

# **THE ASSESSMENT OF PUPILS' SKILLS IN ENGLISH IN EIGHT EUROPEAN COUNTRIES**

**2002**

## **A EUROPEAN PROJECT**

**COMMISSIONED BY**

**THE EUROPEAN NETWORK OF POLICY MAKERS FOR  
THE EVALUATION OF EDUCATION SYSTEMS**

**CO-FINANCED BY**

**Eight European Countries**

**DENMARK, FINLAND, FRANCE, GERMANY,  
the NETHERLANDS, NORWAY, SPAIN and SWEDEN**

**Edited by Gérard BONNET**

**Isabel ALABAU, Gérard BONNET, Kees de BOT, Jesper BRAMSBYE,  
Laurence DAUPHIN, Gudrun ERICKSON,  
Aulikki ETELÄLAHTI, Riet EVERS, Hermann-Günter HESSE,  
Elisabeth IBSEN, Olga KÜHNBACH, Tommy LAGERGREN,  
Jacqueline LEVASSEUR, Karen Leth NIELSEN,  
Petey de QUAY, Eeva TUOKKO, Pierre VRIGNAUD**



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....   | 5   |
| EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....  | 7   |
| THE PROJECT TEAM .....   | 9   |
| I BACKGROUND AND AIMS .....  | 11  |
| THE CONTEXT OF THE PROJECT .....   | 11  |
| THE AIMS OF THE PROJECT .....  | 12  |
| II GENERAL METHODOLOGY OF THE PROJECT .....  | 15  |
| SAMPLING .....   | 15  |
| THE ASSESSMENT TEST .....  | 15  |
| THE SELF-ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENT .....   | 16  |
| THE PUPIL QUESTIONNAIRE .....  | 16  |
| THE TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE .....  | 18  |
| METHODOLOGICAL OVERVIEW .....  | 20  |
| III NATIONAL FOREIGN LANGUAGE PROVISIONS<br>AND NATIONAL TEST IMPLEMENTATION ..... | 25  |
| DENMARK .....  | 25  |
| FINLAND .....  | 31  |
| FRANCE .....   | 35  |
| GERMANY .....  | 41  |
| THE NETHERLANDS .....  | 45  |
| NORWAY .....   | 51  |
| SPAIN .....  | 55  |
| SWEDEN .....   | 61  |
| IV INTERNATIONAL COMPARISON OF THE TEST AND QUESTIONNAIRES .....                   | 67  |
| INTERNATIONAL ANALYSIS OF THE TEST RESULTS .....                                   | 67  |
| INTERNATIONAL ANALYSIS OF THE SELF-ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENT .....                     | 75  |
| INTERNATIONAL ANALYSIS OF THE PUPIL QUESTIONNAIRE .....                            | 79  |
| INTERNATIONAL ANALYSIS OF THE TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE .....                          | 97  |
| V THE INTERNATIONAL RESULTS IN A NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE .....                        | 111 |
| DENMARK .....  | 111 |
| FINLAND .....  | 119 |
| FRANCE .....   | 125 |
| GERMANY .....  | 131 |
| THE NETHERLANDS .....  | 139 |
| NORWAY .....   | 143 |
| SPAIN .....  | 149 |
| SWEDEN .....   | 155 |
| Selected references .....  | 161 |
| Annexes .....  | 163 |



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The editor of this document particularly wishes to thank the following for their help in the course of the implementation of the project survey:

The European Network of Policy Makers for the Evaluation of Education Systems, for initiating the project and providing political support;

The project partner institutions for making available funds and facilities;

The head-teachers and staff of the schools in the eight countries where the survey was implemented, as well as the 12 000 pupils who were involved in this.

Special thanks are due to the contributors from the eight countries for their efforts throughout the project and in particular to Isabel ALABAU (Spain) for taking responsibility for the teacher questionnaire, to Kees de BOT and his Dutch colleagues for doing the same for the pupil questionnaire and to Pierre VRIGNAUD (France) for the psychometric analysis of the test items and the pupil self-assessment instrument.



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This project is the follow up of a previous survey of pupils' attainments in English as a foreign language conducted in 1995-1996 in four European countries (France, Spain, Sweden, and later the Netherlands) under the aegis of the **European Network of policy makers for the evaluation of education systems**. The findings of the project were later presented at a European colloquium held in 1997 and funded under the SOCRATES programme to examine the effectiveness of the teaching of English as a foreign language. As the policy relevance of the topic only increased over the years, the **European Network** decided to repeat the survey and to extend it to other European countries. In addition to the original participants, Finland, Germany, Norway and Denmark, agreed to take part in this project.

The present document describes the background and the methodology of the project and offers a comparative analysis the results of the linguistic test administered in the eight countries which serves as the basis for a national perspective on the results. It falls into 5 sections.

**Section I** introduces the project. It describes its background and the current policy context of foreign language assessment in relation to recent policy developments in the European Union. It also explains the broad aims of the survey which are as much concerned with the interpretation of countries' results from a national perspective as with international comparison *per se*. Indeed, the very philosophy of the present approach is to provide broad indications for practitioners and policy makers about pupils' performance rather than attempt comparisons to the nearest decimal.

**Section II** describes the general methodology agreed for the implementation of the project: selection of the sample of pupils tested (about 1500 pupils towards the end of compulsory education); test instruments and questionnaires. The assessment test is the same as the one used in 1997; for the reason it does not follow the classification of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. It covers only three of the recognised competencies (reading, listening comprehension and writing) plus linguistic knowledge. This is tested through 75 items. A self- assessment instrument is also used, based on level B 1 of the Common European Framework for the three competencies tested. A pupil questionnaire throws some light on areas of particular significance: contact with the language through personal and media contact; attitudes towards the language; socio-economic background of pupils and language proficiency. Finally a teacher questionnaire looks at the context in which they operate: their training, professional experience, use of methodology and resources, etc. A table at the end of this section sums up the overall context of the

study from a comparative perspective: educational provisions; samples; implementation of the test.

**Section III** describes the national foreign language policy in the countries taking part in the project and gives details of how the test and questionnaires were implemented in each country. As well as providing a background to national language teaching contexts, this section also provides implicit information on the issue of comparability of the data. It reinforces the fact that the comparison should be interpreted in terms of relative results to be seen in context rather than in terms of absolute statistical truth.

**Section IV** is a presentation of the results of the statistical comparison of the test and questionnaire data for all the countries in the project. In order to avoid unhelpful and irrelevant league tables of countries, no overall country score is given for the test results. Only comparative scores for each of the four assessed skills is proposed, clearly showing that some countries may perform poorly for certain skills but better for others. A general trend for all countries is to score best on reading comprehension, lower on linguistic competence and lowest on written production. It is perhaps no surprise that the countries from the South of Europe tend to perform less satisfactorily; what is interesting however is that the extent of the gap between them and the best performing countries differs according to which skill is assessed. The self-assessment questionnaire shows that overall the pupils in the countries with the highest performance at the test find predominantly the test rather easy or easy; conversely the majority of the pupils in the countries with the lowest performance find the test difficult or rather difficult. The analyses of both the teacher and the pupil questionnaires throw some interesting light on national practices which may in part explain some of the test results. Given the fact that national adaptation had been allowed in the framework of the questionnaire templates, no cross analysis of the questionnaire data and of the test data has been carried out.

**Section V** gives an analysis, carried out by each country and under their sole responsibility, of their national results and the conclusions that they draw from them. This qualitative country by country analysis of the results is intended to provide policy makers and practitioners with material to improve language provision, teaching and learning.

The document ends with a list of references and annexes introducing the instruments used in the project.



# THE PROJECT TEAM

Under the aegis of the **European Network of Policy Makers for the Evaluation of Education Systems** eight European countries participated in the present project which was co-ordinated by **Gérard BONNET** (Direction de l'évaluation et de la prospective, Ministère de la jeunesse, de l'éducation nationale et de la recherche).

The institutions and researchers chosen by the eight countries to implement the present project are:

**DENMARK** – The Danish Evaluation Institute

Karen Leth NIELSEN  
Jesper BRAMSBY

**FINLAND** - National Board of Education (Opetushallitus)

Eeva TUOKKO  
Aulikki ETELÄLAHTI

**FRANCE** - Direction de l'évaluation et de la prospective, Ministère de la jeunesse, de l'éducation nationale et de la recherche

Jacqueline LEVASSEUR  
Laurence DAUPHIN  
Bruno TROSSEILLE  
Pierre VRIGNAUD (Université Paris X)

**GERMANY** – Deutsches Institut für Internationale Pädagogische Forschung (DIPF)

Hermann-Günter HESSE  
Olga KÜHNBACH

**The NETHERLANDS** – University of Nijmegen / University of Groningen

Kees de BOT  
Petey de QUAY  
Riet EVERS

**NORWAY** – University of Oslo

Elisabeth IBSEN

**SPAIN** - Instituto Nacional de Evaluación y Calidad del Sistema Educativo (INECSE)

Isabel ALABAU  
Jose Angel CALLEJA

**SWEDEN** - National Agency for Education (Skolverket)

Tommy LAGERGREN (Skolverket)  
Gudrun ERICKSON (Göteborg University)



# I BACKGROUND AND AIMS

The project which is reported on in this document was carried out in 2002-2003 in eight countries in Europe on behalf of the **European Network of policy makers for the evaluation of education systems**<sup>1</sup>.

## THE CONTEXT OF THE PROJECT

This survey is a follow up of a previous study which was conducted in 1995-1996 to compare pupils' achievements in English as a foreign language in France, Spain, Sweden and later the Netherlands, using tests containing common elements. This in turn was reported on in 1997 during a European conference organised jointly by five member countries of the **European Network of policy makers for the evaluation of education systems** (Finland, France, Portugal, Spain and Sweden) and the European Commission within the general framework of the SOCRATES Community programme (Action III, 3, 1).

The full description of the original project and of the proceedings of the conference appeared in *The effectiveness of the teaching of English in the European Union ; Report of the Colloquium and Background documents*. Edited by G. Bonnet; pp. 198; ministère de l'éducation nationale, DPD Edition diffusion, Paris, January 1998. This document is also available in French. Both linguistic versions can be found on the website of the **European Network**: <http://cisad.adc.education.fr/reva/>

At the time, in 1997, and while bearing in mind the official policy of the Union in favour of linguistic diversity, the rationale for choosing the English Language as the subject-matter for a European and Commission-funded event was simply that English occupies a prominent place in foreign language teaching provision, not just because of the number of pupils learning it but also because of its status in the world. It is on the basis of this practical consideration that English was singled out. As all European countries teach English in their schools on a large scale they all have it as common ground for comparison and reflection on language teaching. No other European language offers this opportunity.

---

<sup>1</sup> The **European Network** was set up following a meeting of education senior civil servants during the French presidency of the European Union in 1995. This Network is an intergovernmental group the members of which were appointed by individual countries through the Education Committee. Members exercise varying degrees of responsibility in the field of school evaluation and monitoring in their countries. The Network is made up of representatives from all 15 Member states (including both Belgian communities and Scotland) as well as Iceland and Norway. The European Commission and Switzerland are also represented on the Network. The 10 new European member States have been invited to join the Network. The French education ministry is responsible for the Network's management and for publishing and disseminating the Network's twice yearly newsletter, *EVALUATION*.

The aims of the Network are as follows:

- (1) to foster exchanges of information about policies, reforms and innovations in the field of educational evaluation and monitoring in the UE;
- (2) to facilitate and initiate active European co-operation in the same field. To implement this objective the Network identifies, defines and conducts projects involving several countries, either on an intergovernmental basis, or through bids for European Commission's calls for tender, in particular in the context of the SOCRATES programme.

The Network has commissioned over a dozen projects and published the resulting reports, most of which, together with *EVALUATION*, can be accessed and downloaded of the Networks' website: <http://cisad.adc.education.fr/reva/>

Yet it was intended that the work conducted for the test and the discussions held during the conference should apply to foreign language teaching in general and that the findings of the project could be used to assess and discuss the outcome of the teaching of all the European languages as foreign languages.

In 2001, the **European Network of policy makers for the evaluation of education systems** decided at their London meeting to repeat the survey and to extend it to other European countries. In addition to the original participants (France, Spain, Sweden and the Netherlands), Finland, Germany, Norway and Denmark agreed to take part in the project.

## **THE AIMS OF THE PROJECT**

In 2002-2003 the relevance of testing pupils' skills in foreign languages has, if anything, intensified since the first comparative work was conducted in 1995-96. It is all the more policy relevant as there are no comparable data in foreign language achievement available at a time when co-operation between EU member states is increasing in order to foster the construction of Europe in the field of education. Clearly foreign language skills are central for Europe and indicators in this area are recognised as being a high priority.

It is particularly intriguing that while millions of pupils in the European Union, the British Isles aside, learn English as a foreign language at some point in their school careers, a lot of them throughout their school careers, the fundamental question of how successful this effort turns out to be is hardly ever formulated on a national -let alone European- basis. More generally millions of tax-payers' money across and beyond the Union are spent each year on foreign language teaching provisions and yet none of the European institutions had, until very recently, ever wanted to know whether this was money usefully spent. Nor did they want to know whether the much vaunted community policy of promoting mobility was attainable given the ability of European citizens to use another language than their own.

