was in. So it was really disappointing, because I got to the end of the year and all I’ve done is gone over the things I had already known. And I still can’t say things in German. What I really wanted from this course is to go to Germany and speak German. But if I got there I don’t
have the skills. Grammar is very important because it enables you to speak well. They say: “Go out listen to some SBS radio!”. I don’t do that. I read German magazines, but it still doesn’t give you the oral practice. And I don’t get it in class either (Monash University, 002).

The classroom observations showed that grammar instruction indeed occupied central position in the language classes; and a great deal of attention was paid to accuracy both in oral and written communication. Activities such as: completing grammar exercises, reading aloud and reciting grammar rules, writing orthographic dictations, performing bilateral translations, sentence transformations, syntactic analyses of sentences, morphological analyses of words appeared more or less regularly at all three Ukrainian universities. It is worthwhile noting that grammar per se was only one of the aspects into which the language program was formally divided. For example, a typical 10-12 hour weekly language “menu” might have been split into the following compulsory components: textbook, grammar, lexis (sometimes called vocabulary), phonetics, conversation, home reading, analytical reading, newspaper, and so forth. However, grammatical phenomena in one form or another were discussed irrespective of the profile of the class. For example, in one of the home reading classes, year 3 students at Kyiv University were discussing a text about Thomas Mann. The teacher began to read random sentences from the text in Ukrainian for students to translate into German by employing the syntactic structures and vocabulary from the original text. Each student’s translation was then discussed and errors corrected.

It should be noted that the traditional written activities were often accompanied by more lively communicatively-oriented activities where students were given the opportunity to show some creativity and to practice their speaking skills. Some examples are: making up stories using new vocabulary, creating a dialogue with another student or simply expressing an opinion on a character or a issue from the book. In many cases, students’ oral communication was too much a subject of error correction (although not as scrupulous as in written communication).
The classroom observations in the two Australian tertiary institutions revealed that grammar instruction also occupied a rather important position in the language class; however some differences in the methods of its teaching were noticed. As mentioned earlier, Australian students had far fewer contact hours per week, compared with Ukrainian students. Beginners would generally have up to 6 hours per week and this amount tended to decrease with advancement of the year of study. Often the remaining hours would not be entirely dedicated to language learning, but shared with other study areas: such as culture or literature. For example, at Monash University, the language program for second-year students was made up of 2 hours of language tutorials and two hours of cultural component (see www.arts.monash.edu.au/german/introduction.html, and student A3, 079). With such a small quantity of language classes per week the discussion of a grammar topic took place practically in every class. As in Ukraine, explicit grammar instruction was not uncommon in Australia; however it depended on the teacher. Also, as in Ukraine, students were asked to reproduce the rule or explain the use of a certain grammatical form used in a dialogue or in a sentence. The teacher also tended to refer to corresponding grammatical phenomena from English wherever possible.

It was obvious that the teacher was not trying to follow a strict scenario in the class, instead, spontaneous questions and responses in students were encouraged. The use of activities involving independent thinking, creativity, group- and pair discussions were particularly characteristic of German language classes in Australia. It was rare for a teacher to correct students’ grammatical or phonetic errors in oral communication where they did not interfere with comprehensibility. The general atmosphere in the class in Australia was usually relaxed and friendly.

**Irrelevance of the vocabulary taught**

Another important issue which was mentioned by almost all of the students was the irrelevance of the vocabulary taught. Many students admitted that the topics and texts which were offered in their ordinary language class often were irrelevant to them and remote from “real life”. This resulted in the class being boring and in the end useless. One student from a Ukrainian university noted:
The teaching at the university is good. There is quite a lot of grammar (…), but the vocab they teach is somewhat remote from real life. There were things that we need, but also things that one does not discuss in everyday life (U1, Kyiv University, 088).

Ukrainian student U3 also recalled that the texts were often artificial and the vocabulary was out of date: “The texts were often artificial and old (…). But to me, a conversation class is meant to acquaint you with all sorts of colloquial and youth words, which we were never taught” (Kharkiv University, 139).

For Australian students the same thing turned out to be one of the major problems in their university language learning:

A2: They give us topics that you are not going to talk about in everyday life. How many times do you need to talk about Hermeneutics outside the university? I can talk in German about it. But if you ask me to talk about simple things like cooking or going to the shops, I struggle. Simply because we are not exposed to it at university level (Monash University, 087).

Student A3 mentioned her frustrating misunderstanding of a simple phrase while in Germany for which, she asserted, her overly formal university education was responsible:

I wish we had had more original texts rather than those specially made for students (…). They are so formulated the ones that they give us, so clichéd. When I went to Germany I couldn’t work out what “Fernseh gucken” was, I thought they wanted me to cook something. Then I realised that it was “to watch TV”. We’ve never been told. They always teach us in a very formal way. More colloquial stuff would be really good to learn (Monash University, 124).
Student A5 also expressed her concern about her insufficient knowledge of practical day-to-day vocabulary which she ventured might be a problem in a German-speaking country:

What I’ve learned so far is not that much of a help (...). I can tell you that this is Dative and this is Accusative. I don’t even know how to order something from a shelf; I’ve never learned any kind of day-to-day language. If we learn some vocab it’s really detached, obscure (...). I can’t order things from a shop, I don’t know the words for clothing, I don’t know anything that would get me by in day-to-day life. I don’t really know how to have a general conversation with people, because every time we have a general conversation [in the class] it’s “What are your hobbies?” and “How do you get to uni every day?”. It’s not really what I expect people will be asking me when I get to Germany. And I don’t know any colloquial language, so if I’m hanging out with people my age in Germany, probably I won’t be able to understand (Monash University, 143).

Cross-country differences

Repetitiveness of the material

Some Australian students lamented that they were often bored in their language class. The reason for this was not just the irrelevance of the taught material, but also its repetitiveness:

A1: I always found the classes boring (...), probably because I felt that the same material was covered every year (...): you learn Konjunktiv II every year without really refining it. It was the little rules and the little refinements that I
wanted to know more and not just to be sort of introduced if someone asked about it (Melbourne University, 121-135);

A4: Generally, on the whole I enjoy it [the study] quite much. One frustrating aspect of it is that we tend to focus on the same grammar points. And it becomes really boring after a while, like this year we haven’t done anything new at all (...) we just keep doing the same old thing. It doesn’t really motivate you to keep going …it’s probably something that I would change (Monash University, 023).

Lack of reinforcement of and control over the material taught

It was also not uncommon amongst Australian students to complain about the lack of control and reinforcement of the material:

A1: I suppose I accept my teacher’s argument that we are not supposed to have them [vocabulary and grammar tests] in the third year, but I still think they would be quite helpful. (...) I wanted to be forced to learn it, so that I wouldn’t just forget everything after a couple of weeks. (Melbourne University, 135-147);

A3: You learn those rules, but sometimes it’s just hard to apply them. Probably more interaction would be quite good. It would be good to have something like role playing and forcing you to get up and speak off the top of your head instead of just sitting there and listening (Monash University, 253-260).
“University is not the place for learning colloquial vocabulary”

We mentioned above that both groups of students expressed the opinion that the material taught at their university was often irrelevant to “real life”, unpractical and out of date. To many Ukrainian students, however, this fact seemed neither surprising nor disappointing, but rather an inseparable part of university education. The researcher’s general impression was that it was even an expectation of many students to study material of general intellectual value, which might not necessarily be “interesting” or “practical”:

U5: We did not have lots of conversation. But I think if you learn a foreign language in your own country it is always rather theoretical (Lviv University, 338).

U3: I am very grateful to all of them [university teachers] and to the university for the [high] level of German. But honestly speaking, one can never feel completely free [with the language] until one goes to Germany, until one is completely submerged in the [German-speaking] environment (Kharkiv University, 121).

Students’ and teachers’ roles

Traditionally, the teacher in Ukraine, as indeed throughout the whole of the Soviet Union, possessed ultimate authority in the class. Nicholas (1983, p. 74) noted that the teacher in the USSR was considered to be the expert in a particular subject, and that learning was merely the passive acquisition by learners of knowledge, dispensed to them by experts.

The Australian education system, on the other hand, was developed following the Western educational tradition which is different in many respects from the Soviet tradition, including the roles attributed to teachers and learners. In this study, we have
attempted to establish whether such differences really exist and how significant they are.

The classes in Ukraine generally followed a strict structure with many pre-planned activities. The formal or informal greeting was usually followed by a recapitulation of homework. Often students themselves were asked by the teacher to tell the class what the homework was. In some cases the teacher checked with every student if they had done their homework. The teacher normally called out students’ names to read the next sentence from an exercise or to retell the text. Pair work or group work at this stage of the tutorial was rare. This was seemingly the most tense part of the class, which students would rather have avoided, unless they were fully prepared. In some classes, hardly any spontaneity was welcome and the teacher’s disappointing look, at best, and a bad mark, at worst, awaited those who were unprepared or attempting to do the homework on the spot.

In the main part of the class it was the teacher’s role to explain the new material or the meaning of new words to students, to ask questions about a topic or a text or to set specific tasks to be fulfilled by the class. Everything seemed orderly. At the same time the strict structure and control over the activities did not necessarily mean that the class was “boring”. Some teachers were able to demonstrate immense skill in keeping students involved and interested, but at the same time to maintain control over all activities. By way of example, one language class for 4th-year students at Kharkiv University proceeded according to a strict plan, which nevertheless provided enough opportunities for all students to talk and to be creative. In the first part of the class students discussed their homework, which was a text about Germany’s government bodies, by responding to the teacher’s questions. The teacher then asked students to elicit all the words from the text that were characteristic for the given topic. The task was structured so as to engage all the students within a relatively short period of time. One student was asked to name a word in Ukrainian; the task of the next student was then to provide its German equivalent. Then a new topic “Immigrants in Germany” was introduced where students were allowed to play the role of either German citizens or immigrants, each expressing their opinion on the matter of immigration. After a long heated debate, the teacher showed some pictures of immigrants and asked students to describe an immigrant and in a few minutes to come up with a life story for him/her
while working in pairs. One person from each pair was required to tell the story in front of the class.

This example shows that the class was structured and contained a strict sequence of activities initiated by the teacher; nevertheless it was full of interesting and creative tasks involving speaking and independent thinking so that the students’ level of interest was maintained. However, this investigation also intended to establish what students themselves thought about the roles of the teacher and themselves in the language class. Here are the opinions of students from the three Ukrainian universities expressed in the interviews:

U3: The role of the teacher and students should be something like 50/50. We are not like people in the West, where students are rather independent. Our people are lazy, they need a whip. The teacher should guide, provide advice. If the topic is difficult, the teacher should “chew it” and place it in the student’s mouth. The student, on the other hand should not be lazy. He should just absorb everything. It’s such a pleasure to work with students who want to learn (...). The student-teacher relationships should be like a partnership; they should be like friends: smile, openness, readiness to help. Unfortunately this is not always the case, as many teachers represent the “old model” (...). I was lucky, because during my study, we did not get many such teachers. My uni teachers were always open and ready to help, they used to give us their phone number, so that we could ring them and ask something. Nobody likes grumpy teachers, even if they know their subject very well (Kharkiv University, 264).

A fifth-year student from Kyiv University stressed that some control and reinforcement is essential:

It’s typical for our mentality that students won’t study unless they are forced to. I know some teachers from Germany, where they were very loyal to students and
nobody learned a thing. Students therefore did not have motivation. Too strict is bad as well. The situation where students get lectured by their teachers because they don’t do anything is not good either. Teachers should look for a golden middle. The teacher should tell the students to do something, but also explain why they need it. The teacher should almost be an equal to the students, but at the same time not allow the students to get away with too much. The distance shouldn’t be too large (U1, 314).

A similar opinion was expressed by a student from Lviv University:

U5: The teacher must be an authority; however students should not be afraid of him/her. He/she should be accessible, helpful to students. The distance must not be too large, but at the same time students must understand that he/she is a teacher (U5, 316).

Australian students tended to generalise less as to students’ mentality and what the ideal teacher should be. Instead, each perceived the question about student-teacher roles from their own language learning experience. Similarly to Ukrainian students they noted that a good teacher is someone who gives guidance, but at the same time, provides opportunities for free discussions:

A4: I’ve got a really good teacher. She manages to drive us in some directions, but then if we really get into something and we’re all talking about it in German, she lets us talk and she listens. I am really happy with that (Monash University, 128).

Student A3 (232) from the same university also liked the fact that the teacher encouraged students to talk and often asked their opinion on an issue, but regretted the fact that the classes were too crowded and only a few people got a chance to speak and to interact in German.

A1: If you’re learning new material, then I suppose the teacher should be teaching, but the rest of the time I think the
atmosphere in the class is best if there is maximum of interaction. It’s good not just if you do group work, but if the interaction is between the teacher and the student, so that the teacher can be correcting and setting models. It really depends on the personality of the teacher. I had one teacher who managed to get many people to talk and respond to his questions, but in other classes it was the teacher was asking questions and everyone was scared that they will be asked (Melbourne University, 227).

A student from another Australian University noted that she obtained a very positive and unique experience from her learning of German, greatly due to the comfortable settings that the teacher created in the class:

A5: I think the German department is very good in its relationships to students. They make them feel very comfortable. In other subjects there are so many students that you just become a number and they’d never know your name. In the German department (…) everybody is very approachable. [My teacher] is just like of one of us (…). They are not really strict, which is good and bad. I just think it lags just a bit, the whole program…(laughter) (Monash University, 097).

In summary, the data have shown that students from Ukraine and Australia, in fact had some common concerns with regard to their university German education (Table 7.16).
### Table 7.16 Issues arising from the discussion on the contents of the language course

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issues</th>
<th>Australia</th>
<th>Ukraine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Importance of grammar</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Lack of effective communicative activities</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Irrelevance of the material taught</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Repetitiveness of the material</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✗</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Lack of reinforcement and control of the material taught</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✗</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Lack of practical or interesting material is OK in the university setting</td>
<td>✗</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Both groups of students highly valued grammar instruction in the German language class, but stressed that more attention should be paid to communicative activities which would enable them to communicate freely in a German-speaking country using colloquial words and phrases. One of the issues frequently mentioned by both groups of students was the irrelevance of the material taught; many texts and topics to which they were exposed contained old and artificial lexis that had little practical value. Some concerns were more common amongst students in one particular country. For example, it was characteristic of Australian students to mention the repetitiveness of the contents, lack of dynamics in the study program; and the lack of control and reinforcement of the material taught.
Motivation and perceived need for more classes. Is there any connection?

In this study the researcher was also interested in examining the connection between students’ reasons for studying German and their perceived need for more classes. The purpose of this analysis was to establish whether motivation was a strong factor that affected students’ perceived gaps in the university German language curriculum.

Fisher’s Exact Test was used in order to determine if there were nonrandom associations between two categorical variables (Weisstein, no year indicated). $P$-values were extracted from the data using the SPSS computer package, version 12.

Appendix F provides a table showing $p$-values for Fisher’s Exact Test on the relationship between students’ motivation and the perceived need for more classes in the given areas. A low $p$-value means that the data are unlikely if there is no relationship between the two variables in the table. Hence we interpret this to suggest that there is a relationship. We looked at each such significant relationship separately (where the $p$-value was less than 0.05) in order to identify how the relationship works. Where only the Australian or Ukrainian data showed a strong relationship, the other country’s responses for the same pair of questions were also analysed for the purpose of comparison.

Work and Conversation

In the previous section we defined what the most popular motives were for Ukrainian and Australian students to study German at university. In this section we will examine whether motivation had any relationship with students’ perceived need for more language classes in certain areas.
The data showed a strong correlation between the two variables in the group of Australian students: the majority of those who felt the need for more conversation classes also chose “to work” as their reason for studying German. Conversely, the majority of students who responded negatively to conversation were not interested in pursuing a career in a German-speaking country, hence the low $p$-value.

With regard to Ukrainian students, a very large proportion indicated the need for more conversation classes. The majority of students tended to respond negatively to the motive regardless of their answer to “conversation”. Thus no association was found between the option “conversation” and the motive “to work in a German-speaking country”.

### Table 7.17 Work and conversation. Australia ($p$-value 0.002)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conversation</th>
<th>To work in a German-speaking country</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>18.6%</td>
<td>15.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>16.1%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>34.7%</td>
<td>65.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of students = 118

### Table 7.18 Work and conversation. Ukraine ($p$-value 0.8)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conversation</th>
<th>To work in a German-speaking country</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>52.5%</td>
<td>35.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60.4%</td>
<td>39.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of students = 101
Study and Conversation

Table 7.19 Study and conversation. Australia ($p$-value 0.006)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conversation</th>
<th>To study in a German-speaking country</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>22.0%</td>
<td>11.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>24.6%</td>
<td>41.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>46.6%</td>
<td>53.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of students = 118

As with the previous results, the present data revealed a significant relationship in the group of Australian students between the motive “to study” and the need for more conversation classes. The majority of students expressing the need for more conversation classes also tended to choose the option “to study in a German-speaking country”, whereas those who answered negatively to “conversation” were generally not interested in studying overseas. Therefore the $p$-value was low.

Table 7.20 Study and conversation. Ukraine ($p$-value 0.4)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conversation</th>
<th>To study in a German-speaking country</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>45.5%</td>
<td>42.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>53.5%</td>
<td>46.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of students = 101

As seen from the table, a very large proportion of Ukrainian students chose the option “conversation” (88%). As with table 7.18 (conversation – work), the $p$-value was relatively high and no dependency on the motive “to study in a German-speaking country” could be found.
**Work and Grammar**

**Table 7.21** Work and grammar. Ukraine (*p*-value 0.003)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>To work in a German-speaking country</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>51.5%</td>
<td>22.8%</td>
<td>74.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
<td>16.8%</td>
<td>25.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60.4%</td>
<td>39.6%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of students = 101

In Ukraine, a large proportion of students replied negatively to Grammar (74.3%). With the majority of these students this answer was strongly associated with the negative answer to the variable of motive, whereas amongst the students who answered positively to “grammar”, the opposite was true. Thus a strong relationship existed between the two variables in the group of Ukrainian students.

**Table 7.22** Work and grammar. Australia (*p*-value 0.08)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>To work in a German-speaking country</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>29.7%</td>
<td>45.8%</td>
<td>75.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
<td>19.5%</td>
<td>24.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>34.7%</td>
<td>65.3%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of students = 118

Similarly to their Ukrainian peers, most Australian students disagreed that more classes on grammar were necessary (75.4%). However, the majority of them replied positively to the motive. The same was true amongst those respondents who did feel the need for more grammar classes. Thus no strong association was found between the variables “grammar” and “to work in a German-speaking country” in the Australian group of students. Interestingly, Fisher’s Exact Test showed no strong correlations with regard to the variables “grammar” and “to study in a German-speaking country” in either of the groups.
Teaching and Translation/Interpreting

Table 7.23  Teaching and translation/interpreting. Ukraine (p-value 0.04)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Translation/interpreting</th>
<th>To teach German</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>20.8%</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
<td>34.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>23.8%</td>
<td>41.6%</td>
<td>65.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>44.6%</td>
<td>55.4%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of students = 101

The results showed a rather strong association between the need for more translation/interpreting classes and the motive “to teach German” in the group of Ukrainian students. Almost two thirds of those who chose “translation/interpreting” indicated their desire to teach the language. On the other hand, the majority of those who replied “no” to “translation/interpreting” tended also not to be interested in teaching the language, hence the low p-value.

Table 7.24  Teaching and translation/interpreting. Australia (p-value 0.8)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Translation/interpreting</th>
<th>To teach German</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>53.4%</td>
<td>11.9%</td>
<td>65.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>29.7%</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
<td>34.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>83.1%</td>
<td>16.9%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of students = 118

A completely different picture emerges with regard to Australian students. The vast majority of Australian students were uninterested in teaching German, irrespective of their answer to “translation/interpreting”. Thus no association could be found between the two variables in the group of Australian students.
Table 7.25 Work and translation/interpreting. Australia (p-value 0.004)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Translation/interpreting</th>
<th>To work in a German-speaking country</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>28.8%</td>
<td>36.4%</td>
<td>65.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>28.8%</td>
<td>34.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>34.7%</td>
<td>65.3%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of students = 118

In contrast to previous data, this pair of variables showed a significant correlation amongst the Australian respondents. The majority of those feeling the need for more translation/interpreting classes also indicated their desire to work in a German-speaking country. The proportions of those who did not feel the need for more such classes was split almost evenly between the positive and negative answers regarding the motive.

Table 7.26 Work and translation/interpreting. Ukraine (p-value 0.5)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Translation/interpreting</th>
<th>To work in a German-speaking country</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>22.8%</td>
<td>11.9%</td>
<td>34.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>37.6%</td>
<td>27.7%</td>
<td>65.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60.4%</td>
<td>39.6%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of students = 101

The situation was somewhat different with Ukrainian students. The majority of those who replied positively to the option “translation/interpreting” did not intend to work in a German-speaking country, nor did those who replied “no” to the class type. Although the majority of students in Ukraine would have liked to have had more classes on interpreting/translation, this was not due to the motive “to work in a German-speaking country”, hence the high p-value.
Culture and Translation/Interpreting

Table 7.27 Culture and translation/interpreting. Ukraine (p-value 0.03)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Translation/interpreting</th>
<th>To get to know German culture</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>17.8%</td>
<td>16.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>47.5%</td>
<td>65.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>35.6%</td>
<td>64.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of students = 101

A strong mutual correlation was found between the two variables in the group of Ukrainian students. The majority of those who expressed the need for more translation/interpreting classes also ticked the motive “to get to know German culture”. The proportion of those who did not feel that more such classes were necessary was split almost evenly between the motive.

