

5. Attitudes and ambiguities – teachers’ views on second foreign language education in Swedish compulsory school

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Introduction

Sweden is a multilingual country with around 20% of the population born outside Sweden⁴ and up to 200 different languages spoken in society (Institutet för språk och folkminnen, 2020). This is reflected in the national curricula for compulsory and upper secondary school, with separate syllabuses for Swedish, Swedish as a second language, Mother tongue tuition⁵, Sami, and Swedish Sign language for the Hearing. In addition, three syllabuses are provided for so-called foreign languages, namely English, Modern languages and Chinese.

The overarching aim of the questionnaire underlying the current study is to give voice to a large group of teachers of Second foreign languages (SFLs), by mapping, describing and reflecting on their reported practices and perceptions regarding a substantial

4 <https://www.scb.se/hitta-statistik/sverige-i-siffror/manniskorna-i-sverige/utrikes-fodda/>

5 Sweden has five official national minority languages: Finnish, Meänkieli, Romani chib, Sami, and Yiddish. Sami has its own syllabus, whereas the other four are included separately in the syllabus for Mother tongue tuition.

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number of issues within the broad domain of language education, including aspects of learning, teaching, assessment, and framework factors. The extensive teacher questionnaire (translated English version in Appendix 1) was part of a research project on Modern languages in compulsory school (see below). Some of the most salient results were reported at an early stage to the category of stakeholders enabling the survey, namely teachers (Erickson et al., 2018).

In this chapter, three areas often discussed in the Swedish context are focused upon, namely *professional satisfaction*, *teachers' target language use* and *the curricular status of Modern languages*. These issues are also discussed in reports and studies on Modern languages (e.g., Lärarnas Riksförbund, 2016; Skolinspektionen, 2010; Tholin, 2019). Furthermore, the three areas can be seen as representing three fundamental levels of education, namely the individual, pedagogical and structural levels (cf. Erickson et al., 2015). Some background information is first given about the TAL project and about discussions concerning the school subject Modern languages in Sweden. In addition, the conceptual basis for the study is outlined and the iterative development of the questionnaire is described. Before reporting the results, the data collection, the sample achieved, and the analytical approach taken are presented. The results section that follows is organised according to the three above mentioned issues. In the last part of the chapter, the results are discussed and some possible implications of the findings are outlined.

Background

In the following, the research project within which the current study was conducted is presented, as are foreign languages in Swedish compulsory school, including current discussions regarding the subject Modern languages, the latter underlying the choice of the three issues focused upon in the present chapter.

The TAL project

The purpose of the project *Learning, Teaching and Assessment of Second Foreign Languages – an Alignment Study on Oral*

Language Proficiency in the Swedish School Context, funded by the Swedish Research Council between 2016 and 2018, was to achieve a better understanding of SFL in Swedish compulsory school, with special attention given to oral proficiency (Granfeldt et al., 2016).⁶ The target languages in focus were French, German and Spanish.

The project adopted a holistic perspective on language education and examined factors at the individual level, the school level and the societal level. A major part of the project consisted of surveys with school-leaders and teachers, combined with field studies at 15 schools in the country, drawn from the initial sample of schools. The school leaders' questionnaire was sent to a stratified random sample of 416 schools (with sampling assistance from Statistics Sweden/SCB) in September 2016. The response rate was 34% (n=143), and the questionnaire targeted school leaders' educational and professional background and attitudes to second foreign languages, as well as school frame factors, including resources (Granfeldt et al., 2019).

The questionnaire examining teachers' perspectives, which is the focal point of the current chapter, was developed in a collaborative process involving language teachers as well as researchers and included piloting at different stages. It was administered in 2017 and sent to teachers of French, German and Spanish in the schools that had been sampled for the project, as mentioned above (see further below, under Methodology).

Second foreign languages in Sweden

The tradition to study modern languages in Sweden goes back to the 19th century, when, initially, French was the first foreign language. It was also possible to study German and English in secondary education (Hyltenstam & Österberg, 2010). In 1859, German became the first foreign language (Psykologisk Pedagogisk Uppslagsbok, 1956) and remained so until 1946, when after the end of World War II English took over this role (Hyltenstam & Österberg, 2010). In 1952/53, English was made a compulsory subject for all students as from school year five. This starting

⁶ Project website at <https://www.tal.lu.se>

point has since then been gradually lowered, today being year three at the latest (Johansson, 2004; Malmberg, 2000; Tholin & Lindqvist, 2009).

With English as the first foreign language, studies of French or German became possible from school year 7, and from 1962 to 1969 it was compulsory to take one of these languages in order to be admitted to upper secondary school (Tholin, 2019).

There have been important policy changes regarding SFLs since 1969, two of which deserve to be highlighted here. First, in 1994, Spanish was introduced as a possible alternative to French and German and is today by far the most frequent choice among beginners (Bardel et al., 2019; Tholin, 2019). Second, the latest starting point has recently been lowered from year 7 to year 6 (Persson, 2018). Both these changes, together with others, for example an increase of teaching time (Tholin, 2019), aimed at raising motivation among students to study a second foreign language (Bardel et al., 2019). It also needs to be pointed out that Modern languages is part of the so called ‘Language choice’ (Swe: *Språkvalet*), a group of language electives in Swedish compulsory school, from which students have to choose one. This group currently (2020) comprises Modern languages, additional studies in Swedish and/or English, Mother tongue tuition, and Swedish Sign language for the Hearing (Skolförordningen, 2011:185; Tholin, 2019).

However, in comparison with English, the SFLs face very different conditions. The strong position of English concerning attitudes, motivation and proficiency level is far from the same when it comes to French, German and Spanish (Bardel et al., 2019; European Commission, 2012a; European Commission, 2012b). Furthermore, in the same way as school children today learn English in out-of-school activities, younger children also have many chances to acquire some English already in preschool age, not least via digital media (Sylvén, 2022).

It is important to recall that the possibility to study an SFL, introduced after English, is offered to all students.⁷ In compulsory

⁷ There is also a possibility to take a third foreign language, starting in school year 8, within the so-called ‘Student’s choice’ (Swe: *Elevers val*). Very few students make this choice (in 2019/20, 0,8%; n=966)

school, at least two of the languages French, German and Spanish must be offered by the school organiser within the Language choice, and a large majority of children – 88.7% of the cohort in the autumn of 2019⁸ – start with one of these languages, in spite of its optional status. Of the total cohort in 2019, 17.5% of the students chose French, 19.8% German, and 51.5% Spanish (0.2% other modern languages).⁹

While most students start with a second foreign language, a number of them drop out during the years up to year 9 (Krih, 2019; Tholin, 2019). According to statistics from the National Agency for Education, between 2015 and 2019 final grades of Modern languages were awarded to an average of 69% of the students.¹⁰

Tholin's (2019) and Krih's (2019) studies offer an important background to the current study, but compared to the large and developing body of educational research on the learning, teaching and assessment of English in Sweden, there is a lack of studies on the second foreign languages. The TAL project, from which the data for the current text emanate, represents an exception.

Current discussions about Modern languages

Certain issues regarding SFLs in Sweden are the subject of recurrent discussions in the media and among different categories of stakeholders, and have been so for quite some time. One of these issues concerns Modern language teachers' satisfaction with their work, which has been shown to be alarmingly low. An example of this is a survey conducted by one of the large teacher unions showing that, during the past few years, more than 60% of

<https://www.skolverket.se/skolutveckling/statistik/sok-statistik-om-forskola-skola-och-vuxenutbildning?sok=SokC&omrade=Skolor%20och%20elever&lasar=2019/20&run=1> Table 7B

⁸ <https://www.skolverket.se/skolutveckling/statistik/sok-statistik-om-forskola-skola-och-vuxenutbildning?sok=SokC&omrade=Skolor%20och%20elever&lasar=2019/20&run=1> Table 7A

⁹ See footnote 5.

¹⁰ <https://www.skolverket.se/skolutveckling/statistik/sok-statistik-om-forskola-skola-och-vuxenutbildning?sok=SokC&omrade=Betyg%20%C3%A5rskurs%209&lasar=2018/19>

Modern language teachers have considered leaving the profession (Lärarnas Riksförbund, 2016). Reasons vary, with low salaries, heavy work load and lack of in-service education being the most frequently mentioned negative aspects. Another issue, which has been a topic for discussion at least since the mid 1900s, was brought forward in 2010 by the Swedish Schools Inspectorate in a critical report concerning SFL education in compulsory school (Skolinspektionen, 2010), highlighting the question of target language use, which was found to be low both among teachers and students. The Inspectorate saw this as evidence of weak compliance with the national curriculum and syllabus that are characterised by a clearly functional and competence-based view of language, with active language use in focus. A third example of a discussion that has been going on for a long time and still evokes strong opinions is the status of SFLs, or more precisely whether it should be mandatory for all students in compulsory school or remain an elective subject. Here, a certain change can be noted, for example when comparing a study conducted by the National Board of Education in the late 20th century (Skolöverstyrelsen, 1991) and the survey conducted by a teachers' union some twenty years later (Lärarnas Riksförbund, 2016). In the older study, only about 12% of the responding SFL teachers expressed a positive attitude to a mandatory second foreign language, whereas the corresponding response in the more recent survey was roughly 50%.