It was only at the European Council held in Barcelona in March 2002 that the Heads of States and Governments stated in their conclusions that steps must be taken for "the establishment of a linguistic competence [in foreign languages] indicator in 2003". Although the European Commission has just set the wheels in motion to start work on the production of this indicator it is not clear at this stage when it will be or what it will be (what skills, what languages?). It is safe to assume that at least four or five years will elapse before new European data are available in this field.

In this context, the aim of this study is to set the ball rolling by making available a modicum of information on this central issue. The idea is to provide some further basic comparative data on pupils' achievements across countries with a view to underpinning the cultural, structural and technical reasons why outcomes vary from one country to the next. Once again English has been chosen. No doubt it would have been better to extend the survey to other languages taught in European schools as well. However it was found that concentrating on the same language was, given the resources available, the more sensible decision. Besides, the other aspect of this

survey is to give some degree of measure of national variation in achievement over time in those countries where the test was implemented in 1995-1996. This however is not part of the present report and will be dealt with at the national level.

It was agreed among the participating countries that, despite the fact that the original test had its weaknesses and may no longer in some countries correspond to the skills expected of pupils, there was some justification in retaining it in the form it had in 1995-96. This is what has been done. On the other hand the pupil and teacher questionnaires administered along with the test were modified and adapted to national contexts. Likewise the original sample description was retained and the test was administered to pupils towards the end of compulsory education. The same three basic components of languages were tested (listening, reading, writing), while speaking was left out for both methodological and financial reasons.

Strict comparability of the data is certainly an issue which needs addressing. Given the specific nature of foreign language provisions in the different countries, where learning starts at different ages with varying degrees of intensity, it was felt that some leeway was acceptable in sampling and administration. Since strict comparability would involve testing pupils not just of the same age but pupils having learnt English for the same amount of time, and this is clearly not possible for the reason given above, comparability must be understood in a looser sense than is usually the case in the current major international studies. Indeed, the very philosophy of the present approach is to provide broad indications about pupils' performance rather than attempt comparisons to the nearest decimal.

Finally, to avoid misconceptions about the nature of this study and misunderstandings about its results, it should be stated clearly that the overarching principle has been to try and provide useful and relevant information to individual countries in the light of an international perspective. Unlike other approaches to international comparisons, this is not an attempt to benchmark countries. There are perfectly well understood reasons why some countries' pupils perform better in English than others. This has in part to do with the historical, geographical, linguistic and cultural context in those countries. Commenting on this from a global score perspective would bring nothing new and would even be unhelpful. What is attempted here is to provide countries with a different perspective, thanks to comparative data, to help them understand the strengths and weaknesses of their language instruction schemes, with a view to improving their results. This is why the emphasis of this study is as much about what goes on in countries as about comparison between them. The stakes of such an undertaking are high for countries in the light of European integration. This is about nothing less than creating the conditions for young people to acquire the linguistic skills which they need to possess in order to function as full European citizens.



## **II GENERAL METHODOLOGY OF THE PROJECT**

The overall methodology of the study was thoroughly discussed and approved by the participating countries on the basis of the existing instruments. Although it was agreed that the assessment test should be rigorously identical in all the countries, it was also understood that there might be a need for the background questionnaires to be slightly adapted to cover national needs. It also appeared that the pupil questionnaire would be substantially different. This implies that only those elements that are common could be used in the international statistical analysis, while the rest could be utilised in a national perspective only.

Because it was decided that the emphasis of the project should be on the national use of the results, with the implication that the questionnaires needed to have a strong national component, it was deemed unnecessary, and indeed impractical, to try and present a cross analysis of the test results and the questionnaires results. The correlation between the two sets of data is therefore only looked at, where it is felt to be relevant, in section V of the report where a strictly national analysis of the project results is presented by each participating country.

### **SAMPLING**

The intention was to test pupils at the end of lower secondary education (near the end of compulsory education). A target of around 1500 pupils per country was set. It was agreed to use a stratified sample to make the test representative of schools and pupils. National deviations from this are explained in the next section.

### **THE ASSESSMENT TEST**

For the reasons given above, the assessment test is the same as the one used in the comparative assessment which took place from 1995 to 1996. This test is made up of elements of the 1995 French evaluation of pupils' performance in English and of elements of a similar Swedish test. It must be understood that the test is based on the frameworks used in France and Sweden at the time and not on the Council of Europe's Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. The test is made up of 75 items covering the following skill areas:

Linguistic knowledge: 25 items

Written comprehension: 16 items

Written expression: 21 items

Oral comprehension: 13 items

The questions dealing with linguistic skills are French while Sweden provided the exercises on oral comprehension and written comprehension. The written expression exercises were sometimes French, sometimes Swedish. As explained, oral expression is not part of the test.

The test was administered following broad guidelines which were adapted to suit each country's particular school context. This is described in the next section.

The written instructions for the test were given in the pupils' own language. A common Compact Disc was provided to all the countries for the oral comprehension part of the test; oral instructions in the native language were edited in by each country.

A common code book was provided and translated into all the languages. It was agreed that for the international analysis of the tests only the answers given as "correct" in the coding instructions would be coded as right. Other possible correct answers not included would be coded as wrong. However, countries were free to consider them as correct in their own national analysis and national report.

## **THE SELF-ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENT**

To complement the actual performance test, pupils were asked to fill in a self-assessment instrument which was common to all the participating countries and administered in the native language, except for Norway where the version in English was used. This self-assessment instrument consists of "can-do statements" based on Level B 1 of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*. It does not include questions about speaking since this skill is not included in the test.

## **THE PUPIL QUESTIONNAIRE**

On the basis of the findings of the earlier project on English proficiency in various European countries, it was felt that a more comprehensive questionnaire on the pupils' characteristics was needed. In order to explain differences between groups of pupils within and between countries, information on a considerable amount and variety of variables is needed. The fact that pupils receive their education in country X or Y in itself can never explain why they show a particular level of proficiency that may differ from levels found in other countries. While there may be underlying cultural factors that have an impact on national educational systems, explanations for differences between countries can only be elucidated if there are variables that can be empirically tested.

We were fortunate to have access to a questionnaire that had been used before in research with a similar focus as the present project. In the mid 1990s, Berns,



Hasenbrink & Skinner set up a project which aimed to assess the impact of the media on English language skills and language attitudes of adolescents in different parts of Germany. In a second phase, the project became an international one aiming at a comparison between Germany, Belgium, France and the Netherlands. The scope of the project became somewhat wider and now includes 4 parts:

1. English language contact through the media and in personal contacts;
2. Attitudes towards the English language;
3. Socio-economic background of pupils;
4. Language proficiency.

Language contact included both the use of the language in interaction (e.g. parents, peers, holidays in foreign countries) and through media of different types (radio, TV, magazines, internet). Measuring language contact in a valid way is notoriously difficult, since individuals may profit in different ways from the same amount of contact. Ideally one should implement individual profiles of language contact and language use, but given the scale of both the previous and the present investigation, such an individual approach was inconceivable.

Attitudes measured included opinions on the English language itself, but also views on what skills in that language may be useful for education, job opportunities and cross-cultural encounters, and motivation to improve English language skills.

The socio-economic background was measured by looking at the highest level of education of parents and level of proficiency in English according to the pupils. Originally the pupils were also asked about their parents' jobs, but the information appeared to be highly unreliable, since the job labels given by the pupils were often unspecific ('civil servant', 'something in the army'). In addition, jobs were not easily categorised to form a social stratification.

For language proficiency two measures were used, a self-evaluation test consisting of a set of so called "Can-do"-statements in which the pupils indicate on a scale to what extent they judged themselves to be able to carry out specific activities in the foreign language (understand a simple message, read an average journal article, write a short report), and global questions on the four skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. In addition a lexical test was used to measure knowledge of English words in different frequency ranges.

The project in which the questionnaire has been developed is described in Berns, Hasenbrink & de Bot (eds.).

While the questionnaire from the Berns et al. project seemed to be useful for the present project, some of the project partners felt that on the one hand parts of it were not relevant for their national situation while on the other hand relevant information

was not included in the questionnaire. Therefore, it was decided that a core of the questionnaire would be administered in all participating countries, while individual countries were free to add questions or leave out irrelevant ones. In appendix Y the questionnaire and the additions have been included.

## **THE TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE**

As in the assessment carried out in 1996, it was decided to administer a questionnaire addressed to the teachers of English of the target groups aimed at obtaining data about the teaching process of the English language and the professional characteristics of teachers in the different participating countries. These data could provide information on different aspects of the teachers' work which could affect in a positive way their pupils' attainment, and could also provide information in order to facilitate a better understanding of the different pupils' achievement in the participating countries in the survey.

The variables included in the questionnaire are to some extent the same as the ones in the questionnaire used in 1996, but it was considered necessary to revise that questionnaire in order to improve some of the variables or to include new ones. With this purpose, Spain, once a detailed revision of the 1996 questionnaire was completed, presented in one of the study meetings a proposal which, under the idea that all the questions had the same meaning for all the teachers of the different countries, to collect more detailed information of some important aspects, for instance: the methodology used in the teaching of the foreign language, the use of the real English language in the class and the activities carried out by the teachers in order to enable their pupils to practice the language outside and inside the school class. The proposal also included the idea that the questionnaire was written and therefore administered in English. Once the proposal was analysed and some modifications were included it was decided to implement it. Two countries, France and The Netherlands, did not apply the questionnaire in English but in their respective languages.

The variables in the questionnaire are grouped under the following aspects of teachers teaching this subject area:

- Personal data
- Initial training
- In-service training
- Professional experience
- The teaching profession

- Methodology
- Resources used
- Relationships between colleagues
- Level of difficulty of the test administered to their pupils

Concerning the personal data two variables have been used, one referring to gender and another one to the age of teachers.

With respect to teacher training variables concerning their initial and their in-service training were included. The first ones were aimed at obtaining information about the qualifications they held, and whether they had been trained as teachers in an English speaking country, or whether they had stayed in English speaking countries for different reasons from those concerning their studies. The second ones devoted to gather information about the type of in-service training they had done in the last four years.

The questions aimed at collecting information about their professional experience were about the number of years teaching English and also the number of years they had stayed at the school at the moment of answering the questionnaire. They were also asked about their opinion concerning the value that both society and pupils gave to their teaching profession.

The section devoted to the teaching practice was the longest of the questionnaire, nineteen questions were included in order to gather information about a variety of aspects of this practice, for instance: following the progression of a text book, the use of the English language during the lessons, how to teach new content, pair work or group work with pupils, how to motivate pupils to use the English language inside the class of English and outside it, pupils participation in the class activities, how often they give homework to their pupils, how to deal with mixed ability problems in the lessons, etc...

As far as the use of resources is concerned, teachers were asked about how often they made use of a variety of resources such as: audio and video recordings of different types, games, songs, magazines, books, the Internet, and other materials.

Another section in this questionnaire is devoted to questions about the activities that teachers organise in order to encourage their pupils to use the English language in real situations such as: whether they organise exchanges with teachers and pupils from other countries, whether they organise out of school activities to foster the practice of the language, whether they set up discussion groups on the Internet, etc...

At the end of the questionnaire two questions were included about the teacher's opinion regarding the level of difficulty of the test administered to their pupils in order

to measure their achievement and regarding how familiar to their pupils were the types of exercises used in that test.

A descriptive analysis of the data gathered from this questionnaire is presented in Section IV in this report. It is very important for the right interpretation of the data to bear in mind that the teachers who have participated in the survey do not constitute a representative sample of all the teachers who teach the English language in the grade where the pupils of this study are enrolled, since the study sample was based on schools and pupils.

## **METHODOLOGICAL OVERVIEW**

The following tables give an overview of the methodology of the project in each of the participating countries from the point of view of the educational background of the test group and of the implementation of the test.