Table 7.28 Culture and translation/interpreting. Australia (p-value 0.8)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Translation/interpreting</th>
<th>To get to know German culture</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>34.7%</td>
<td>30.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>16.9%</td>
<td>34.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>52.5%</td>
<td>47.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of students = 118

In the Australian group no correlation between the two variables was found. Students’ responses on the need for more translation/interpreting classes did not show any significant association with the motive “to get to know German culture”, hence the high p-value.
Enjoyment and Translation/Interpreting

Table 7.29 Enjoyment and translation/interpreting. Ukraine ($p$-value 0.02)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Translation/interpreting</th>
<th>Enjoyment</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>25.7%</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
<td>34.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>32.7%</td>
<td>32.7%</td>
<td>65.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>58.4%</td>
<td>41.6%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of students = 101

Almost 35% of Ukrainian students did not feel the need for more classes on translation/interpreting. They were also more likely to respond negatively to the motive “enjoyment”. The answers of those who responded positively to “translation/interpreting” were split evenly between the motive. Thus, students tended to express the need for more translation/interpreting classes irrespective of the motive. However, they tended to tick “no” if the answer to the motive was negative too.

Table 7.30 Enjoyment and translation/interpreting. Australia ($p$-value 0.5)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Translation/interpreting</th>
<th>Enjoyment</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>18.6%</td>
<td>46.6%</td>
<td>65.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>11.9%</td>
<td>22.9%</td>
<td>34.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>30.5%</td>
<td>69.5%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of students = 118

In the Australian group no dependence on the perceived need for more translation/interpreting classes and the motive of “enjoyment” could be found. Students tended to choose the option “enjoyment” irrespective of whether they felt the need for more translation/interpreting classes or not.
Summary

In summary, in the Ukrainian data, some associations were found between the following pairs of variables:

- grammar and work (positive correlation, \( p \)-value 0.003);
- translation/interpreting and teaching (positive correlation, \( p \)-value 0.04);
- translation/interpreting and culture (positive correlation, \( p \)-value 0.03); and
- translation/interpreting and enjoyment (negative correlation, \( p \)-value 0.02).

Amongst the Australian students, a strong correlation could be found with the variables

- conversation and work (positive correlation, \( p \)-value 0.002);
- conversation and study (positive correlation, \( p \)-value 0.006); and
- translation/interpreting and work (positive correlation, \( p \)-value 0.004).

Conversation

The data showed that the response “conversation” was strongly associated with the motives “to work” or “to study in a German-speaking country” amongst Australian students. In Ukraine, interest in more conversation classes was high, however, no strong correlation with either of the motives could be found.

Grammar

The majority of students in both groups did not feel the need for more grammar classes. However, for Ukrainian students, this variable was strongly related to the motive “to work in a German-speaking country”: students tended to favour more grammar classes if their response to the motive was positive too, and vice versa. No
such relationship was found in the Australian sample, where the majority of students replied negatively to “grammar” regardless of the motive.

Translation/interpreting

In Ukraine, the desire for more translation/interpreting classes was strongly associated with the motive “to teach German”. Students were more likely to respond positively to the class type if they were intending to pursue a language teaching career. The same was true with the motive “to get to know German culture”, where a strong association with “translation/interpreting” was revealed. On the other hand, the data showed that Ukrainian student were unlikely to be interested in more translation/interpreting classes if they were learning German out of enjoyment.

In contrast, the Australian students’ desire for more translation/interpreting classes was strongly linked to the motive “to work in a German-speaking country” but hardly with any other motive.

Students’ own perceived strengths and weaknesses in the four language skills

The aim of this question was to establish students’ opinions on their own strengths and weaknesses in the four language skills: speaking, listening, reading and writing. The participants were asked to rank the four items on a four-point scale from 1 “the best” to 4 “the worst”. Students were allowed to rate more than one skill, if they considered them to be at the same level. Table 7.31 shows how students ranked each of the four language skills. Further analysis follows in the form of figures showing how students’ responses were distributed across the 4-grade scale for each of the language skills.
Table 7.31 Students’ self-reported level of mastery of the four language skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skills/Ranking</th>
<th>Ukraine %</th>
<th>Australia %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(the best)</td>
<td>(the worst)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(the best)</td>
<td>(the worst)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking</td>
<td>16.7 37.3 24.5 18.6 10.0 16.7 40.0 31.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening</td>
<td>28.4 26.5 19.6 25.5 30.8 15.0 28.3 24.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>58.8 18.6 15.7 2.9 40.8 38.3 12.5 6.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>20.6 39.2 25.5 9.8 15.8 33.3 19.2 30.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 7.2 Speaking  
Figure 7.3 Listening  
Figure 7.4 Reading  
Figure 7.5 Writing
Figure “Speaking” shows that Ukrainian students had considerably more confidence about their speaking skills. 54% said that they are very good or good at this skill, compared with only 26.7% Australians.

With listening, the responses of Ukrainian and Australian students were distributed more or less evenly across the four grades.

With regard to reading, a large proportion of students in both countries tended to rank this skill highly. In Ukraine, 59% thought that they better at reading than at any other skill, while only about 3% admitted that reading was their weakest area. Similarly, almost 41% of Australian students were very satisfied with their reading skill.

Figure “Writing” shows that a score “2” was the most popular amongst both groups of students. The number of those dissatisfied with their writing skill was considerably higher in Australia than in Ukraine.

Summary

The following table provides an overview of the proportion of students in each country who rated their language skills highly by listing them in either first or second place.

Table 7.32 Proportion of students in Ukraine and Australia answering “1” or “2” to the given skill category

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skills</th>
<th>Ukraine %</th>
<th>Australia %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High level of satisfaction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>26.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening</td>
<td>54.9</td>
<td>45.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>77.4</td>
<td>79.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>59.8</td>
<td>49.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data showed that Ukrainian students tended to be generally more satisfied with most of their language skills than their Australian peers. The figures were nevertheless alarming for both countries as a significant share of students still rated their skills
poorly, with the exception of reading. The skill that stood out in the Australian data was speaking: only about a quarter of Australian students reported to be satisfied with their abilities in speaking in German.

**Expectations from the course**

The aim of this question was to establish what level of language proficiency students expected to achieve by the end of their university language course. As with the question about students’ perceived deficiencies, this question dealt with the four language skills: oral production, listening comprehension, reading comprehension and written production. Students were asked to choose one level (A, B, C or D) best suited to their expectations. Level A corresponded to a native-like proficiency in the given area, while level D referred to a level that allows the language user to perform only some basic tasks in L2. The ratings provided in the student questionnaire were partly based on The Australian Second Language Proficiency Ratings document issued in 1991 by Wylie and Ingram (Wylie & Ingram, 1991), and partly on the researcher’s intention to provide a clear-cut structure to the question reflecting four various levels of language proficiency which the participants could easily understand and refer themselves to in the process of filling out the questionnaire. The table below shows the distribution of responses of students in Ukraine and Australia regarding their expectations in the four language skills.
Table 7.33 Students’ expectations of their language proficiency level by the end of the university language course

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language skills</th>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>Ukraine</th>
<th>Australia</th>
<th>Ukraine (n=5)</th>
<th>Australia (n=5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>(n=5)</td>
<td>(n=5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking</td>
<td>A communicates freely, on a variety of topics close to a native speaker</td>
<td>68.7</td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B communicates freely, on a variety of topics, occasionally making some mistakes</td>
<td>28.3</td>
<td>55.8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C speaks freely on everyday topics only, making some mistakes</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D can meet survival needs, have simple conversations but with quite a few mistakes</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening</td>
<td>A understands everything on a wide range of topics on radio/TV, news, jokes and puns just like a native-speaker</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B understands nearly everything from most topics on radio/TV, news, jokes and puns only occasionally baffled by colloquialisms and regionalisms</td>
<td>71.7</td>
<td>58.3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C understands simple instructions and discussions on every-day topics, rarely asking for repetition or paraphrase</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>27.8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D understands familiar or expected topics, though has difficulty following longer texts and more complex discourse structures, asks frequently for repetition or paraphrase</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 7.33 (continued) Students’ expectations of their language proficiency level by the end of the university language course

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Expected Level</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A native-like in all aspects of reading</td>
<td></td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B understands nearly everything when reading newspapers, magazines, literature on a broad range of topics and genres, though occasional use of dictionary is required</td>
<td></td>
<td>59.6</td>
<td>43.5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C understands nearly everything when reading newspapers, magazines, simplified literature texts on every-day topics, has problems with unusually complex structures</td>
<td></td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D understands well enough simple texts on everyday topics, frequently using bilingual dictionary</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing</th>
<th>Expected Level</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A native-like in all aspects of writing, handles new situations and uses humour</td>
<td></td>
<td>24.2</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B writes with a high degree of accuracy in vocational or academic fields, only occasionally making errors in grammar</td>
<td></td>
<td>69.7</td>
<td>37.8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C writes in all informal and formal communications in daily life, though making some errors in grammar and orthography</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>45.9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D can use simple vocabulary and structures when writing on everyday topics, making errors in grammar in more complex constructions</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the following graphs, students’ expected proficiency levels in the four macroskills are juxtaposed.
Speaking. Figure 7.6 shows that the majority of Ukrainian students (69%) expected to acquire a native-like competence in speaking by the end of their university study. Australian students had somewhat lower expectations from their tertiary study and the majority expected to reach level B.

Listening. With this skill the results of Ukrainian and Australian students are somewhat similar. A comparatively small proportion of students was hoping to acquire native-like competence in this particular macroskill. Ukrainian and Australian students were both
under the impression that they would probably only reach level B in listening. Overall, Ukrainian students tended to be more positive about the level of proficiency that they would acquire by the end of the university course than their Australian counterparts. The proportion of Australian participants who thought that they would probably not go any higher than level C was 28%, compared to just 6% in Ukraine.

**Reading.** For reading, students in both groups tended to choose level B. However the proportion of those expecting to achieve the highest proficiency level was also quite high in Ukraine: 33%, compared to just 9% in Australia. A rather high level of participants at the Australian universities (40%) expected to reach level C.

**Writing.** With regard to writing the majority of Ukrainian students (70%) expected to reach level B, whereas the participants from Australia tended to choose either level C (46%) or B (38%). In Ukraine only 6% of students thought that they would not attain a standard higher than level C. Thus a stark difference could be observed in Ukrainian and Australian students’ expectations regarding the level of writing proficiency that could be reached by the end of university study.

**Summary**

Overall students from both countries tended to have rather high expectations from their university course, as seen by the fact that the majority of respondents in both countries tended to choose either level A or level B (the exception was “writing” in the Australian group). It was more common amongst Ukrainian students to have higher expectations from the course compared to their Australian peers.
Students’ perceptions of classroom activities

The approach used in this study was to turn directly to the FL class to ascertain whether differences in perceptions of grammar and communication-oriented activities exist between Australian and Ukrainian students. Ukraine’s changing socio-political climate since 1991, its openness to the processes of globalisation and market economy has realigned the objectives in education closer to those in Western countries. With growing possibilities for travel, study and work abroad, Ukrainian students have started to reassess their goals in language learning and consequently the importance of classroom activities, thus, probably, revealing similar preferences to their Australian counterparts. In this research, we intend to find out whether this is indeed so. Table 7.34 shows a list of classroom activities, and alongside each, the overall proportion of students who rated the activity as important. The difference in the percentages is shown in the fifth column of the table. The table also gives the p-value for Fisher’s Exact Test; this tests the association between students’ response to an item and their country. A low p-value (< 0.05) is an indication that the importance ratings differ according to the country of origin for that particular activity.
Table 7.34 The proportion of students in each country who thought that the given activity was important

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of item in questionnaire / Activity</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Percentage difference (Ukraine – Australia)</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Teacher explaining grammar</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Making dialogues and discussions(^{52})</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Doing exercises after each grammar rule</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 Individual correction of mistakes</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Reading a newspaper or a book …</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Developing translation/interpreting skills</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Listening to a tape or watching TV</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Teacher’s explanations proceed in German</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Doing grammar exercises from a textbook</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Writing essay</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Making sentences with new words</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>-4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 Teacher summarising typical mistakes</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>-7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Listening to a native speaker …</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>19.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Preparing talk on a given topic</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 Comparing German and students’ L1</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Learning poems/dialogues etc. by heart</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>56.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Writing dictation</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>18.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Listening to and learning songs in German</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>15.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 Teachers’ explanations proceed in students’ L1</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>-19.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results suggest some differences between the students from different countries in the following activities: 8, 10, 11, 12, 16 and 18. These activities will be discussed in detail in the Chapter 8.

\(^{52}\) The full version of the names of activities can be found in the Appendix
Similarities between the groups

Students from both countries highly valued both grammar and communicative activities in the language class. Almost 100% of students from both groups recognised the important role of the teacher in explaining grammar, creating dialogues and discussion on various topics, setting grammar exercises and in individual correction of mistakes. Students more or less equally believed that it is important to discuss the contents of a newspaper article, book, or a film, to do exercises which develop translation/interpreting skills, to make sentences with new words and to write essays. Also, an equally high majority of students (94%) indicated that teachers’ explanations must be in German wherever possible. Items such as “preparing a talk on a given topic” and “comparing German and students’ L1 when explaining language phenomena” were also perceived as important by an overwhelming majority of students in Australia and Ukraine.

Our interview data were consistent overall with the findings from questionnaires. Almost all the interviewees both in Australia and Ukraine believed that a combination of grammar and communicative activities in the class is an important factor for successful language learning. On the other hand, many students agreed that the former (grammar) activities very often unduly dominated the class. A student at an Australian university expressed her concern that grammar was often taught at the expense of communication and the opportunity to speak was barely available (A2, March 2006). It should be noted though, that responses like this were very characteristic for the university where contact hours per week were limited to just two. In the university where the study program allowed for more hours of German, including an hour deliberately allocated to conversation, students were on the whole satisfied.
**Teachers’ background**

Table 7.35 below provides teachers’ self reported details on their position at the university, mother tongue, experience in learning FLs including German, and the time and the subjects they have been teaching at their university.

**Table 7.35 Teachers’ background**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher (German department)</th>
<th>Position in at university</th>
<th>Mother tongue</th>
<th>Knowledge of other FLs</th>
<th>Place where German was acquired</th>
<th>Duration of teaching German at the university</th>
<th>Subjects that are currently taught by the teacher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T1 (Kyiv University)</td>
<td>PhD, position “Dozent”</td>
<td>Russian, Ukrainian</td>
<td>English (5 years)</td>
<td>Specialised language school, university in Chernivtsi</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>Stylistics, German as major, German as second FL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T2 (Kyiv University)</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>Ukrainian</td>
<td>English (4 years)</td>
<td>School (2 y) University (5 y)</td>
<td>7 years</td>
<td>Practical German, Theory and practice of translation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T3 (Kyiv University)</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Ukrainian</td>
<td>English (5 years)</td>
<td>School, university</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td>Practical German</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Russian (15 years)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 7.35 (continued 1) Teachers’ background

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Languages</th>
<th>Bachelor</th>
<th>Master</th>
<th>Doctorate</th>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>Specialization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T4</td>
<td>Dr., professor</td>
<td>Russian, English</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>Theoretical grammar, current problems of German Studies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T5</td>
<td>PhD, Senior lecturer</td>
<td>Russian, Ukrainian, English</td>
<td>5 years</td>
<td>Specialised language school, university</td>
<td>5 years</td>
<td>Practical German, analytical reading</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T6</td>
<td>PhD (Kandydat's'ka)</td>
<td>Ukrainian, Russian, English</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>School, university</td>
<td>16 years</td>
<td>Practical German, stylistics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T7</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Ukrainian, Russian, French</td>
<td>5 years</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>10 years</td>
<td>Practical German, theory and practice of translation, Methodology of language teaching</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T8</td>
<td>Assistant</td>
<td>Ukrainian, Spanish, Swedish</td>
<td>2 months</td>
<td>School, uni, 5 months in Germany</td>
<td>1.5 years</td>
<td>Grammar, Practical German</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T9</td>
<td>Assistant</td>
<td>Ukrainian, English, Spanish</td>
<td>2 months</td>
<td>School, university</td>
<td>2 months</td>
<td>Practical German</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T10</td>
<td>PhD, Dozent</td>
<td>Ukrainian, Russian</td>
<td>38 years</td>
<td>School, university</td>
<td>38 years</td>
<td>Vocabulary, Practical phonetics and Grammar, Theoretical phonetics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Degree</td>
<td>Native Language</td>
<td>Other Languages</td>
<td>Years</td>
<td>Background</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T11</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>Ukrainian</td>
<td>English (4 y.)</td>
<td>26 y.</td>
<td>Practical German (all aspects), History of German, Text Linguistics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Lviv University)</td>
<td>Dozent</td>
<td></td>
<td>University</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T12</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>German</td>
<td>Latin (9 y.),</td>
<td>15 y.</td>
<td>German and options</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Melbourne University)</td>
<td>Chair of the discipline</td>
<td>English (7 y.),</td>
<td>Native speaker</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Russian (2 y.),</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Portuguese (5 y.),</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>French (1 y.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T13</td>
<td>Tutor</td>
<td>German</td>
<td>French, English</td>
<td>13 y.</td>
<td>Beginners’ German</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Melbourne University)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Native speaker</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T14</td>
<td>Lecturer</td>
<td>German</td>
<td>English (8 y.),</td>
<td>3 y.</td>
<td>German language and literature</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Melbourne University)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Latin (5 y.),</td>
<td>Native speaker</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>French (1 y.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T15</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>German (10 y.),</td>
<td>6 y.</td>
<td>Intermediate German, cultural component</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Melbourne University)</td>
<td>Lecturer</td>
<td></td>
<td>School, university</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Italian (3 y.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 7.35 (continued 3) Teachers’ background

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>T16 (Monash University)</th>
<th>Data missing</th>
<th>German</th>
<th>English (9 years), French (2 y), Latin (4 y), Italian (1 y), Spanish (1 y), Mandarin (2 y), Indonesian (2 y)</th>
<th>Native speaker</th>
<th>2 years</th>
<th>German</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T17 (Monash University)</td>
<td>PhD Assistant lecturer</td>
<td>German</td>
<td>English (ongoing), Italian (1 y), French (4 y), Latin (7 y.)</td>
<td>Native speaker</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>German</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Teacher questionnaires

Seventeen teachers submitted their questionnaires. As seen from the table 7.35, the teachers of German in Ukraine were of Ukrainian/Russian origin. The data showed that they mostly learned German at schools and then at university to become qualified language teachers. Some had had in-country language practice, despite the fact that there were very few opportunities for language teachers to practice their skills in German-speaking countries due to lack of grants, financial and visa constraints. Apart from German, all the teachers in Ukraine also reported to have learned English. On the other hand, table 7.35 reveals that many teachers working in Australian German departments are in fact native-speakers of German, who teach various aspects of language. Many of them have had extensive experience in learning FLs, such as English, French and Italian.

We will now turn to the analysis of data obtained through teacher questionnaires. Teachers’ answers will be compared with the responses provided by the students on issues such as

- students’ reasons to study German;
- students’ strengths and weaknesses in speaking, listening, reading and writing;
- the importance of grammar in language learning/teaching;
- ideal proportion of grammar practice and communicative activities;
- perceptions of classroom activities, and
- expected level of language competence by the end of the course.

Some issues that will be analysed further will concentrate exclusively on teachers where they reveal their own views on the use of teaching methods and marking students’ work.
Students’ motives for studying German

Ukrainian teachers

In the previous section dealing with students’ reasons for studying German at a university we showed that Ukrainian students tended to choose items such as: “to get to know German culture” (65%), “for travel” (56%), “to teach” (55%) (Table 7.10). Popular were also such answers as “to study abroad” (46%), “for enjoyment” (41%) and “to work in a German-speaking country” (40%). Less popular were the items “liked the sound of German” (24%), other (16% - for details see Table 7.11), “German-speaking partner” (12%), and “to balance out my technical course” (2%). The question that we were trying to answer was whether teachers held the same views on students’ motives to study German at the university. Figure 7.10 below as well as a table in Appendix G compares the answers provided by Ukrainian students and their teachers.

![Diagram showing percentage comparison between Ukrainian students and teachers' responses.]

**Figure 7.10** Students’ reasons for studying German. A comparison of Ukrainian students’ and teachers’ responses

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53 Appendix 7 provides a summary of responses (in the form of a table) of students and teachers from Ukraine and Australia
Table 7.36 Details of the option “other”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option “other”</th>
<th>Ukrainian teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>to work as an interpreter</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to work for a company in Ukraine</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Keeping in mind that the number of teachers were comparatively low (11 teachers) to allow a valid generalisation Figure 7.10 still gives some indication of the differences in students’ and teachers’ answers:

- all the 11 teachers in the Ukrainian sample thought that students learn German in order to study abroad (students - 46%);
- nine out of 11 respondents (82%) have chosen the reason “to work in a German-speaking country” (students – 40%);
- eight teachers agreed with the item “to teach German” (students – 55%).

These three items were chosen by the majority of teachers. They were however not necessarily as such amongst students (with the exception of the item “to teach”). Only four teachers (36%) picked students’ most popular motive (65%) – “to get to know German culture” and only two teachers thought that one of the reasons why students study German is to get their best from their travelling experience (students – 56%).

Thus the teachers tended to think too little of students’ interest in culture and travel – these were the most popular answers amongst students.
The following figure compares responses provided by the Australian students and their teachers.

**Figure 7.11** Students’ reasons for studying German. A comparison of Australian students’ and teachers’ responses

Similarly to Ukrainian teachers, all of the Australian teachers (six) chose the motive “to study abroad”, and only about a half of students agreed with them. Three out of six teachers thought that students would teach after their university study. As Figure 7.11 shows, this was matched by only 17% of students. Australian teachers too tended to underestimate the travel motive, which was popular amongst Australian students as well (68%).

The category “other” was chosen by only one teacher who suggested that one of the reasons for study German at the university is students’ previous experience of learning German at school. The following question deals with socially rather than individually determined reasons behind learning German in Ukraine and Australia.
Reasons behind studying German in Ukraine and Australia

Similarly to students, teachers were asked to express their own opinion on why they thought German should be studied in their country.