Focus of the study

The three issues mentioned – professional satisfaction, teachers' target language use¹¹ and the curricular status of Modern languages – constitute the focal point of the present text, chosen because of their importance in the professional and policy-related debate referred to above. They represent different levels of language education, with professional satisfaction at the individual level and teachers' target language use at the pedagogical

11 For reasons of focus and space, students' target language use, albeit of obvious interest and connected to teachers' use, is not focused upon in the current chapter.

level, whereas the curricular status of Modern languages in Swedish compulsory school represents the structural level. Reviewing the somewhat disparate sources mentioned in the previous paragraph, one can conclude that they try to deal with problems of attitudes and motivation in relation to other foreign languages than English. The relevance of bringing these three issues together and trying to find out what they mean to teachers who work in the field becomes obvious. As shown below, the different parts of the teacher questionnaire cover the three levels of language education, the individual, the pedagogical and the structural, by asking questions about the respondents' background; learning and teaching, assessment and grading; frame factors and attitudes.

The three different issues focused upon, representing three levels of language education, taken together require a broad conceptual basis at the individual, teacher level, the pedagogical content level, and the structural level (see further *Conceptual considerations*, p. 167, and *The Questionnaire*, p. 169). Furthermore, they have all been the subject of previous research, although not in connection with each other and not with the methodology used here which further explains the rationale behind this study. Conceptual considerations of significance to the content of the questionnaire and the analysis of the responses will briefly be further discussed in the Methodology section of the text. First, however, some mentioning of previous studies related to the three issues seems relevant.

Previous research

As for *Professional satisfaction*, a number of national and international studies have been conducted. In Sweden, broad national evaluations were conducted between 1989 and 2003, all of them comprising questions to teachers (e.g., Skolverket, 2004). Internationally, teachers' attitudes to their profession have been studied more recently in the TALIS surveys (OECD, 2019; Skolverket, 2020a). TALIS, *The Teaching and Learning International Survey*, is organised by the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) and focuses on school

leaders' and teachers' work. In the latest survey (2018), 48 countries around the world took part. Results show that, on the whole, nine out of ten Swedish teachers of a broad range of subjects declared themselves satisfied with their work, with only ten per cent regretting their choice of profession. Regarding the perceived status of their work, Swedish teachers are considerably more hesitant than their international colleagues, the OECD mean for high status being 26% and the Swedish corresponding proportion 11%, to be compared with 18% in Denmark, 35% in Norway and 58% in Finland (Skolverket, 2020a). Finally, it can be noted that surveys among teachers of SFLs regarding professional satisfaction are scarce, the teacher union survey from 2016 being an exception. However, studies of English as a foreign language (e.g., Bonnet, 2004; Skolverket/Erickson, 2004), highlight a number of opinions expressed by teachers, concerning for example the lack of in-service education, and a perceived low degree of interest in the language teaching profession.

Teachers' target language use (TLU) has quite a prominent role in the current national syllabuses for foreign languages in Sweden (Skolverket, 2011). In the syllabuses for English and Modern languages for upper secondary school, it is explicitly stated that "Instruction should in all essence be conducted in English/the target language".¹² However, this sentence is not included in the syllabus for lower secondary school, although there are apparent similarities in the documents concerning the description of other aspects of language learning and teaching. This can be assumed to be related to the age of the students rather than the level of competence, this since Modern languages in upper secondary school range all the way from beginners to the highest level described in the syllabus.

TLU in foreign language classrooms has been the object of a large number of studies, mostly focusing on teachers (for studies before 2002, see Turnbull & Arnett, 2002; for more recent research on the issue, see Shin et al., 2019). In addition, a consistent monolingual, target language approach for teachers as well

12 Swe: *Undervisningen ska i allt väsentligt bedrivas på engelska/målspråket.*

as for students has been – and still is – strongly promoted in discussions about learner autonomy and the implementation of the action-oriented language competence described in the CEFR (Little, 2009; Little et al., 2017). Although a certain change is noticeable regarding the perception of TLU as self-evident, or even indispensable (e.g., Krulatz et al., 2016; Littlewood & Yu, 2011), monolingual approaches still have a very strong position in language education. In the Nordic context, however, studies of TLU are relatively scarce, especially regarding languages other than English. An exception is Stoltz (2011), who studied the use of French among teachers and students in two French upper secondary language classrooms in Sweden, finding that Swedish was used to a considerable extent, most often related to specific instructional activities and with the aim of facilitating students' understanding. In a recent study, also of French, set in a Norwegian lower secondary school context, Norwegian L1 was found to be the language of instruction in most classes (Thue Vold & Brkan, 2020) and that students' use of the target language was clearly limited. Further, the frequency and effects of teachers' target language use were studied in the European Survey on Language Competences (European Commission, 2012b). Results, albeit not all of them significant, indicate that "the more teachers speak the target language during lessons, the higher the score on the language test" (p. 64).

The curricular status of Modern languages has been discussed for a very long time in Sweden, but the subject has never been mandatory for all students. As from the 1960s, there were two levels of courses: one 'general' and one 'special'¹³, where the general course was intended to offer a less demanding alternative. These 'alternative courses' were first introduced for English and Mathematics and later also for French and German (Malmberg, 2000). Both courses granted access to upper secondary school (Giota & Emanuelsson, 2015). The existence of the alternative SFL courses became fairly short, and they were abolished in 1980. The two courses for English and Mathematics were kept but were increasingly criticised, not least for

13 Swe: *Allmän kurs* and *särskild kurs*.

contributing to students' tactical choices and for increasing segregation based on class and gender (Giota & Emanuelsson, 2015; Lindblad & Eriksson, 1987). The courses were abolished when the 1994 curricula were launched (Malmberg, 2000; Marklund, 1985).

As mentioned in the beginning of the current chapter, considerable structural changes regarding Modern languages were introduced in the 1994 national curricula, with the ambition to strengthen students' motivation to learn more languages. Periodically, the issue of a mandatory SFL for all students has been debated in the general media and also in teachers' journals, often with strong opinions expressed both for keeping the optional status and for introducing obligatory SFL. However, political discussions have not been very loud, and it seems clear that opinions about this issue are often divided, also within political parties. The National Agency for Education has approached the Ministry for Education on several occasions since the early 2000s, most recently in 2018 (Skolverket, 2018), suggesting reforms to make more students study a second foreign language, not least by abolishing the option to choose additional Swedish or English, but so far no changes have been made.

Methodology

The methodology of the study will be described from three points of view, namely the development of the questionnaire; the collection of data, including the achieved teacher sample, and the analytical approach.

The development of the TAL teacher questionnaire

The development of the TAL teacher questionnaire (henceforward, the TTQ) was preceded by a number of discussions within the project group and with different educational researchers and experienced teachers, in particular regarding recipient related issues, ranging from sampling to delivery mode and format. Furthermore, conceptual and empirical considerations and analyses had an essential role in the actual development of the instrument.

Conceptual considerations

The overarching purpose of the TTQ was to focus on a broad spectrum of issues related to teachers' experiences and perceptions of their profession and to offer possibilities to view these aspects from different angles. Consequently, a broad conceptual basis was needed for the development of the TTQ, but also for the analyses and interpretations. In this study, research on teacher cognition (Borg, 2003; van Driel & Berry, 2012) was essential, as were theories – general and subject specific – on Pedagogical content knowledge, PCK (Shulman, 1986; Watzke, 2007). A conceptual basis in theories about teacher cognition proved highly relevant in the analyses of all three issues focused upon in this chapter. PCK, together with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, CEFR (Council of Europe, 2001), on language learning, teaching and assessment, were indispensable in approaching and analysing the whole language educational area focused upon in the questionnaire, in particular the question of teachers' target language use. Theories about communicative competence and its role in action oriented language learning, teaching and assessment (Hymes, 1972; Canale & Swain, 1980; Larsen-Freeman, 2000) were of obvious importance, separately within different domains, but also as expressed and operationalised, for example, in the CEFR and its accompanying Companion Volume (Council of Europe, 2020), and in the Swedish national curriculum and language syllabuses (Skolverket, 2011), the latter affecting, in an obvious way, language teachers' daily practices.

Furthermore, to better capture aspects of systemic, school and collegial environment, Frame factor theory was relevant, that is, theories focusing on external factors affecting the lives of schools and teachers (Dahllöf, 1967; Lundgren, 1999), as well as work on Practice architectures (Kemmis et al., 2014), including so called sayings and doings (Schatzki, 2010), which further strengthen the social aspects by adding relations between different agents to the landscape of factors forming conditions and practices at schools. Frame factor theory – both regarding material and relational aspects (Lundgren, 1999 and Kemmis et al., 2014) – proved very useful in interpreting and analysing professional satisfaction as well as the curricular status of Modern languages.