## Educational background

|   | Denmark  | Finland  | France   | Germany   | The Netherlands  | Norway   | Spain  | Sweden  |
|---|--|--|--|---|--|--|--|---|
| Years of English instruction (test group)                           | 6  | 7 for pupils speaking Finnish/<br>5 for pupils speaking Swedish  | 4<br>A few may have started at Primary School, too   | Group 1: 5<br>Group 2: 6                                    | 6  | 6  | 8  | 6<br>Some may have had instruction before grade 3, too  |
| Length of a lesson  | 45 minutes   | 45 minutes   | 55 minutes   | 45 minutes  | 45-50 minutes  | 45 minutes   | 55 minutes   | Flexible  |
| Minimum number of English lessons/hours during compulsory education | 680/510  | 640/480  | 432 lessons  | Group 1: 635/476<br>and 800/600<br>Group 2: 920/690         | 550/445  | 570/428  | 450 hours  | 480 hours   |
| Test implementation in relation to the end of compulsory education  | 8 months before  | 2 months before  | 1 month before   | Group 1:<br>9-10 months before<br>Group 2:<br>1 month after | Group 1:<br>1 month before<br>Group 2:<br>9 months before                      | 2-3 months before  | 1 month before   | 7 months before   |
| Time set aside for the test incl. Self-assessment and questionnaire | 90 minutes   | 90 minutes , excl. time for self-assessment  | 90 minutes   | Both groups::<br>45 minutes (only for the test)             | 90 minutes   | 120 minutes  | 120 minutes  | 120 minutes   |
| Central Proficiency areas,  | Communication skills<br>Language and usage<br>Language learning<br>Cultural and social relations | Skills: everyday language communication<br>Knowledge: the target language and its culture, the countries, people and cultures of the language area<br>Attitudes:<br>Learning-to-learn skills | Three main objectives: linguistic, cultural and intellectual.<br>Priority is the ability to communicate.<br>Cultural and grammatical skills are means to that end. | Varies between the four participating states                | Skills in the 4 skills plus linguistic awareness and intercultural orientation | Encountering the spoken and written language, Using the language, Knowledge of the English language and its cultural context, Knowledge of one's own language learning | Communicative skills<br>Reflection on language that comprises language functions and grammar<br>Socio-cultural aspects | Receptive skills<br>Productive skills<br>Interactive skills<br>Cultural awareness<br>Reflection ( taking responsibility for one's own learning) |

## Sampling

|                                     | Denmark         | Finland                | France                                  | Germany                                 | The Netherlands   | Norway                                     | Spain           | Sweden             |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|------------------------|---|---|---|--|-----------------|--------------------|
| School sample/ population           | 102/ 1530       | 109/685                | 60/1500                                 | 13/3209<br>(4 states)                   | 12/690<br>Some 40 schools were contacted but only 12 participated | 90/851                                     | 124/ 6277       | 76/ 1352           |
| Participating schools               | 91              | 109                    | 51                                      | 13                                      | 12  | 65   | 123             | 71                 |
| Response rate for schools           | 89%             | 100%                   | 85%                                     |   |   | 72%  | 99%             | 93%                |
| Student sample                      | 1551            | 1614                   | 1135                                    | Group 1:232<br>Group 2:226 <sup>2</sup> | 1574  | 1526                                       | 2957            | 1616               |
| Students - response rate            | 95 %            | 99%                    | 75%                                     | 90,4 %                                  | 100%  | 86%  | 99,6%           | 89 %               |
| School types :                      |                 |                        |   |   |   |  |                 |                    |
| Type I - sample /population         | Public: 73/1018 | Public Finnish: 99/641 | Public: 100 %<br>General education only | Hauptschule: 3/1429                     | VMBO: 616   | Public: 100%<br>Compulsory lower secondary | Public: 73/3356 | Public: 95/87 %    |
| Type II - sample /population        | Private: 29/512 | Public Swedish: 10/44  |   | Realschule: 2/ 667                      | HAVO: 537   | -  | Private:51/2921 | Independent: 5/13% |
| Type III - sample /population       | -               | -                      |   | Gymnasium: 4/ 653                       | VWO: 421  | -  | -               | -                  |
| Type IV - sample/population         | -               | -                      |   | Integrierte Gesamtschule: 4/460         | -   | -  | -               | -                  |
| Participation mandatory for schools | Yes             | Yes                    | Yes                                     | No                                      | No  | No   | No              | No                 |
| Simple random selection             | Yes             | No                     | Yes                                     | No                                      | No  | Probability proportional to size           | No              | No                 |
| Stratified selection                | -               | Yes                    | -                                       | Yes                                     |   | -  | Yes             | Yes                |
| Representative for all strata       | -               | Yes                    | -                                       | No ( too small)                         |   | -  | Yes             | Yes                |

<sup>2</sup> not all students did the whole test

## Validation

|  | <b>Denmark</b>  | <b>Finland</b>  | <b>France</b>                        | <b>Germany</b>   | <b>The Netherlands</b>                                    | <b>Norway</b>                    | <b>Spain</b>                           | <b>Sweden</b>   |
|--|---|---|--------------------------------------|--|---|----------------------------------|--|---|
| Test results valuated by expert in English                     | No  | Trained graduated student of English codes the test results | Pupils' own teachers                 | Trained students coded the tests results   | Coding by graduate student                                | An extended codebook is followed | Experts selected by a specialised firm | Trained graduate students of English coded the test results |
| Technical registration according to the international codebook | Yes   | Yes   | Yes                                  | No   | yes   | Yes                              | Yes                                    | Yes   |
| Manual keying of data  | No  | Pupils' background questions and teachers' questionnaire    | Yes                                  | In cases of doubt  | Yes   | Yes                              | Yes                                    | Yes   |
| Scanning of data   | Yes   | Yes   | No                                   | Yes  | No  | No                               | No                                     | No  |
| Reasons for discarding respondents <sup>3</sup>                | Inconsistencies in replies; outliers in statistical sense | No respondents discarded                                    | Pupils who completed only 1 sequence | No respondents; Less than 1 year instruction in German language (non-German mother tongue) | Inconsistencies in replies, outliers in statistical sense | Blank/Obstruction                | No respondents discarded               | No respondents discarded                                    |

<sup>3</sup>e.g. blank, doublets, obstruction etc.





# **III NATIONAL FOREIGN LANGUAGE PROVISIONS AND NATIONAL TEST IMPLEMENTATION**

The following is a description, for each country taking part in the project, of the general provisions for language learning and teaching, as well as a description of the way in which the test was implemented and of the sample tested.

## **DENMARK**

### **FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION**

#### **The Folkeskole**

In Denmark, we have a comprehensive school, the Folkeskole, which covers the entire period of compulsory education. It cannot, as is the case in most other countries, be divided into primary and secondary education. The Folkeskole consists of a voluntary pre-school class, the nine-year mandatory course and a voluntary 10<sup>th</sup> year. It thus caters for pupils aged 6-17. The comprehensive concept of the Danish Folkeskole enables the children to remain in the same pupil group with the same classmates from the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 9<sup>th</sup> (or 10<sup>th</sup>) grade.

#### **English instruction received by the test population**

English is the first foreign language, and it is compulsory for all pupils from the 4<sup>th</sup> grade (9-10-year-olds) of the Folkeskole.

Lessons normally last 45 minutes, and the recommended number of English lessons for the survey sample are two lessons per week in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade and three lessons per week from 5<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> grade. Thus, the respondents have had 17 lessons of 45 minutes multiplied with 40 (the length of a school year is 40 weeks), but it should be noticed that by the time the test was conducted the respondents had only been in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade for three months.

## **Curriculum guidelines**

The Danish Parliament lays down the overall aims of the teaching, the Ministry of Education sets the aims of the individual subjects, and the local school authorities decide on how to attain these aims. The Ministry of Education issues curriculum guidelines for each subject, but these are seen purely as recommendations and are as such not mandatory for the local education authorities or schools.

In August 2002, the Ministry of Education prescribed new regulations called 'Clear Goals' for the teaching of English. Clear Goals clarifies the central knowledge and proficiency areas and contains, as something new, progression goals after the 5<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> and the voluntary 10<sup>th</sup> grade.

The content of the knowledge and proficiency areas corresponds to the former regulation from 1994, but the goals for the teaching of English are now mandatory for the local school authorities. In most cases, the local authorities were following the national goals set by the 1994 regulation, and in reality this means that the test population has been taught according to the same intentions as set in Clear Goals (described below).

### **The aim of the teaching of English**

The aim of the teaching in the subject of English is described as follows: 'It shall be the aim of teaching in the subject English that the pupils acquire knowledge and proficiency so that they can understand spoken and written English and can express themselves orally and in writing. The teaching shall at the same time develop the pupils' awareness of the English language and usage as well as of language learning.

The teaching shall create a framework for experience, insight and co-operation as well as strengthen the pupils' active participation. The teaching shall thus see to it that the pupils maintain their desire to deal with language and culture for the advancement of their further development. The teaching shall give the pupils an insight into the cultural and social conditions in English-speaking countries and thereby strengthen their international understanding and their understanding of their own culture.' (Ministry of Education – Order of the Aims of the Teaching, [www.uvm.dk](http://www.uvm.dk)).

The four central proficiency areas which the teaching shall comprise are:

1. Communication skills
2. Language and usage
3. Language learning
4. Cultural and social relations.

### **The education of teachers of English in Denmark**

A Danish teacher's certificate is obtained at a college of education. The programme is based on a leaving examination at upper secondary level, and the programme is of four years' duration. These colleges are the only institutions which are authorised to provide the four-year programme qualifying for teaching in the Danish Folkeskole.

The students specialise in four main subjects. The majority of the teachers working in the Folkeskole today were educated at a time when they only had two main subjects. The level reached in each of the four subjects corresponds to 0.55 of a person's work in one year (33 ECTS-points). This figure does not differ much for the teachers that are specialised in two subjects. Here the figure is about 10% higher.

A teacher's certificate formally qualifies a graduate teacher to teach all subjects to all grades (1<sup>st</sup> -10<sup>th</sup> grade). 81.6% of the teachers who teach in English in the 4<sup>th</sup> to the 9<sup>th</sup> grade have English as one of their main subjects (2001).

## **TEST IMPLEMENTATION AND SAMPLE**

### **Performing institution**

The Danish Evaluation Institute (EVA) is responsible for the Danish part of the survey. EVA is an independent institution formed under the auspices of the Danish Ministry of Education. It develops and highlights improvements in the quality of education and is a national centre of knowledge in the field of evaluation of education.

### **Sampling and representativeness**

The population surveyed comprises 15-16-year-olds in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade, which is the final year of compulsory education in Denmark. In collaboration with the

consultancy firm Gallup, EVA conducted the survey in October and November 2002 among 1,486 pupils at 91 schools.

Selection was made from a database including all Danish primary and lower secondary schools. The schools were selected by an ordinary random selection. In total, 102 schools were contacted. 11 of these did not participate<sup>4</sup> (Table 1).

**Table 1**

| <b>School type</b>                         | <b>Population</b> | <b>Schools contacted</b> | <b>Schools participating</b> |
|--|-------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| Municipal schools (Folkeskoler)            | 1018              | 73                       | 67                           |
| Free elementary schools (Frie grundskoler) | 314               | 21                       | 17                           |
| Continuation schools <sup>5</sup>          | 198               | 8                        | 7                            |
| All schools                                | 1530              | 102                      | 91                           |

On the basis of available public registers, it is possible to compare the sample on the following strata: sex, geographical variation, school size and school type.

50.7% of the survey participants are boys. That corresponds to the share of boys in the population in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade as a whole.

57% of the test population is from the eastern part of Denmark, while the figure for the population as a whole is 40%. The test results do not show a significant difference determined by region.

There is an imbalance between the population and the sample of schools with more than 500 pupils. Whereas the population holds 31%, the sample holds 46%. The test score for schools with more than 500 pupils is higher than the main score, 64% versus 60%. Yet, the difference is seen as too marginal to necessitate a correction of data.

As it shows in Table 2 below, there is a small imbalance between the population and the sample of continuation schools. But there was no significant

<sup>4</sup> Six municipal schools did not participate because they were not part of the target group or due to other reasons. Furthermore five free elementary schools and one continuation school did not wish to participate.

<sup>5</sup> Continuation schools are lower secondary level boarding schools for 14-17-year-olds.

difference between the test results from the municipal schools and from the continuation schools.

**Table 2**

|                         | <b>Population</b>                           | <b>Sample</b>                               |
|-------------------------|---|---|
| <b>School type</b>      | <u>Share of 9<sup>th</sup> grade pupils</u> | <u>Share of 9<sup>th</sup> grade pupils</u> |
| Municipal schools       | 74%   | 78 %  |
| Free elementary schools | 14 %  | 15 %  |
| Continuation schools    | 12 %  | 7 %   |
| All schools             | 100 %                                       | 100 %                                       |

Based on the information listed above, the sample is seen as representative of the 9<sup>th</sup> grade population as a whole.

### **Process of data retrieval**

It is mandatory for municipal schools to participate in evaluations conducted by EVA in contrast to the free elementary schools and the continuation schools, which cater for about a fourth of the population. These schools participated in the test voluntarily.

The municipal schools that did not respond to the first enquiry from EVA were contacted by phone. After this, six schools were left out either because they were not part of the target group or because of other reasons.

The selected schools were informed about the test in August 2002 and returned factual information about the number of 9<sup>th</sup> grade classes at each school. Then one class at each school was randomly chosen, and each school assigned a test administrator who could not be the teacher of English of the participating class. The test material was sent to the schools about a week prior to the test. All the 91 schools carried out the test and returned the test material within the announced time frame.

### **Treatment of data**

The total of pupils in the test classes are 1,551. Of these 1,486 participated in the test. This gives a response rate of the test, the pupil self-evaluation and the pupil questionnaire on 95%. Two schools did not return the teacher questionnaire so that part of the survey is based on 89 instead of 91 participants.

Data were cleared by discarding respondents showing inconsistencies in replies and outliers in the statistical sense. All answers were validated through machine validation. Data was not removed for other reasons than technical reasons. All of these factors add to the reliability of the data.

## **FINLAND**

### **FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION**

In Finland basic education means general education provided free of charge for entire age groups. According to the Basic Education Act of 1998, comprehensive school lasts nine years and is intended for children between 7 and 16 years of age. Children are summoned to school in the year that they become seven years of age. Thus, most of the pupils taking part in this evaluation were, in principle, born in 1985.