![Graph showing reasons for studying German](image)

**Figure 7.12** Reasons for studying German in Ukraine as perceived by students and teachers

The table shows a generally similar pattern in students’ and teachers’ responses. Both groups of participants particularly emphasised the cultural, economic and general educational value of learning German in Ukraine. In the category “other”, one teacher asserted that during the current period of globalisation the ability to communicate in several FLs is absolutely essential (T3, Kyiv University). T9 from Lviv University indicated that competence in a FL is one of the most important skills in the employment market.
Students’ and teachers’ responses when compared in figure 7.13 seem to create a somewhat similar picture. The most popular answer amongst both groups was the item “learning another language is a key to understanding other cultures and mentalities and broadens one’s outlook”. “To maintain cultural connections and economic reasons” were also amongst the highest on the graph. For the option “other” one teacher expressed the opinion that German should be studied because it enables one to read German texts (literary and others) in the original (T14, Melbourne University).

The figure shows some similarities in Australian students’ and teachers’ answers, but reveals differences with their Ukrainian counterparts for whom economic relationships with German-speaking countries were more popular.
Teachers’ perceptions of students’ strengths and weaknesses in the four language skills

The aim of this question was to obtain teachers’ opinion on students’ level of mastery of the four language skills.

Table 7.37 Students’ level of mastery of the four language skills as perceived by teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skills/Ranking</th>
<th>Ukraine (number of teachers out of 10)</th>
<th>Australia (number of teachers out of 5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 (the best)</td>
<td>1 (the best)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking</td>
<td>1 5 2 2 0</td>
<td>1 3 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening</td>
<td>3 3 3 1 1</td>
<td>2 0 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>7 2 0 1 4</td>
<td>1 1 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>0 6 2 2 0</td>
<td>2 1 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Speaking

The table shows that Ukrainian teachers were more optimistic about their students speaking abilities than their Australian counterparts, which reflected the opinions of their students. The reader will recall that the largest proportion of Ukrainian students (37.3%) considered themselves good at speaking. On the other hand, the largest proportion of students in Australia (40%) was not very confident in their speaking and rated it as “3”.

Listening

One teacher in Ukraine thought that listening was students’ most problematic area. The remainder of teachers’ responses was spread evenly between categories “1”, “2” and “3”. In Australia two out of five teachers expressed the opinion that listening was the students’ weakest area.
Reading

The reading category showed teachers and students in close agreement. In general, reading was considered the students’ strength.

Writing

None of the teachers were happy with their students’ writing skills. Six out of ten teachers in Ukraine thought that this area was “good”, and so did only two Australian teachers.

Summary

The responses of teachers, although on a far smaller scale, proved to be generally similar to the responses provided by students. The small number of teachers who participated in the study does not allow us to generalise, however there is some indication that most teachers were aware of their students’ problem areas, particularly in speaking and writing.

Grammar in language teaching

Table 7.38 shows teachers’ opinions on the importance of grammar in language teaching and learning. As with students, we offered a four-point scale in order to obtain a more robust picture of teachers’ perceptions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of teachers in</th>
<th>Not essential</th>
<th>Rather important</th>
<th>Very important</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teachers generally perceived grammar instruction as a “rather” or “very important” component of language teaching and learning. Ukrainian teachers stood out particularly,
in that ten out of eleven participants chose the option “very important”. Some teachers commented on their answers. A teacher from Lviv University, for example, noted that grammar is a very important component particularly for those who are going to teach German (T11). A teacher from Australia asserted that the amount of grammar in the class depends on the reason for learning the language, that is, for travel, grammar might not be very important, but it is for most other reasons (T14, Melbourne University). Another teacher from an Australian university expressed the opinion that grammar gives students an understanding of how the language works, but it does not facilitate the speaking of it in a classroom environment (T17, Monash University).

Question 10 deals with teachers’ perceived ideal proportion of grammar and communicative activities in the class.

### Table 7.39 Ideal proportion of grammar and communicative activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of teachers in</th>
<th>mainly grammar</th>
<th>mainly conversation</th>
<th>equal amount of both</th>
<th>not sure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All six teachers in Australia and ten in Ukraine favoured the combination of grammar and communicative activities. Three teachers elaborated their answers. T11 from Lviv University, and T12 from Melbourne University noted that not only did they like combining both types of activities, but that their preferred proportion depended on the purpose of class and the level of students. Another teacher from Monash University chose the option “equal amount of both types of activities” because, he/she explained, diversity is the key to successful language teaching (T17).
Teachers’ perceptions of classroom activities

The following section of the teachers’ questionnaire was an analogue to that given to students about classroom activities. The intention was to compare teachers’ opinions about the items in the table with the data provided by the students to shed light on whether there was any degree of similarity between students’ and teachers’ views. It has to be noted, however, that the comparatively small number of teachers made generalisation difficult.
Table 7.40 Teacher’s perceptions of classroom activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of activities</th>
<th>Ukraine</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Australia</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not essential</td>
<td>Rather important</td>
<td>Very important</td>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td>Not essential</td>
<td>Rather important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Preparing a talk on a given topic</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Making dialogues and conversations and discussing different issues</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Listening to a tape or watching TV and then discussing the contents</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Reading a newspaper or a text from a book and then discussing the contents</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Writing an essay or a letter to a pen friend</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Doing grammar exercises from a textbook</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Doing exercises on development of translation / interpreting skills</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Learning texts/poems and dialogues by heart</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Making sentences with new words</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Listening to a native speaker and repeating after him/her</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Dictation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Listening to and learning songs in German</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Doing exercises after each grammar rule</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Teacher explaining grammar</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Teacher’s explanations proceed in German</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Teacher’s explanations proceed in Ukrainian/English</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Correction of mistakes</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Teacher summarising typical mistakes</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Comparing German and English when explaining language phenomena</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Other activities:

T3 (Kyiv University) – end of topic tests;

T5 (Kharkiv University) – creative tasks, projects, role-plays;

T9 (Lviv University) – correction of errors by students themselves;

T12 (Melbourne University) – finding their own explanation in German, group work;

T14 (Melbourne University) – summarising texts in German, discussing homework.

**Ukrainian teachers**

In general, the options “not essential” and “unsure” were used least frequently. The activities which were marked as “rather important” by the majority of respondents were as follows:

- 1. preparing a talk on a given topic (6);
- 6. doing grammar exercises from a textbook (6);
- 8. learning texts and poems by heart (6);
- 11. dictation (6).

The activities which were marked as “very important” by the majority of Ukrainian teachers were:

- 2. making dialogues and conversations… (6);
- 3. listening to a tape or watching TV … (7);
- 4. reading a newspaper or a text … (7);
- 13. doing exercises after each grammar rule (8);
- 14. teacher explaining grammar (6);
- 15. teacher’s explanations proceed in German (8);
- 18. teacher summarising typical mistakes (6).
With some activities teachers’ voices split almost evenly between the two categories “rather important” and “very important”:

- 7. doing exercises that help develop translation/interpreting skills;
- 9. making sentences with new words;
- 10. listening to a native speaker and repeating after him/her;
- 17. correction of mistakes; and
- 19. Comparing German and English when explaining language phenomena.

The opinions of some teachers split between “not essential” and “rather/very important” with the activities such as: 12. “listening to and learning songs in German” and 16. “teacher’s explanations proceed in students’ L1”.

**Australian teachers**

The responses of Australian teachers on certain activities were in stark contrast with those of Ukrainian teachers. Activities 8 (Learning texts/poems and dialogues by heart) and 11 (Dictation) were assessed by the majority of teachers in Australia as “not essential”, whereas the majority of their Ukrainian counterparts thought they were rather important activities.

The activities which were marked as “rather important” by the majority of Australian teachers were:

- 1. preparing a talk on a given topic (6);
- 3. listening to a tape or watching TV … (6);
- 6. doing grammar exercises from a textbook (5);
- 7. doing exercises on development of translation / interpreting skills (4);
- 13. doing exercises after each grammar rule (4);
- 15. teacher explanations proceed in German (4);
- 17. correction of mistakes (5).
The activities which were marked as “very important” by the majority of Australian teachers were:

- 2. making dialogues and conversations… (5);
- 4. reading a newspaper or a text from a book and then discussing the contents (4);
- 9. making sentences with new words (5);
- 14. teacher explaining grammar (6);
- 18. teacher summarising typical mistakes (4);
- 19. comparing German and English … (4);

Regarding the activity 5. “writing an essay or a letter” teachers’ opinions were divided between “rather important” and “very important”, whereas the opinions regarding activities 10, 12 and 16 were more contradicting as they split between “not essential” and “rather/very important”.

**Methods and approaches used in the class**

This section of the teacher questionnaire deals with the methods and approaches teachers used in the German language class and their motivation behind the choice of a particular method or mixture of methods (Table 7.41).
Table 7.41 Methods and approaches used in the class

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers’ ID</th>
<th>Self-reported use of methods/approaches</th>
<th>Motivation behind the choice of methods/approaches</th>
<th>Principles used in language teaching</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T1 (Kyiv University)</td>
<td>The communicative approach, intercultural approach</td>
<td>I consider the ability to communicate in German a primary objective of language teaching</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T2 (Kyiv University)</td>
<td>The communicative approach combined with traditional ways of explaining material and using German as much as possible</td>
<td>The teacher is not just a mediator between Ukrainian and German languages and cultures but also an advisor/consultant</td>
<td>To develop and maintain students’ communicative skills, to provoke them to spontaneous conversations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T3 (Kyiv University)</td>
<td>My methods are based on the textbook “Em” which includes tasks and exercises for both individual and group work on speaking, writing, reading and listening</td>
<td>Good quality of the textbook</td>
<td>Language is a means of communication, hence I consider it important to create communicative situations for students and develop their ability to communicate in various contexts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T4 (Kyiv university)</td>
<td>The communicative approach</td>
<td>Students acquire language better by communicating</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T5 (Kharkiv University)</td>
<td>I use the communicative approach when we discuss a certain topic; descriptive method with vocabulary; analytical method with grammar; and the method of communicative equivalence when doing translation exercises.</td>
<td>The communicative approach provides the skills to think in terms of categories of the foreign language; the descriptive method is good for expanding one’s vocabulary, and the analytical method is suitable for those who would like to become a linguist and/or to teach the language, as it reveals the structure of the language</td>
<td>I try to be demanding, giving, consistent and tolerant in everything I do in the class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T6 (Kharkiv University)</td>
<td>The communicative approach</td>
<td>Communication in FL facilitates integration of acquired knowledge in all aspects of language</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 7.41 (continued 1) Methods and approaches used in the class

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>T7</th>
<th>(Kharkiv University)</th>
<th>Communicative and grammar-translation methods, cultural-hermeneutic approach, role-play</th>
<th>These are the most effective methods which students like and which maintain their motivations to study the language</th>
<th>Students must learn to think in German and not just to translate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T8</td>
<td>(Lviv University)</td>
<td>Communicative, behaviourist approaches</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T9</td>
<td>(Lviv University)</td>
<td>First of all I pay attention to the correct use of vocabulary and grammar, as well contents of the utterance</td>
<td>These components are essential for language learning, and I do think that the teacher must pay attention to the contents of the utterance to make sure that the speaker has achieved his/her communicative goal</td>
<td>I try to create healthy atmosphere in the class. I think it facilitates learning of the language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T10</td>
<td>(Lviv University)</td>
<td>I use the contrast method, which helps avoid interference from students’ mother tongue. I also use elements of interactive, cognitive, audio-lingual, direct, communicative and grammar-translation method as well as group-work</td>
<td>I think the combination of these methods is very effective in language teaching</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T11</td>
<td>(Lviv University)</td>
<td>Communicative method, intercultural approach</td>
<td>These methods motivate students, make the whole learning experience more interesting</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T12</td>
<td>(Melbourne University)</td>
<td>I use an eclectic mixture of cognitive and communicative methods</td>
<td>I react to what I perceive useful for reaching the course objectives</td>
<td>Flexibility, making students feel a tease and not afraid to make mistakes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T13</td>
<td>(Melbourne University)</td>
<td>Group, partner work</td>
<td>To have students interact with each other as much as possible, to help them gain confidence in using new language</td>
<td>Wide variety – how to introduce and practice topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T14</td>
<td>(Melbourne University)</td>
<td>I combine traditional explanations of grammar with conversational approach</td>
<td>I think that both aspects are equally important and interdependent – only if you understand grammar, can you communicate effectively and only if you communicate will you remember the grammar</td>
<td>Making classes fun and enjoyable. Bored students do not learn anything</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 7.41 (continued 2) Methods and approaches used in the class

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>T15</th>
<th>Immersion, largely in German</th>
<th>-</th>
<th>Empathy, encouragement, humour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Melbourne University)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>T16</th>
<th>Conversational, analytical</th>
<th>The combination of these two methods is, in my view, the most appropriate for students</th>
<th>To use what knowledge is there to build upon</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Monash University)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>T17</th>
<th>-</th>
<th>-</th>
<th>I try to expose students to as much German as possible. I also like to diversify classroom activities and to be consistent in use of the language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Monash University)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table shows that the Communicative Language Teaching was the most popular amongst the teachers. In fact, eight out of eleven teachers in Ukraine mentioned the word “communicative” in their answer, often in conjunction with another method(s) or approach(es), such as: intercultural approach (T1), traditional approaches (T2), descriptive, analytical methods and a method of communicative equivalence (T5), grammar translation method and cultural-hermeneutic approach (T7). The decisions behind the choice of particular methods are partly based on teachers’ own perceptions of what best works in the class, what motivates students more, also with considerations of the objectives of the course and, again, on the type of textbook available for the course (T3).

The classroom observations showed that indeed no single method dominated in language classroom. Most teachers were trying to mix and match various types of activities. The choice of teaching techniques and the types of activities often depended on the level of students, the textbook and other teaching materials available to the teacher and students.

Some teachers noted that the students themselves sometimes preferred to adhere to traditional rather than new, communicatively-oriented methods. In a personal
communication with the researcher, T1 recalled her somewhat unpleasant experience from an attempt to conduct a communicatively-oriented lesson:

T1: I tried to apply the communicative approach to students. I started to speak German with them straight away and organise Partnerarbeit, Gruppenarbeit, and so forth. After the first class they lodged a complaint that my teaching was not good enough. They did not understand these things. They are accustomed to a completely different teaching style in their Latin classes and in what they had at school. We are doing fine now. They don’t mind this method now (Kyiv University).

Australian teachers too were often inclined to combine communicative methods with other ones, such as grammar-translation (T14), analytical (T16), immersion (15), group and partner-work (13). The classroom observations showed that grammar-centered methods dominated in the beginners’ classes, although students were also encouraged to talk. Some teachers suggested that the key to successful language class, is diversity or activities (T17) and variety of topics (T13). The researcher gained insight into what was meant by this when she visited a few beginner classes at Melbourne University. In one lesson students were introduced to a variety of grammar structures, namely: asking questions, negations, ways of translating into German the verb “to like”. These topics were accompanied by dialogues, exercises in a textbook, and practiced in pair work and other activities (7 May, 2004). Students indeed were occupied all the time and eager to take part in all the activities. De Courcy (2005) together with her fellow learner-teacher participants also arrived at the conclusion that teaching styles need to be varied in order to cater for learners’ different needs.

The third column in the table reveals the teachers’ general philosophy behind the choice of a given teaching methodology. Teacher 2 and 3, for example, noted that it is important to create a variety of communicative situations which provoke students towards spontaneous conversations, as it occurs in real life. Teacher 7 explained her choice of the eclectic methodology, including the communicative approach, because it taught students to think in German. Teacher 12 from Melbourne University noted that flexibility in methods is a key to a successful language class while making students feel a tease and not to be afraid to make mistakes. His/her colleague indicated that language
classes should be fun and enjoyable. Bored students, he/she said, do not learn anything (T14). A similar opinion was held by teacher 15, who said that there should be plenty of empathy, encouragement and humour in the class. The researcher could not help noticing that the atmosphere in many language classes in the Australian universities was very friendly and encouraging. This was evident in the behaviour of the teachers: smile, laughter, jokes etc; and in the way teachers communicated to students and involved them in various classroom activities, for example, using “ice-breakers” at the beginning of the class, warmth and tolerance in answering students’ questions, incorporating elements “of fun”, such as catching a soft toy by a student whose turn it was then to read a sentence and using caricatures relevant to a topic. Group solidarity and a supportive atmosphere were also underlined as important aspects of language learning in a recent study by de Courcy (2005, p. 9).

The block about teaching methodology also contained a question about the use of students’ mother tongue in the language class. The table below outlines the results gathered from the questionnaires.

**Table 7.42 Use of students’ mother tongue in the class**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>often</th>
<th>sometimes</th>
<th>rarely</th>
<th>never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ukraine (n=10)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia (n=5)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most teachers in Ukraine indicated that they used Ukrainian rarely (6). Some teachers elaborated on their answer. A teacher from a Ukrainian university stated: “I use Ukrainian rarely, that is only with beginners and when translating certain words” (T1, Kyiv University). A similar opinion was put forward by teachers 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 13, 16 and 17. Teacher 7 explained that he/she sometimes used Ukrainian where grammar rules were particularly complicated and students were not advanced enough in their German to be able to understand explanations in German (T7, Kharkiv University); teacher 10 from Lviv University and T11 from Melbourne University reported to turn to the students’ mother tongue if certain lexical units were difficult to explain with the
help of synonyms or antonyms (Lviv University). Teacher 14 explained his/her answer “often”: “I usually do all teaching in German first. If I get the impression that students do not understand everything, I repeat/summarise in English. In the first year it is often necessary” (Melbourne University).

Table 7.43 Correction of errors in oral use

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of teachers in</th>
<th>always</th>
<th>often</th>
<th>sometimes</th>
<th>rarely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ukraine (n=10)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia (n=6)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

T3 indicated that he/she corrected errors only sometimes when these were repeated many times, whereas T5 noted that he/she corrected errors often in oral use, but only after the student had finished talking. T7 and T10 maintained that he/she corrected only those errors which interfered with normal communication. T10, 11 and 14 said that it was important to correct those errors which were typical for the class, then “everybody profits from the corrections” (T11, Melbourne University). Another teacher said that he/she corrected errors more often when a new topic was introduced (T13, Melbourne University). A similar opinion was expressed by teacher 16: “I always correct errors in exercises particularly if these errors are made on the grammatical topic of the day. However, I correct errors only sometimes in conversation if it is clear what people want to say” (T16, Monash University).

The data from classroom observations have shown that how and when errors are corrected in students’ oral communication depended on the teacher and the situation. However, it was more common amongst Ukrainian teachers to provide corrective feedback during or after an activity. Other students in the class were also sometimes invited to contribute. The Australian teachers tended to be more relaxed about correcting errors in oral communication. And the teachers’ attempt to encourage students to speak by all means was obvious.
Student data, however have shown that an overwhelming majority of students, both from Ukraine and Australia, thought it was important that their errors in oral or written communication be corrected (Table 7.34). In the interview some Australian students complained about the lack of constructive feedback from their teachers:

We speak and they don’t correct us at all (...). I often notice other students making mistakes; imagine how many I am making as well that I’d want to know about! They [the teachers] want to give us practice in speaking, but we are not really improving that much (A5, Monash University, 090).

Table 7.44 Correction of errors in written use

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of teachers in</th>
<th>always</th>
<th>often</th>
<th>sometimes</th>
<th>rarely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ukraine (n=11)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia (n=6)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority of teachers from both countries reported to have always corrected errors in students’ written work. T7 from Kharkiv University, for example, asserted that he/she corrected errors in written use if related to a rule which students were supposed to have learned and practiced. A teacher from an Australian university explained how errors were always corrected in his/her class: “Students are required to resubmit written work in a corrected form so that they learn to use grammar or diction correctly” (T14, Melbourne University).
Table 7.45 Use of audio-visual equipment in the class

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of teachers in</th>
<th>often</th>
<th>sometimes</th>
<th>rarely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ukraine (n=11)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia (n=5)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The use of audio-visual equipment in the German language turned out to be rather common amongst both Ukrainian and Australian teachers.

Marking of students’ work

Table 7.46 Aspects of language to which teachers paid particular attention when marking students’ written and oral work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers’ ID</th>
<th>Aspects of language that are considered to be the most important when marking students’ written work</th>
<th>Aspects of language that are considered to be the most important when marking students’ oral performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T1 (Kyiv University)</td>
<td>1. grammar</td>
<td>1. fluency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. orthography</td>
<td>2. logical construction of sentences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. style</td>
<td>3. use of a variety of linguistic devices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4. grammar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T2 (Kyiv University)</td>
<td>1. grammar</td>
<td>1. appropriate use of words and phrases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. vocabulary</td>
<td>2. grammar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. orthography</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. pragmatics, social competence, coherence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 7.46 (continued 1) Aspects of language to which teachers paid particular attention when marking students’ written and oral work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>T3 (Kyiv University)</th>
<th>1. grammar, orthography</th>
<th>1. vocabulary, grammar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. vocabulary</td>
<td>2. complexity of grammar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. coherence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. use of various syntactic structures</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>T4 (Kyiv university)</th>
<th>1. grammar</th>
<th>1. grammar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. vocabulary</td>
<td>2. vocabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. orthography</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>T5 (Kharkiv University)</th>
<th>1. if communicative goal has been reached (comprehensiveness)</th>
<th>1. if communicative goal has been reached (comprehensiveness)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. appropriate vocabulary and grammar structures</td>
<td>2. appropriate vocabulary and grammar structures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. style</td>
<td>3. style</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. orthography, punctuation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The priority is given according to the type of work we are doing (translation, composition, dictation etc.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>T6 (Kharkiv University)</th>
<th>1. grammar</th>
<th>1. grammar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. vocabulary, style</td>
<td>2. vocabulary, style</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. orthography</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>T7 (Kharkiv University)</th>
<th>1. grammar</th>
<th>1. grammar, vocabulary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. vocabulary</td>
<td>2. phonetics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. creativity</td>
<td>3. logical construction of sentences, text structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. use of synonyms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>T8 (Lviv University)</th>
<th>1. vocabulary</th>
<th>1. vocabulary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. grammar</td>
<td>2. grammar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. orthography</td>
<td>3. style</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. style</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

244
Table 7.46 (continued 2) Aspects of language to which teachers paid particular attention when marking students’ written and oral work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>T9 (Lviv University)</th>
<th>T10 (Lviv University)</th>
<th>T11 (Lviv University)</th>
<th>T12 (Melbourne University)</th>
<th>T13 (Melbourne University)</th>
<th>T14 (Melbourne University)</th>
<th>T15 (Melbourne University)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. vocabulary</td>
<td>1. vocabulary</td>
<td>1. fluency</td>
<td>1. understanding and transfer of phenomena recently learnt</td>
<td>1. grammar</td>
<td>1. comprehensibility</td>
<td>1. communicative adequacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. grammar</td>
<td>2. grammar</td>
<td>2. coherence</td>
<td>2. communicative adequacy</td>
<td>2. orthography</td>
<td>2. grammar</td>
<td>2. grammar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. orthography</td>
<td></td>
<td>3. pronunciation</td>
<td>3. grammar</td>
<td>3. communicative adequacy</td>
<td>3. pronunciation</td>
<td>3. content</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It all depends on the type of work students are doing. I consider all aspects important.