Empirical considerations

Three empirical paths were followed to optimise the development of the questionnaire. One of these was to form a reference group, including people with different competences related to language teaching, learning and assessment, most of them also teachers of languages. A number of the members had substantial experience of language test development at the national level, which meant that they were well acquainted with the national curricula and syllabuses and that they worked with teacher questionnaires on a regular basis. In the group, some of the members also had experiences from different research projects related to language education at large to bring into the work. This group met throughout the development process and provided valuable comments and advice to the project group on the different steps undertaken and on the questionnaire as a whole.

A second way to develop the TTQ was to study previous examples of national and international questionnaires for language teachers. Nationally, this meant examples from National evaluation rounds of English (1989–2003) and a research project focusing on language teachers' role in assessment (Skolverket/Oscarson & Apelgren, 2005; Oscarson & Apelgren, 2011). In addition, the previously mentioned survey targeting the subject Modern languages in Swedish schools, labelled 'Languages – so much more than English'¹⁴ served as a useful source (Lärarnas Riksförbund, 2016). Internationally, questionnaires from two European surveys were studied: 'The Assessment of pupils' skills in English in eight European Countries' (Bonnet, 2004, ed.) and 'The European Survey on Language Competences' (European Commission, 2012c). Although most of these questionnaires focus on assessment, they all contain a substantial number of relevant questions related to language education in a broad sense.

Finally, in the empirical phase of developing the TTQ, different rounds of questions and sets of questions were piloted, analyzed and discussed in the reference and project groups. Preliminary versions of the full questionnaire were pretested in three different rounds with language teachers from different parts of the country

14 Swe: *Språk – så mycket mer än engelska.*

and adjustments were made based on their comments. All in all, this meant that approximately 40 people were in touch with the TTQ during its developmental stage and were able to actively influence its final design.

With these actions undertaken in the development of the TTQ, we feel confident that the content and item formats have been firmly grounded in a combination of conceptual considerations, current practice and previous research.

The questionnaire

A digital questionnaire was considered most feasible for respondents as well as researchers, and the aspiration was also to, thereby, optimise the response rate. As for format, it was deemed important to combine selected response and open-ended questions, thus creating possibilities for initial overviews and comparisons of the data as well as deeper understanding of the responses. The final questionnaire (Appendix 1)¹⁵ that was answered anonymously online comprises 50 questions, divided into four thematic sections focusing on Respondent background information (Q 1–13); Learning and teaching (Q 14–24), and Assessment and grading (Q 25–34) [cf., for example, Council of Europe (2001); Shulman (1986)]; Frame factors and attitudes (Q 35–50), [cf. Borg (2003); Kemmis et al. (2014); Lundgren (1999)]. In particular, the sections focusing on learning, teaching and assessment were related to the current national syllabus for Modern languages, but a number of questions also focused on issues beyond the scope of the national regulatory documents, for example concerning teaching methods and practices (cf. Watzke, 2007), which in accordance with the national curriculum are to be decided locally, by individual teachers and schools. The questions were of different length and complexity, with eight of multiple-choice (MC) type only, 11 requiring open responses only and 31 using a mix of closed and open formats, with MC items or Likert scales plus space where respondents were prompted to comment on the issue in focus. The last two questions differed from the others in asking teachers

15 In the appended questionnaire, the 23 questions (46% of all questions) actively used in the analyses are italicized.

to express themselves freely on the contribution of Modern languages to students' general education and development, and the respondents' teaching practices regarding SFL oral competence (see Erickson et al., 2018 for an overview of the general results).

Data collection and achieved teacher sample

To ensure a representative sample of schools, and also to enable possible analyses between the different studies within the TAL project, it was decided to distribute the TTQ to the 416 schools initially sampled for the project by Statistics Sweden. As already mentioned, the 416 schools were extracted using a stratified random method to ensure a representative group of schools across the country regarding socio-economic as well as geographical inclusion parameters (for further information, see Granfeldt et al., 2019). All in all, 315 responses were received, representing 186 schools, which gives a response rate at the school level of c. 45%. This may seem very low, but according to communication with Statistics Sweden¹⁶, this is a slightly higher number than is usually expected in surveys of the current kind. The underlying reasons are obviously multifaceted, but what may be seen as an essential aspect of the relative reluctance to respond, for example, to questionnaires, is the rapidly growing interest in educational research that has brought about a large number of studies requiring active collaboration between teachers/head teachers and researchers. Fortunately, however, the responses received can be compared to population data for teachers of Modern languages, provided by the National Agency for Education¹⁷, which gives useful information regarding the representativity of the data.

Table 1 gives an overview of some relevant background statistics of the 315 participating teachers, as reported in the questionnaire.

¹⁶ Statistics Sweden/SCB is a Swedish government administrative authority, which reports to the Ministry of Finance and is responsible for official statistics and other government statistics. Statistics Sweden shall, on behalf of the "Riksdag" (Parliament), provide customers with good quality statistics.

¹⁷ <https://www.skolverket.se/skolutveckling/statistik/sok-statistik-om-forskola-skola-och-vuxenutbildning?sok=SokB&omr=Personal&run=1>

Table 1. Background information TTQ

Question	All teachers <i>n</i> =315	Teachers of French <i>n</i> =99	Teachers of German <i>n</i> =108	Teachers of Spanish <i>n</i> =114	Comments
Target language		32%	34%	36%	6 respondents teach two of the target languages About 2% report that they teach more than one modern language
School type					
Municipal school	85% (<i>n</i> =158)	86%	82%	88%	2 teachers report that their school is a mix of municipal and independent
Independent school ¹⁸	15% (<i>n</i> =28)	14%	18%	12%	
National teacher certification					Teachers apply for their certification; issued for specific subjects and school years
= Yes	84% (<i>n</i> =263)	89%	85%	78%	
Teacher education					
1. Teacher ed. incl. target language	83% (<i>n</i> =258)	90%	84%	77%	
2. Teacher ed. excl. target language	4% (<i>n</i> =12)	1%	6%	5%	
3. Ongoing teacher ed.	5% (<i>n</i> =17)	3%	3%	10%	
4. No teacher ed. but target language ed.	4% (<i>n</i> =13)	4%	5%	3%	

5. No teacher ed. and no target language ed.	4% (n=12)	2%	3%	6%	No fixed time limit; months indicated in instruction for comments
Spent longer period in Target Language country = Yes	76%	76%	70%	83%	
Target language is teacher's LI = Yes	27%	11%	22%	45%	
Target language teaching experience					
0-6 years	30%	22%	32%	35%	
7-14 years	32%	28%	30%	37%	
15 years or more	37%	50%	38%	28%	
Year of birth					
Range	1944-1992	1951-1992	1944-1992	1950-1991	
Median	1970	1969	1968	1972	
Gender					About 1% of the total sample chose not to report gender; no one chose the non-binary alternative
Female respondents	80%	88%	76%	75%	
Male respondents	19%	10%	22%	23%	

18 Independent schools in Sweden teach according to the national curricula and are free of charge.

As shown in the table, the teachers responding were fairly evenly distributed across the three target languages in focus, French, German and Spanish. As compared to national statistics of Modern languages for school year 2017/2018, i.e., the year when the questionnaire was administered, this indicates a certain overrepresentation of teachers of French and German, and a corresponding underrepresentation of teachers of Spanish. However, differences are quite small.¹⁹ Regarding number of female and male teachers, the proportions in the TTQ group were similar to national statistics for the year in focus, 2017/18.²⁰

85% of the respondents were teaching at a municipal school, which is similar to national statistics for school year 2017/2018.²¹ As for formal qualifications, however, the group of respondents in the TTQ study reported a considerably higher degree of national teacher certification and teacher education including the target language than the whole group of Modern language teachers, with 65% in the whole group (TTQ: 84%), and 70, 73 and 58% for French, German and Spanish, respectively (TTQ: 89, 85, 78%).²²

Analyses of the responses to the questionnaire, based on the different selection criteria used by Statistics Sweden, show reasonable representativity of schools in relation to the 416 schools contacted initially. This means that the TTQ schools do not differ in any systematic way from the full sample regarding geographic, demographic and socio-economic variables. However, it is impor-

19 <https://www.skolverket.se/skolutveckling/statistik/sok-statistik-om-forskola-skola-och-vuxenutbildning?sok=SokC&omrade=Personal&claras=2017%2F18&run=1;Table 5.A>

20 <https://www.skolverket.se/skolutveckling/statistik/sok-statistik-om-forskola-skola-och-vuxenutbildning?sok=SokC&omrade=Personal&claras=2017%2F18>

21 <https://www.ekonomifakta.se/fakta/valfarden-i-privat-regi/skolan-i-privat-regi/elever-i-friskola/>

22 https://sirir.skolverket.se/reports/rwservlet?cmdkey=common&geo=1&report=personal_amne2&p_flik=G&p_verksform=11&p_hman=&p_niva=S&p_amne=&P_VERKSAMHETSAR=2017&P_KOMMUNKOD=&P_LANKOD=&p_skolkod=&p_hmankod=

tant to bear in mind, that this does not mean that the individual teachers are necessarily representative, for example in terms of education or opinions. Taking part in the survey was optional, and it is highly likely that those who chose to do so were interested in the topic and thus reflected a certain degree of positive selection, which needs to be taken into account when interpreting the responses.