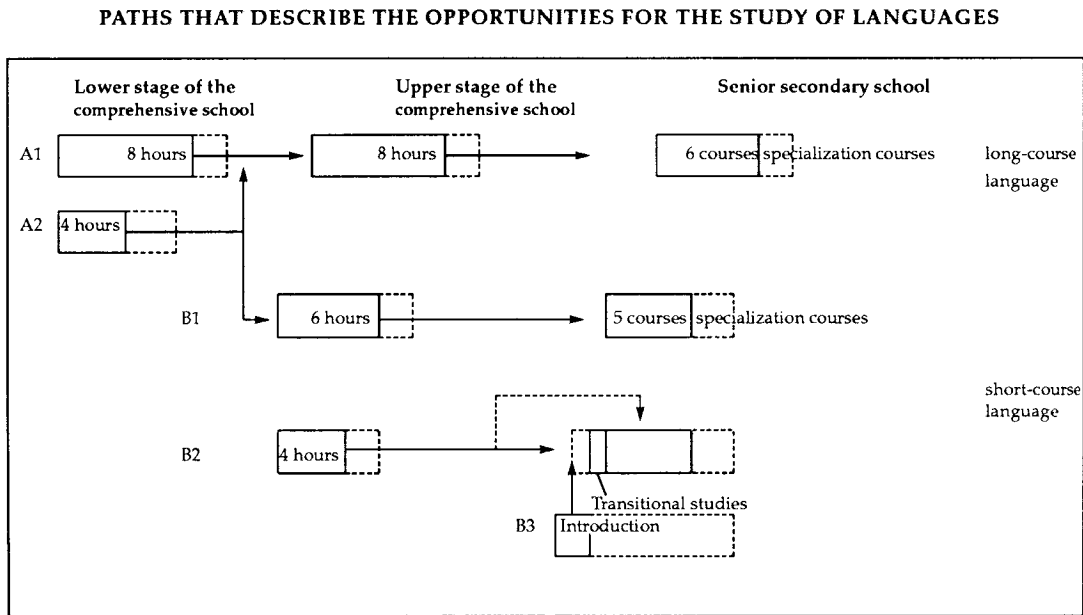
Instruction is usually given in one of the country's two official languages, i.e. either in Finnish or in Swedish. Both language groups have their own school networks. Teaching groups in basic education are formed according to year classes, i.e. forms. During the first six years, instruction in the English language is mostly given by subject teachers or class teachers specialised in English while during the last three years of the upper comprehensive teaching is mainly taken care of by subject teachers.

#### **Language teaching in Finland**

The broad national objectives and the allocation of teaching time to instruction in different subjects and subject groups and to pupil counselling are decided by the Government. The time allocation presents two levels of language teaching: A-level and B-level. A1 denotes the language starting in the lower stage of comprehensive school and common (obligatory) to all students, while A2 denotes the voluntary language that starts in the lower stage of comprehensive school. The students are required to study at least one A-level language and at least one B-level language in order to complete their schooling. Participation to this evaluation was restricted to pupils studying English as A1-level language. Figure 1 shows that they had had two lessons of English a week on average for five years and three lessons a week for two years.

**Figure 1.**

(National Board of Education , 21)



The National Board of Education decides on the objectives and core contents of instruction by confirming the core curriculum. Based on these, each provider of education prepares the local basic education curriculum. The aims for foreign languages as well as the methods of teaching them have to be in harmony with the comprehensive school's general aims and activities.

### **The Framework Curriculum for the English language**

The general objectives are defined as *skills* (gets along in the language he is learning in everyday language communication), *knowledge* (knows ways to communicate that are characteristic of the target language and its culture; receives information about the countries, people, and cultures of the language area), and *attitudes* (has an open mind towards different cultures and its representatives; becomes interested in foreign languages and cultures; experiences the teaching and study as meaningful, emotional, and challenging;). In addition, *learning-to-learn skills* are emphasised (develops his study skills alone and in groups; develops his ability to evaluate himself, and learns to be responsible for his studies). (Tuokko 2001, 93)

The contents are presented separately for forms (2)3 – 6 of lower comprehensive school and 7-9 of upper secondary school. At the end of comprehensive school(9<sup>th</sup> form) it is expected that the student:

- understands speaking that concerns everyday things and that is delivered at a normal tempo;



- can participate in a conversation on ordinary things by applying natural and fluent pronunciation, accent, rhythm, and intonation;
- can understand fairly easy written language that discusses general things;
- has assimilated vocabulary central to the language, main phrases, and basic structures;
- can produce short, narrative or descriptive written texts, for example, with help, if necessary:
- knows ways to communicate that are peculiar to the target language and the culture; and
- has assimilated knowledge about the countries, peoples, and cultures of the language areas.”

(National Board of Education 1994, 75)

The content descriptions emphasise everyday communicative situations. The expectations are expressed in “can do”-form, which contains the idea of functional and communicative competence, i.e. being able to act properly both as the transmitter and the receiver of the message. Since autumn 1999 schools have also had access to a manual published by the National Board of Education where the level of mark 8 (showing average skills on the scale of 10 – 4, the latter one indicating failure) has been defined for the final stage of basic education. The criteria were defined separately for the different skills: speaking, writing, listening, reading as well as cultural competencies. No particular instructions or lists are given on teaching grammatical structures.

The Framework Curriculum does not define topics in detail. The main topics are man and his living environment and everyday life, school, work, and society; nature and environment; the student’s own country, the surrounding world and internationalism, culture peculiar to the English language; communications and different media.

The basis for choice of vocabulary and structures is their communicative value, frequency, suitability and practicality to the topics and different verbal and written tasks. Special attention is paid to the contents of the message, understandability, and the fluency of the language.

## **TEST IMPLEMENTATION AND SAMPLE**

### **The sample**

The size of the age-group attending the 9<sup>th</sup> form in 2002 was 60,879 Finnish-speaking and 3758 Swedish-speaking pupils. In order to ensure a representative sample, three different sampling strata were used. The first stratum was based on the number of schools in each province to guarantee a representative sample on the national level. The second stratum consisted of sampling a representative number of schools in areas with different economic backgrounds using the European Community Structural Fund objective regions as the criterion. The third stratum consisted of the type of municipality, i.e. urban, densely populated, or rural.

The sampling resulted in 100 (out of which one could not participate) Finnish-speaking and 10 Swedish-speaking schools attending the assessment. In Paris, it had been decided that the biggest group studying English in the 9<sup>th</sup> form would be chosen. So, the final sample consisted of

1464 Finnish-speaking and 150 Swedish speaking pupils. Finnish pupils taking part in the assessment had been studying English for almost seven years (A1 language) Practically all Swedish-speaking pupils study English as their A2 language due to the relatively close resemblance of their mother tongue and English (as opposed to Finnish)..This is understandable because the Swedish and English languages are cognate languages, while the Finnish language belongs to another language group, the Finno-Ugric languages.

### **Practical measures in implementing the evaluation**

The sample schools were informed about the participation on 5<sup>th</sup> March, 2002. The heads of the schools, who were in charge of implementing the evaluation, were sent the material on 4<sup>th</sup> April. The English teacher of the group chosen to participate was informed about the evaluation procedure.

It was agreed that the evaluation would be conducted between 15<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> April. The two-lesson (of 45 minutes.) assessment could be given either during successive lessons or during two separate lessons provided it took place during the same week. The pupils' background questionnaire could be filled in during any lesson. The pupils' responses as well as the teacher questionnaires were to be sent to the National Board of Education by 15<sup>th</sup> May. The mailing costs were covered and the tests coded by the NBE.

# FRANCE

## FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION

### Language policy

French is the official language for professional, administrative and legal purposes; this applies also to the overseas territories and districts. Other languages are not officially recognised in public affairs. However, some regional languages remain alive: Alsatian, near the German border, Basque in the south-west, Breton in the west, Corsican on the island of Corsica, and Occitan in the south.

### Organisation of language education

#### Primary schools

In 1989, foreign language awareness was introduced into primary schools (grades 1 to 5; age 6 to 10) in grades 4 and 5, with a time allocation of 1½ hours per week.

In 1995 a plan was introduced for pupils in grade 2, age 7 to learn a foreign language through daily audio-visual presentations lasting a quarter of an hour. One and a half hours of foreign language learning was introduced in grades 3 and 4.

More recently, the intention has been to offer foreign language teaching proper to all pupils from grade 1 onwards. This will take time to be achieved in all schools, in particular because of the lack of qualified teachers.

Overall, English is the language chosen by a vast majority of parents (nearly 80%). German comes after with nearly 16%.

#### Secondary schools

In lower secondary schools, called *collège*, (grades 6 to 9; age 11 to 15) two foreign languages are compulsory, and in some sections of upper secondary schools, called *lycées*, (grades 10 to 12; age 16 to 18) a third foreign language is optional. All pupils in upper secondary schools are required to learn at least one foreign language - often a continuation of their study of English.

At the beginning of lower secondary school, grade 6 (age 11), pupils have to choose their first foreign language. Most choose English (over 90 per cent);

Spanish is becoming the second choice, followed by German. Very small numbers choose other languages, for example, Italian, Literary Arabic, Chinese, Modern Hebrew, Japanese, Dutch, Polish, Portuguese or Russian.

At the beginning of grade 8, (age 13) pupils have to choose a second foreign language, most often Spanish, German, English, or Italian.

There are three hours on average of foreign language teaching each week, or five hours for students taking the intensive language option. This allocation of time constitutes about 8 per cent of curriculum time for each language learnt.

### **Foreign languages as medium of instruction**

In some cases, foreign languages are taught as the medium of instruction. There are in particular the European schools, established for children of parents who work for the European Community, three Franco-German *lycées* and finally a few *lycées* in France and in Germany where an exchange of teachers allows for the teaching of language, literature, history and geography in the language of the other country.

However, the two main arrangements for foreign languages as medium of instruction are special sections in some mainstream secondary schools:

European sections, created in 1992, where teachers and students are French, offer teaching in a foreign language for non-linguistic subjects, including science. Pupils in these programmes get a special credit in the *baccalauréat*.

International sections have also been created in 10 different languages. The classes are made up of a proportion of foreign pupils -whose mother language is that of the section- and of French pupils who wish to enhance their mastery of the relevant language. Curricula have been modified in co-operation with the relevant foreign partners to accommodate the teaching of literature, history and geography by foreign teachers, using their own language. These courses normally lead to the French baccalaureate with a special mention which qualifies candidates seeking entry to universities in partner countries. They can also lead to the International Baccalaureate.

### **Curriculum, syllabus and materials**

Heads of schools and teachers are obliged to adhere to the weekly allocation of time and the curriculum objectives for languages, laid down nationally by government. Nevertheless, teachers are free to exercise choice within this statutory framework, with regard to teaching methods, course books and other material resources. Teaching materials are produced commercially. In primary and lower secondary schools, books are lent to pupils, so schools make the choice; in upper secondary, students buy their own books and their choice is influenced by the decision of individual teachers.

The teaching of all foreign languages is organised around three main objectives: linguistic, cultural and intellectual. Reading, writing, listening and speaking skills are developed with a view to enhancing pupils' autonomy. According to the language taught, the curriculum emphasises those skills and their speed of acquisition differently but the priority for all languages is the ability to communicate. Cultural and grammatical skills are means to that end.

### **Assessment of students**

Individual teachers assess their students' attainment in the spoken and written language, on a continuous basis. This is sometimes co-ordinated at the school level. There is no examination with a language test at the end of lower secondary.

At the end of upper secondary school, languages are always tested, although oral tests and written papers are not always be set at the same time.

### **Teacher qualifications and support**

Language teachers in secondary schools are language specialists: their minimum qualification is a university degree, followed by two years professional training in a teacher training institute (*IUFM*). As part of their training they are accredited through a competitive examination set nationally. About 10 per cent are auxiliary teachers, with university diplomas.

In-service training of teachers is arranged, either by the ministry of education or by the professional associations. In-service training is not compulsory, but can be recommended in individual cases by the school Inspectorate. It is organised locally, outside school hours, and consists of modules for which teachers register.

### **Trends in language education**

Currently, the main trend is the growth of foreign language teaching in educational sectors which formerly made little provision: in primary schools, where the early learning of foreign languages is growing rapidly, and in professional and technical contexts, where language learning is seen to promote mobility of labour within the European Union.

## **TEST IMPLEMENTATION AND SAMPLE**

### **Target population**

The 2002 French sample includes pupils aged born in 1986/87 (around the age of 14) attending the last form of upper secondary school (grade 9) who had been studying English for at least four years. All the pupils started learning

English at least in the first year of lower secondary school (grade 6), but some may have started it at primary school.

The pupils in the sample received 3 hours of English teaching per week.

### **Test implementation**

The test was implemented in the last week of May or in the first week of June 2002. As the whole test (assessment test, self-assessment questionnaire and pupil questionnaire) takes up to 85 minutes, it was administered in two sessions over two 55 minute periods in the same week.

The instrument consisted of one single booklet. In the first session the pupils were asked to complete the oral comprehension and linguistic competence items; the time allocated was 20 and 25 minutes respectively. At the end of the first session the booklet was collected. It was handed out again at the beginning of the second period for the written comprehension and written production exercises (30 minutes for both), followed by the self-assessment questionnaire and the pupil questionnaire.

In view of the lack of reliability of pupils' responses regarding their parents' socio-economic status observed in France in other studies, it was not attempted to obtain this sort of information.

### **Sample**

The original sample contains around 1500 pupils (60 classes in 60 schools). It covers exclusively the general education stream in public sector lower secondary schools. It is a random sample of classes (not stratified).