Grammar is important, however listening comprehension and the ability to communicate counts more.
Table 7.46 (continued 3) Aspects of language to which teachers paid particular attention when marking students’ written and oral work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Aspects of Language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T16 (Monash University)</td>
<td>1. grammar 2. orthography 3. communicative adequacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My priorities in marking students’ oral work are different [from marking written work], because it would be too frustrating and communication would not be possible without any flow of conversation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T17 (Monash University)</td>
<td>1. “makes sense” factor (content) 2. grammar 3. stylistic level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Less focus on grammar, more on fluency</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Written work**

The table shows that in Ukraine 6 out of 11 teachers put grammar in first place in their list of priorities when marking students’ written work. This item was often followed by vocabulary and/or orthography. For many teachers, style and coherence were also important in marking. Teachers 5 and 11 suggested that how they mark students’ written work depended on the type of task, whether it was translation, composition, dictation or some other activity. Interestingly, T5 admitted that the most important criterion for him/her was whether a student had reached the communicative goal. For two out of six Australian teachers grammar occupied first position. Also important were aspects such as: comprehensibility, orthography, communicative adequacy, “dare” and “makes sense” factors.

**Oral work**

In marking students’ oral performance, the majority of Ukrainian teachers considered correct use of vocabulary (5) as the foremost criterion; however four teachers still indicated grammar as being more important. Other important items were fluency, complexity of grammar and lexical structures, and coherence.

With the Australian teachers, option “grammar” occupied only second or third position typically following characteristics such as comprehensibility, communicative adequacy and fluency. Teacher 13 noted that grammar was an important criterion in
marking students’ oral work; however listening comprehension and the ability to communicate counted more (Melbourne University). Teacher 16 admitted that his/her priorities differed from those used to mark written work, “because it would be too frustrating and communication would not be possible without any flow of conversation” (Monash University).

It appears that Ukrainian and Australian teachers represent two somewhat different approaches towards correction of errors and priorities in marking students’ work. The former group laid more emphasis on grammar and lexical correctness in both oral and written communication, whereas the Australian teachers tended to put fluency to the fore.

### Expectations from the course

**Table 7.47 Expected level of language competence by the end of the course**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of teachers in</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Oral production</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukraine (n=11)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia (n=6)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Listening comprehension</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukraine (n=11)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia (n=6)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukraine (n=11)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia (n=6)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Writing</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukraine (n=11)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia (n=6)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 7.47 shows that an overwhelming number of Ukrainian teachers thought that students ought to be able to achieve at least level B in all four language skills. Australian teachers were not so unanimous in their expectations. Four out of six respondents thought that students could achieve level B in areas speaking and listening, whereas two were of the opinion that they would only reach level C. With regard to reading, four out of six teachers expected only level C (3) or even D (1).
8. DISCUSSION

The aim of this project was to examine the social and educational aspects of the study and teaching of German as a FL in the universities of Ukraine and Australia in the areas: curriculum, aims and content, teaching methodology and the attitudes of those directly involved in teaching and learning. In order to accomplish this, the following research questions were formulated:

1. What is the structure and objectives of the German language program at Ukrainian and Australian universities?
2. What are the peculiarities of the German language curriculum, content and teaching methodology in the universities of Ukraine and Australia?
3. What are students’ motives for studying German in Ukraine and Australia?
4. What are students’ and teachers’ perceptions of the curriculum, content and teaching?
5. How do students themselves evaluate their present language skills, and those expected to be acquired by the end of the course?
6. What are the advantages and disadvantages inherent in both education practices?

The findings of this study specifically dealing with the structure and objectives of German language programs in the Ukrainian and Australian universities have been discussed in detail in the previous chapter. Here a more general contemplation of the issues of curriculum (which in many cases overlaps with the notion of “language program”), contents and teaching methodology unfolds. The discussion of these issues will be followed by that of students’ motives, students’ and teachers’ perceptions and students’ self-reported deficiency ratings. The answer to the last research question will be embedded in the analysis that follows.
Curriculum: Where do the differences occur?

Ukraine adopts a holistic approach towards education which presupposes that students upon entering the university must embark on a wide range of linguistic and general humanity subjects. Ukrainian institutions can “afford” to be holistic as to a large extent they are funded and administered by the government. Australian universities, on the other hand, are largely self-reliant in terms of funding. The viability of many language departments is highly dependent on student numbers.

In Ukraine, the Ministry of Education closely regulates the curriculum (although not as much as primary and secondary education) the curriculum, and provides recommendations as to the content of subjects and examinations. Tertiary departments in Australia are relatively autonomous in aspects that relate to the organising and structuring of the German language program, as well as syllabus design. At the same time, administrators and academic staff are often governed by their perceptions of what might be interesting for the students. Students normally have various opportunities to express their opinion and general impression of the course, teaching methodologies and the teacher, for example, by filling out a questionnaire that is administered to all students at the end of each semester. Thus the program is more narrowly focused and is generally sensitive towards the needs and interests of students.

The two countries to a large extent reflect varying epistemological styles in education broadly discussed in the literature. In his comparative analysis of five countries: the USSR, the USA, France, the GFR and England, Nicholas (1983, p. 5) suggested that all of them are “the sources and epitomes of three different, significant and influential Epistemological Styles”: Marxist-Leninist, Pragmatic and Classical European (see also Holmes & McLean, 1989, p. 102).

Ukraine

It was obvious, that even after some 15 years of independence, Ukraine has retained many features of the Soviet model based on Marxist-Leninist principles. Along with other aspects, the principles of Soviet education included a broadness of
curriculum and content both in schools and higher educational institutions equally accessible to all pupils and students. This was based on the objective of the Communist Party to raise broadly educated citizens, charged with the spirit of communism. Education in the USSR was a political matter whose purpose was to “to act as the main agent in the production of the new Communist Society of tomorrow” (Nicholas, 1983, p. 6).

Currently, the curriculum designed for students who major in languages, also offers a wide range of both purely linguistic and general humanities subjects. Upon the completion of the Masters degree students of the University of Kyiv are entitled to teach German and/or English at all levels as well as engage themselves in interpreting and/or translation activities, as disciplines such as *Theory and Practice of Translation and Interpreting* are offered to all students at some point in their study. The curriculum also embraces a wide range of other linguistic and humanities subjects, such as: *The History of the German Language, Stylistics, Lexicology, Theoretical Phonetics, Theoretical Grammar, Theory of the English Language, Theory of Linguistics, Philosophy* and so on. A list of compulsory subjects from the researcher’s own five-year study culminating in a Masters degree contains as many as 53 subjects completed during the period from 1996 to 2001. Over a period of 5 years, a student who majored in German would have completed 2395 hours of German language instruction, 1528 hours of English, 389 hours of History of Foreign Literature, 133 hours of Latin. Earlier in this study we noted that a reformation of the tertiary education system is currently taking place in Ukraine to suit the requirements of the Bologna Convention. These changes are happening in such areas as course design, syllabus, assessment and methodology of teaching (Sojko, 2006). The number of contact hours, as well as the range of compulsory disciplines is likely to be reduced. The Minister of Education and Science of Ukraine, Stanislav Nikolajenko, noted:

Our higher educational institutions have a considerably larger amount of contact hours per week than other countries which does not allow the students to acquire certain independent study skills (…). Such a large teaching load does not allow the academic staff to conduct research and to grow professionally. Therefore, the
Ministry advises tertiary institutions to decrease the number of contact hours and to allow students more time for independent study (…) (Surzhyk, 2005).

However, this investigation has shown that the problem lies not just in the excessively large number of contact hours, but in the general approach towards teaching the language and making the language class interesting and worthwhile for students. We argue that if any changes are to be made, then they should also account for the opinions of those directly involved in the teaching/learning process, that is, students and teachers. Students are the “recipients” of educational services, they are the ones who use the acquired knowledge throughout their lives and define whether their university courses were worthwhile.

Overall, Ukrainian students appeared to have quite a positive attitude towards their study. There is a general understanding that it is one of the most important stages in their lives and university education is prestigious, and a springboard towards success and prosperity. To many, a broad, firmly set curriculum and an already defined study pathway is the way university education “should be”. The university reality is often taken as a given, as something that has been “cut in stone”, organised and approved by someone in the Ministry of Education or in the Chancellor’s office, as something that they as “just students” cannot change, but rather should assimilate. When reflecting on gaps in the curriculum, a student noted that although they did not have enough conversation classes, this was typical of any university education where “foreign language study is always rather theoretical” (U5, 338). Looking back at her study of German a few years ago, a former student at one of the three Ukrainian universities expressed a similar opinion⁵⁴:

I understand that university is simply not the right place for teaching/learning the language, which Germans speak. I mean, they teach the “correct” language at uni. And I wouldn’t have expected from my teachers to teach me really colloquial phrases. I think that this is not a drawback, but just the reality that life and university are

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⁵⁴ Former students were not included in the present study as ‘participants’. Therefore the former student, who we mention here, has agreed to be referred to by her real name.
slightly different. They have to teach the “correct” language, not the colloquial one (Panchenko, Svitlana, personal communication, November 16, 2005).

The new Curriculum for German in Ukraine

It has been noted that the objectives and the contents of education are currently being revisited to suit the recommendations of the Bologna Convention and the requirements of modern day circumstances. Discussions are currently under way, at least on paper, in the field of language education as well. The Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine together with the National Linguistic University of Kyiv have designed a typical program that defines new goals in language education which have been co-ordinated with the recommendations of the Council of Europe in language education (Curriculum, 2004). The document is recommended for use in universities and pedagogical institutes where German is taught as a major. The Curriculum describes the general principles of the tertiary GFL class and gives recommendations on teaching the four language skills and aspects such as grammar, phonetics and lexis. It acknowledges the fact that the era of methodological dogmatism is over and that it has become characteristic of the modern language class to use principles and techniques from various methods and approaches. At the same time it recognises the important role of learning materials that to a great extent determine how the language is taught in the class (Curriculum, 2004, p. 34). The curriculum describes the three main attributes of a GFL class:

- communicative and action-oriented;
- learner-centred and one that supports learner autonomy;
- oriented towards learning the culture of the German-speaking countries, in particular Germany, Austria, Switzerland and Liechtenstein.

The first attribute is also one of the central objectives of the GFL class stated in the program. It identifies the primary aim of a language class: to equip students with the necessary communicative skills that they can use in real-life communicative situations (ibid). Therefore activities and exercises that help students develop these skills should
be given priority, such as group work, pair work, simulation, working on a project, and so forth. At the same time students’ active participation and creativity should be encouraged wherever possible.

The second attribute states that the interests and needs of students should be taken into account when designing the syllabus of the language program and choosing teaching methods and techniques. The program emphasises that teachers and students are equal partners and both take responsibility for success in language learning.

The third component of the GFL class implies that the intercultural GFL class is a dialogue not only between Germany and Ukraine, but also between other countries of the German-speaking world, such as Austria, Switzerland and Liechtenstein, and that therefore these should be granted a more prominent place within the cultural component of the integrated language classes.

The Curriculum outlines a set of principles upon which the choice of methodological approaches and the classroom activities should be based:

- coherence: All elements of the content are presented and practiced integratively;
- individual and socio-cultural relevance: The choice of content and exercises should take into account students’ personal experience, intercultural knowledge and understanding of socio-cultural aspects;
- the development of learner autonomy: Students should be offered the types of tasks and exercises that will help transform them into autonomous learners;
- professional relevance: preference should be given to those classroom activities and exercises that will be useful for the students’ future pedagogical career.

The last principle is based on the assumption that students of language departments will pursue a teaching career at a school or a university. As the results have shown, this assumption is somewhat erroneous as not all the students expressed the desire to teach the language at the end of their tertiary study. The principle of professional relevance in this case should refer to those classroom activities and exercises that would be useful not only in the field of language teaching, but for the variety of language related professional activities that students might potentially be engaged in, such as: interpreting/translation, business, travel, and so on. Taking into account modern day circumstances which allow practically anyone to work, study,
travel or live abroad, the role of language departments has also been profoundly modified, at least in the eyes of students. It is no longer about training linguists and language teachers, but also effective language users for a variety of purposes and in a variety of fields. One of the underlying tasks of European language education as stated by the Council of Europe (upon which the Curriculum is based) is to prepare all Europeans for the growing needs of international mobility and co-operation not only in the field of education, culture and science, but also in trade and industry (see also Nikolayeva, 2003).

The new Curriculum and the teaching of grammar

As mentioned above, grammar used to occupy a central place in any FL class in Ukraine. Only relatively recently has the dominance of grammar begun to be questioned. Activities that are characteristic of the Grammar-translation method have gradually started to be replaced by more communicatively-oriented ones, such as dialogues, group discussions, pair work, and so on. This was partly also due to the increasing availability of authentic textbooks, such as *Themen Neu, Em, Deutsch Aktiv*, which for many teachers have become a source of new interesting activities and fresh teaching techniques. The head of department of German linguistics Dr. Ivan Sojko characterised the contemporary teaching methodology and the place of grammar in his department as follows:

What we now have is called “communicative grammar”.
This means that grammar is practised in models and communicative situations close to real life. We are combining the old teaching methods with the new ones to suit modern day circumstances.\(^{55}\) (Dr. I. Sojko, personal communication, June 27, 2006).

The new Curriculum does not explicitly specify the role of grammar in the language class; instead it puts forward recommendations as to the methods of teaching

\(^{55}\) Translation from Ukrainian is provided by the author
it. Learner autonomy and the principle of integration of grammar and lexical material are particularly emphasised. The inductive mode of explaining grammatical phenomena is given preference over the deductive, so that students themselves have a chance to formulate the rule from the given examples. Grammar phenomena are learned in communicative situations and in a variety of contexts (Curriculum, 2004, p. 38).

Later we will discuss the question of whether the objectives and the recommendations provided by the New Curriculum in German really have been taken into account in everyday teaching activities. However we realise that the full implementation will take more time and discussion.

The new Curriculum and textbooks

Language departments cannot afford to purchase new textbooks and essential electronic equipment. The researcher herself happened to be a witness to a situation when teachers were confronted with a dilemma: to use old textbooks packed with ideological texts but which are nevertheless readily available to students in the library, or at their own expense, to provide new, usually expensive textbooks, a single copy of which would be shared between all the teachers in the department. Thus the lack of suitable textbooks and learning materials that would correspond to today’s language learning imperatives is one of the most serious problems in tertiary FL education. Many of those still used in the FL departments are hopelessly out of date and need a thorough revision of content and methodology to meet the new aims (see Krasjuk, 1999, p. 19).

Similarly, the new Curriculum for German explicitly states that available textbooks and learning materials do not correspond to the aims of the modern FL class and authentic German textbooks are not readily available, are expensive and do not take into account Ukraine’s national specifics (Curriculum, 2004, p. 47). Thus the authors of the new Curriculum recommend adjusting some authentic material from German textbooks, video- and audio-materials and media to suit the needs of Ukrainian language learners, and to create new materials, preferably based on the new Curriculum for German. In addition, the Curriculum provides a multi-page list of recommended textbooks, and other learning materials for various skills and aspects of language
learning to be used in the German language class. The list includes textbooks published both within the bounds of the former Soviet Union and in German-speaking countries during the period from the late 1980s to the early 2000s. It is remarkable, however that a good half of all textbooks recommended for speaking practice, as well as those targeting socio-cultural competence and country studying (*Landeskunde*) are over 10 years old, and again, we argue, may lead to the problem of learners being supplied with outdated vocabulary and old information.

**Language curriculum in Australian universities**

Our research revealed that, unlike in Ukraine, there is no common curriculum for German for tertiary institutions in Australia. As mentioned before, Australian universities are relatively independent from any central authority and take decisions about what and how to teach individually. Baldauf (2000, 1997) asserted that universities have not developed their own complementary holistic language policies but rather have set up a variety of specific problem-oriented solutions. The provision of German at universities throughout Australia is unequal too. Some universities cater for all levels of German from the beginner to the honours or postgraduate student and some only offer classes for beginners. The number of hours, students and academic staff also vary from one institution to another. That is why it is impossible to create a single program for use at all universities in Australia.

**Study areas: communication and grammar**

Question 11 was designed to find out whether students felt the need for more classes in certain areas, such as conversation, grammar, phonetics, translation/interpreting, business German or history of language.

The quantitative and qualitative data showed that in both countries that the majority of students were concerned about the lack of a communicative component in their university language program. 88% of students and Ukraine and 66% of their
Australian peers expressed the need for more conversation classes at university. It was not uncommon, particularly amongst Australian students, to mention this problem in the interviews as well. At Monash University where students were exposed to fewer hours of language instruction they tended to be more critical about their course, particularly when it came to the dominance of grammar and the lack of opportunities for speaking. At the time the research was conducted, the language program consisted of as little as two hours of language tutorials and the same number of classes dedicated to broader aspects of German culture. Many students complained that with so little time allocated to language, the main part of the class was dedicated to the discussion of grammar topics, thus leaving virtually no time for practising communicative skills. “We want to speak and we are not speaking” noted one of the students at Monash University in the final year of her university language course. And this view was typical for students who took part in the interview. Students from other participating universities also mentioned the lack of opportunities to speak in German in the class. This was despite the fact that teachers tended to define their methods as communicative and their teaching objectives as developing communicative skills in students. The conclusion that we can draw from such a contradiction is that in fact teachers’ answers might be based on what they think they ought to be doing and not what they actually do in the class. These results resonated with those found in the Report of the review of modern languages in higher education by Leal, Bettoni and Malcolm (1991, p. 77): in spite of the fact that staff from language departments identified oral/aural proficiency as the most highly rated objectives, students themselves felt that these were less important to the department than some other objectives.

The lack of balance between the two types of activities might have a demotivating effect on language learning (see for example Clyne, 1996 ). Clyne emphasised the importance of balancing the focus on form and focus on meaning, an integrated approach whereby learners can obtain both practice and the vital feedback to modify their hypotheses.

Our research has shown that Ukrainian students generally welcomed the broadness of curriculum. This was particularly obvious in students’ interviews when they admitted that all the areas were covered to a greater or lesser extent. However many of them, like their Australian counterparts, expressed the opinion that more
emphasis on the communicative component would have been highly desirable. In fact, this is the direction in which the current education policy has claimed to be heading. Even some influential politicians occupying key positions on matters of language education have expressed the view that languages should now be taught with consideration of the requirements of modern circumstances and accent should be put on the acquisition of practical communicative skills (Tutashyns'kyi, 2006, interview was accessed in 2006). This investigation has shown that such an objective did coincide with the opinions of students and ought to be reached and implemented in the language curriculum in the quickest time possible.

The data obtained from questionnaires showed that only 26% of students in Ukraine and 25% in Australia expressed the desire for more grammar classes. The interviews, however, shed some light on what students’ real attitude was towards grammar and communicative activities and what really was lacking in the program and why. The relatively low figure for grammar did not mean low interest or that students attributed a low degree of importance to grammar instruction. On the contrary, it was common amongst students from both countries to think that grammar was a particularly important component in language learning (see Table 7.14). Table 7.34 showed that almost all the students in Ukraine and Australia considered activities such as doing grammar, correction of mistakes, and other grammar-related activities as important. In the interviews, it was typical for students to say that grammar was “extremely important” (U3, 130) or “I really like the fact that they push grammar a lot” (A3, 098). However they also admitted that grammar often dominated in the language class and no or very little time was left for communicating in German. A student from a Ukrainian university noted that although the program had separate classes on grammar and oral practice, in reality during “Konversation” classes grammar was taught again. At another university in Ukraine, a student reported that in some cases teachers relied on students’ free-will to incorporate the communicative component into their program by asking them to speak in German to each other during the break or after classes – a practice that in the respondent’s opinion was somewhat utopian. At Monash University, where the number of language classes was particularly low, students repeatedly emphasised that tutorials tended to have a very strong grammar focus that grew even stronger with the advancement of the study level (A2, 114).
Other study areas

Translation/interpreting. The results showed that apart from conversation, students also perceived the need for more translation/interpreting classes (Table 7.13). Being second on the list, this option was chosen by 65% of Ukrainian students and 35% of their Australian peers. Skills that can be acquired in translation/interpreting classes are primarily of pragmatic value for students in Ukraine, due to a wide array of employment opportunities for those with translation/interpreting skills in commerce, international relations, diplomacy, trade, etc, in that country.