Analytical approach

In this study we present a selection of primary analyses of the TTQ data. The variables described were chosen to illuminate the three issues focused upon in the current chapter: teachers' professional satisfaction, teachers' target language use, and the curricular status of second foreign languages. Thus, this is not a complete account and analysis of the entire survey.

We have chosen to present only standard descriptive statistics, such as frequencies distributions on key questions, and comparisons of means on selected Likert-scale questions. However, our discussion of these response patterns is also supported by analyses of relations between variables expressing perceptions or attitudes and background variables using correlations and p-values.

Selected open responses have been subject to iterative reading by the researchers, targeting explicitly and implicitly expressed perceptions regarding the three issues in focus. These perceptions have also been categorised and validated through independent coding by three researchers, discussed and subsequently agreed upon. In the text, these categories are used in relation to the perceptions expressed on the scales of the attitude items.

A separation has been made between the different target languages, to enable analyses of possible similarities and differences between answers from respondents teaching French, German and Spanish. However, since comparing the three languages was not the main aim of the study, this will be accounted for and commented on only in cases where the results show a noticeable difference relevant to the issue in focus.

Results

In the following, results from the questionnaire regarding the three issues focused upon in the current text will be presented, one at a time, with the numbers of questions actively used in the analyses given within brackets. Special attention will be given to instances where certain ambiguities emerge. Finally, the different results are discussed in the concluding section of the text.

Professional satisfaction

The fourth thematic section in the TTQ focused on frame factors and attitudes and comprised 16 questions altogether. Eight of these questions, together with one from the section on assessment, aimed to capture what may be referred to as professional satisfaction, which to a considerable, albeit individually varying, extent can be connected conceptually as well as practically to different conditions in the working environment, with material as well as relational characteristics (cf. Borg, 2003; Kemmis et al., 2014; Lundgren, 1999).

The questions chosen to capture levels of professional satisfaction among the respondents focused on three aspects that commonly emerge as having an influential role, namely colleagues and collegial cooperation, in-service education, and perceived attitudes to the language teaching profession.

Two open-ended questions focused on number of colleagues (the numbers of the questions in the questionnaire given within square brackets):

‘How many teachers of Modern languages are there at your school?’ [38],

and

‘How many teachers teach the target language at your school?’ [39]

The responses to these questions, in particular the first one, highlighted a problem regarding terminology, namely the concept of

‘Modern languages’, which has been used in national curricula since the year 2000 (instead of naming the individual languages) but still causes certain problems of interpretation and use. The respondents’ definition was sometimes too wide, including both English and different mother tongues, sometimes too narrow, presumably referring to the target language only. This made some answers difficult to interpret and results should be treated with caution. However, the most common number of Modern language teachers reported, in order of frequency, were 3 ($n=76$; 25%), 4 ($n=70$; 23%) and 5 teachers of Modern languages ($n=51$; 17%), followed by 2 ($n=35$; 12%).

The question about target language, that is, French, German or Spanish, was apparently easier to interpret, with only very few answers indicating a possible misunderstanding of the terminology. As shown in Table 2, the following responses were given.

Table 2. Number of teachers teaching the target language at the respondent’s school

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	1	132	41.9	45.2
	2	72	22.9	24.7
	3	44	14.0	15.1
	4	17	5.4	5.8
	5	14	4.4	4.8
	6	6	1.9	2.1
	7	3	1.0	1.0
	8	2	.6	.7
	9	1	.3	.3
	12	1	.3	.3
	Total	292	92.7	100.0
Missing System		23	7.3	
Total		315	100.0	

As can be seen, the largest group of respondents, about 45%, report on being the only teacher of the target language at her/his school, followed by 25% having one colleague teaching the same language. Comments show that lack, or shortage, of colleagues is often considered as negative.

A separation of French, German and Spanish shows clear differences, with 60% of the teachers of French reporting to be the only target language teacher at the school, as compared to 52% for German and 26% for Spanish. Consequently, teachers of Spanish much more often have colleagues teaching the same language. This can obviously be related to the higher number of students/groups for Spanish as compared to the other two languages, but it may also reflect conditions related to organisation and forms of employment in different municipalities and schools.

In a subsequent question [40], the respondents were asked to describe in what ways teachers of Modern languages collaborate at their schools. Here, the problem of terminology mentioned previously was further emphasized: It was often not possible to determine how the question had been interpreted, and a considerable number of teachers apparently used Modern languages for their own target language. English was mentioned in four comments out of 281, and Swedish once; other languages not at all. As for the answers to the question, the responses were quite scattered, both concerning frequency and content. It was quite clear, however, that the most common example of collaboration given concerned assessment and/or grading. This may be compared to the outcome of question 28, where teachers were asked to indicate on a 5-point scale how often they cooperated with colleagues on assessment issues, and where the mean was 3.08, hence in between the alternatives often and seldom.

Another question in the TTQ [41] focused on language related in-service education during the past five years. As shown in Table 3, quite a negative view emerges.

As can be seen, less than a third of the respondents report on recent in-service education related to the target language, and only

Table 3. During the past five years, have you taken part in in-service training related to the target language?

Type of in-service education	Yes (percent)	No (percent)
Focusing on language	30.3	69.7
Focusing on language teaching	30.6	69.4
Integrating language and language teaching	19.9	80.1
Funded in-service education in a TL speaking country	9.9	90.1
TL in-service education that I have been able to influence myself	18.6	81.4

one out of ten on such education in a target language speaking country. Furthermore, only 19% feel that they have been able to influence the education themselves. The following two quotations may serve as illustrations to what is often reported²³: ‘*Only simple things in my own town, without/or with very low costs*’ and ‘*Paid for my own five-week course last autumn. Didn’t receive any economic support at all and have never had any during my nearly 20 years teaching languages*’. However, there are also positive examples given, for example activities offered by different Swedish universities (‘language teacher days’), the Swedish language teachers’ union, and language and culture institutes (*Institut Français*, *Goethe Institut* and *Instituto Cervantes*). Some local initiatives are also mentioned: ‘*Once every academic year, there is usually an opportunity to meet the other teachers of X in the municipality, which is very valuable*’. Regarding language in-service education, the results in the current study coincide to a large extent with similar studies, which we will return to in the concluding discussion.

Three questions in the TTQ focused on the respondents’ perceptions regarding external views on *the value of knowing Modern languages*. Here, the views in society [44], at the respondent’s own school [45] and among students [46] were asked for in multiple choice questions with five alternative answers in a Likert scale. The responses are summarised in Table 4.

²³ Quotations translated into English by the researchers.

Table 4. How do you think the following agents value target language competence?

		Society (percent)	Your school (percent)	Students (percent)
Valid	1 <i>very low</i>	12.4	4.3	8.9
	2	33.2	21.0	26.4
	3	36.2	40.0	45.5
	4	12.4	23.9	15.2
	5 <i>very high</i>	5.9	10.8	4.0
	Total	307	305	303
Missing system		8	10	12
Total		315	315	315
Mean		2.66	3.16	2.79

As can be seen, the respondents did not consider TL competence very highly valued, especially not by society in general or by students. As shown by the mean value, the attitudes at their own schools were deemed a bit more positive, but only to some extent, with a mean value slightly above the ‘neutral’ middle value 3. Some teacher comments summarize attitudes often expressed by the teachers:

- *Just the fact that it’s the only subject that students can choose not to study says all... General indifference, ‘English is enough’, is the general attitude;*
- *Students are often encouraged to opt out of Modern languages when they don’t manage a Pass in the core subjects (‘core subjects’ are often used when referring to Swedish, English and Mathematics);*

and

- *The subject has low priority but it has become better. Our school management now think that most students should study a modern language instead of the Swedish/English option*

What the respondents convey regarding number of colleagues, in-service education and perceived attitudes to their profession as teachers of Modern languages is quite negative. Therefore, it is somewhat surprising, albeit a bit ambiguous, that the answers to the question ‘*Would you choose to become a teacher of Modern languages today as well*’ [43] is answered with Yes by 84% of the respondents, with [only] 16% saying No. However, some of the comments following this dichotomous question shed some light on the complex issues of professional satisfaction. Positive features frequently mentioned were the value of languages, personally as well as globally; creativity; contact with young people; learning by teaching and, very frequently, joy from ‘opening doors’ and seeing people grow. Negative comments were of course also made, albeit not very frequently. Factors mentioned here included workload, working environment, stress, and lacking motivation among students. Some also emphasised that as long as Modern languages is an optional subject, it will never have the same status as other subjects. We will return to this structural aspect later in the text, after having had a closer look at the pedagogical issue of target language use.

Teachers’ target language use

Oral language proficiency was emphasised in the TAL project, and consequently the teacher questionnaire comprised a number of questions about this competence, not least focusing on the frequency and nature of target language use in the classroom, both regarding teachers and students. In the following, the analyses presented focus on teachers’ target language use.