The schools in the sample are situated in 13 of the 26 regions of metropolitan France (excluding overseas districts and territories): Paris, Besançon, Lille; Lyon; Montpellier; Nancy-Metz; Nantes; Reims; Amiens; Rouen; Créteil; Versailles; Corse.

The pupils in the sample were enrolled in general education in the last form of lower secondary school (grade 9) in classes of at least 20 pupils. They had been studying English as their first foreign language since at least grade 6 (first form of lower secondary school).

The schools in the sample took part in the test on a compulsory basis, as they have to by law.

### Statistical description of the sample

| Month of birth | Percentage of pupils | Year of birth | Percentage of pupils | Gender       | Percentage of pupils |
|----------------|----------------------|---------------|----------------------|--------------|----------------------|
| January        | 8,1                  | 80            | 0,1                  | Boys         | 47,1                 |
| February       | 7,3                  | 82            | 0,1                  |              |                      |
| March          | 7,7                  | 84            | 0,3                  | Girls        | 51,6                 |
| April          | 8,3                  | 85            | 3,8                  |              |                      |
| May            | 9,3                  | 86            | 24,5                 |              |                      |
| June           | 9,9                  | 87            | 67,1                 | Non Response | 1,2                  |
| July           | 8,2                  | 88            | 2,5                  |              |                      |
| August         | 8,6                  | 89            | 0,4                  |              |                      |
| September      | 7,8                  | Non Response  | 1,4                  |              |                      |
| October        | 6,8                  |               |                      |              |                      |
| November       | 7,9                  |               |                      |              |                      |
| December       | 8,3                  |               |                      |              |                      |
| Non Response   | 1,9                  |               |                      |              |                      |

It can be reasonably assumed that the sample is nationally representative of French pupils enrolled in general education in grade 9 in the public sector.





## GERMANY

Special attention needs to be given to the implementation of the test in Germany, as this was done as part of a larger national data gathering exercise. Consequently, many aspects of the EU-test are different in Germany from what they are in the other participating countries. For the purpose of the international comparison, it has therefore not been possible to take the German data into account.

### FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION

#### Developments in the German school system<sup>6</sup>

The present system of education in the Federal Republic of Germany and, more specifically, the teaching and learning of foreign languages cannot be understood without considering some of the more recent changes that occurred after World War II. Whereas the east was ruled by a central government, Western Germany became a federal state where education was the special responsibility of the states, not of the central government. In Western Germany pupils usually learned English as first foreign language, whereas pupils in the east usually had to learn Russian. After reunification in 1992 the western system was extended to the whole country with now sixteen states. But the reunification and the unification of the school system led also to some problems, which are still existing: In the east of Germany there is a deficiency of English teachers today and an overload of Russian teachers. Furthermore a lot of the eastern pupils do not achieve as well as their western contemporaries.

In order to make sure that educational traditions in these states do not become too diverse the permanent standing committee of all the ministers of education (one minister for each state) coordinates decisions in education and safeguards certain agreed principles and standards. From then on the tripartite system was accepted in the whole Republic and turned out to be a system of choices among four different types of schools. After primary school there has to be a decision (by parents) about the three possibilities of school types: grammar school (*Gymnasium*), middle school (*Realschule*) and main secondary school (*Hauptschule*)<sup>7</sup>.

---

<sup>6</sup> Section by Günter Nold, University of Dortmund

<sup>7</sup> *Hauptschule*: Type of school at lower secondary level providing a basic general education. Compulsory school, unless pupil is attending a different type of secondary school, usually comprising grades 5-9.  
*Realschule*: Type of school at lower secondary level, usually comprising grades 5-10. Provides pupils with a more extensive general education and the opportunity to go on to courses of education at upper secondary level that lead to vocational or higher education entrance qualifications.

## Foreign language teaching in Germany

Two specific political decisions of the sixties had a great impact on FL teaching and learning in the western part of Germany. In 1964 the Hamburg Treaty of the German states made English an obligatory foreign language in all types of schools. For the first time English became a subject taught not only in the grammar and middle schools, but also in the main secondary schools. The methodology had to be adapted to students who traditionally had not had any experience of FL learning. Increasingly, the question was raised of whether the insistence on grammatical accuracy was an acceptable curricular aim for a great number of students whose interest in FL learning was more centred around the use rather than the form of language.

A second political decision turned out to be decisive for further curricular developments in FL teaching, namely the German-French Treaty of 1963. Among others it created the German-French Youth Exchange Program and encouraged the learning of French on a greater scale based on the objective of culture learning. Eventually it supported the introduction of French as the language of instruction in certain schools and triggered a teacher-supported initiative that finally led to the German model of partial immersion.

The concept of communicative competence became a very powerful methodological influence until the seventies. It had a great impact on the syllabi and especially the textbooks in the eighties, when notions and speech acts were introduced into the textbooks, complementing the predominantly grammatical progression. In most schools they function as the hidden curriculum of grades 5 through ten. Although they have basically been developed with a national, not a state-related focus, they have been introduced in a majority of schools all over Germany. They both typically combine form-focused objectives with pragmalinguistic aims and they also direct the attention to skills-based activities and cultural topics and themes. The relatively consistent use of these books led to a greater curricular homogeneity in the different states of Germany.

In the nineties FL teaching became more and more European in scope and the concept of cultural and intercultural learning shifted the focus still further from grammar-based to communication- and culture-based objectives. The Common European Framework of Reference (2000; German version: Goethe-Institut, 2001) is now a major force in an ongoing process of curricular changes. FL classrooms and more specifically English classrooms today are certainly determined by curricular decisions that have become filtered through the available textbooks especially as far as grades five through ten are concerned.

---

*Gymnasium*: Type of school covering both lower and upper secondary level (usually grades 5-13) and providing an in-depth general education aimed at the general higher education entrance qualification.

*Integrierte Gesamtschule*: Type of school at lower secondary level offering courses of education leading to different qualifications (Hauptschulabschluss, Mittlerer Schulabschluss, entitlement to proceed to the upper level of the Gymnasium), usually comprising grades 5-10.

## TEST IMPLEMENTATION AND SAMPLE

### The EU-Test as part of the DESI Pilot Study

In Germany the EU-Test and reduced versions of the teacher and pupil questionnaires have been included in the DESI pilot study to contribute to the European assessment study of English language and to serve as an external criterion for the validation of the new instruments for the DESI-modules "listening comprehension" and "language awareness".

The DESI-study (Deutsch-Englisch-Schülerleistungen-International/ International Study of Pupils' Achievement in German and English Language) has been conceptualised as an international project in order to analyse the performance of 9<sup>th</sup> graders, around fifteen year old pupils in the German and English language. The study is run on behalf of the Standing Committee of the Ministers of Education of the German federal states (Kultusminister Konferenz, KMK) by a consortium, the German Institute of International Educational Research (DIPF) in Frankfurt am Main acting as main contractor. DESI aims at:

-the nation-wide *assessment* of the active and passive, oral and written proficiency in German and English;

-the *explanation* of the linguistic achievements by individual, educational, school, family and socio-cultural background factors and

-the foundation of approaches to *optimise instruction*.

Thus, DESI functions as a national supplement to PISA 2000. DESI is curriculum-oriented and covers a broad range of linguistic abilities from the classic formal language skills to communicative and intercultural competencies. The main survey which will be realised in 2003/2004 will be based on two measures at the beginning and at the end of one school year and comprise 11.000 students. The data have been gathered between September, 16<sup>th</sup> and October, 11<sup>th</sup> of 2002, a few weeks after the start of the school year.

### Sample

Four German states have been selected for convenience: Bremen (North-West), Hessen (Mid-West), Baden-Württemberg (South-West) and Brandenburg (North-East). Schools have been selected at random separately for each state. The sample includes 24 schools and all types of schools: "Hauptschule": 6, „Realschule“: 4, „Gymnasium“: 8 and „Integrierte Gesamtschule“: 6. In a second step one 9<sup>th</sup> grade class and one 10<sup>th</sup> grade class per school have been drawn at random from the selected schools. The 10<sup>th</sup> grade classes have been included to obtain information about the possible size of added values to be expected after one year of schooling.

Simultaneously all pupils of the class and English teachers were included for testing and to fill in the pupils' questionnaire and the teachers' questionnaires respectively.

### **Procedure**

The IEA Data Processing Centre (DPC) in Hamburg has been contracted in order to realise the sampling procedure described above, prepare the test sheets and questionnaires, gather the data and code the answers of the pupils, parents and teachers. The headteachers were asked to nominate a co-ordinator in order to communicate with the DPC. The co-ordinator organised time and space for the classes to be tested.

### **Data management**

All in-coming test materials have been controlled by the DPC. Trained students coded the answers of the items. The coders did not have any chance to associate the ID's with regions or schools. The questionnaires were scanned electronically and controlled for errors. A software for data recording was adapted to interpret the scanned materials. The scores identified have been transferred to database files. The sheets with doubtful data were selected to be shown on the monitor for post-processing. Only these cases were processed manually by trained coders obliged for concealment. Saved data have been controlled for inconsistencies. After being processed by the DPC, the data were passed on to the German Institute for International Educational Research to proceed with further processing and analysing.

### **The EU-Test in the DESI pilot study**

The data for the DESI-pilot study in which the EU-Test was embedded were gathered on two consecutive days. The data for the EU-test have been collected on the second day. 232 pupils worked through listening comprehension and linguistic competence another 226 pupils reading comprehension and text production. Unlike the other partners in the EU-group the DESI-project developed its own questionnaires for pupils, parents, teachers, and school administrators. In order to avoid duplications instead of the questionnaires developed by the EU group the comprehensive questionnaires of the DESI-project has been applied. This means, not all of the questions could be included in the final analysis of the EU-project.

## **THE NETHERLANDS**

### **FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION**

Although Dutch tradesmen have been sailing the world for centuries and have had contacts with other languages and cultures since the middle ages, education in foreign languages only started by the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century (Wilhelm 1997). In that time, foreign language skills were not considered to be basic requirements for all citizens and it took till the late 19<sup>th</sup> century before foreign languages became compulsory subjects in all levels of post primary education. French, and to a lesser extent German dominated the scene. Much later, during the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, English established itself as the first foreign language in the Dutch educational system. In 1986 it was introduced as a compulsory subject in the last 2 years of primary education, and a few years later it became the only compulsory language for all types of secondary education, including vocational training. This means that the part of the population that went to school from the late 1970s onwards, had had English as a school subject for at least 4 years. Apart from the odd case, it is therefore virtually impossible to find a pure monolingual speaker of Dutch under the age of 50.

#### **English in the Dutch Educational system**

##### Primary Education

In a comparative study of language education in 35 countries from different parts of the world, Blondin, Candelier, et al.(1998) mention that English teaching in the Netherlands generally starts at age 10 and lasts about 8 years on average. An estimated 92% of all pupils follow English lessons with a modal number of 150 minutes a week. English is a compulsory subject in the last two years of primary education, and by the end of primary education pupils will have received about 50 hours of instruction.

##### Secondary Education

After primary school, Dutch pupils can choose between different types of secondary school. The options are:

VMBO (pre-vocational secondary education); lasts 4 years and prepares pupils for secondary vocational training, MBO.

HAVO (senior general secondary education); lasts 5 years and prepares for higher professional education.

VWO (pre-university education); lasts 6 years and prepares for university.

All three types of secondary education are for children aged 12 and over and all begin with a period of 'basic secondary education', generally lasting for three years and consisting of a broad core curriculum for all pupils.

This period of basic secondary education is the only structural similarity between the three types of secondary education mentioned above. In all other ways, they differ widely from each other; in the length of the programme, for example and the level of the school leaving exams.

#### Bilingual education and bilingual streams

In bilingual education in the Netherlands Dutch-speaking pupils receive education that is offered using a foreign language (mostly English) as means of communication. It started as a 'grass-roots' movement: a number of highly motivated teachers and parents convinced their schools to start a new line of teaching, in which the foreign language (mostly English) should partly be used as a medium of instruction. The goal of these programmes is for the pupils to reach high levels of language proficiency in English and in many schools to prepare them for the International Baccalaureate. Research by Huibregtse (2000) shows that this approach leads to the expected higher levels of proficiency in English without detrimental effect on the pupils' language proficiency in their mother tongue and their achievements in school subjects. In 2002 there are more than 40 schools offering a bilingual (i. e. Dutch/English) programme. This goes to show that this approach of English Education is attractive to many pupils and schools.

#### Other important sources of English acquisition

School being an important source for acquisition of any foreign language, it must be noted that Dutch pupils attain school more weeks per year than Swedish pupils, for example. These and other differences in the education of English in countries such as France, Spain, Sweden and The Netherlands are described in the NFER Publication of 'Profile of Language Education 25 Countries' by Peter Dickson and Alister Cumming (1996). More weeks of school attendance result in –amongst others- more minutes of English education. But this only partly accounts for relative high scores in English on previously administered tests by Dutch pupils. As Dickson and Cumming noted, especially Dutch VBO-pupils (now known as VMBO, pre-vocational training) scored well in English. In this document, a parallel is sought between English

acquisition in general and the impact of media such as television, video and radio.