In Australia 4 out of 5 respondents mentioned that they would have liked to have had more classes on interpreting/translation. Apart from vocational considerations, students were also driven by the applicability of this skill in everyday life, such as the ability to translate letters from German-speaking friends and relatives. Students in Leal’s et al. study (1991) also expressed the desire for more translation/interpreting classes while this desire was not always matched by the teaching staff. In our study, the majority of teachers considered translation/interpreting to be important, however further research is needed to examine in more detail teachers’ attitudes towards this aspect of language learning.

Business German. As mentioned above, this discipline was more of a concern for Ukrainian students, 47% of whom expressed the desire for more Business German classes. Only 20% of students in Australian institutions agreed with them. As with the previous study area, Business German provides vital knowledge for those looking for work within Ukraine. The situation is different in Australia where employment opportunities with German are limited and students do not see direct benefits from acquiring competency in Business German.

Phonetics and History of the Language. Twenty-two percent of Ukrainian students and only 10% of Australian students expressed the need for more classes on phonetics. However, in the interviews, Australian students tended to mention the lack of such
classes rather frequently. A student from Monash University regretted that phonetics was only introduced into the study program in the third year and not in the first.

A comparatively low 7% of respondents in Ukraine and 12% in Australia thought that they would like to have had more classes on the History of the German Language.

The research showed that students both in Ukraine and Australia tended to look at the contents of the language program from a practical point of view, valuing applicability to future employment, rather than academic or intellectual satisfaction.

A similar conclusion was reached by Schneider (2004, p. 276), who noted that “learners have a pragmatic orientation towards their tertiary language studies”. In her study, the majority of students turned out to be interested first of all in language tutorials, lectures on Second language acquisition and Culture; and less in Linguistics, L2 History, Literature and Philosophy. Business German also attracted a relatively low 14% of students at the advanced level.

The crosstabulation analysis shed some light on the connection between students’ responses on what aspect of language learning they thought was lacking in their program and their reasons for undertaking the German language course at the university (see Appendix D). The response “Conversation” turned out to be strongly associated with the motives “to study and to work in a German-speaking country” only in the group of Australian students. No strong associations with these or any other motives were revealed amongst Ukrainian students, despite the fact that a large number 88% felt the need for more “conversation”.

It was established however that a strong association exists in the group of Ukrainian students between the motive “to work in a German-speaking country” and the desire for more grammar classes. In the Australian group no such relationship could be found.

The analysis also revealed that Ukrainian students were more likely to express the desire for more classes on translation/interpreting if they were going to become language teachers and if they chose the motive “to get to know German culture”.

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Australian students, on the other hand, tended to feel the need for more translation/interpreting classes if they were planning to work in a German-speaking country.

**Problems arising with the contents of the course**

The research showed that students from both countries shared their concern not only about the dominance of grammar and lack of communicative activities, but about the irrelevance of the material that was taught. It was revealed that many students found the vocabulary and topics that were discussed in the language class artificial and inapplicable to “real life”. Many students recalled situations when they felt helpless and ridiculous when in a German-speaking country because of the lack of language skills even after a few semesters of language study at university. This situation became a source of frustration and dissatisfaction with the course. Similarly, Darijchuk (2001, p. 79) found that tertiary FL class in Ukraine often lacks relevance to real life, fresh vocabulary and topics for discussion.

Some of the problems mentioned by students tended to be more characteristic of one particular country. For example, many Australian students tended to complain about the fact that the course and the material offered in the class were often repetitive. Reiteration of the old material with little refinement was a common complaint of students at both Melbourne and Monash universities (students A1, 121-135; A4, 023).

Another problem mentioned in the interviews was the lack of reinforcement of and control over the material. In the opinion of some students from both of the Australian universities, more control and more frequent references to the learnt material would have aided in committing it to memory (A1, 135-147; A3, 253-260).

An interesting feature of Ukrainian students was their tendency to be philosophical about the lack of the communicative components and relevant interesting topics. As we mentioned in the Results Chapter, many students tended to think that this was just an inseparable part of university education, which is not supposed to be always amusing, enjoyable, or practical but “rather theoretical” (U5, 338).
Students’ motivation for studying German

Ukrainian students versus Australian students

We found that motives such as “enjoyment”, “to travel”, “to work in a German-speaking country”, “to study abroad” and “to get to know German culture” turned out to be popular with both groups of students. These results resonate with some of the earlier studies exploring student motivation for German language study. Ammon (1991) and Schneider (2004), for instance, found that travel- and work-related reasons were amongst the most popular motives for studying German, and teaching was at the bottom of students’ “wish list” (Schneider, 2004, p. 275).

Some differences in responses could also be observed, namely the Australian students scored higher than Ukrainian students particularly with the following motives:

- Enjoyment (a difference of 29%)
- To work in a German-speaking country (a difference of 25%)
- For travel (a difference of 12%), and
- To study abroad (a difference of 7%).

The somewhat lower proportion of Ukrainian students choosing work-, study- or travel-related reasons reflect the relative scarceness of opportunities in Ukraine to go abroad. In Ukrainian universities, funding for undertaking study abroad appears to be not as readily available to students, as it is in Australian universities. Often a trip abroad for Ukrainians is a matter of personal connections, good searching skills and budget. The most widely known exchange programs, for example, those organised by the German Academic Exchange Service (Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst – DAAD) or Goethe Institute are offered in Ukraine. However they are highly competitive, due to a very large number of applicants, and only very few get the “lucky ticket” to a German-speaking country. In addition, organising a visa, a compulsory requirement for

56 Availability of opportunities to go abroad or meeting native-speakers varies from university to university and from city to city. For example, in the capital city Kyiv, or in Lviv, in the west of the country, students would generally be exposed to a wider range of offers, than those in Kharkiv, situated in the Eastern part of Ukraine.
Ukrainian citizens, can be quite an involved and costly process, which sometimes requires the applicant, no matter what part of Ukraine he or she comes from, to be present in person at the German Embassy in Kyiv. Out of thirty students enrolled in years 2 to 5 in the German department at Kharkiv University who participated in the survey, only one had visited a German-speaking country!

Australian Universities, to a greater extent than Ukrainian universities, offer various exchange and study-abroad programs for which some funding can become available to students. For example, the School of Languages at Melbourne University awards eight language scholarships each year to students of German and Swedish. It allows students to undertake an eight-week intensive language course at a German or Swedish university (Melbourne University Undergraduate Handbook, 2006). The German department at Monash University has a “Study Abroad” program funded partly by “Monash Abroad” and partly by the German Government (DAAD) which allows its students to undertake an eight week intensive language course at a German university as part of a major sequence and/or an honours degree in German, Linguistics or Cultural Studies (Monash University Undergraduate Handbook, 2006). The availability of travel opportunities as well as previous experience of visiting German-speaking countries, we argue, made the possibility of going overseas for Australian students more realistic.

On the other hand, the prospect of teaching attracted many more Ukrainian students than Australian. This difference might be due to the fact that Ukrainian FL departments have traditionally seen their role as trainers of future FL teachers. University graduates with an MA degree have the necessary qualifications to teach a FL at any level of education in Ukraine upon completion of the full university program. At the same time, the data have shown that not all the students wanted to become language teachers at the end of their study. A relatively large number (45%) did not cite teaching as a future aspiration. This was partly due to the fact that the teaching profession is typically not viewed as the most financially rewarding. A university diploma from a prestigious FL department is a life-ticket for its holder, which helps the graduate to obtain employment almost anywhere: in multi-national companies, joint ventures, government institutions, media, travel agencies, flight agencies, and so forth, and not just at a school or a university. To many teaching was “always available” as a very last
Nevertheless, eight out of eleven teachers in Ukraine thought that students would like to teach German upon completion of their degree.

In Australia, on the other hand, students often obtain their degree in FLs concurrently with other degrees such as Science, Engineering, Medicine, Law, and are not automatically entitled to a career in the education system, which requires additional qualifications. Figure 7.1 has shown that the prospect of teaching German was a reason for studying at university for only 17% of students. Rather, many students seemed to be more interested in utilising their German language knowledge abroad.

Thus, we have revealed some commonalties and differences in student motivation for studying German at university. Whereas many motives turned out to be important for both groups of students, some differences could be observed. These differences are partly due to the countries’ distinctive socio-linguistic and economic situation, travel and employment opportunities and partly due to the intrinsically different aims of the tertiary German language course in Ukraine and Australia. The two factors are no doubt closely connected with each other.

**Teachers’ perceptions of student motives**

Although the number of teachers participating in the study was low compared to the number of students in order to be able to conduct a statistical analysis of the data, we nevertheless obtained some evidence to suggest that teachers in both countries were not always aware of students’ motives. Teachers in both countries tended to undervalue the importance of student motives such as “for travel” and those simply based on the enjoyment of learning German. On the other hand, teachers often attributed to great a value to motives such as “to teach German” and “to study abroad”.

With some items Ukrainian and Australian teacher groups showed some difference in their perceptions of student motives. The Ukrainian teachers tended to think little of students’ most popular motive “to get to know German culture” in that only 4 out of 11 respondents selected it. In Australia on the other hand, teachers tended to overrate items such as “to teach German” and “to balance out my technical course”.

resort.
The study has shown that the teachers were overall aware that there is a range of motives that have brought students to study German at the university. The implication for language teaching is that teachers and course designers need to become more concerned about the range of motives that drive students for tertiary study and to adjust the focus and the structure of the course accordingly. This is not to suggest that language departments should be completely subservient on the will of the students and cater to their every need, an attitude more suited to independent language courses and private tutors. This approach would undoubtedly lead to a dumbing down of language programs and jeopardise the whole idea of a broad university education. We are arguing here for the continuing interest of those responsible for language programs in students’ motivation for language study, which could make the language program more sensitive to students’ needs.

Perceptions of classroom activities

Learning and teaching activities are manifestations of the approach used in the language class (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 26). Previously, we established that Australia and Ukraine followed different paths in applying approaches and methods in FL learning. In Australia of the 1960s-1970s the need arouse to attract a greater number of students into universities and language classes had to become more appealing to students greater emphasis on practical knowledge. Thus communicative approaches were taken on board with grammar being marginalised as such that supposedly did not fit within the new method.

In Ukraine, on the other hand, the need for a methodological overhaul was not so pressing. Although some innovative approaches were developed and used, they could not shake the strong foundations of traditional approaches, nor was this shift particularly necessary in the isolated communist country. Out of the four basic language skills, reading and writing were considered the most important. A typical language class contained activities requiring little creativity and freedom, such as writing dictation, reading aloud from a textbook, retelling prose texts or poems by heart, completing exercises on an aspect of grammar and on translating and/or interpreting, and preparing monologues or dialogues on prescribed topics (e.g. “My family”, “My country”, “Kyiv
The situation is changing now and the question about redirecting the language program towards the acquisition of more practical skills is at the centre of the methodological debate. Recent publications emphasise the need for turning the FL class into a mini-model of a real life communicative situation, whereby the rationale behind each activity is explained to students (Darijchuk, 2000, p. 78). The most effective methods are those which, amongst other aspects, have clearly defined communicative goals (Kryuchkov, 2002, p. 11).

The aim of Question 15 in the questionnaire was to establish student perceptions of grammar and communicative activities, as well as to shed some light on differences in responses between Ukrainian and Australian students. The author’s assumption was that the objectives of language learning in the two countries are becoming more similar against the backdrop of the processes of globalisation and market economy.

As we mentioned in the chapter 7 (table 7.34), the opinions of Ukrainian and Australian students coincided for many activities: both groups valued grammar and communicative activities – results consistent with our findings regarding students’ perceived lack of classes. We established that the majority of students in Ukraine and Australia rated most of the activities as “important” (the exceptions were the activities “learning poems/dialogues, etc by heart” and “listening to and learning songs in German” (to which we will return later) (King, 2006). Thus the question was not whether the students perceived the given activities as important (we know they mostly did), but rather with which activities the most notable differences occurred and why.

It is appropriate here to remind the reader in which activities the opinions of the Ukrainian and Australian students were similar and where the results revealed some differences. The judgements were based upon the degree of difference/similarity on the p-value obtained with Fisher’s Exact Test. For the following activities the Test did not reveal any differences and the percentages were high in both groups:

- teacher explains grammar;
- making dialogues and discussions;
- doing exercises after each grammar rule;
• individual correction of mistakes;
• reading a newspaper or a book with a discussion following;
• doing exercises that develop translation/interpreting skills;
• listening to a tape or watching TV with a discussion following;
• teacher’s explanations are in German;
• doing grammar exercises from a textbook;
• writing an essay or a letter;
• making sentences with new words;
• preparing a talk on a given topic; and
• teacher compares German and students’ L1 when explaining language phenomena.

In cases where the $p$-value was relatively low there was some evidence to suggest that the importance ratings differed according to the country of origin for that particular activity. The results showed some differences for the following activities: 8, 10, 11, 12, 16 and 18, which we are going to discuss below.

The responses of the teachers were overall similar to those of the students. All the activities listed above were marked as “rather” or “very important” by the teachers. The minor differences that occurred will also be discussed further.

*Activity 8.* Learning poems, dialogues, etc. by heart (Ukraine – 81%, Australia – 24%)

This significant difference is not surprising considering the fact that memorisation of vocabulary and grammar topics used to be one of the most commonly used teaching and learning strategies in the Soviet education system (see the discussion on classroom activities above). The author’s own experience from her student years, the overall impression from the fieldwork research and data from interviews confirm that this activity is still used in the language class in Ukraine and has quite a few proponents. Students who were in favour of this activity in the interview, said that it helped them learn phrases and language structures better, as well as develop memory in general (U1, Kyiv University). Some students expressed a negative attitude towards this type of
activity and suggested that if at all, it should only be used during the initial stages of language learning (U2, Kyiv University; U3, Kharkiv University).

The majority of Australian teachers (four out of six) also marked this activity as “not essential”, whereas in Ukraine more than a half of all the respondents were in favour of learning texts and poems by heart.

*Activity 10.* Listening to and repeating after a native speaker (Ukraine – 91%, Australia – 83%)

Nunan (2002) has argued that listening was the Cinderella skill in second language learning. Very often it had been overlooked in favour of its elder sister – speaking. Every so often, Nunan noted, listening comes into fashion. This was the case in the 1960s, when listening was brought on by the wave of infatuation with oral language skills. It came into fashion again, within the context of Krashen’s ideas about comprehensible input and later reinforced by the Total Physical Response in the late 1980s. Repeating words or the utterances of native speakers, either recorded on a tape or produced live was and still is used (whenever the language laboratories are available) in the universities of Australia and Ukraine as a means of teaching and learning “authentic” pronunciation. Such a statistically significant difference in proportions between the student groups probably comes down to the fact that the opportunities for Ukrainian students to talk to a native speaker and to be exposed to the “live” language either within or outside the university are rather limited. At the same time, students realise the importance of being exposed to the language spoken by native-speakers and value to a great extent the classes conducted by either DAAD lecturers or other invited teachers from German-speaking countries:

U4: The classes [conducted by German teachers] are very valuable in that we discuss interesting topics or current affairs in Germany. Communication with these teachers has the closest connection with real life (Kharkiv University, April 2006).

German teachers normally come to Ukrainian universities as temporary staff members by means of the German Academic Exchange Service (Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst – DAAD), which has been active in Ukraine only since 1998. There
are as few as seven DAAD teachers in Ukraine - one in each of the biggest cities including Kyiv, Lviv, Odessa, Kharkiv, Donez’k, Dniporpetrovs’k and Tscherniwzi (Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst (DAAD) in der Ukraine [German Academic Exchange Service in Ukraine]). For many students these teachers are almost the only opportunity to communicate with German native-speakers.

**Activity 11.** Writing dictation (Ukraine – 79%, Australia – 61%)

Similarly to “learning poems, dialogues etc. by heart”, this activity was widely used in Soviet pedagogy and is still being used. In the two Australian universities, this activity is a rare one. At the same time, students who are familiar with this activity from school or from their studies in Germany, or at language courses had a positive attitude towards it:

A5: We never did this activity at the university. I’ve done it once at Goethe institute and I found it quite beneficial (Monash University, April 2006).

A2: I think, this activity will be quite useful for developing the ear, but we never do it (Monash University, March 2006).

A6: When I was studying in Germany, I found this activity really useful, but we’ve never done it here (Melbourne University, April 2006).

Indeed, some pedagogues noted that dictation had been judged unduly harshly, when in fact it could be an engaging and beneficial activity. This simple exercise helps develop skills in at least four areas: phonetics, listening comprehension, grammar and orthography (see Häussermann & Piepho, 1996).

As one might expect, the majority of Ukrainian teachers held the view that this activity was “rather important” for language learning.

**Activity 12.** Listening to and learning songs in German (Ukraine – 66%, Australia – 50%)

This item was not amongst the most popular with either of the student groups. Nevertheless, as we have already noted (with activity 8 discussed above), Ukrainian students are more accustomed to learning material by heart, including songs. However,
the interview data provided mixed responses from both groups of students on the importance of this activity for language learning:

U3: Songs can sometimes be difficult to understand; still I think it’s a good way to learn new phrases and words (Kharkiv University, March 2006).

A1: Through songs you get exposed to “live” language and learn new vocabulary, so I think it is quite an important activity (Melbourne University, March 2006).

Students who did not find this activity useful referred to the fact that songs take a lot of class time, can often be incomprehensible and therefore are not worthwhile (A5 Monash University, April, 2006).

Activity 16. Teacher uses students’ L1 in his/her explanations (Ukraine – 55%, Australia – 74%)

Many students both in Ukraine and Australia expressed the belief that the language used for explanation or instruction ought to depend on the students’ level of language proficiency and difficulty of the material. (The same was held by the teachers as well). However, Ukrainian students seemed to have been very conscious of the fact that the German class was nearly the only opportunity for them to talk and to be exposed to the German language and therefore any further exposure to the language in the class was appreciated. A fifth-year student at a Ukrainian university noted: “Teachers stopped using Ukrainian after the first semester at the university and by the fifth year German has become almost like our first language” (U3, Kharkiv Univeristy, April, 2006).

With teachers, no straightforward answer could be obtained, as many of them were teaching at various levels. However, the data in tables 7.41 and 7.43 suggested that more Ukrainian teachers tended to be against the use of students’ mother tongue in the class.

Activity 18. Teachers summarising typical mistakes (Ukraine – 91%, Australia – 99%)

Traditional teaching methods, with their emphasis on form rather than meaning, presuppose scrupulous attention to mistakes in oral and written production. Communicative approaches, on the other hand, take a more relaxed view of mistakes,
suggesting that mistakes should not be corrected unless they make the utterance incomprehensible. Some researchers have suggested that students and teachers should focus on major patterns of error rather than attempting to correct every single mistake (Bates, Lane, & Lange, 1993 as cited in; cited in Ferris, 2002). The data from the questionnaires showed that for an overwhelming majority of students in both countries, these were not mutually exclusive things (almost all the students in both countries thought activity 17 “individual correction of mistakes” was also important). More Australian students, however, thought that the accent should be put on typical mistakes. The data from interviews turned out to be more homogeneous. Opinions like the following one where not infrequent with the Australian students: “Both [types] are important, but I find it particularly useful to know what mistakes are made by other people” (A5, Monash University April 2006).

Some of the Ukrainian students noted that, although the individual correction of mistakes was important, the teacher should not interrupt their speaking but discuss their mistakes at the end (U1, U2, U3, April 2006).

The reader will recall from Chapter 7, that teachers also tended to hold various opinions on when and how errors should be corrected in oral use. In written language almost all teachers agreed that errors should be corrected. Classroom observations showed that Ukrainian teachers tended to correct errors even in oral use.

The findings of this investigation confirm to some extent those of earlier studies by Horwitz (1988), Kern (1995) and Rao (2002) in that it showed that students greatly valued both traditional activities, such as doing grammar exercises and having their errors corrected and those the communicative language teaching such as discussing various topics and making dialogues.

Teachers and course designers need to be aware of the fact that it is the lack of balance of the two components that very often leads to students’ frustration and dissatisfaction with the course and perhaps their withdrawal from the subject.

In conclusion, we would like to point out that although the opinions of students are valuable here, it would be wrong for course administrators and teachers to solely base their decisions as to the curriculum on what students think or want. The results of this study suggest that Australian students often attribute to tertiary language education a very specific task – to acquire language skills. Many are inclined to perceive the
university language course from a purely instrumental point of view and to regard other disciplines that do not directly provide language training as a waste of time and irrelevant. By this they overlook probably the most important feature of any university education which distinguishes it from corporate or TAFE language courses, private tuition and the like: that is to provide a broad, state-of-the-art complex of knowledge in language(s), linguistics, literature and culture as well as skills for further education.

**Teacher perceptions of the aspects of language teaching:**

**the role of grammar, classroom activities and teaching methods**

The part of the present investigation dealing with teachers’ perception of the role of grammar instruction in language teaching/learning revealed that teachers in Ukraine and Australia, similarly to students, greatly valued grammar in language teaching. Ukrainian teachers were almost unilateral in recognising grammar as a “very important” component of language learning. At the same time many teachers noted that the decision making about the role of grammar in the class ought to take into account students’ reasons for studying German. Grammar is important if students intend to teach German and it is not very important for reasons such as travel (T11, T14) (this is of course one of the examples when teachers’ awareness of student motives became important). Nearly all of the teachers in both countries agreed with the idea that there should be an equal amount of grammar practice and communicative activities in the class.

The question dealing with teachers’ perceptions of selected classroom activities (Q11 in the Teacher Questionnaire) also showed that teachers highly regarded grammar activities. The majority of teachers in Ukraine and Australia indicated that it is “very important” that the teacher explains grammar to students and provides feedback on student mistakes. Apart from the “traditional” activities that mainly focus on grammar and providing feedback, both groups of teachers valued communication-oriented tasks equally high.
That, as we know, coincides with students opinions. However, when it comes to practice many, particularly, Australian students reported a lack of balance between these two components in favour of grammar (e.g. U5, A2, A5).