A question at the beginning of the questionnaire, targeting the respondents’ current language confidence, may serve as an interesting, albeit not wholly compatible, baseline for further questions about target language use. The question was phrased in the following way: ‘*As compared to when you were a novice teacher of the target language, how confident do you feel in your language use today?*’ [10]. Responses were given both on a five-point Likert scale ranging from ‘Much more confident’ to ‘Much less confident’ and in (optional) individual comments. Table 5 shows the results that emerged.

Table 5. Current target language confidence as compared to being a novice teacher

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	1 <i>much less conf.</i>	–	–	–
	2	9	2.9	2.9
	3	71	22.5	23.1
	4	90	28.6	29.2
	5 <i>much more conf.</i>	138	43.8	44.8
	Total	308	97.8	100.0
Missing system		7	2.2	
Total		315	100.0	
Mean	4.16			

As can be seen, the large majority of the respondents declared that they feel more confident to use the target language today as compared to when they were novice teachers, the largest group – 45% – even much more confident. It is also worth noticing that nobody chose the alternative ‘Much less confident’ and only nine individuals the second lowest alternative. Analyses of the 94 individual comments (30% of the respondents) show that close to twenty of those commenting characterise the target language as either their first or second language, or a language used daily in their family. It is also clear that the respondents emphasise the importance of frequent and authentic contact with their target language, usually through visits to countries where the language is spoken or via in-service training in general. However, these options are not depicted as something common. Interestingly, some teachers also point out that they are (much) more confident today. However, this does not necessarily have to do with language but with pedagogy; they know how to teach. Confidence may obviously also be applicable to other aspects of using the language in focus, not only regarding oral competence. Finally, when comparing responses based on the different target languages, the teachers of Spanish report a somewhat higher increase of confidence as compared to being new in the profession, with 80% choosing the two most positive alternatives, as compared to around 70% for French and German.

To capture the respondents' degree of active target language use in the classroom, one question focused on the average amount of time for all school years (usually four, but sometimes three).²⁴ The question was phrased in the following way: *'During how large a proportion of your lesson time do you speak in the target language? Think of all school years together and estimate an average percentage.'* [14].²⁵ As shown in Table 6, the question generated the following responses.

The table shows a distribution of intervals of percentages where 41% of the respondents report an average use of the target language of between 26 and 50% of the time, with 31% below and 28% above that range. Following the Likert scale question, the respondents were asked to comment on the interval chosen. Here some examples of situations were given, based on pre-testing experiences: *'Please describe the situation more thoroughly (for example, if it varies for school year, content etc.)*. A large number of comments were given (253 = 80%), generating a fairly clear picture of the TLU issue, and of the opposite, namely use of Swedish, i.e., the national majority language and L1 for most students.

²⁴ At the time of the study, most students started their SFL in school year 6, but a substantial number (c. 37%) also in year 7. As from the autumn of 2018, starting in year 6 is mandatory.

²⁵ The reason for this general wording was to avoid taking it explicitly for granted that there were differences, for example between different school years.

Table 6. Average target language use across school years 6/7–9

			Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	1–10%	1	17	5.4	5.5
	11–25%	2	78	24.8	25.2
	26–50%	3	127	40.3	41.0
	51–75%	4	69	21.9	22.2
	76–100%	5	19	6.0	6.1
	Total		310	97.8	100.0
Missing System			5	2.2	
Total			315	100.0	
Mean	2.98				

By far the most common of these comments concerned *differences between instruction for students at different levels of competence*. A large number of respondents ($n = 110$; 43%) described a situation when the first instruction, in school years 6 and 7, is mostly delivered in or via Swedish, and that teachers' use of the target language then increases gradually up to the end of compulsory school. The most common explanation given to this situation concerns students' limited comprehension, often used synonymously with learning, expressed in this way in one of the comments: *'It varies between years. The more [X] they have learnt, the more [X] I speak'*. Another frequent teacher comment ($n = 56$; 22%) focused on *explanations of grammar*, which were commonly delivered in Swedish. Here as well, Swedish, or rather L1, was described as a prerequisite for understanding and learning. A third, fairly frequent comment ($n = 28$; 11%) concerned language teaching methodology and pointed to procedures including translation, for example of instructions, between the target language and Swedish, either done by the teacher him/herself or students. It is worth noticing that none of the 253 responses mentioned students with another L1 than Swedish.

Following the question on the 'longitudinal' use of the target language, there was one focusing on situational and content related aspects, the first one being *'How often do you use the target language in the following situations?'* [15] The two situations focused upon were talking to one student or more and talking to the whole group. As shown in Tables 7 and 8, the following responses were given.

Table 7. Target language use 'when talking to one or more students'

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	1 <i>very seldom</i>	14	4.4	4.5
	2	36	11.4	11.5
	3	124	39.4	39.7
	4	96	30.5	30.8
	5 <i>very often</i>	42	13.3	13.5
	Total	312	99.0	100.0
Missing System		3	1.0	
Total		315	100.0	
Mean	3.37			

Table 8. Target language use ‘when talking to the whole group’

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	1 <i>very seldom</i>	3	1.0	1.0
	2	12	3.8	3.9
	3	94	29.8	30.6
	4	126	40.0	41.0
	5 <i>very often</i>	72	22.9	23.5
	Total	307	97.5	100.0
Missing System		8	2.5	
Total		315	100.0	
Mean	3.82			

As can be seen, there is a certain difference in frequency between the two situations, not very large, however significant and worth considering. The difference may be easier to detect in an analysis of mean values, which shows 3.37 for TLU with one student or more and 3.82 for TLU with the whole group. Some possible explanations to the discrepancy may be found in the comments following the Likert scales, where the respondents were asked to describe ‘concrete situations when you most often use the target language (for example to greet, tell, explain or instruct)’. The responses here were very similar to those in the preceding question concerning average TL use over time, and reflect a situation where the target language is very often used for purposes of classroom management (greeting, informing, instructing, planning etc.) but also for social small talk and questions about texts. A number of teachers also take the opportunity to repeat and emphasise when the TL is not used: ‘I ALWAYS speak in Swedish when it comes to pure grammar’.

Albeit not the focal point of teachers’ target language use, a question focusing on the type of oral proficiency assessed by the teachers may serve as an indication of an attitude to oral SFL

language proficiency, where spontaneous language use is not in focus, at least not when evaluating the relatively low level of proficiency that is expected at the end of compulsory school (roughly equivalent to CEFR level A2.1). The question [30], was three-dimensional in its focus, namely asking about teachers' practices regarding oral *situations* assessed, the *constellations* of students, and the students' *partners/audience*. Here, the four highest ranked options all emanated from prepared topics, which means that spontaneous, unprepared topics were not used at all as often, in spite of the fact that oral interaction has a prominent role in the national syllabus for Modern languages.

Finally, it should be mentioned that differences between the three different languages in focus were quite modest regarding reported teachers' target language use, especially concerning situational use, where only very small differences were seen. In the question concerning estimated TLU time across years, there was a slight tendency of a wider distribution of percentages in German and Spanish, with more low and high values, and a certain central tendency for French – 52% choosing TLU for 26–50 per cent of the time, as compared to 33 and 39% for German and Spanish, respectively. With numbers of respondents quite low, 94 for French, 105 for German and 102 for Spanish, interpretations and possible conclusions obviously need to be handled with caution.

The curricular status of Modern languages

One question at the end of the TTQ focuses on a structural issue that has been discussed for a long time in Sweden, namely the curricular status of Modern languages in compulsory school – whether it should be mandatory or, as today, an elective among other languages.

The question focusing on the curricular status of Modern languages in the TTQ was a Yes/No question followed by space for comments. The question was phrased in the following way: '*Do you think Modern languages should be a mandatory subject in compulsory school?* [47], with responses summarised in Table 9.

Table 9. Do you think SFL should be a mandatory subject in compulsory school?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Yes	214	67.9	71.1
	No	87	27.6	28.9
	Total	301	95.6	100.0
Missing System		14	4.4	
Total		315	100.0	

As shown, the large majority, 68%, of the respondents answered Yes to the question about mandatory SFL, 28% said No and 4% chose not to answer. As compared to results from earlier surveys, this is a clear increase of those in favour of a second obligatory foreign language in compulsory school. To find out about teachers' comments on their answers, an analysis of the 98 open comments available (31% of the respondents) was undertaken. Three of the researchers independently categorised all comments as positive or negative, or both, without knowing whether they were preceded by a Yes or a No to the main question. Consensus in this part of the analysis was very high. In the next step, different categories of comments within each group were identified, compared, discussed, and eventually agreed upon.

Four arguments were typically found in the positive comments. Learning/knowing an additional foreign language was characterised as:

- useful, especially seen in an international and a future perspective
- logical from a curriculum point of view
- beneficial for the individual
- generally positive, often touching and/or elaborating on some or all of the aspects mentioned above.