In CBS Jaarboek 2002 statistics are found on the way youngsters tend to spend their leisure time. All age groups (from 6 years on) watched television for an average of 163 minutes daily in 1999 and 2000. In the group 12-17 years, an average of 205 minutes was spent daily on TV/video/radio. Also on internet, a new and time-consuming occupation and form of entertainment for youngsters English holds a strong position: English language providers (Google, HOTBOT) are used more widely than Dutch ones like ILSE.

In a few countries in Western-Europe, the Nordic countries, The Netherlands and the Dutch-speaking part of Belgium, TV programs are not dubbed but subtitled. This means that TV is an important source of contact with foreign languages. On average, Dutch TV watchers will get at least one hours of English every day. Earlier research (de Bot et al.1986) has shown that watching subtitled TV programs does not mean that only the subtitles are attended to: information is drawn both from the spoken language and from the subtitles. Research by the Dutch broadcasting Association (NOS 1977) shows that the Dutch population clearly prefers subtitling over dubbing. Keeping up or developing foreign language skilled is mentioned as one of the motives.

In addition, English is remarkably present in various forms of advertising in the Netherlands. This domain seems to be at the forefront of the spread of English. This seems to reflect De Mooij's (1994) advice for advertisers: 'The better-educated throughout Europe as well as the youth can be reached with English.' (288).

### **Functions of English**

In the Netherlands Dutch is the de facto national language, while a small number of regional languages now also have more official status. Dutch is also the language of instruction, the language of the law and the language of government, though for some functions the regional language, in particular Frisian in Friesland, may be used.

There is no research on the 'linguistic landscape' (Landry & Bourhis 1997) of the Netherlands, but informal impressions suggest that there is a lot of English in the Dutch (urban) landscape. Public safety announcements are quite often in Dutch and English, restaurants will often have an English language menu. Information leaflets on subsidies, diseases, education, taxes and the like will typically be available in various languages, always including English, which here clearly serves as a lingua franca in the strict sense: it is the language used with those whose language is not catered for. Books, newspapers and magazines in English can be found in every bookshop even in smaller cities.

Another relevant aspect is the position of English as a *home* language in the Netherlands. Broeder & Extra (1999) present data from an extensive Home

Language Survey amongst some 35.000 primary school pupils in 5 medium sized cities in the Netherlands. There were 9.094 children with a non-Dutch language background, and 411 of them came from an English-speaking background. In this subgroup, 68% spoke *only* English at home when asked about languages other than Dutch, while 32% spoke English in combination with one or more other languages. Interestingly, those English home language children indicate that they nearly always speak Dutch with family members, report a better command of Dutch than of English and on average prefer speaking Dutch over English. This shows that as a home language, English is threatened by Dutch, which is an interesting contrast with the threat some people claim English to be to Dutch at the societal level. The data on English as home language support the findings of Weltens & de Bot on adults' language preferences reported on below: in order to live in the Netherlands, English is not enough, though in bigger internationally oriented cities like Amsterdam this may be different.

## **Conclusion**

In the Netherlands English has a strong position. Although there are no linguistic reasons, English is considered as the foreign language that is most easily learned.

Levels of proficiency are generally high, the language is present throughout daily life, and attitudes towards it are largely positive. In the light of the present study it's clear that the acquisition and learning of English are favoured in many ways and that there are good reasons for Dutch pupils to learn this language for their prospects in work and education, and for leisure-time activities. Nevertheless, it should be mentioned that although levels of proficiency are generally high, not all aspects have been acquired to the same degree.

## **TEST IMPLEMENTATION AND SAMPLE**

In this project a total of 1574 pupils from 12 schools have been tested on their English language proficiency. Different than in many other European countries participating on this cross-national comparison on English language proficiency, Dutch pupils can choose between different types of secondary education (VMBO pre-vocational secondary education; HAVO, senior general secondary education or VWO, pre-university education). Different schools present different options as to the level and length of secondary education. It was decided to include all levels in this project in order to get a full coverage of this age group. Schools for children with disabilities or learning problems have not been



included since they only represent a very small part of the total set. The same applies to bilingual schools.

For this project schools have been selected that are part of the so called VOCL (Voortgezet Onderwijs Cohort Leerlingen/Cohort of pupils in Secondary Education) project. This project aims at gathering longitudinal data from a representative sample (20,000 pupils/200 schools, which accounts for about 10% of the total population of secondary school pupils in the Netherlands). There are now three cohorts, one from 1989, one from 1993 and one from 1999. In the survey, questionnaires are used to gather background information of the pupils, such as level of education of the parents, socio-economic position, end of primary school results, and school career. In addition tests on Dutch language proficiency and mathematics have been administered in the first and third year of each of the cohorts. In the past there have been discussions on the inclusion of tests for English language proficiency in the survey, but so far the problems of adding ever more tests and questionnaires and the ensuing decline of willingness of schools to participate have prevented this. Since the ministry of education was still interested to learn more about English language proficiency in this group, it invited us to gather our data at schools that are part of the VOCL project. Because the schools in this group have been selected with the aim of having a representative sample, using these schools would also make our data more representative. Given the size of the present investigation and money available to carry it out, it was not possible to process data on 20,000 pupils. Also, as mentioned earlier, schools in the Netherlands are free to participate in this kind of research, so we had no stick, and basically very little in terms of carrots, to convince schools to participate.

While it would have been very interesting to have longitudinal data on language development from these groups of pupils, it was decided for various reasons, partly financial, partly because of the involvement in the larger international study, to use a one-shot design. The aim was to gather all data in the spring of 2002, but due to delays caused by lengthy negotiations between partners in the international project on what tests and questionnaires to include, the time was too short. Also, at that time there was financial uncertainty as to when the necessary financial means would be made available. Nevertheless, given the time pressure, we decided to make all necessary preparations for the survey.

In the first week of April a list of 26 schools was presented to us by the VOCL group, schools representing a important range of the different possible school levels of the Dutch educational system (VMBO, Havo, VWO) and schools geographically spread throughout the country.

On April 23<sup>rd</sup> all schools received our letter explaining design and goal of this survey. Schools were requested to react before the 15<sup>th</sup> of may whether or not we could count on their participation. We were welcomed to eight of these schools eventually; Others declined or didn't respond and in week 23 en 24 tests were administered.

We were very pleased with the quick and smooth collaboration of these eight schools, but having received about 900 questionnaires from this first session, we decided to contact other schools of the VOCL-list again. Since the time was too short now, this was done in September after the summer recess.

Again a number of schools showed their enthusiasm and we prepared testing material for four more school accounting for another 583 pupils. Considering the difficulty of approaching schools in the larger cities, we were specifically pleased to include schools in Rotterdam and The Hague to our survey.

All in all this resulted in the participation of 12 schools and a total of 1572 pupils.

## **NORWAY**

### **FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION**

#### **Primary, lower secondary and upper secondary education**

Compulsory education in Norway is based upon a common national 10-year curriculum. The general part of this, the core curriculum, is also the basis for three year's of upper secondary voluntary schooling. The subject curricula propose a common learning content for all pupils. Municipalities are responsible for primary and lower secondary schools while county authorities are responsible for upper secondary education. Norway has two official languages, Norwegian and the Sami language.

#### **English – the first foreign language (A-language)**

In the 1960s English became a compulsory subject in Norwegian schools with start in grade five. In 1974 English was taught from grade three. With the latest school reform in 1997 English is introduced from the first grade. Schools are however free to dispose over a certain amount of lessons in grades 1- 4. English as a first foreign language is a compulsory subject in primary, lower secondary and in upper secondary education, including vocational classes. The predominance of English is explained in the National Curriculum (1997):

“It is natural for Norwegian pupils to learn English as their 1<sup>st</sup> foreign language. English is a major world language, and represents the language area with which we have the closest links in terms of geography, culture and language history.” (<http://www.ls.no/L97/L97> English version)

The syllabus in English is based on the language-learning foundations laid when pupils learn their first language, on experiences pupils have already gained through contact with other languages and cultures both at school and elsewhere, and on text competence, which pupils have acquired through learning their mother tongue.

English as a school subject in L97 is based upon basic principles of communicative language learning and comprises four main areas:

1. Encountering the spoken and written language
2. Using the language
3. Knowledge of the English language and its cultural context

#### 4. Knowledge of one's own language learning

Levels are not stated according to the *Common European Framework of Reference*, but content and texts are recommended as examples of learning material. In addition extra resources are recommended for use in the classroom, in particular computer technology. Aims are stated in more general terms so that the pupils can develop their abilities to communicate and interact with people from other cultures.

In Norway English is the dominant "other language" in pupil's everyday life in for instance music and media, and foreign films are not dubbed but subtitled. English is to a large extent also used as lingua franca in business communication.

#### **Other foreign languages (B-languages)**

With the introduction of a common compulsory school for all pupils in 1974, German, and later French, received the status of optional subject in the lower secondary school. With the reform of 1997, the two languages were introduced as subjects for all, now called compulsory additional subjects. Other languages are offered as optional subjects in Norway: Finnish, Spanish, Norwegian as a second language and Norwegian as a sign language. Finnish has also the status as second language in Northern Norway.

#### **The education of English teachers in Norway**

There are two main ways to become a teacher in Norway: one through the university colleges with their teacher education programmes and one through the universities. The length of study to a BA at the universities is roughly three to four years, with a possibility of including practical pedagogical education, PPU, in the degree. The length of study to an MA at the universities has so far been about seven years. In addition to the subject studies a one-year practical pedagogical education (PPU) is required to be certified as a teacher. A present reform standardises the length of study to become a teacher to either 4 years (including a BA and PPU) or 5 years (including an MA and PPU). English studies for teachers at the university level span from a one-year foundation course up to an MA with thesis.

Teacher education at the university colleges has up till autumn 2003 been marked by many compulsory subjects. The 1998 reform, LU 98, gave the following compulsory subjects: 1. year: Religious Instruction and Norwegian, 2. year Maths, Norwegian, Arts, 3. year: Society and Environment, Crafts, and in the fourth year possibilities for English and other subjects as options of 10 or 20 credit points courses. Before the reform of 1998 English was a compulsory subject of at least 10 credit points. A new teacher reform reduces the amount of compulsory subjects, but English is still not a compulsory subject, a fact that is worrying for the future qualification of teachers of English.

What we see today, and also in the present European survey, is that the best qualified teachers are those over 50.

## **TEST IMPLEMENTATION AND SAMPLE**

### **Participating institution**

The Norwegian Ministry of Education and The National Board of Education are formally responsible for the survey. The Department of Teacher Education and School Development (ILS) at the University of Oslo is the performing institution.

### **Sampling**

The population surveyed comprises 15/16-year-olds in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade, the final year of compulsory education in Norway. Selection was from a database in which all Norwegian primary and lower secondary schools are included. From this database we first excluded 40 schools that were to take part in other international surveys in the same period. We then excluded schools without a 10<sup>th</sup> grade, Sami schools, and schools with fewer than 10 pupils at this level (311 schools). This gave 851 schools and 47.878 pupils in the sampling frame. We had decided to select 90 schools, so the number of pupils was divided by 90 giving the number 532. The school for each 532<sup>nd</sup> pupil was then included in the sample. This gave for each school a chance of being sampled in proportion to the number of pupils attending the school.

All the 90 schools were state schools. 18 of the 90 schools used New Norwegian, an official, written variant of Norwegian. There was a good geographic spread.

The selected 90 schools were contacted (19.02.2002) with information about the survey and asked to take part. Participation in such surveys is not mandatory in Norway. Therefore a recommendation letter from the Norwegian Board of Education was enclosed to encourage participation. A reply letter was to be returned to ILS within 06.03.2002. 18 schools did not answer within the given deadline. These 18 schools were first contacted by fax, and then phoned shortly afterwards. 9 of these schools agreed to take part, 9 declined. The nine schools which opted not to take part in this second round gave mainly the same reasons; they were located in cities where many surveys were arranged by colleges and/or the universities in their vicinity. They felt they could not divert more from ordinary teaching time shortly before examinations.

The schools that accepted to participate returned a list containing the number of classes in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade and the number of pupils in each grade. Then the project leader manually and at random selected the classes that were to take part in the survey, one class from each school. The English teacher in the

sampled class was asked to answer the questionnaire. If the class had several English teachers, only one was to answer the teacher's questionnaire.

All in all, 66 out of 90 schools agreed to participate. The total number of pupils included in the sample was 1526. One school did not get the material in time because of delay somewhere in the system. Thus the final data comprises 65 schools and 1314 students. 50.2% of the respondents were boys, 49.5% were girls. 99% of the pupils were born in 1986, i.e. they were either 16 years old or going to be 16 later in 2002. The school level participation rate was 73% (65 out of 89 schools).

The sample of students is representative. The sample of teachers is strictly speaking not representative as they are teachers for a representative sample of 10<sup>th</sup> graders.

### **Implementation and scoring**

The survey was administered during weeks 17 and 18 in a 2 hours' session (end of April, beginning of May). For most schools the time set aside for the test was more than needed.

Scoring was done externally with close supervision from the project leader. Norway followed an extended code book, which identified more answers than the original French code book.

### **Test and questionnaire adaptation**

The instructions in the test booklet were translated into Norwegian and New Norwegian. The instructions for the listening exercises were translated from French into Norwegian. The test was identical with the original version sent from Paris. The added self-assessment items in the form of Can-do-statements were not translated into the mother tongue, but were kept in English.