The study also revealed some differences between the two groups of teachers. Activities 8 (learning texts/poems/dialogues/etc. by heart) and 11 (dictation) which were valued by the majority of the Ukrainian teachers had hardly any appeal amongst their Australian counterparts. This fact illustrates to some extent the fact mentioned earlier about different pedagogical and methodological traditions. A similar discrepancy occurred in the student sample as well (see section “Perceptions of classroom activities”).

Also revealing were teachers’ detailed answers regarding the methods and approaches that they use in the class. The word “communicative” or “communication” frequently appeared in teachers’ answers. Both groups of teachers admitted to have combined various approaches that target the development of both accuracy and fluency. This answer resonated in their responses on their perceived role of grammar and communicative activities. The same was found during classroom observations: there was no clear-cut method that the teachers preferred, but rather a variety of techniques and activities. This brings to the fore the debate surrounding the concept of method. Allwright (1991) pointed out that the concept of method is “relatively unhelpful” as “it offers a ‘cheap’ externally derived sense of coherence for language teachers, which may itself inhibit the development of a personally ‘expensive’, but ultimately far more valuable, internally derived sense of coherence (…) (pp. 7-8). So when teachers try to depart from the “externally derived coherence” towards what works best for learning, the eclectic method emerges (Kumaravadivelu, 2006).

The motivation behind using a mixture of traditional and communicative techniques varied. Some teachers admitted that apart from grammatical competence, learners have to develop an ability to communicate in various contexts. Others, expressed the view that by mixing various activities they create a healthy, encouraging atmosphere which makes learning fun. Overall all teachers thought that a combination of methods was the most effective approach toward language teaching (T10) and the most appropriate for students as well (T16).
The findings of this study resonate with those of Schulz, who revealed that teachers in the U.S. and Colombia had overall similar views with their students regarding the importance of grammar (2001, p. 254). Namely, there was an agreement between the groups that grammar instruction aids in language learning. Similarly to our results, the earlier study also found that both teachers and students favoured a combination of grammar and communicative activities, with teachers being even more keen on the communicative tasks (p. 254).

The opinions of teachers about the effectiveness of a combination of form-focused and meaning-focused approaches finds its substantiation in the theory of language acquisition. Lightbown & Spada (2006) have asserted that

"[t]he challenge [for language teachers] is to find the balance between meaning-based and form-focused activities. The right balance is likely to be different according to the characteristics of the learners. The learners’ age, metalinguistic sophistication, prior educational experiences, motivation, and goals, as well as the similarity of the target language to a language already known need to be taken into account when decisions are made about the amount and type of form-focus to offer (p. 178)."

That means that not only do teachers need to vary the traditional and communicative techniques but also to be able to adjust the balance depending on the kinds of learners they have.

**Use of L1 in the class**

An interesting difference was found between Ukrainian and Australian teachers regarding the language of instruction. The majority of Ukrainian teachers reported to have used students’ L1 in the German class rarely or only sometimes. Whereas four out of five teachers in Australia thought they were using English “often” or “sometimes”. All the teachers were however common in specifying the conditions under which they
would turn to students’ L1 such as, with beginners or if students failed to comprehend an explanation previously made in German. Classroom observations revealed that classes in Ukraine were indeed conducted mainly in German. This included greetings, questions about previous homework, recapitulation of previously discussed texts and grammar rules, introduction to a new topic, discussion of new vocabulary, creation of communicative situations and concluding the class. The Ukrainian language was used mainly with translation exercises. This goes in line with their responses to another, similar question which dealt with teachers’ perceptions of selected classroom activities teaching techniques. Eight out of eleven respondents indicated that speaking German in the class was very important (Table 7.40).

The question about the use of learners’ L1 in a FL class has been an important issue in SLA. As with grammar instruction, almost every methodological school of thought had a stance regarding the use of L1 which it made clear to its learners. Methods as diverse as The Audiolingual Method, The Silent Way, Total Physical Response, and the Natural Approach held that only the target language should be spoken in the class (Collins, 2001). Butzkamm (1995, p. 189) has in fact used the term Einsprachigkeit to refer to “a truly original contribution of the 20th century to theory and practice of FL education”57, when both methods and dictionaries emerged based on the principle of “monolingualism”. This view however, has not been justified from the pedagogical point of view. Numerous studies on SLA acquisition have provided evidence that the use of the target language as well as learners’ first language helped achieve the highest gains in target language proficiency (Auerbach, 1993; Cummins & Swain, 1986). Collins (2001) observed the classroom behaviour of Spanish students studying English in the U.S. with three teachers only one of whom used their mother tongue in the class. Collins found that students’ satisfaction with the class and their willingness to interact in English was greater if they were allowed to communicate in their L1. Collins argued that students’ L1 interaction, which he found, was always related to the instruction, were in fact the five kinds of learning strategies (metacognitive, cognitive, compensation, social and affective) elaborated by Oxford (1990). Regarding implications for classroom pedagogy, Collins pointed out that rather

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57 Translation from German is provided by Oksana King
than suppressing all use of L1, teachers need to establish a cause for learners’ interaction in L1.

**Marking students’ work**

The question dealing with teachers’ views on the most/least important aspects of language that they pay attention to when marking students written and oral work revealed somewhat different results for both groups of teachers. More than a half of Ukrainian teachers (6 out of 11) admitted that they look at “grammar” more than any other aspect in student written work. On the other hand grammar was reported to be less important in oral communication. Other aspects of language were more important such as fluency, the right choice of vocabulary, and achievement of the communicative goal. Australian teachers were less inclined to grant grammar the first position in written work. In fact there was not much difference between the criteria of marking written and oral communication. Only two out of six teachers put grammar first. Others considered aspects such as comprehensibility, communicative adequacy more important. As we discussed earlier, more than 90% of students in each country thought that the correction of errors (in oral or written use) was important.

Further research involving a larger number of teachers will allow a greater degree of certainty on whether a mismatch in student and teacher perceptions occurs regarding but the few papers that have already examined this matter found that students wanted more error correction than teachers wanted to give (Bernat, 2007; McCargar, 1993; Schulz, 2001). Addressing this problem Lightbrown & Spada (2006) asserted that

> teachers have a responsibility to help learners to do their best, and this includes the provision of explicit, form-focused instruction and feedback on error. When errors are persistent, especially when they are shared by almost all students in a class, it is important to bring the problem to their attention […]. It may be necessary to repeat the feedback on error many times (p. 190).
At the same time, the researchers noted that it is important to know just how much, with which students and under what circumstances the feedback on error can be issued. Excessive feedback on error can have a negative effect on motivation, and teachers must be sensitive to their students’ reactions to correction. Those with little knowledge of linguistics (including children) will not benefit greatly from metalinguistic explanations, but university students may find such explanations of great value. Also, while some students may find immediate correction of error embarrassing, for others it might be exactly what they need (p. 191).

In summary, it was found that Ukrainian and Australian held overall similar views on the role of grammar in language teaching/learning and on the importance of combining form- and meaning-focused activities. The difference between teachers was found in the question relating to the role of accuracy in students’ written and oral work. For the majority of the Ukrainian teachers this was a crucial criterion for marking, while for Australian teachers other aspects were of more concern. At the same time overwhelming majority of students (more than 90%) in Ukraine and Australia considered feedback on error as important. Also a discrepancy was found between teachers’ stated use of methods and students’ feedback on methods and activities used in the classroom. Teachers tended to describe their method as communicative or “eclectic” where a mixture of both traditional and communicative activities takes place. This contradicts with the previously discussed student reflections on classroom pedagogy as well as with results obtained from classroom observations. The two latter sets of data revealed a dominance of form-focused activities and student-reported lack of opportunities to communicate in German. Inconsistencies between teacher stated beliefs and practices regarding form-focused and meaning-focused activities were found in other studies as well (see for instance Basturkmen, Loewen, & Ellis, 2004; Peacock, 1998).

The discrepancies in teachers’ stated beliefs about the methods they use in the classroom and actual reality are not easy to explain. A separate investigation (in similar settings) is needed, perhaps involving a greater number of teachers, so as to obtain more detailed results on the beliefs held by teachers and students in Ukraine and Australia regarding these aspects of language learning. However the analysis that we have
conducted left us wondering whether the teachers spoke about their ideal model of teaching informed by their study of teaching methodology and frequently talked-about communicative language teaching, particularly in the context of the Bologna Process and The Common European Framework, and not by their own, practical knowledge (see also Basturkmen et al., 2004). Secondly, teachers may have varying beliefs about the notion of communicative language teaching and what kinds of tasks may actually be considered communicative. Thirdly, the implementation of teachers’ stated methods in practice may be hindered by constraints such as curriculum and examination requirements, available teaching materials, and their own experiences as a student.

**Students’ self-reported deficiency ratings and expectations from the course**

One of the issues that the present thesis sets out to discuss was how students from Ukraine and Australia rated their own skills in four areas: speaking, listening, reading and writing. The main objective of this question was to gain some insight into students’ awareness of their strengths and weaknesses in language learning. As reported in the chapter 7, Australian students remained largely dissatisfied with all of their skills apart from reading, which 79% of students put in either first or second position. Particularly worrying were the figures for “speaking”: only 27% of students said that this was their best or second best skill. Australian teachers sounded unoptimistic as well: four out of five admitted that speaking was students’ worst or second worst skill (Table 7.37).

In Ukraine, students showed somewhat greater confidence in all the skills (Table 7.32). Similarly to the Australian students, satisfaction with reading tended to be rather high, as seen from 77% of students who positioned this skill in either first or second place. Ukrainian teachers were also confident in students’ reading skills: seven out of eleven participants rated it as students’ best skill.

Somewhat similar conclusions were arrived at by Schneider (2004, p. 237), who also examined students’ perceptions of their own language skills. 20 out of 29 respondents in the German Intermediate Group and 19 out of 21 in the Advanced Group
reported to have “very good”, “good” or “reasonable” reading skills. The figure was rather high compared to the data obtained on other language skills.

The data reflects to some extent our findings on students’ perceived lack of classes. The majority of students in both countries expressed the desire for more conversation classes, as many of them, as we now know, were dissatisfied with their speaking abilities. There is reason to be concerned, as the majority of students were planning to travel, to work or to study in a German-speaking country, so effective communicative skills were of great importance to these students. The situation seems to be alarming particularly against the current backdrop of increasing pressure on Australian language departments to find their own survival strategies. Frequently these strategies involve cutting the number of contact hours, often at the expense of conversation classes. This is the situation that occurred at Monash University, leaving students with just two contact hours per week where the discussion of grammar topics, as the study revealed, takes most of the class time. This investigation showed that students from this very university seemed to be more critical of the course particularly with regard to the lack of opportunities to speak in German and large class sizes.

The data on students’ expectations showed that students nevertheless were hoping to achieve rather high levels of language competence. In speaking, for example, 69% of Ukrainian students expected to reach a native-speaker-like command of German. Ten out of eleven teachers thought that students should be able to achieve level B. Australian students while not so ambitious, still hoped to achieve at least level B (56%). Four out of six Australian teachers agreed with them. The majority of students expected to reach level B with listening (72% in Ukraine and 58% in Australia). Their teachers also supported this view. Almost 60% of Ukrainian students and 44% of their Australian counterparts expected to achieve level B in reading. All Ukrainian teachers provided the same answer with regard to their students, whereas the opinion of Australian teachers was divided between levels B and C. With regard to writing, the majority of Ukrainian students (70%) expected to achieve level B and in Australia, level C was the most popular answer. Nine Ukrainian teachers agreed with students’ expectations. Not so optimistic were Australian teachers, only 3 of whom thought that students would achieve level B.
Heads of departments and course administrators must be aware that any reduction of contact hours will most likely lead to student frustration, dissatisfaction with the course and possibly their quitting the program altogether, because it does not meet their expectations. As reported in the chapter Results, students tended to have rather high expectations of their university language course. In Australia more than a half of all students expected to reach level B in speaking, that is “to communicate freely on a variety of topics, occasionally making some mistakes”. Is this level really attainable by students by the end of a university course with only two contact hours per week? A student from Monash University in the final year of the course noted: “The reason [why we chose the course] was that we wanted to speak and we are not speaking, especially not at my level, where it was all grammar focused” (A2, 114). Another student from the same university also sounded frustrated: “What I really wanted from this course is to go to Germany and speak German. But if I go there I don’t have the skills” (A5, 002).
9. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The present chapter summarises the main findings of the comparative study which aimed to explore the study and teaching of German at universities in Ukraine and Australia. They are brought together in the table below.

Table 9.1 Summary of the findings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects of tertiary German language education</th>
<th>Ukraine</th>
<th>Australia</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CURRICULUM</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>General features</td>
<td>- Adopts an holistic, encyclopedic approach (however the number of contact hours, aims and structure of FL programs are currently being revisited)</td>
<td>- Differs from one institution to another, due to a large degree of autonomy in issues such as design of the language curriculum and the contents of the language course, etc.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Largely centralised (based on recommendations of a centrally approved curriculum and textbooks, but allows a degree of autonomy)</td>
<td>- The program is demand-driven and relatively narrowly specialised</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Availability of travel opportunities for students and Study Abroad programs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Problems</td>
<td>- Lack of conversation classes and imbalance towards grammar</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>- lack of classes that equip students with skills such as:</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>- interpreting/translation,</td>
<td>- lack of classes that equip students with skills such as:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- business German, and</td>
<td>- phonetics</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- practical and updated grammar</td>
<td>- interpreting/translation, and</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- interestingly taught and relevant course in German culture</td>
<td>- interestingly taught and relevant course in German culture</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- the classes and electives need to be more integrated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Positive features</td>
<td>comprehensiveness: coverage of all the aspects of language, resulting in students’ self-reported good or excellent skills, which have also been admired by native speakers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 9.1 (continued 1) Summary of the findings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>TEACHING METHODS AND APPROACHES AND TEACHERS</strong></th>
<th>No single method dominates, but rather a mixture of traditional and new communicative methods is used. The methodology used largely depends on the level of study, teachers and learning materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| The place of grammar and communicative activities | - Grammar is the central component of the FL class
- Shift towards communicative grammar, more integrated language learning
- Shift towards a more practical orientation in language learning
- Grammar and communication are taught integratively, however grammar sometimes dominates as a result of the very small number of classes |
| Problems | - too much grammar often at the expense of communicative activities
- lack of control and reinforcement of the material taught
- teachers are not always qualified to teach |
| Positive features | - the use of a variety of approaches and methodologies
- solid foundations in grammar
- highly qualified, supportive teachers
- imparts a solid foundation in grammar
- learner-friendly environment that takes into account students’ individual needs and interests
- competent, accommodating teachers |
| Students’ perceptions of grammar and communicative activities | - The majority of students expressed the opinion that both grammar and communicative activities are very important and that there should be an equal amount of both
- Activities such as learning by heart, listening to and repeating after a native speaker, writing dictation and learning songs in German were perceived as important by Ukrainian students. These activities were more characteristic of Soviet pedagogical tradition
- Australian students tended more to think that the teacher should conduct her/his explanation in students’ L1. |
| Teachers’ perceptions of grammar and communicative activities and the use of methods | - Similarly to students, teachers showed their great respect for grammar teaching. They also thought that there should be a balance between grammar practice and communicative activities;
- The differences in perceptions of importance of certain classroom activities were similar to those found in the two student groups, namely Ukrainian teachers greatly valued activities such as learning by heart, dictation and learning songs. Australian teachers tended to mark these activities as “not essential”;  
- A discrepancy was found between teacher self-reported use of methods/activities and practice.

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Table 9.1 (continued 2) Summary of the findings

| Students’ and teacher’s role | - the teacher is the highest authority in the class, similar to his/her position during the Soviet Union | - the teacher is more a facilitator than an authority |
| - language classes are generally strictly structured | - the relationship between students and the teacher is often equal |
| - the activities and tasks are offered by the teacher who has full control over the class and students | - the structure of the class is more liberal and relies on student participation |
| - the atmosphere is generally rather tense and formal | - the atmosphere in the class is more encouraging and relaxed |

| Students’ opinion on the role of teacher and learners | - Ukrainian students tended to explicitly admit that independence is not for them, i.e. the teacher should give guidance, provide advice |
| - Reinforcement or a “whip” is needed | - The teacher should provide guidance and opportunities for free discussion |
| - Partner-like relationships, teacher’s openness, politeness and readiness to help were welcomed by Ukrainian learners | - The teacher should set models |
| - The teacher should be “one of us” |

| Student self-reported strengths and weaknesses in speaking, listening, reading and writing | - Over a half of all students were satisfied with their skills, particularly with reading |
| - Australian students remained largely dissatisfied with their skills apart from reading and particularly many students admitted having problems with speaking |

| Expectations from the language course | - Students from both countries tended to have rather high expectations from their university language course |

**CONTENTS OF THE LANGUAGE CLASS**

| Problems | - the material taught is often irrelevant, vocabulary and topics are outdated |
| - lack of colloquial material | - repetitiveness of the material taught |

| Positive features | - comprehensive approach in terms of skills and abilities that are targeted in the language class |
| - a variety of topics and genres are discussed |
Table 9.1 (Continued 3) Summary of the findings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STUDENTS’ MOTIVATION FOR STUDYING GERMAN (as perceived by students and teachers)</th>
<th>Australian students rated the following motives higher than Ukrainian students:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- The motives such as “enjoyment”, “to travel”, “to work in a German-speaking country”, “to study abroad” and “to get to know German culture” turned out to be popular with both groups of students;</td>
<td>- Enjoyment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- teachers tended to underestimate students’ interest in culture and travel.</td>
<td>- To work in a German-speaking country</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Ukrainian students showed a greater interest in teaching German</td>
<td>- For travel, and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- To study abroad.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROBLEMS OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM</td>
<td>- crowded classes</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- lack of suitable learning materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- lack of native-speakers</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- lack of scholarships and grants for studying abroad</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- lack of contact hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Many of the distinctions between the aspects of tertiary German language provision, as we argued in the Introduction and the Discussion chapters, were largely due to each country’s distinctive socio-political climate, attitudes towards languages and pedagogical traditions that had been forming over many years and were also to a great extent affected by social factors. In Ukraine, a country situated in Europe with close historical, political and economic links to other European countries, including the German-speaking countries, the position of FLs in education has always been rather strong. After English, German is Ukraine’s most popular FL. The position of FLs has further improved since Ukraine became an independent state in 1991 and began to pursue a course towards integration into the European Union and became a member of many international organisations. In 2005 Ukraine joined the Bologna Process which sought to facilitate global co-operation in the sphere of education and mutual recognition of qualification. Participation in this program has made the Ukrainian Government, teachers and course designers reconsider the aims of language courses, curriculum, and content and to seek new, more effective teaching methods and
approaches. These objectives are laid out in the New Curriculum for German issued by
the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine.

The results of the study suggested that, on the one hand, classes are becoming
more practice-oriented and integrated, and grammar is taught with consideration of the
communicative aspirations of learners. This is particularly obvious in the rhetoric of
teachers and administration. Students were generally positive about their German
language course. They appreciated the fact that the curriculum includes many different
disciplines and language classes themselves are designed to train a range of language
skills and to facilitate the acquisition of a broad vocabulary. On the other hand, students
still felt unsatisfied with the number of conversation classes and expressed the need for
more useful, relevant, and updated vocabulary. Our study has shown that this is an
absolutely essential element of tertiary language education, as many students intended
to use their knowledge of German not just within Ukraine, for example by pursuing a
teaching career, but also in German-speaking countries for travel, study or work-related
reasons.

On the other hand, language departments face many problems in the
implementation of new methods and models of language education. The most basic is
the lack of funding that makes it impossible to get hold of new textbooks and to
purchase essential electronic equipment.

Secondly, many tertiary teachers and students are suffering from a lack of
general access to grants and scholarships that would improve and update their language
and teaching skills. It often comes down to an individual’s searching and
communication skills, as well as personal contacts to organise a trip abroad. Thanks to
the DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service) representatives in Kyiv, Kharkiv,
Dnipropetrovsk, Donetsk, Ivano-Frankivsk, Lviv, Odessa, and many other cities of
Ukraine (Zettler, 2003), students and teachers at some higher institutes are provided
with a native speaker of German and a chance to receive a scholarship to study or
perform research in Germany. Unfortunately, the number of scholarships is very
limited, which makes them extremely competitive and therefore generally inaccessible
to the majority of students and teachers of German.

Thirdly, the programs and teaching methodologies need to be updated. Teachers
and scholars are alarmed when graduates of some of the most renowned and prestigious
higher educational institutions are unable to communicate on every-day topics. Some of the former students of language departments are even forced to attend additional language courses or private classes in order to equip themselves with practical communicative skills (Krasjuk, 1999, p. 19). The situation leads one to the conclusion that some language programs and teaching methods need to be updated and modernised to suit the requirements of today (see Oguy, 2003, p. 455). The fact that the Recommendations of the European Council on the contents, methods of teaching, and competences are being implemented into real life, at least at school level, is definitely a positive one (Shalenko, 2002, p. 28).

Fourthly, the needs of learners should be taken into consideration when designing the curriculum and the contents of the language course. Despite the fact that tertiary departments have some flexibility in the design and contents of language classes, these are nonetheless often constrained by the requirements of the State examinations that take place at the end of year five. These requirements cannot and do not take into account the latest developments in language teaching methodology, the sort of skills required in modern day circumstances, let alone students’ individual needs. So far, students coming to the university are offered a pre-designed “menu” of subjects irrespective of their initial motivation and the requirement of the employment market. The idea of developing a widely-educated individual is certainly a worthy one and is a great advantage of the post-Soviet education system over the Western one; however students’ motivation and preferences should be taken into account in order to maximise the effectiveness of their tertiary language study.