In this category, the first and the last group were the largest. Examples of comments, one per group, are the following:

- *If you are going to have even the smallest chance of competing about jobs in today's world, you must master more languages than English.*

- *It is very strange that you are allowed to just skip that subject. In that case, you might as well be allowed to opt out of physics.*
- *It is important to know another language, besides English; it also opens for understanding foreign cultures and can serve as motivation to learn more languages later.*
- *As a teenager you don't know if you will need a Modern language. A language is no heavy rucksack to carry and something you may find very useful in the future.*

Aspects identified in the No-answers were the following, often expressing concerns about the students. An additional foreign language was considered negative for

- students with learning difficulties
- newly arrived migrant students
- students lacking motivation
- students struggling with the demands of Pass grades in Swedish and English (required for entrance to upper secondary school)
- Single comments also concerned heterogeneity in the SFL groups, which was seen as a pedagogical problem both for teachers and students.

Overlaps between the aspects were common, which complicated the grouping of comments to some extent. However, the largest group of comments saying No to mandatory SFL was the one focusing on the demands of Pass grades in English and Swedish, followed by a mixed category encompassing issues of learning difficulties coupled with lack of motivation.

Examples of No-comments, one per category, are the following:

- *All students are not suited for studying a third language, but it should be compulsory to learn a third language for students who don't have learning difficulties in any of the core subjects.*
- *We have so many newly arrived students today who need to learn Swedish, English first of all. In addition, these students also have their mother tongues to work with.*

- *Without will and motivation, there are no language results.*
- *Not for those students who are fully busy mastering English and Swedish.*
- *Those who are talented and want to achieve something would not have a chance to improve, as long as we don't have general and special courses.*

Some types of comments occurred in different contexts, sometimes following both a Yes and a No to the initial question, which made them difficult to fit into the identified categories. This is also the reason why a detailed account of numbers for the different aspects would be neither quite possible to define, nor meaningful in the interpretation of the results. However, this does not mean that these comments are less relevant; on the contrary, they are well worth mentioning to make the picture of the situation clearer and more complete. In particular four different aspects were mentioned, namely individual student features related to *maturity* rather than to aptitude or motivation; the need for *adaptation* and *individualisation* of instruction as well as resources for *special support* for individual students ('as in other subjects', some respondents pointed out). In addition, a widening of electives was mentioned, both regarding languages and other subjects, for example, both Japanese and more practical subjects, crafts in particular. One teacher also mentions the issue of students' different mother tongues that are sometimes studied and graded as Modern languages (an option mentioned in the curriculum).

Finally, it needs to be pointed out that the analyses of comments revealed a certain degree of ambiguity in the Yes responses, namely that, strictly speaking, about a fifth of them were not totally positive to mandatory SFLs, but conditional in their message, that is naming the exceptions that should be made to the obligatory status. These exceptions often concerned students with learning difficulties, general and/or regarding English and Swedish, as well as newly arrived migrant students. The following comments may serve as examples:

- *To achieve the goals of the EU with two languages besides one's mother tongue. An exception, though, for those students who have a special reason not to be able to study the language, certain difficulties for example.*

- *Not for those who have only just arrived or have enormous problems with English.*

As for the three language groups, that is the teachers of French, German and Spanish, there were no large differences in responses. However, teachers of German were slightly less positive to mandatory SFL than their colleagues in French and Spanish, with 75% Yes responses for French, 66% for German, and 73% for Spanish.

Discussion

The 315 responses from teachers across the country generate a rich and diverse picture of practices and perceptions characterizing second foreign language education, and they also clearly illustrate the contextuality and complexity of the teaching profession at different levels (cf. Borg, 2003; Shulman, 1986). As shown in the analyses, what seems to be certain interesting ambiguities emerge in the responses to and comments on the three issues focused upon. In the following, these issues will be briefly discussed under the headings of the three levels that they represent: the individual, pedagogical and structural levels.

The individual level

At the individual level, the respondents' professional satisfaction was looked into based on questions focusing on three aspects of well-being and self-esteem in relation to being a SFL teacher: having colleagues, access to in-service education, and external appreciation of the value of learning, teaching and knowing a SFL, indirectly, that is, the professional choice of the respondents. Taken together, the picture conveyed is not a very positive one, with reported lack, or shortage, of colleagues, especially those teaching the same target language, weak provision of in-service education, and what is felt to be a generally lukewarm interest in SFLs as such (cf. contextual and relational factors described, for example, by Borg, 2003, Lundgren, 1999, and Kemmis et al., 2014). In spite of this, however, the large majority of the respondents (84%) answer yes to a question if they would choose to become teachers again. Whether this reflects

a profound satisfaction with the profession, or a feeling that there are not many alternatives for people with an education in languages is of course not possible to establish. It is noteworthy, though, that teachers in the open comments to several questions speak very positively about the teaching profession, in particular focusing on the aspect of working with young people in the process of learning and development. Based on the ambiguity that lies within the discrepancy between the reported examples of negative experiences of the profession, and the strong expression of liking of the same profession, we will now briefly discuss the different ambiguities that emerge in the data.

It is sometimes claimed that the teaching profession can be very lonely with lack of regular peer communication and support. This was one of the reasons to include questions on colleagues in Modern languages and the specific target language. Furthermore, adequate professional development as well as the feeling of respect for languages and language education are essential. It seems clear that a majority of the respondents were the only teachers of the specific TL at their schools, which was sometimes mentioned as a reason for weak or no collaboration between colleagues. Here, a widening of the concept of 'colleague' seems essential, especially given the fact that all Modern languages in the Swedish school system (except Chinese) have the same national syllabus and the English syllabus is almost identical, albeit operating at different proficiency levels for students of the same age. Also, professional collaboration with teachers of Swedish L1 and L2, as well as Mother tongue, would enable the chance of strengthening the language education context with mutual benefits for the different teacher groups and, in the long run, also for students. Regarding the very weak provision of in-service education, the results from the current study coincide with similar studies, at both national and international levels (e.g., Bonnet, 2004; Lärarnas Riksförbund, 2016). To interpret this, several aspects have to be considered, for example the decentralised organisation of schooling in Sweden, which makes decisions regarding teachers' professional development quite variable. It is worth noticing, however, that efforts to facilitate and promote collegial learning are increasing, with the aim of enhancing professional development

by combining learning with collegial collaboration (Timperley, 2011). Work of this kind has grown considerably, in Sweden supported by major national initiatives and investments, for example the program “Språksprånget”²⁶ (‘the Language leap’) offering online, in-service materials and modules for Modern languages.

The pedagogical level

At the pedagogical level, the responses to the questions focusing on teachers’ target language use is another example of potential ambiguity, most of all with the discrepancy between teachers’ reported increase of confidence in their target language proficiency and their not too frequent use of the language in the classroom. The tradition of teaching a foreign language through, or with the consistent support of, the L1, or rather the majority language of the country, goes back in history, with its roots in the teaching of classical languages (Littlewood & Yu, 2011), and is sometimes characterised as teaching *about* the target language rather than *in* the language. What seems to be very firm beliefs regarding this practice is expressed in the TTQ responses, especially concerning the importance of adapting the amount of input to the age and proficiency level of the students, that is speaking much more Swedish in the early years, and, even more clearly, to adapt one’s SFL use to content, especially regarding grammar, which is reported to be taught through Swedish almost exclusively. Certain priorities made in the assessment of students’ oral language competence also strengthen the impression that the functional and action-oriented approach to language proficiency (cf. Council of Europe, 2001; Skolverket, 2011) may not be altogether embraced.

TLU is an issue that has been, and is, being focused upon in research as well as in public debates about language teaching, with strong opinions on both sides. According to Thue Vold and Brkan (2020), the current status in research is one of “judicious use of L1” (Shin et al., 2019), with contextual adaptations needed, however with maximised exposure to the TL “because it is essential for the development of communicative language abilities”

²⁶ <https://www.skolverket.se/skolutveckling/kurser-och-utbildningar/sprakspranget---kompetensutveckling-for--larare-i-moderna-sprak>

(p. 2), especially in FL and SFL contexts, where out-of-school exposure to the language is limited.

Two reflections can be made in relation to the questionnaire responses to the issue of Target language use, the first being that Swedish is most often seen as a necessary means to understand both in general and, in particular, regarding formal aspects of the language. None of the 253 responses to the TLU question include any reference to the fact that well above 20 percent of the students in Swedish compulsory school do not have Swedish as their L1²⁷ (Skolverket, 2020b; no data available on the proportion in SFL groups). Consequently, it cannot be taken for granted that these students are helped by references to Swedish. If references to individual students' L1s are considered necessary, it requires that teachers have a solid 'multi-contrastive' knowledge and awareness as pointed out by Ohlander (1988; see also Erickson, 1990, and Tornberg, 2020); otherwise some students are favoured in a way that may be considered problematic in an inclusive 'school for all', a concept introduced in connection with the launching of a national curriculum for Swedish compulsory school in 1980, Lgr 80²⁸ (Skolöverstyrelsen, 1980).