The student questionnaire was translated into two separate booklets, one version in Norwegian and one in New Norwegian, while the teacher questionnaire was in English.

### **English instruction received by the test population**

The pupils in the survey, the 10<sup>th</sup> graders in the final year of the compulsory school, have received English instruction in relation to two national curricula. They attended English lessons for one year in the fourth grade, according to the previous National Curriculum, M87. They skipped one grade level and were taught according to L 97 from grade 6 to 10. The test population has received 6 years of English instruction and 9 years of schooling and have had 15 lessons of 45 minutes each. The length of a Norwegian school year is on average 38 weeks.

## **SPAIN**

### **FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION**

In the seventies a fundamental change in the teaching and learning of foreign languages took place in Spain. The General Education Act of 1970 introduced a foreign language as a compulsory subject for the first time within “Educación General Básica” (6 – 14 years of age) from the age of eleven. The pedagogical orientation for the learning of a foreign language at this stage established that the main goal should be the acquisition of the four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) under an oral approach using active methods and techniques, taking into account some of the contributions of the linguistic structuralism.

From 1990 the current Education Act (see chart 1), LOGSE, established that pupils learn a foreign language in all the compulsory levels. The learning of a foreign language has a compulsory nature from the third grade of Primary Education, 8 years of age, which means a three years advance compared to the former education system. It is worth noting that many Autonomous Regions are implementing the learning of a foreign language from the first grade on an experimental or permanent basis. The language studied depends on the school offer and on the pupils' choice. Although the majority of pupils, 98%, enrolled in public schools study English, the remaining percentage is shared out among French, German, Portuguese and Italian.

Regarding the learning of a second foreign language, pupils have the chance of doing so in the seventh grade at the beginning of Secondary Compulsory Education, twelve years of age. Schools must offer the teaching of a second foreign language in a obligatory way, but it has an optional nature for pupils. 42% of pupils enrolled in public schools study a second foreign language, 40% of pupils study French and the remaining 2% study German, English as a second language and other languages.

The pupils who finished their compulsory studies in 2001 were the first to benefit from the advance of the starting age, 8 years, for the learning of the first foreign language, and the possibility of learning a second foreign language from 12 years of age.

It is important to highlight that the curricular goal of foreign language teaching is not teaching a foreign language but teaching learners to communicate in it. This implies adopting an approach based on communication and geared towards the acquisition of a communicative competence. This competence in turn comprises different sub-competences:

- Grammatical competence, or the ability to use the units and rules of the functioning of the language system.

- Discursive competence, or the ability to use different types of discourse and organise them according to the communicative situation and the participants.
- Socio-linguistic competence, or the ability to adapt linguistic realisation to a specific context, complying with those uses accepted in a particular linguistic community.
- Strategic competence, or the ability to define, correct, express nuances, or, in general introduce adjustments in the course of a communicative situation.

Regarding **Compulsory Secondary Education**, the educational stage where the pupils of the survey belong to, teaching is primarily directed towards a communicative command of the spoken language, to a standard sufficient for communicating in everyday situations and in situations related to the interests and motivations of the learners. Likewise, teaching also promotes the acquisition of written skills, guaranteeing learners the ability to communicate in the written code. The command of both spoken and written language provides learners with the autonomy to continue studying the language in depth at a later date. A systematic reflection about the foreign language is developed, but this linguistic reflection acts essentially as a unifying element and reference point for linguistic knowledge, and is always a means to achieving communicative competence, never an end in itself. The most important socio-cultural aspects of the foreign language are also developed at this stage.

The core curriculum for this stage is organised in the following way: there is a set of general objectives; these objectives are implied in the different blocks of contents in which the foreign language area is divided. These blocks refer to:

I. Communicative skills.

II. Reflection on language that comprises language functions and grammar, vocabulary, and phonetics.

III. Socio-cultural aspects.

The core curriculum also comprises the assessment criteria that establish the type and grade of learning the students should have attained in relation to the abilities described in the general objectives.

A total number of teaching hours for foreign language learning is prescribed in the core curriculum. Those are the minimum hours that a pupil is guaranteed. For the first two years, that constitute the first cycle, a minimum of 210 hours and for the following two years, second cycle, 240 hours are prescribed.

#### English instruction received by the target population in this survey

The pupils that answered the test administered in May 2002 were enrolled in the last grade of compulsory education, that is 10<sup>th</sup> grade. They started learning English as first foreign language on an obligatory basis at grade 3<sup>rd</sup>. According to the present National Curriculum they received three English lessons per week in periods of an hour approximately. Depending on the school curriculum



these periods can be of 50 or 60 minutes, the majority of schools have 50 minutes teaching periods.

Chart 1. Spanish Education System (LOGSE 1990)  Compulsory education

| Age                |  |   |                           |                      |
|--------------------|--|---|---------------------------|----------------------|
| 18-19              |  | → UNIVERSITY EDUCATION / ADVANCED VOCATIONAL TRAINING |                           |                      |
| 17-18              | Baccalaureate/Intermediate Vocational Training | UPPER SECONDARY EDUCATION                             |                           | COMPULSORY EDUCATION |
| 16-17              |  |   |                           |                      |
| 15-16              | Grade 10 <sup>th</sup>                         | Second cycle  | LOWER SECONDARY EDUCATION |                      |
| 14-15              | 9 <sup>th</sup>                                |   |                           |                      |
| 13-14              | 8 <sup>th</sup>                                | First cycle   |                           |                      |
| 12-13 <sup>2</sup> | 7 <sup>th</sup>                                |   |                           |                      |
| 11-12              | 6 <sup>th</sup>                                | Third cycle   | PRIMARY EDUCATION         |                      |
| 10-11              | 5 <sup>th</sup>                                |   |                           |                      |
| 9-10               | 4 <sup>th</sup>                                | Second cycle  |                           |                      |
| 8-9 <sup>1</sup>   | 3 <sup>rd</sup>                                |   |                           |                      |
| 7-8                | 2 <sup>nd</sup>                                | First cycle   |                           |                      |
| 6-7                | 1 <sup>st</sup>                                |   |                           |                      |
| 5-6                | Second cycle                                   |   |                           | INFANT EDUCATION     |
| 4-5                |  |   |                           |                      |
| 3-4                |  |   |                           |                      |
| 2-3                | First cycle                                    |   |                           |                      |
| 1-2                |  |   |                           |                      |
| 0-1                |  |   |                           |                      |

<sup>1</sup> compulsory learning of a first foreign language ( 8 – 18 years of age)

<sup>2</sup> optional learning of a second foreign language (12 – 18 years of age)

## TEST IMPLEMENTATION AND SAMPLE

Spain decided to carry out the assessment following the agreements reached at the preparatory meetings in Paris. The decision was taken with the approval of all the Autonomous Regions met at INCE.

### Population and Sample

The pupils studying at the end of compulsory education or finalising the lower stage of Secondary Education, as it was agreed among the participating countries, formed the target population. This population in Spain corresponds to pupils aged between 15 and 16 in grade tenth, the last grade of compulsory secondary education, studying English as first foreign language in 2002.

The sample was nationally representative. All the Autonomous Regions were included. The sampling design was a two stage cluster design: 1<sup>st</sup> stage: selection of schools using a probability-proportional to size technique; 2<sup>nd</sup> stage: random selection of class within the selected schools.

Schools were stratified according to: Autonomous Region; type of school (public and private)

All the pupils and the teacher of English of the selected class were included in the sample.

Planned sample: 124 schools; 2728 pupils (average of 22 pupils per class); 124 teachers of English.

The planned sample of pupils was expected to produce global means estimates and percentages with a confidence interval of 95% and the following margins of error: Means:  $\forall 0.1s$  (s: standard deviation estimate); Percentages:  $\forall 5.0\%$ .

The precision mentioned above has been obtained without taking into account that the sampling is stratified, due to the difficulty of considering that fact. It has been demonstrated in previous studies in Spain that the achievement variables are distributed in a homogeneous way within every stratum and, as a consequence, a stratified sample entails an improvement of accuracy in obtaining achievement estimates.

Obtained sample: 123 schools; 2957 pupils; 123 teachers of English.

### The instruments

The **test** used was the same as the one used by the rest of the countries. The instructions of the questions were translated into the different Spanish official languages (Basque, Castilian, Catalan, Galician and Valencian). It was edited in two different booklets, Test A and Test B, the first one containing the oral

comprehension and the linguistic competence set of items, the second one comprised the reading comprehension items and the written production ones.

The **pupil's questionnaire** contained more or less the same questions as the other countries' ones but with slightly differences, mainly those related to the own features of the Spanish education system. It was also translated into different Spanish official languages, the same ones as for the test.

The **teacher's questionnaire**, addressed to the teachers of English of the surveyed pupils, contained the same questions in all the participating countries with the exception of those questions concerning the country own education system characteristics. The questionnaire was in English as it was in the majority of the participating countries.

### **Instrument administration and coding**

The administration of these instruments was carried out within the second week of May in all the Spanish Autonomous Regions. The instruments were administered by teachers following the instructions given to them by the corresponding education administration. They were written in a manual in order to create homogeneous assessment conditions for the test administration.

The test of English was administered using two different teaching periods of English, the first one devoted to the first part of the test, Test A comprising the listening and grammar exercises, the second period devoted to Test B with the reading and writing exercises, three questions about the pupils' own opinion on the test, and thirteen questions about pupils' self assessment.

The pupils' questionnaire was administered using a part of a third teaching period of English.

The teachers of English of the target groups answered their questionnaires in the same week.

Once the administration was finished, the firm that distributed the assessment booklets to the different schools in all the autonomous regions gathered those booklets and carried out the coding of the open questions. This coding was done following the code book used in the 1996 assessment revised by all the participants in the current assessment.

Data recording was the following stage. It was carried out by a specialised firm. The test data recording was done following the design given by France. The data from the questionnaires were recorded following international procedures. All the data files were revised in order to detect possible recording errors and if it was the case correct them. In the middle of September the files with de assessment data were sent to France in order to undertake the statistical analyses.



## **SWEDEN**

### **FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION**

#### **The Swedish school system**

The Swedish school system consists of the non-compulsory pre-school class, the nine-year compulsory school (ages 7-16), and the non-compulsory upper-secondary school (ages 16-19). Adult education is offered throughout the system as well as special education for individuals with disabilities. All education throughout the public school system is free of charge. There is no charge to students or their parents for teaching materials, school meals, health services or transport in the compulsory school.

Compulsory schooling can be national, municipal or private (independent). More than 94 per cent of all pupils attend municipal schools. Many pupils receive their entire compulsory schooling in the same school, but it is also common for children to change schools when starting the sixth or seventh grade.

Almost all pupils (98%) attending compulsory school continue directly to upper-secondary school. Some 65 per cent complete their studies within three years. Statistics show that 73 per cent have completed their studies after an additional year. Upper-secondary school is divided into 17 three-year national programmes, 13 mainly vocational, all of which are intended to provide a broad-based education and result in general eligibility for further studies in higher education.

#### **Curriculum guidelines**

Curricula, national objectives and guidelines for schooling in Sweden are defined by Parliament and the government. There are three inter-linked curricula for pre-school, compulsory school (including pre-school class and leisure time centre), and upper-secondary school. Within the goals and frameworks, each individual municipality is free to decide how its schools should be run. Furthermore, there are no national guidelines for the choice of content and methods to be used, i.e. how the goals are to be attained.

In accordance with the National Curriculum, the grading system is goal and criterion related. That is, the grades relate pupils' knowledge and achievements to the goals set out in the syllabuses. In the compulsory school, there are three passing grades – Pass, Pass with Distinction and Pass with Special Distinction. At least once a term, the teacher, the pupil and his or her parent(s)/guardian(s)

have a meeting to discuss how the pupil is progressing and how learning can be stimulated and supported. The pupil is the focus of this meeting, but it also gives the adults involved with the child an opportunity to get to know each other. These meetings take the place of annual reports or marks until grade 8, but they continue throughout compulsory school, and in upper-secondary school.

At the end of ninth grade, national tests are administered to assess pupils' achievement levels in three subjects: English, mathematics and Swedish/Swedish as a second language. The tests provide support for teachers in establishing grades for the school-leaving certificate. Schools are offered national tests in the same subjects at the end of the fifth grade. Although these early tests are not compulsory, they are widely used, partly to support the teachers in deciding whether the goals have been attained, partly to provide diagnostic information. However, it should be noted, that no marks are given until grade 8. There are diagnostic materials in mathematics and Swedish/Swedish as a second language for the years before the sixth grade, and in English, mathematics and Swedish/Swedish as a second language for school years 6 to 9. These materials are intended to highlight individual pupils' strengths and weaknesses in each subject.

### **Language teaching and learning in Sweden**

English in the compulsory school comprises 480 hours. It is compulsory for all students from grade 4, but each school/municipality can choose to start teaching as early as in grade 1, or even in pre-school. Statistics show a tendency towards starting earlier. The schools have to offer a foreign language option from grade 6 or 7. The option comprises 320 hours in the compulsory school and the most common languages are German, Spanish and French (in that order). Statistics show that about 79 per cent of all pupils in the compulsory school learn a second foreign language in grade 7. A third language option is offered from grade 8. Only about 4 per cent of the pupils take this opportunity.