It is remarkable that in many respects Ukrainian and Australian students had in fact a lot in common, particularly with regard to their motivational orientations, perceptions of grammar and communicative activities, and their desire to have a more balanced, integrated language class with updated, more relevant and practical contents. Both groups admitted that the teacher should give guidance and control in the class, but at the same time provide enough independence and encouragement for students. They recognised the importance of a broad knowledge of German, provided it was applicable to “real life”. These commonalities are to some extent due to and are indicative of the processes that are happening around the world such as globalisation, internationalisation that present similar challenges to institutions in formerly very different countries such
as Ukraine and Australia. The fact that universities in Ukraine and Australia have both joined the Bologna Process is a good example that tertiary institutions are pursuing similar objectives in education, including language education.

What differentiates Australian FL learning/teaching from that in Ukraine at a more profound level is the traditionally insecure position of FLs per se. Australian FL departments face a lot of difficulties in attracting students, in funding and in justifying their place in the increasingly instrumentally-driven and demand-oriented tertiary sector. In contrast to Ukraine, FLs in Australia, as we mentioned before, are not viewed as a necessary skill to have. The argument that learning languages can be beneficial in other ways, including being a crucial means of developing intercultural understanding and linguistic enrichment does not seem to work either. This is particularly the case with European languages. As a result, Australian language departments are forced constantly to search for alternative means for attracting new students, retaining the old ones and to make the language program more cost-effective. Some of these measures have proved to be rather beneficial both for students and departments while others have not. Amongst those that worked, for example, was the creation of a flexible system that allows students to undertake a study of an FL without majoring in it, but rather to take it concurrently with their major degree (e.g., Diploma in Modern Languages). Alternatively, students have the option to undertake a double degree, whereby they obtain a major in both fields. There is evidence that this trend has led to increased enrolments in languages at some universities and at others it has compensated for the drop in students majoring in a language (Pauwels, 2004, p. 12).

Australian language departments are under increasing pressure to modernise and improve teaching methodologies. Some researchers (e.g. Pauwels, 2004) argue that the knowledge and expertise of academic staff in current approaches to teaching, especially communicative language is solid or even outstanding. Other studies, including ours, have found that new communicative methods still need to be given greater prominence in the language class, teachers need to become more involved in research and there is room for improvement in teachers’ qualifications (Roever & Duffy, 2005, p. 15; Schneider, 2004, p. 312). Still the imperative to reconsider teaching methods is certainly a positive one.
Another positive development for the fate of struggling language departments was the creation of a variety of Study Abroad units, which are credited towards the completion of the diploma at the university (Pauwels, 2004, p. 13). We mentioned already that German language departments at the University of Melbourne and Monash University have agreements with some European universities allowing students to spend several weeks or even months at a university of their choice.

Besides this, German departments have generally proved to be generous in providing and informing students about various extra-curricular activities, such as Stammtische, social evenings, film festivals, theatrical performances, poetry competitions that enhance students’ exposure to the language and culture and provide additional motivation and a comfortable atmosphere for learning the language.

Although the difficult situation in which FL departments have found themselves in the last few decades has had some stimulating effect, it has also led to a range of negative consequences. Cost-cutting measures forced language departments to significantly shrink in size by not replacing retiring staff members. As a consequence, the available staff have had to face larger workloads and greater challenges in the production of quality research and teaching. This might be one of the reasons why teachers do not implement the latest findings in pedagogy in their own teaching practices and rather resort to whatever means are less time consuming, for example, teaching as they were taught or simply sticking to recommendations provided in (not always perfect) textbooks.

Secondly, departments are forced to cut down to a minimum the number of contact hours and electives offered to students. It has been shown that this may have a detrimental effect on students’ self reported level of language proficiency, motivation and overall satisfaction with the course. We have shown that students from a university where the number of contact hours was just two (in the second year) were overly dissatisfied with the course which was naturally lacking in comprehensiveness, did not pay enough attention to communicative activities and was repetitive (see chapters 7 and 8). A situation such as this must no doubt lead to students’ becoming frustrated with language learning, leaving language departments to face the risk of losing present or potential students, causing further financial difficulties, and thus closing the vicious circle.
Another common problem which has been discussed here and which is closely linked to the previous problem, is unacceptably large class sizes, which again has a damaging effect on the teaching and learning process and on students’ perceptions of language learning (see also Pauwels, 2004, p. 14). The situation with FLs at universities is best summarised by Pauwels (2004, 15) who noted:

While I do not believe that languages and language teaching at universities are in a state of crisis or on the brink of collapse, I do feel that the robustness of languages as a discipline is being eroded as a result of the resourcing difficulties faced by most language departments in Australia. In addition I think the increased focus on the instrumental role of languages, which stresses primarily the “skills” aspect, affect the robustness of language study as an academic discipline. Fundamental to the continued existence of languages and language teaching at Australian universities is the need to maintain, and indeed strengthen, the scholarship base in languages.

What needs to be done?

In the previous section we highlighted the positive and negative features that characterise German education at the universities of Ukraine and Australia and that have become particularly obvious during the course of our empirical comparative study. The present section provides suggestions for improvement in the areas that this study dealt with. They can be defined as: curriculum, teaching methods and approaches and content of the class.
UKRAINE

Curriculum:

- A comprehensive, broad curriculum should be more attuned to the needs and interests of the primary “receivers” of educational services – students;
- Students’ motivational orientations, real employment opportunities and expectations from the language course should be taken into account when designing language curriculum, for example by offering students a questionnaire to fill out at the beginning or end of the semester;
- Collaboration between institutions within the country as well as abroad should be increased in order to disseminate best educational practices and provide opportunities for exchange programs.

Teaching methods and approaches and teachers:

- Teachers should be aware of the latest research in FL learning and actively use the findings in the classroom;
- A combination of methods should be used which incorporate both grammar and communicative activities. An integrated approach will decrease the occurrence of learners becoming frustrated and demotivated with the course;
- While the teacher should still be the authority in the classroom, a shift towards more learner-centred teaching should take place whereby the responsibilities in teaching and learning are shared.

Contents of the class:

- The grammar and lexical material given to students should be up to date, and relevant to learners’ needs and interests;
- University language departments should not be ashamed to introduce colloquial vocabulary to students, as this is what they need in real-life communication.
Administrative:

- Local and state authorities should be informed about the catastrophic situation with learning materials and electronic equipment. Lack of learning materials and equipment will make it impossible to follow the course of the Bologna Process and specifically the CEF;

- There should be provision of grants and scholarships to students and teachers by means of lobbying for more funding by university administration, local and government authorities and independent sponsors.

AUSTRALIA

Curriculum:

- More accent should be put on study areas such as: communication, translation/interpreting, phonetics and culture. Decisions as to the most appropriate content and placements should be made. While these areas are being offered by language departments, many students nevertheless admitted to a gap in these areas.

- Language classes and options should be more integrated and complement each other. More unity is needed both between subjects and between various aspects of language learning so that, for example, grammar material is taught through already familiar communicative situations and vice versa;

Teaching methods and approaches and teachers:

- More communicatively-oriented methods need to be introduced and opportunities for free discussions in German created. This is not to suggest that they must be at the expense of grammar, but rather both types of activities should be balanced;

- More control and reinforcement should be introduced into the class. This would encourage students to study regularly and to point out their problem areas;
• Teaching styles should correspond to the level of students. Part of student dissatisfaction comes from teachers who “know their material very well, but just cannot get it into our heads” by either being too demanding or simply difficult for students to follow because of a lack of language knowledge or the very fast rate of introducing new material.

Contents of the language class:
• The material to which students are introduced needs to be more relevant to real life. Many students admitted having been exposed to “sophisticated topics”, but not to those that would be useful in real-life circumstances;
• Vocabulary must be updated and more attention should be paid to colloquial lexis.

Administrative:
• University administration and language departments need to be aware of the negative effect that reducing the number of contact hours and the range of options available to students has on students’ language proficiency, motivation and overall satisfaction with the course
• Class sizes should be decreased.

Closing remarks and suggestions for future research

This thesis has been one of the first attempts to bring together two distinctive systems of foreign (German) language education while exploring a range of issues. The scope of our inquiry was intentionally broad as only by looking at the interplay between many issues can a fuller picture be obtained about how a FL is studied and taught at universities of (in our case) two countries. The results were revealing. In some cases they confirmed the researcher’s pre-conceived ideas about differences in structure, curriculum, number of contact hours, duration of the German language course,
pedagogical traditions, and availability of native speakers, resources and exchange programs.

In other cases, the results were more enlightening. For instance, it was interesting to find that students in Ukraine and Australia had similar motivations for German language study and similar perceptions of teaching methods and classroom activities. Recent global trends which have not left either country unaffected, the changed political regime in Ukraine, and emerging opportunities for travel, to study or work abroad are all factors which may have allowed these similarities to develop. To discover differences and similarities between the two educational systems and between student and teacher perceptions on the aspects of learning was just as enjoyable as it was thought provoking and made us wonder how the themes discussed in this thesis can be further researched in the future. For instance, there has almost been no research on student and teacher beliefs about language learning in Ukraine, nor has the gap between teacher stated beliefs and practices been researched. It would be also interesting to explore the issue with the use of students’ L1 in the German language class: why do teachers use or not use students’ L1 and what effect does this have on learners and the learning process?

Australia, unlike Ukraine, has a large proportion of native speakers of German with or without formal education in language teaching. This made us wonder with which particular aspects of learning and at what stages is any beneficial impact of the teacher-native-speaker actually felt? Also, it would be interesting to explore the self-perceptions of native and non-native speakers and the perceptions that students have of them. This field is relatively new and has mainly been explored for ESL and EFL (Braine, 2005), thus any investigation into German language teachers in Australia and Ukraine will no doubt be an interesting contribution.

In the future it would also be interesting to study not only how language programs are organised and run by the language departments in various countries, but also the outcomes of these programs in terms of student proficiency. Further, an analysis of textbooks and other teaching materials would shed more light on the content of the course and teaching methods. The circle of research participants could be broadened to include not just students and teachers, but also course / curriculum
designers and university graduates whose knowledge and experience would no doubt reveal many more important issues regarding the tertiary language program.

The present investigation contributes towards the current debate about the usefulness, and indeed necessity, of second language learning in modern day circumstances. It is about the granting of LOTEs their rightful place in tertiary education, particularly against the backdrop of the current market-value approach towards education which has and still is leading towards the closure or restructuring of many humanitarian disciplines, languages in particular. At a time when many democratic countries around the world are trying to eliminate intercultural barriers in communication and education, to neglect languages at school and university level means to throw away the key to understanding other cultures and mentalities and to pave a road towards isolation and narrow-mindedness.
APPENDIX A.
Questionnaire for students

THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE
Faculty of Arts
Department of German and Swedish Studies

I. General part

1. Please indicate the course(s) you are undertaking at this university

___________________________________________________ Year ____________

2. What is (are) your native tongue(s)?

___________________________________________________________________

3. Please indicate all languages other than English (LOTE(s)), you have studied, where and for how long.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>where</th>
<th>duration</th>
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</table>

4. How many years had you studied German before university? ________________

5. How many years have you been studying German at this university? __________
6. Have you ever been to a German-speaking country?

   YES               NO

If YES, please indicate when you went there and for how long.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>country</th>
<th>when</th>
<th>duration</th>
<th>reason (study the language work, travel etc.)</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

7. Are you majoring in German at the university?   YES

   NO

8. What other subjects (apart from German language) offered by the German department have you taken in this semester?

___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________

9. Indicate your reasons for studying German (feel free to pick more than one)

   a. To teach German
   b. To work in a German speaking country
   c. To Study abroad
   d. To get to know German culture
   e. For travel
   f. To balance out my technical course
   g. German-speaking partner
   h. Liked the sound of German
   i. Enjoyment
   Other (please specify) ___________________________________________
10. Why do you think German language should be studied in Australia?
   
   a. To maintain cultural connections with German-speaking countries and Europe
   b. German-speaking countries are important trade and economic partners
   c. Learning German will help people to get around in Europe
   d. Learning another language is a key to understanding another cultures and mentalities and broadens one’s outlook
   e. To prevent English becoming the world’s lingua franca
   f. because German, as one of Australia’s community languages, should be preserved
   Other (please specify) ___________________________________________

11. Regarding your learning of language, what do you think there should be more classes on:

   a. Conversation
   b. Grammar
   c. Phonetics
   d. Translation / interpreting
   e. Business German
   f. History of language
   g. All areas are adequately covered already
   Other (please specify) ___________________________________________

12. Which areas do you think you are best at and worst at? (please indicate order 1-the best, 4- the worst)

   a. Speaking ____
   b. Listening ____
   c. Reading ____
   d. Writing ____

13. To what degree in your opinion is grammar important when studying languages?

   a. not essential
   b. rather important
   c. very important
   d. not sure
14. What is your ideal proportion of grammar and communicative activities in the class?
   a. mainly grammar, because I can practice my communicative skills with my friends or by visiting a German speaking country
   b. mainly conversation, because I can learn grammar by myself
   c. equal amount of both

   Other (please specify)

II. Students’ perceptions of the use of classroom activities

15. How important are the following activities for learning a language?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of activities</th>
<th>Not essential</th>
<th>Rather important</th>
<th>Very important</th>
<th>Unsure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Preparing a talk on a given topic</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Making dialogues and conversations and discussing different issues</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Listening to a tape or watching TV and then discussing the contents</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Reading a newspaper or a text from a book and then discussing the contents</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Writing an essay or a letter to a pen friend</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Doing grammar exercises from a textbook</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Doing exercises on development of translation / interpreting skills</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Learning texts/poems and dialogues by heart</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Making sentences with new words</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Listening to a native speaker and repeating after him/her</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. Dictation</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. Listening to and learning songs in German</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. Doing exercises after each grammar rule</td>
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<tr>
<td>14. Teacher explaining grammar</td>
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<tr>
<td>15. Teacher’s explanations proceed in German</td>
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<tr>
<td>16. Teacher’s explanations proceed in Ukrainian/English</td>
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<tr>
<td>17. Correction of mistakes</td>
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<tr>
<td>18. Teacher summarising typical mistakes</td>
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<tr>
<td>19. Comparing German and English when explaining language phenomena</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
III. Expectations from the course

16. Which of these skills do you expect to acquire by the end of your university course of German?

**Oral production**

A. communicates freely, on a variety of topics close to a native speaker  
B. communicates freely, on a variety of topics, occasionally making some mistakes  
C. speaks freely on everyday topics only, making some mistakes  
D. can meet survival needs, have simple conversations but with quite a few mistakes

**Listening comprehension**

A. understands everything in a wide range of topics on radio/TV, news, jokes and puns just like a native-speaker  
B. understands nearly everything from most topics on radio/TV, news, jokes and puns only occasionally baffled by colloquialisms and regionalisms  
C. understands simple instructions and discussions on every-day topics, rarely asking for repetition or paraphrase  
D. understands familiar or expected topics, though has difficulty following longer texts and more complex discourse structures, asks frequently for repetition or paraphrase
Reading comprehension

A. native-like in all aspects of reading
B. understands nearly everything when reading newspapers, magazines, literature on a broad range of topics and genres, though occasional use of dictionary is required
C. understands nearly everything when reading newspapers, magazines, simplified literature texts on every-day topics, has problems with unusually complex structures
D. understands well enough simple texts on everyday topics, frequently using bilingual dictionary

Written production

A. native-like in all aspects of writing, handles new situations and uses humor
B. writes with a high degree of accuracy in vocational or academic fields, only occasionally making errors in grammar
C. writes in all informal and formal communications in daily life, though making some errors in grammar and orthography
D. can use simple vocabulary and structures when writing on everyday topics, making errors in grammar in more complex constructions
APPENDIX B.
Questionnaire for teachers

THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE
Faculty of Arts
Department of German and Swedish Studies

I. General part

Name (optional)
______________________________________________________________________
Your title ___________
Department_____________________________________________________________

1. What is (are) your native tongue(s)?
______________________________________________________________________

2. If German is NOT your native tongue, please indicate where you acquired this language
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________

3. Do you have experience in learning a language other than your mother tongue?

YES   NO
If YES, please specify here

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Duration</th>
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4. How long have you been teaching German at the university? ________________
5. What subject(s) are you currently teaching?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Year</th>
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6. In your opinion, what are the students’ reasons for studying German? (pick more than one if necessary)

   a. To teach German
   b. To work in a German speaking country
   c. To Study abroad
   d. To get to know German culture
   e. For travel
   f. To balance out a technical course
   g. German-speaking partner
   h. Liked the sound of German
   i. Enjoyment
   j. Other (please specify)

7. Why do you think German language should be taught and studied in Australia?

   g. To maintain cultural connections with German-speaking countries and Europe
   h. German-speaking countries are important trade and economic partners
   i. Learning German will help people to get around in Europe
   j. Learning another language is a key to understanding another cultures and mentalities and broadens one’s outlook
   k. To prevent English becoming the world’s lingua franca
   l. Because German, as one of Australia’s community languages, should be preserved
   j. Other (please specify)
8. Which areas do you think your students are best at? Worst at? (please indicate order 1-the best. 4-the worst)
   a. Speaking ____
   b. Listening ____
   c. Reading ____
   d. Writing ____

9. To what degree in your opinion is grammar important when teaching/learning languages?
   a. not essential
   b. rather important
   c. very important
   d. not sure
   Other (please specify) ___________________________________________

10. What is your ideal proportion of grammar and communicative activities in the class?
   a. mainly grammar, because students can practice their communicative skills with their friends or by visiting a German speaking country
   b. mainly conversation, because students can learn grammar by themselves
   c. equal amount of both
   Other (please specify) ___________________________________________

II. Teachers’ perceptions of the use of classroom activities

11. How important are the following activities for learning a language?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of activities</th>
<th>Not essential</th>
<th>Rather important</th>
<th>Very important</th>
<th>Unsure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Preparing a talk on a given topic</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Making dialogues and conversations and discussing different issues</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Listening to a tape or watching TV and then discussing the contents</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Reading a newspaper or a text from a book and then discussing the contents</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Writing an essay or a letter to a pen friend</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Doing grammar exercises from a textbook</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Doing exercises on development of translation / interpreting skills</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Learning texts/poems and dialogues by heart</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Making sentences with new words</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Listening to a native speaker and repeating after</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
him/her

11. Dictation
12. Listening to and learning songs in German
13. Doing exercises after each grammar rule
14. Teacher explaining grammar
15. Teacher’s explanations proceed in German
16. Teacher’s explanations proceed in Ukrainian/English
17. Individual correction of mistakes
18. Teacher summarising typical mistakes
19. Comparing German and English when explaining language phenomena

Other activities (please specify)

20.
21.
22.

III. Teaching methods and approaches

12. Which approaches or methods do you use in your language classes?
   _________________________________________________________________
   _________________________________________________________________
   _________________________________________________________________

13. Why did you choose this method or approach?
   _________________________________________________________________
   _________________________________________________________________
   _________________________________________________________________
14. What do you consider the most important principles of your teaching approach?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

15. Do you use English to explain / clarify? (please circle)

often  sometimes  rarely  never

Please specify conditions when you would use English more often than German

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

16. Do you correct errors? (please circle)

a) in oral use: always  often  sometimes  rarely

only if (specify conditions) _______________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

b) in written use: always  often  sometimes  rarely

only if (specify conditions) _______________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

17. How often do you use audio-visual equipment in your classes? (please circle)

often  sometimes  rarely

only if (specify conditions)

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
IV. Marking students’ work

18. Give a list of priorities by which you mark students' written work (e.g., grammatical accuracy, spelling, communicative adequacy etc.) If this question is difficult for you to answer please explain why.

1. _______________________________________________________________________
2. _______________________________________________________________________
3. _______________________________________________________________________
4. _______________________________________________________________________

19. Do you use the same priorities for marking oral work?
   YES  NO

   If NO please specify

______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________

V. Expectations from the course

20. Which of these skills do you expect your students to acquire by the end of their university course of German?

   **Oral production**
   i. communicates freely, on a variety of topics close to a native speaker
   ii. communicates freely, on a variety of topics, occasionally making some mistakes
   iii. speaks freely on everyday topics only, making some mistakes
   iv. can meet survival needs, have simple conversation but with quite a few mistakes
**Listening comprehension**

A. understands everything in a wide range of topics on radio/TV, news, jokes and puns just like a native-speaker

B. understands nearly everything from most topics on radio/TV, news, jokes and puns only occasionally baffled by colloquialisms and regionalisms

C. understands simple instructions and discussions on every-day topics, rarely asking for repetition or paraphrase

D. understands familiar or expected topics, though has difficulty following longer texts and more complex discourse structures, asks frequently for repetition or paraphrase

**Reading comprehension**

A. native-like in all aspects of reading

B. understands nearly everything when reading newspapers, magazines, literature on a broad range of topics and genres, though occasional use of dictionary is required

C. understands nearly everything when reading newspapers, magazines, simplified literature texts on every-day topics, has problems with unusually complex structures

D. understands well enough simple texts on everyday topics, frequently using bilingual dictionary

**Written production**

A. native-like in all aspects of writing, handles new situations and uses humor

B. writes with a high degree of accuracy in vocational or academic fields, only occasionally making errors in grammar

C. writes in all informal and formal communications in daily life, though making some errors in grammar and orthography

D. can use simple vocabulary and structures when writing on everyday topics, making errors in grammar in more complex constructions.
### APPENDIX C.

An example of classroom observation notes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University: Kharkiv</th>
<th>Teacher name: S.S</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year: 4</td>
<td>Group:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date: 23/11/04</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Materials used</th>
<th>Detailed description of the activities and tasks performed by the teacher and students</th>
<th>Reflective notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staatsliche Organe</td>
<td>Karpus</td>
<td>The teacher asks students to provide a definition of the term, &quot;Staatsliche Organe,&quot; be active and the question. Students all try to answer and are willing to talk. They are also rather fluent.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Deutsch</td>
<td></td>
<td>Homework: A text which the students were supposed to have read at home is discussed. The teacher asks: &quot;Wie würden Sie den Text beitihlen?&quot; Each student in the class is trying to provide a better version. Then the teacher asks: &quot;Haben Sie bitte die Wörter [wovon] gerechnet?&quot; Students characterize the text thematically. &quot;Students have time to express themselves in German:...&quot;</td>
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</table>

First double period ends.
Second double period.