Secondly, the attitudes expressed regarding TLU often reflect a traditional view of language learning and teaching that can probably, at least to some extent, be related to the poor provision of in-service education. Consequently, there seems to be plenty of room for improvement, both regarding more theoretical and conceptual aspects of language and language education, and practical examples of teaching, implementing an action-oriented approach and promoting communicative language competence. In this, collegial collaboration seems to be one of the positive and constructive ways to move forward. Returning to the issue of professional satisfaction and the widening of the concept of colleagues discussed, collaboration between (S)FL teachers and teachers of Swedish as a second language may be an interesting path to explore, for example regarding the use of the target language. With groups that are usually very linguistically mixed, teachers of Swedish as a second language normally have to stick to the target language as the only

27 https://siris.skolverket.se/reports/rwservlet?cmdkey=common&geo=1&report=gr_elever&p_sub=1&p_ar=2019&p_lankod=&p_kommunkod=&p_skolkod=&p_hmantyp=&p_hmankod=&p_flik=G

28 Lgr = "Läroplan för grundskolan" (Curriculum for compulsory school)

common denominator, and this may be of interest to discuss in relation also to other language subjects.

The structural level

One question, in particular, focused on the structural level, namely national regulations regarding the curricular status of second foreign languages (Dahllöf, 1967; Tholin & Lindqvist, 2009). Here, a gradual change of attitudes has taken place over time, from a firm SFL teachers' No at the end of the last century to the inclusion of a SFL in the group of mandatory subjects in compulsory school (Skolöverstyrelsen, 1991), to a clear Yes expressed in the TTQ. However, analyses of the comments to the question reveal a certain degree of ambiguity in this case as well, showing that in around a fifth of the responses saying Yes to mandatory SFL, there were exceptions defined, often using the same arguments and expressing the same concerns that were put forward by those negative to a change: newly arrived migrant students were mentioned as were learners struggling with Swedish and English, and those with 'different difficulties'. Adjusting the numbers for these conditional Yes responses only changes the outcome of the question marginally, but the ambiguity as such seems of interest, since it reflects a view of certain subjects, in this case SFLs, being less possible to master for all students, whereas others, for example Physics, Geography and Arts, are not questioned, at least not explicitly. Putting it differently, the question could be asked, whether a second foreign language is seen as a subject for all or just for some of the students in the Swedish, distinctly inclusive compulsory school. A considerable number of respondents also highlight this aspect in their comments and problematise the message given by the fact that Modern languages are optional, wondering whether this contributes to the perceived low status of the subject in society, at their schools and among students.

Another aspect of clear interest is that the respondents were not equally eager to comment on their answers regarding the curricular status of Modern languages; 51% of the comments submitted were made by respondents having chosen the No alternative to mandatory SFL, although this group represented less than a third of the total number of respondents. There may be several reasons for this, maybe one being that this group felt the need to explain a

negative answer, and perhaps an opinion perceived as less in line with contemporary discussions regarding inclusion and ‘a school for all’ (Skolöverstyrelsen, 1980).

An aspect not commented on in the responses is the fact that Modern languages are part of the ‘Language choice’ in the curriculum. This means that choosing one of the options in this group is mandatory but that none of the alternative subjects are individually compulsory. This is a question that has been discussed for a long time (see *Second foreign languages in Sweden* at the beginning of the chapter) and where different modifications have been suggested, the most frequent one being to abolish additional English and Swedish. However, what is seldom talked about, even less discussed, is the fact that Mother tongue tuition is included in this group. This means that a large number of students with another L1 than Swedish may have to choose between a SFL and their first language. This is an unfortunate situation that will need serious discussions at the structural level.

Concluding remarks

In conclusion, the responses to the TAL teacher questionnaire generated a large amount of interesting information, including a number of ambiguities that may serve as food for thought and inspiration for continued discussion and development of (second) foreign language education and teacher training. The material has obviously only been partially possible to report on and discuss in the current chapter. However, a few very general points can be made at this stage, first that the study is an example of successful teacher-researcher collaboration, both regarding the development of the questionnaire and in teachers taking time to respond in ways that often go far beyond expectation regarding willingness to share experiences and reflections. Perhaps the most essential comment to make, though, is that, in spite of a number of problems made clear regarding different aspects of SFL education at the individual, pedagogical and structural levels, the responses convey genuine commitment among the respondents regarding their profession and, not least, the learning and development of their students. This may be illustrated by the following

quotation from one of the teachers in the study in response to the question why s/he chose to become a teacher of SFL:

*‘Because language is such a fantastic tool, unlocking communication and relations between people. If I can help a single student to meet a new situation, person, or a new context thanks to her/his language, then I have succeeded!’*²⁹

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29 Swe: “För att språk är ett sådant fantastiskt verktyg, som låser upp kommunikation och relationer mellan människor. Om jag kan hjälpa en enda elev att möta en ny situation, människa eller ett nytt sammanhang tack vare språket så har jag lyckats!”

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Appendix 1

ITALICIZED QUESTIONS = QUESTIONS USED IN THE TEXT

(2, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 28, 30, 38, 39, 40, 41, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47)

Teacher survey on learning, teaching and assessment of Modern Languages

A Background information. Here are some questions about your school and your educational background.

1. The name of the school where you teach, and the municipality:

2. *Which of the following languages are you teaching at present?*

- French
- Spanish
- German

We would like you to respond to this questionnaire based on the language that you are most experienced in teaching. In the following, it will be referred to as the “target language”. Please, fill in the language that you choose:

3. *Do you teach Modern languages in more than one school?*

- Yes
- No

If yes in question 3, please answer according to the school where you do your main teaching.

4. *Fill in the kind of school where you work:*

- Municipal
- Independent
- Other

If other, please note which:

5. *Which years/ school forms are there at your school? (Several marks may be needed.)*

- Preschool-Year 5
- Year 6
- Years 7–9
- Upper secondary preparatory class
- Special school

6. *Do you have a national teacher certification?*

- Yes
- No

If yes, please note the combination of school subjects and type of school /years:

7. Describe your educational background. Mark the alternative that is most applicable:

- Teaching degree including Modern languages
- Teacher, but lack studies in Modern languages.
- Ongoing teacher education
- Studies in Modern languages but without a teaching degree.
- No formal teaching degree, nor studies of Modern languages.

Type of teaching degree (also foreign teaching degree) and year of graduation:

Please fill in the combination of school subjects and type of school/ years part of your teaching degree:

If ongoing teaching education, describe how far you have come:

Indicate the combination of school subjects and the type of school years you aim for:

Have you completed your degree with studies in an additional language? (e.g., the target language or another modern language)?

- Yes
- No

Note which language, number of credits (new or old credits):

Indicate the total number of credits that you have obtained in the target language and if it refers to new or old credits.

Are you planning to study in order to acquire certification in the target language?

Yes

No

How are you planning to complete your education (indicate school form and how many credits you are going to study/have left to study):

Are you planning to acquire teacher certification through supplementary teacher training (KPU)?

Yes

No

Indicate school form you are planning for, and when you have planned to study:

Other educational background, please indicate below:

8. *Have you spent a longer period of time in the area where the target language is spoken?*

Yes

No

If yes, indicate how long (in months):

9. *Is the target language your first language?*

- Yes
 No

10. *As compared to when you were a novice teacher of the target language, how confident do you feel in your language use today?*

*Much more
confident*

*Much less
confident*

- | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |

Comments:

11. *How long have you been teaching the target language?*

- 0–3 years
 4–6 years
 7–10 years
 11–14 years
 >15 years

12. Year of birth:

13. Gender:

- Female
 Male
 Other gender id
 Don't want to say

B Learning and teaching

Here are some questions regarding learning and teaching in the target language.

14. *During how large a proportion of your lesson time do you speak in the target language? Think of all school years together and estimate an average percentage.*

- 0%–10%
 11%–25%
 26%–50%
 51%–75%
 76%–100%

Give a more detailed description of the situation (e.g., if it varies with school year, content or something else)

15. *How often do you use the target language in the following situations? (Mark one of the boxes in a scale from “Very often” to “Very seldom”. Proceed in the same way with the questions with similar scales).*

	Very often				Very seldom
	5	4	3	2	1
When talking to one or more students	<input type="checkbox"/>				
When talking to the whole group	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Indicate specific situations when you mostly use the target language (e.g., to greet, tell, explain or give instructions):

16. How often do the students do the following in the target language (working methods)?

	Very often				Very seldom
	5	4	3	2	1
Work in self-chosen pairs or groups	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Work in pairs or groups that you have created	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Work individually	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Talk with others using digital media	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Speak in pairs/ groups in front of the whole group	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Speak individually in front of the whole group	<input type="checkbox"/>				

17. How often do your students use the target language in the following situations?

	Very often				Very seldom
	5	4	3	2	1
When they work in pairs or groups	<input type="checkbox"/>				
When they speak/ interact with others using digital media	<input type="checkbox"/>				
When they speak in pairs/ groups in front of the whole group	<input type="checkbox"/>				
When they speak individually in front of the whole group	<input type="checkbox"/>				
When they speak with you	<input type="checkbox"/>				

18. Is the national syllabus for Modern languages a living document to you in your teaching?

- 5 Yes, absolutely
- 4
- 3
- 2
- 1 No, absolutely not

19. How often do you use the syllabus for the following?

	Very often				Very seldom
	5	4	3	2	1
To plan your teaching	<input type="checkbox"/>				
For assessment and grading	<input type="checkbox"/>				
To develop or choose teaching materials	<input type="checkbox"/>				
In communication with students	<input type="checkbox"/>				
In communication with colleagues	<input type="checkbox"/>				
In communication with parents	<input type="checkbox"/>				
In communication with teacher students	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Comment:

20. Is the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) a living document to you?

- 5 Yes, absolutely
- 4
- 3
- 2
- 1 No, absolutely not

21. How often do you and your students use the following resources (please note that there are some overlaps)?

	Very often			Very seldom	
	5	4	3	2	1
Computers, smartphones	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Audio-visual material (audio, audiobooks, DVD, video, YouTube clips or others)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Newspapers and journals	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Dictionaries, encyclopedias	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Special digital software for languages	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Text books (with manuals and workbooks)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Dictionary	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Grammar book	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Books in the target language, e.g., fiction or non-fiction	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Cartoons in the target language	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Lyrics in the target language	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Teaching material from the Swedish educational radio (UR)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
European materials, e.g., from the Council of Europe's Centre for modern languages in Graz. (ECML)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Teaching material that you or your colleagues have designed	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Other (indicate in comments below)	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Comments about the above resources or else (e.g., paper or digital versions of the resources mentioned above):

22. How easy do you consider it to find materials which work well for development of the following in the target language?

	Very easy		Very hard		
	5	4	3	2	1
Listening comprehension	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Reading comprehension	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Oral production	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Oral interaction	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Written production	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Written interaction	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Strategies to understand and make oneself understood	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Adaptation to purpose, recipient and context	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Intercultural competence	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Vocabulary and phraseology	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Pronunciation and intonation	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Grammatical security	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Comments:

23. How easy do you think it is for your students to develop the following in the target language?

	Very easy			Very hard	
	5	4	3	2	1
Listening comprehension	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Reading comprehension	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Oral production	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Oral interaction	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Written production	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Written interaction	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Strategies to understand and make oneself understood	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Adaptation to purpose, recipient and context	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Intercultural competence	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Vocabulary and phraseology	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Pronunciation and intonation	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Grammar	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Comments:

24. How often do you focus on the following in your target language teaching? Take all school years into consideration.

	Very often			Very seldom	
	5	4	3	2	1
Listening comprehension	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Reading comprehension	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Oral production	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Oral interaction	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Written production	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Written interaction	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Strategies to understand and make oneself understood	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Adaptation to purpose, recipient and context	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Intercultural competence	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Vocabulary and phraseology	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Pronunciation and intonation	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Grammar	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Indicate if other:

C Assessment

Here are some questions about assessment and grading in the target language.

25. How do you find assessment in the target language?

- 5 Uncomplicated
- 4
- 3
- 2
- 1 Very complicated

Comments:

26. How do you find grading in the target language?

- 5 Uncomplicated
 4
 3
 2
 1 Very complicated

Comments:

27. What degree of support do you feel that you have of the following when assessing and grading students' knowledge in the target language?

	To a very high extent				To a very low extent
	5	4	3	2	1
The syllabus incl. performance standards	<input type="checkbox"/>				
The commentary materials from the NAE	<input type="checkbox"/>				
The NAE national assessment materials	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Assessment tasks/ ready-made tests in text books	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Common tasks at your school	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Common tests at your school	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Tasks/ tests that you have developed yourself	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Tasks/ tests that you have developed together with your students	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Students' portfolios	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Literature on assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Conversations with students	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Conversations with colleagues	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Other (please indicate in the allocated field)	<input type="checkbox"/>				

28. How often do you collaborate with colleagues in assessing in the target language?

- 5 Very often
- 4
- 3
- 2
- 1 Very seldom

Examples of and comments on collaboration:

29. How often do you use the following for assessment in the target language?

	Very often				Never
	5	4	3	2	1
Students' self-assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Peer assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Continuous assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Portfolios	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Written tests on homework	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Oral tests on homework	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Assessment tasks/ Tests from text books	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Common tests at your school	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Tasks/ tests that you have developed yourself	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Tasks/ tests that you have developed together with your students	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Tasks/ tests developed by the students	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Other (please indicate in the allocated field)	<input type="checkbox"/>				

30. How often do you base your assessment of students' oral skills in the target language on the following situations?

	Very often				Never
	5	4	3	2	1
The students speak individually on prepared topics in front of whole the group	<input type="checkbox"/>				
The students speak individually on prepared topics in a small group	<input type="checkbox"/>				
The students speak individually on prepared topics with you	<input type="checkbox"/>				
The students talk individually without preparation in front of the whole group	<input type="checkbox"/>				
The students talk individually without preparation in a small group	<input type="checkbox"/>				

The students talk individually without preparation with you	<input type="checkbox"/>				
The students speak about prepared topics in pairs	<input type="checkbox"/>				
The students speak about prepared topics in groups	<input type="checkbox"/>				
The students speak “freely” about unprepared topics in pairs	<input type="checkbox"/>				
The students speak “freely” about unprepared topics in groups	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Other situations? Please exemplify in the allocated field.	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Comments on situations, content, recordings etc.:

31. How easy do you think it is for your students in school year 9 to achieve the course requirements for oral proficiency regarding the following?

	Very easy				Very hard
	5	4	3	2	1
Formulate instructions and messages	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Present	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Describe	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Tell	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Ask different types of questions	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Express an opinion	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Clarify communication using phrases and formulaic language	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Understand and address others' utterances and questions in a conversation	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Use strategies to keep an interaction going

Use pronunciation and basic syntactic structures in a comprehensible way

Other, indicate what:

32. How often do you give feedback on the following aspects of the students' language skills?

	Very often				Very seldom
	5	4	3	2	1
Listening comprehension	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Reading comprehension	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Oral production	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Oral interaction	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Written production	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Written interaction	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Strategies to understand and make oneself understood	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Adaptation to purpose, recipient and context	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Intercultural competence	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Vocabulary and phraseology	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Pronunciation and intonation	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Grammatical security	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Other (indicate in the allocated field below)	<input type="checkbox"/>				

33. How important do you consider the following when you award final grades in the target language in year 9?

	Very important				Less important
	5	4	3	2	1
Listening comprehension	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Reading comprehension	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Oral production	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Oral interaction	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Written production	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Written interaction	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Strategies to understand and make oneself understood	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Adaptation to purpose, recipient and context	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Intercultural competence	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Vocabulary and phraseology	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Pronunciation and intonation	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Grammatical security	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Other (indicate in the allocated field below)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Indicate if other:	<input type="checkbox"/>				

34. Do you use the support materials for assessment (tests) from the National Agency of Education (NAE) when awarding grades in year 9?

- Yes
- No

Comment:

Any other comments on assessment and grading in the target language, or in general:

D Frame factors

Finally, here are some questions on the conditions for teaching the target language.

35. Approximately, how many students are there normally in a teaching group in the target language? As a minimum? As a maximum?

Is there any difference between the school years or the modern languages regarding the number of students in the teaching groups?

36. Are there mixed groups regarding school year in the teaching of Modern languages?

Yes

No

Comment:

37. Is the school where you teach a so-called 1-1 school (meaning that every student has a laptop, computer or tablet)?

- Yes
- No

Comment:

38. *How many teachers of Modern languages are there at your school?*

39. *How many teachers teach the target language at your school?*

40. *In what way do the teachers of Modern languages collaborate at your school?*

41. *During the past five years, have you taken part in in-service training related to the target language?*

	Yes	No
Focusing on the language	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Focusing on language teaching	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Integrating language and language teaching	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Funded in-service education in a TL country	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
TL in service education that I have been able to influence myself	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If yes, describe in detail (content of the education and country where the course was held):

42. Why did you choose to become a teacher of Modern languages?

43. *Would you choose to become a TL teacher today as well? Please give your reasons.*

- Yes
 No

Motive(s):

44. *How do you think society values TL competence?*

- 5 Very highly
 4
 3
 2
 1 Very low

Comments:

45. *How do you think your school values TL competence??*

- 5 Very highly
 4
 3

- 2
- 1 Very low

Comments:

46. How do you think your pupils value TL competence?

- 5 Very highly
- 4
- 3
- 2
- 1 Very low

Comments:

47. Do you think Modern languages should be a mandatory subject in compulsory school?

- Yes
- No

Comments:

48. In what ways do you think that Modern languages contribute to students' general education and development?

49. We would be very grateful if you could describe and further comment on how you work with oral proficiency in the target language, e.g., when it comes to planning, materials, work inside and outside the classroom, assessment etc. By answering, you will

contribute importantly to an area that still lacks systemized knowledge.

50. Please give your opinion on the content and design of the questionnaire:

Many thanks for your participation!