The teacher shows a poster of an immigrant and asks advanced
so kann man diesen Platz und diese
sehen? A discussion about immigration seems to
have a language barrier.

The teacher shows a picture of people of different
nationalities and asks the students to describe the
students’ clothing.

The students then have to write a short story about one of those the tasks
people, by working in groups given by
Then each student as a rep of the teacher.
her group, goes to the front of the class and tells her story.
APPENDIX D.
Student perceived positive and negative aspects in their university language course. Ukraine

Ukraine. Interview data (n=5)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students</th>
<th>U1</th>
<th>U2</th>
<th>U3</th>
<th>U4</th>
<th>U5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Too much grammar/ emphasis on correctness</td>
<td>In the university they say: Ok, talk, but talk correctly. The feeling was that we had to say everything correctly, that’s why it was hard to speak (147).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of conversation activities</td>
<td>More conversation classes (177).</td>
<td></td>
<td>• In these five years we have had separate classes in grammar and oral practice. In reality, in those ‘Konversation’ classes we did not learn any colloquial lexis. There was something, but very little. What we did was reading and discussion [of what we’ve read]. In fact we were, again, learning grammar (139).</td>
<td>• theoretically] we had</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of updated colloquial vocabulary and relevant studying material</td>
<td>grammar and communication 50/50, but in fact communication was about 10% (139).</td>
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<tr>
<td>• the vocab they teach is somewhat remote from real life. There were things that we need, but also things that one does not discuss in everyday life (088).</td>
<td>• We had for example cultural studies, where they used to tell us about gods and so forth. Students tend to forget such things. What would be interesting is information about habits and people’s way of thinking (332).</td>
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<tr>
<td>• We had Wirtschaftsdeutsch for one year. But the textbook and the tasks were very odd and irrelevant (177).</td>
<td>• The knowledge of colloquial lexis was lacking, youth lexis, colloquial phraseology (071).</td>
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<tr>
<td>• the texts were often artificial and old (...). But to me, conversation class means a chance to get to know all sorts of colloquial and youth words, which we were never taught (139).</td>
<td>• the texts were often artificial and old (...). But to me, conversation class means a chance to get to know all sorts of colloquial and youth words, which we were never taught (139).</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lacks in the curriculum</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• There should be more language classes in the fifth year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• There should be more classes, introducing students to particular terminology, e.g. Law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• I wish we had more grammar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Third foreign language is prescribed to students, so it’s very much of a lottery whether you are going to study Swedish or Dutch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• with just 1 conversation, no grammar, 1 translation class and a class on analytical reading, we don’t have enough actual language classes unfortunately (159).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The only thing, which I wish we’d done a bit more of, was Business translation – exactly what I am doing now. I feel like I have a gap in it. Yes we had some of it, but only in the</td>
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<tr>
<td>classes but only the ones that are interesting and relevant (177).</td>
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<tr>
<td>• I wish we had more <strong>synchronic interpreting</strong>. We've never had it as a separate discipline (217).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• I think a class dedicated to <strong>cultural differences</strong> between, say Ukrainians and Germans would be very interesting. Because, if you have to live with a German under one roof, it sometimes can be quite shocking (326).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Some interesting laws, how one should behave in the streets, what Germans are like (346).</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Problems outside the classroom (e.g., lack of funding, scarce travel opportunities) | There are some scholarships, but they are not widely advertised. Also DAAD, but it’s very difficult to get through (267). | • there is a problem with scholarships, like DAAD. It’s very difficult to get through (200).  
• The trip and the visa are quite big hurdles. Some people find their own ways to go (200).  
• Unfortunately, in my group only three people [out of twelve] went to Germany. I know that there are some programs for people of the Science and Engineering departments, but there are not as many for us linguists. We feel somewhat disadvantaged (071).  
• I would have learned more in my first years had it not been for those old textbooks full of communist ideology (216).  
• we are simply drowning in hand-outs taken from the internet and all sorts of textbooks, that nobody knows. We are always making copies (235).  
• Some of our textbooks are from the 1960s, and texts are about Oktjabrjata or about picking potatoes in a kolkhoz. Take, for example, our textbook “Lexicology of Modern German”; year 1962. Half a century has passed since this textbook was written (272). |
## Positive aspects of the course

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students</th>
<th>U1</th>
<th>U2</th>
<th>U3</th>
<th>U4</th>
<th>U5</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grammar</strong></td>
<td>Teaching at the university was good, there was quite a lot of grammar (088).</td>
<td></td>
<td>Naturally, my grammar was fabulous. We were writing letters to each other [German friends]. They used to tell me that my German was excellent. So, the university gives us a very good knowledge of grammar (071).</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Conversation</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>At the university we had a separate double period which was called Konversation, where we discussed different topics, asked questions of each other. I found it really interesting, it teaches you some practical skills and helps overcome the [language] barrier (192).</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Good quality of teaching and comprehensiveness of the language course</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• I found the classes [by German teachers] quite interesting and useful, because they were native-speakers. Besides we had visiting staff from Germany, professors, who would come for a week (...). We have visiting professors two to three times a year. We always discuss philology or current affairs or burning issues in cultural and political life (236).</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Almost all the aspects were covered, starting from Phonetics, Grammar, Home reading, conversation 088</td>
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<td>• We have a lot of discussions. So we speak a lot (079)</td>
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<td>• This skill [to paraphrase] is by the way very well practiced at uni. We are often required to paraphrase or explain words we don’t know (121).</td>
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<tr>
<td>• I would like to say straight away that those skills [they teach at the university] are definitely useful. When I went to Germany last summer, people would ask me if my parents were from Germany. I would say: actually not (027).</td>
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<tr>
<td>• I can't complain. Our department is very strong. I am very happy. I am really lucky. I heard some departments are not as good as ours, because of the level of the teachers there (142).</td>
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<tr>
<td>• They brought me up to the mark with my phonetics. Before that I had a very dim notion of the subject. When I came to uni, I heard how</td>
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<tr>
<td>• As to the teachers of German, here at the university, I’ve been very happy with them during all the five years. I am very grateful to all of them and to the university for the [high] level of German (121).</td>
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<tr>
<td>• My uni teachers were always open and ready to help, they used to give us their phone number, so that we could ring them and ask something (264).</td>
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<tr>
<td>• I was very happy to be learning pronunciation, because we did not learn it at school, and when we learned the sounds and intonation I could see German was quite different from that we had at school. Half a year we spend learning just this (...). We achieved good results in pronunciation. And when Germans come they tell us that we speak with no accent at all (032).</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Generally, I am really happy with my education. All aspects have been covered [at the university]. We did some translation/interpreting, we read and discussed articles etc, and some aspects of pedagogy have also been covered (080).</td>
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<td>• We watch German films, we listen to German music, we communicate with Germans. We have enough of everything here (106).</td>
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<tr>
<td>• I definitely had enough vocab, even more than enough. Our speech was grammatically more correct than that of Germans themselves. They provide us with first class knowledge at the university. They [Germans] told us that we spoke like TV news readers. They told us ‘you don’t make mistakes’ (142).</td>
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<tr>
<td>• As for the German language, it is taught at a very high level. We had very professional teachers. I will always be very thankful [to everybody there], because I received the foundation which has helped me later (...) (000).</td>
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<td>• Well, I honestly think that all aspects were covered (338).</td>
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</table>
one should speak real German. Secondly, my knowledge of grammar became more systematised. Thirdly, communication. We have many more discussions, compared to school (179).
### Criticism of the course

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students</th>
<th>A1</th>
<th>A2</th>
<th>A3</th>
<th>A4</th>
<th>A5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Too much grammar</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>[The program] has become more a more grammar focused and literary history focused. They are trying to turn us into academics, rather then German-speakers (069).</td>
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<td>Last year we had three hours and it was still all grammar. So they don’t teach you to speak and then at the end they say ‘Oh, you’ve got an oral’. We’ve never done anything that would work towards a good oral (…) (034).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Lack of conversation activities

- *(…)* we want to speak and we are not speaking. Especially not at my [advanced] level, where it’s all grammar-focused. We have a grammar book and a sheet which you have to read through and then analyse the grammar (069-114).
- [in the first years of study] the amount of conversation and grammar was 50/50 […], then it became more and more grammar focused (114).
- I wish we had more conversation, translation and interpreting (…)(124).
- You learn those rules, but sometimes it’s just hard to apply them. Probably more interaction would be quite good (253).
- We tend to get lectured in German, so there is not much opportunity to speak it. Last year we had 1 hour of lectures on culture and 3 hours of grammar, which probably worked better and the classes were smaller which helped a lot (039).
- we were not learning to speak the level I was in. So it was really disappointing, because I got to the end of the year and all I’ve done is gone over the same things I’d done in the previous year. And I still can’t say things in German. What I really wanted from this course is to go to Germany and speak German. But if I got there I don’t have the skills (002).

### Lack of updated colloquial vocabulary and relevant studying material

- They give us topics that you are not going to talk about in everyday life. How many times do you need to talk about hermeneutics outside the university? I can talk in German about it. If you ask me to talk about simple things like cooking or going to the shops, I struggle. Simply because we are not exposed to it at the university level. (087).
- [You should know] the modern usage of words as • They always teach us in a very formal way. More colloquial stuff would be really good to learn 124
- When I went to Germany I couldn’t work out what Fernseh gucken was, I thought they wanted me to cook something. Then I realised that it was ‘to watch TV’. We’ve never been
- What I’ve learned so far is not that much of a help (…). I can tell you that this is Dative and this is Accusative. I don’t even know how to order something from a shelf, I’ve never learned any kind of day-to-day language. If we learn some vocab it’s really detached, obscure (143).
| **Inadequate teaching practices**  
| (lack of reinforcement, repetitiveness of the material) | I always found my language classes boring (…) probably, because I felt that the same material was covered every year (…) and then not really refining it. It was the little rules and the little refinements that I wanted to know more and not just to be sort of introduced if someone asked about it, and then not being tested on it ever, so that I wouldn’t just forget after a couple of weeks (135). | • | One frustrating aspect of it is we tend to focus on the same grammar points. And it becomes REALLY boring after a while, like this year we haven’t done anything new at all (… we just keep doing the same old thing. It doesn’t really motivate you to keep going (…) (023). | • | We speak and they don’t correct us at all (…) (050). |

The texts we are reading at the moment aren’t exactly modern usage of the language (179). | told (124). • We needed a greater variety of styles and genres like newspaper articles. And we needed original texts rather than those specially made for students. Sometimes, the texts they gave us were formulated, clichéd (124). | • | not enforced enough, you learn the rule and you do the exercises but you sort of just forget it. Then we come back and we have to go through it again. It would be good to have something like role playing and forcing you to get up and speak off the top of your head instead of just sitting there and listening. That would be good (260). | • | • |
| Inadequate curriculum design | Phonetics | ...Phonetics, definitely. Sometimes I find it quite difficult pronouncing things. We did actually have a linguistics component in the first year and that covered a bit of that and semantics, sentence structure. There are quite a few people in my class who like the idea of doing translation/interpreting (179). | • What really frustrated me last year in the cultural component was that they put all the first years together no matter what level you were at. It was all in English. Nobody ended up coming from the older year level, I mean what’s the point, we are not learning anything (062).  
• Culture is not very structured. The only good thing that I like about culture is that it’s in German. So I can | • I think there should be balance between grammar, listening comprehension, oral communication, listening, reading, writing and grammar. Last year we did very little listening comprehension at all. That was a bit of a concern ….We are told to do things by ourselves, you know just listen to German radio, but we should have some activities in the class as well…085  
• In terms of the cultural component. What we are doing this semester is literature. I think it would be more | • More phonetics and translation and interpreting 123  
• I find that our culture component is not relevant … I don’t like literature, it means nothing to me, I’m never going to do anything with this…What about linguistics! … 184  
• [I would like] just a little bit more structure in the whole German department. Maybe like a class on speaking, a class on grammar (288). |
German professionally. It’s what you want to do if you ever had to explain to someone in Australia what’s in a German letter that someone sent. Firstly the usefulness, and secondly – it’s just another good way to learn (260).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The classes should be more integrated</th>
<th>Grammar that we learn and texts that we read do not complement each other, I wish they did (253).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[The electives] were definitely separated. I don’t think they were trying to make any links between them, which they probably could do more, because … I think the best things are the electives (181).</td>
<td>I’ve got all my German on Thursday, so four hours of German on Thursday and nothing for a week. By the end of Thursday you’re thinking Oh yeah, I can pick it up again,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

try and pick something up…It’s just a waste of time, it really is (098).

• I would probably put more contact hours and less homework so that we are actually interacting (113).

• I wish we had more conversation, translation and interpreting (…) (124).

interesting if we covered different aspects of general culture, such as business or history (071).
but then you lose all over the next week. It’s hard when it’s not constant. I’d rather have an hour one day, an hour the next day (080).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unsuitable teachers</th>
<th>The teachers who are teaching us aren’t trained to teach. … This particular teacher we’ve got at the moment, is an extremely intelligent. He knows his stuff. But he simply cannot get it from his head out to us (131).</th>
<th>They are not really strict, which is good and bad 097</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The classes are too big</td>
<td>It would be good to have smaller classes 232</td>
<td>This year classes are much larger, which I think is a bit of a concern. …039</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Positive aspects of the course**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A1</th>
<th>A2</th>
<th>A3</th>
<th>A4</th>
<th>A5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grammar</strong></td>
<td>I really like that they push the grammar a lot. Because I find grammar really hard and they never pushed it at school for us past year 10 (098). I like how we go through grammar in sections (253)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Good teaching practices and course in general</strong></td>
<td>I love that they speak German in the tutes. Even explaining grammar… I really love that they try to explain everything in German. If you don’t get it they would explain it (062).</td>
<td>Generally, on the whole I enjoy it quite much (023).</td>
<td></td>
<td>They [teachers] are very approachable (…). [My teacher for example] is just like of one of us (…). But they are also accommodating… if you have a problem. They are not really strict, which is good and bad (097).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Good accommodating teachers</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• [the teachers] are really enthusiastic (105). • …I’ve got a really good teacher and she manages to drive us in some directions, but then if we</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
really get into something and we're all talking about it in German, she lets us talk and she listens. I am really happy with that (105).

**Department**

I think German department is very good in its relationships to students. They make them feel very comfortable. In other subjects where there are so many students you just go like a number and they'd never know your name and in German you very much like part of it (097).
**APPENDIX F.**  
Crosstabulation: motives and perceived need for more classes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motives</th>
<th>To teach German</th>
<th>To work</th>
<th>To study</th>
<th>Culture</th>
<th>For travel</th>
<th>To balance the course</th>
<th>Partner</th>
<th>Liked the sound</th>
<th>Enjoyment</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perceived need for more classes on</td>
<td>U</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>U</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>U</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>U</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>U</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conversation</td>
<td>&gt;0.9</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td><strong>0.002</strong></td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td><strong>0.006</strong></td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>&gt;0.9</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td><strong>0.003</strong></td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phonetics</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translation/interpreting</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td><strong>0.004</strong></td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>&gt;0.9</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>&gt;0.9</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business German</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History of language</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>&gt;0.9</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>&gt;0.9</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td><strong>0.05</strong></td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>&gt;0.9</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All areas are adequately covered</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>&gt;0.9</td>
<td>&gt;0.9</td>
<td>&gt;0.9</td>
<td>&gt;0.9</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>&gt;0.9</td>
<td>&gt;0.9</td>
<td>&gt;0.9</td>
<td>&gt;0.9</td>
<td>&gt;0.9</td>
<td>&gt;0.9</td>
<td>&gt;0.9</td>
<td>&gt;0.9</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Boldface indicates a significant relationship between the two variables (p-value < 0.05)
APPENDIX G.

Summary of student and teacher responses regarding motives to study German at university

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>To teach German</th>
<th>To work abroad</th>
<th>To study abroad</th>
<th>To get to know German culture</th>
<th>For travel</th>
<th>To balance out my technical course</th>
<th>German-speaking partner</th>
<th>Liked the sound of German</th>
<th>Enjoyment</th>
<th>other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ukrainian students</td>
<td>54.9</td>
<td>40.2</td>
<td>46.1</td>
<td>64.7</td>
<td>55.9</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>41.2</td>
<td>15.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian students</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>65.0</td>
<td>52.5</td>
<td>47.5</td>
<td>67.5</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>70.0</td>
<td>21.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discrepancy</td>
<td>-38.2</td>
<td>+24.8</td>
<td>+6.4</td>
<td>-17.2</td>
<td>+11.6</td>
<td>+9.7</td>
<td>-9.3</td>
<td>+4.0</td>
<td>+28.8</td>
<td>+6.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ukrainian / Australian student comparisons % and numbers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ukrainian teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discrepancy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ukrainian student / teacher comparisons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ukrainian students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukrainian teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discrepancy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Australian student / teacher comparisons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australian students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discrepancy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## APPENDIX H.
The Common European Framework. Common Reference Levels

| Proficient User | C2 | Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarise information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations. |
| Independent User | C1 | Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices. |
| Basic User | B2 | Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options. |
| | B1 | Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans. |
| | A2 | Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need. |
| | A1 | Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help. |

## APPENDIX I.
The Common European Framework. Qualitative Aspects of Spoken Language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVEL</th>
<th>RANGE</th>
<th>ACCURACY</th>
<th>FLUENCY</th>
<th>INTERACTION</th>
<th>COHERENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C2</td>
<td>Shows great flexibility in formulating ideas in differing linguistic forms to convey precise and clear meaning, to give emphasis, to differentiate and to eliminate ambiguity. Also has a good command of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms.</td>
<td>Maintains consistent grammatical control of complex language, even in fast speech, so that even when attention is otherwise engaged (e.g., in forward planning, in monitoring others' reactions), he/she can express himself/herself spontaneously at length with a natural colloquial flow, avoiding or backtracking around any difficulty so smoothly that the interlocutor is hardly aware of it.</td>
<td>Can interact with ease and skill, picking up and using nonverbal and intonational cues apparently effortlessly. Can interweave his/her contribution into the joint discourse with fully natural turn-taking, referencing, allusion, and so on, and can maintain cohesiveness and relatedness at an intrinsically high level.</td>
<td>Can create coherent and cohesive discourse making full and appropriate use of a variety of organisational patterns and a wide range of connectors and other cohesive devices.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1</td>
<td>Has a good command of a broad range of language allowing him/her to select a formulation to express him/herself clearly in an appropriate style on a wide range of general, academic, professional or leisure topics without having to restrict what he/she wants to say.</td>
<td>Consistently maintains a high degree of grammatical accuracy; errors are rare, difficult to spot and generally corrected when they do occur.</td>
<td>Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously, almost effortlessly. Only a conceptually difficult subject can hinder a natural, smooth flow of language.</td>
<td>Can select a suitable phrase from a readily available range of discourse functions to preface his remarks in order to get or to keep the floor and to relate his/her own contributions skilfully to those of other speakers.</td>
<td>Can produce clear, smooth, flowing, well-structured speech, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2+</td>
<td>Has a sufficient range of language to be able to give clear descriptions, express viewpoints on most general topics, without much difficulty or searching for words, using some complex sentence forms to do so.</td>
<td>Shows a relatively high degree of grammatical control. Does not make errors which cause misunderstanding, and can correct most of higher mistakes.</td>
<td>Can produce stretches of language with a fairly even tempo; although hesitations can be hesitant as he/she searches for patterns and expressions. There are few noticeably long pauses.</td>
<td>Can initiate discourse, take his/her turn when appropriate and end conversation when he/she needs to, though he/she may not always do this elegantly. Can help the discussion along on familiar ground confirming comprehension, inviting others in, etc.</td>
<td>Can use a limited number of cohesive devices to link utterances into clear, coherent discourse, though there may be some 'jumpliness' in a long contribution.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Qualitative aspects of spoken language (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Can</th>
<th>Can</th>
<th>Can link a series of shorter, discrete simple elements into a connected, linear sequence of points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>B1</strong></td>
<td>Has enough language to get by, with sufficient vocabulary to express himself with some hesitation and circumlocutions on topics such as family, hobbies and interests, work, travel, and current events. Uses reasonably accurately a repertoire of frequently used 'routines' and patterns associated with more predictable situations.</td>
<td>Can keep going comprehensively, even though pausing for grammatical and lexical planning and repair is very evident, especially in longer stretches of free production.</td>
<td>Can initiate, maintain and close simple face-to-face conversation on topics that are familiar or of personal interest. Can repeat back part of what someone has said to confirm mutual understanding.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A2+</strong></td>
<td>Uses basic sentence patterns with memorised phrases, groups of a few words and formulae in order to communicate limited information in simple everyday situations. Uses some simple structures correctly, but still systematically makes basic mistakes.</td>
<td>Can make himself understood in very short utterances, even though pauses, false starts and reformulation are very evident.</td>
<td>Can answer questions and respond to simple statements. Can indicate when he/she is following but is rarely able to understand enough to keep conversation going of his/her own accord.</td>
<td>Can link groups of words with simple connectors like 'and', 'but' and 'because'.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A1</strong></td>
<td>Has a very basic repertoire of words and simple phrases related to personal details and particular concrete situations. Shows only limited control of a few simple grammatical structures and sentence patterns in a memorised repertoire.</td>
<td>Can manage very short, isolated, mainly pre-packaged utterances, with much pausing to search for expressions, to articulate less familiar words, and to repair communication.</td>
<td>Can ask and answer questions about personal details. Can interact in a simple way but communication is totally dependent on repetition, rephrasing and repair.</td>
<td>Can link words or groups of words with very basic linear connectors like 'and' or 'then'.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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