In line with the decentralisation of the school system, there are no overall rules regarding grouping for instruction. Some schools work in mixed-age groups particularly with the 6-10-year-olds, i.e. grades 0/1 to 3, others organise homogeneous groups with regard to age. Flexible grouping also exists. Groups can vary (temporarily) in different subjects and according to ability levels.

### **The aims of the teaching and learning of English**

The general goals for schooling are outlined in the curriculum. In the syllabuses, the goals for each subject are broken down into "goals to aim for" and "goals to be attained". English as a subject aims at developing an all-round communicative ability and language skills necessary for international contacts and should provide pupils with opportunities to use the English language and develop their ability.

In the syllabus for English, five main areas are in focus: *receptive skills, productive skills, interactive skills, cultural awareness and reflection.*

*Receptive skills* focus on the understanding of spoken and written English in different situations, contexts and genres.

*Productive skills* focus on the usage of English in writing or speaking in different situations.

*Interactive skills* focus on the ability to actively take part in discussions and written communication.

*Cultural awareness* focuses on the ability to reflect over ways of living and cultures in English-speaking countries and make comparisons with one's own experiences.

*Reflection* focuses on taking responsibility for one's own learning and consciously use different ways of working to support this learning, to plan, carry out and evaluate tasks on one's own and in co-operation with others.

The syllabuses describe important prerequisites needed for successful language learning/attaining the goals: "The different competencies involved in all-round communicative skills have their counterparts in the structure of the subject. Amongst these is the ability to master a language's form, i.e. its vocabulary, phraseology, pronunciation, spelling and grammar. Competence is also developed in forming linguistically coherent utterances, which in terms of contents and form are increasingly adapted to the situation and audience. When their own language ability is not sufficient, pupils need to compensate for this by using strategies, such as reformulating, or using synonyms, questions and body language." (National Agency for Education, 2001)

### **The education of teachers of English in Sweden**

Teacher education in Sweden is given by the universities and university colleges and comprises 3.5-5.5 years. Teachers usually teach two or three subjects, often more with younger learners. English is not a compulsory subject in the teacher education for the first years of compulsory school. However, to be a teacher of English for the older pupils in the compulsory school, English is required as a subject in the teacher education. The newly reformed teacher education in Sweden is very flexible and the teacher trainees can, to a large extent, form their own education programme from a number of courses offered.

## **TEST IMPLEMENTATION AND SAMPLE**

### **Performing institution**

The Swedish National Agency for Education (Skolverket) is responsible for the Swedish part of the survey. The work has been performed in close co-operation with Göteborg University, which has been responsible for data treatment and analyses. The National Agency for Education is the central authority for the state school system, pre-school activities, childcare and adult education. The duty of the Agency is to concentrate on quality control through follow-ups, evaluation, supervision and quality audits. Other important tasks are continuous reviews of syllabuses and marking criteria, as well as responsibility for an extensive programme of national assessment.

### **Sampling and representativeness**

The present study *Assessment of English* focuses on students' knowledge of English at the end of compulsory schooling. The goal was to include some 1500 students in order to get representative results. In Sweden Year 9 pupils were selected. In school year 9 of the compulsory Swedish school, pupils are about the age of 15.

All Swedish schools (including independent schools) with students in year 8 in 2001 according to the official statistics were part of the selection frame. Schools that were not part of the selection frame, but should have been, were those that started education in school year 9 in the autumn of 2002. Schools in the selection frame that should not be there, were those that closed down school year 9 education.

There was a total number of 1476 schools with at least one student in year 8 in 2001. 60 of those were excluded since they were very special kinds of institutions, such as schools in hospitals. Another 64 schools have been excluded since they had only five or fewer students in year 8. The final selection frame thus comprises 1352 schools.

The 290 Swedish municipalities have been categorised into four types according to Statistics Sweden's categorisation of municipalities. The sample for the Assessment of English study consists of 76 schools chosen randomly and proportionally to the number of schools in each group. In each school one class or group has been randomly chosen, by the National Agency for Education, to take part in the study. In the final sample 71 schools are included. An effort was made to include all 76 schools, but five could not take part for different practical reasons. The school participation rate was thus 93 per cent. The total number of pupils taking part in the study was 1431, which makes up a pupil participation rate of 89 per cent. Reasons for pupils not taking part in the study were usually illness or visits to e. g. the dentist, but also lacking consent from parents to participate.



### **Treatment of data**

The response rate for part A of the test was 99 per cent, for part B of the test 99 per cent, for the pupil questionnaire 97 per cent and for the teacher questionnaire 92 per cent. There was no systematic reason for invalid data. No errors have been removed prior to keying in the data and no respondents have been discarded. Coding has been done by three graduate students of English after thorough training, and keying by a very experienced division at Göteborg University. Both coding and keying were continuously validated and quality controlled during the process. We judge the sample and the data reliable.

### **Test adaptation**

The test was identical with the version from France, though the instructions were translated into Swedish. The test was administered during the first two weeks of November, either in one two-hour session or in two one-hour sessions. The teacher and pupil questionnaires were slightly modified by means of some added questions. The pupil questionnaire was in Swedish, whereas the section with self-assessment items in the form of can-do statements in part B was in English. The teacher questionnaire was administered in English.



# IV INTERNATIONAL COMPARISON OF THE TEST AND QUESTIONNAIRES

## INTERNATIONAL ANALYSIS OF THE TEST RESULTS

This section deals with a comparative approach of the test data in 7 and not 8 countries. This is because, for the reasons explained in section III, the test as it was taken in Germany is in several aspects different from of the EU-test. For the purpose of the international comparison, it has therefore not been possible to take the German data into account.

For the interpretation of the data it should be kept in mind that only descriptive data are presented here. It would not be reliable to conduct inferential analysis on these data for at least two reasons:

1) the assumption that the sample is representative is not firmly established in several countries;

2) the presence of method and item biases. The fact that the test has been administered at different times of the schooling is a strong method bias. Several analyses were conducted to detect differential item functioning (DIF) using several methods (IRT, Mantel-Haenszel, Stout approach). The interpretation of these results has shown that many items were flagged for DIF. As it was not clear why this was so, it was decided to remove these items in the overall analysis.

### **Sample size by countries**

Table 1 presents the number of students who filled out the questionnaire in the different countries. The figures also show the distribution of the pupils over countries. By far the largest sample was tested in Spain with a total of 2843, while the other groups are about the same size. Some pupils did not respond to both parts of the test; they were not retained for the analysis. The figures in the second column in bold characters show the number of pupils retained in the analysis.

Table 1. : Number of responses analysed per country.

|            | <b>Present at both parts</b> | Present in the data file |
|------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| DENMARK    | <b>1462</b>                  | 1486                     |
| FRANCE     | <b>1126</b>                  | 1135                     |
| FINLAND    | <b>1558</b>                  | 1614                     |
| NETHERLAND | <b>1503</b>                  | 1574                     |
| NORWAY     | <b>1306</b>                  | 1314                     |
| SPAIN      | <b>2784</b>                  | 2957                     |
| SWEDEN     | <b>1409</b>                  | 1431                     |
| Total      | <b>11148</b>                 | 11511                    |

### **Presentation of the data**

As was decided for the purpose of this study:

- No overall scale is given in the international report in order to avoid unhelpful comparisons based on a meaningless averaging of all skill scores.
- Results are given for each of the 4 sub-scales (the 4 skills assessed in the test).
- All missing data were re-coded as wrong (code 9).
- Code 1 (right answer) is awarded only to answers which are strictly identical to the officially agreed international coding scheme. All other answers (partially right answer, in particular) were re-coded as wrong (code 0). Partially right answers may be used in national reports, but not for the purpose of international comparison.
- Ten items (in particular all the items of exercise 6) were dropped from the international analysis on account of their lack of reliability.

To make easier the reading of the results and to allow for the comparison between the four scales made up of a different number of items, the results are presented as a percentage of successful items for each scale (the ratio of the score by the number of items in the scale multiplied by 100).

## International results for the four scales

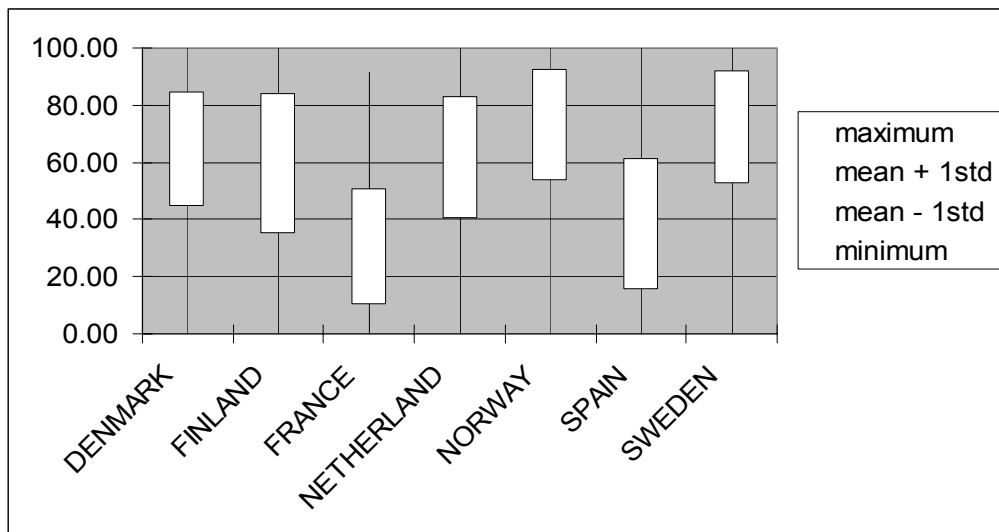
### Oral Comprehension

This scale is made up of 12 items : ex2qs2 + ex2qs3 + ex2qs4 + ex2qs5 + ex2qs6 + ex2qs7 + ex3qs1 + ex3qs2 + ex3qs3 + ex3qs4 + ex3qs5 + ex3qs6.

Table 2. Oral Comprehension scale.

|            | Mean  | Std Deviation | Minimum | Maximum |
|------------|-------|---------------|---------|---------|
| DENMARK    | 64.77 | 20.07         | 0       | 100     |
| FINLAND    | 59.65 | 24.52         | 0       | 100     |
| FRANCE     | 30.60 | 20.39         | 0       | 91.67   |
| NETHERLAND | 61.63 | 21.44         | 0       | 100     |
| NORWAY     | 73.26 | 19.60         | 0       | 100     |
| SPAIN      | 38.33 | 23.08         | 0       | 100     |
| SWEDEN     | 72.18 | 19.65         | 0       | 100     |

Figure 1. Oral Comprehension scale.



Scandinavian country (Norway and Sweden) pupils demonstrate a very good performance for this scale : on average they succeeded to three quarters of the items. With two thirds of successful items, pupils in Finland, Denmark and the Netherlands are clearly doing better than pupils in France and Spain who get lower results, with on average only one third of the items passed by the French. There is a large gap between the results of the highest and the lowest achieving countries (almost 40%).

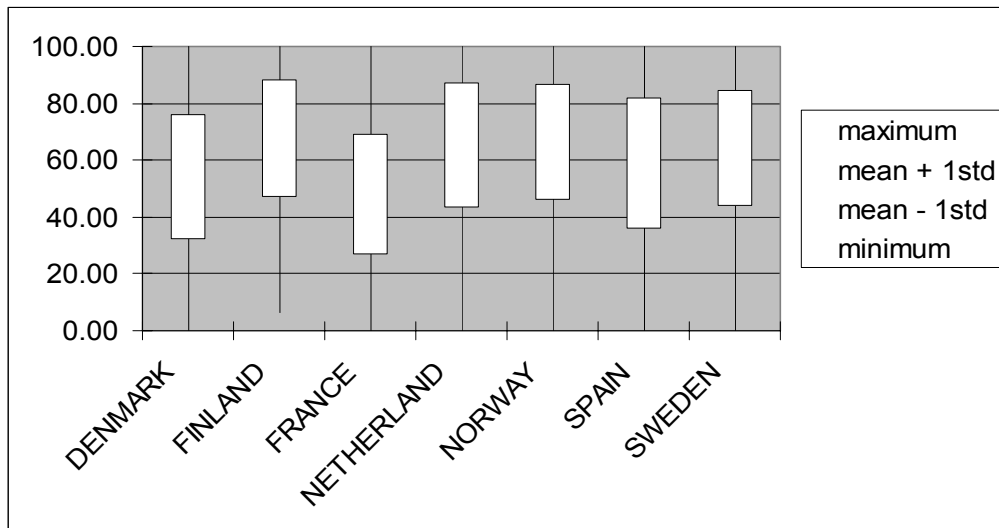
## Linguistic Competence

This scale is made up of 16 items : ex4qs1 + ex4qs2 + ex4qs3 + ex5qs1 + ex5qs2 + ex5qs4 + ex7qs1 + ex7qs2 + ex7qs4 + ex7qs5 + ex7qs6 + ex7qs7 + ex7qs8 + ex7qs9 + ex7qs10 + ex7qs11.

Table 3. Linguistic Competencies scale.

|            | Mean  | Std Deviation | Minimum | Maximum |
|------------|-------|---------------|---------|---------|
| DENMARK    | 53.95 | 22.10         | 0       | 100     |
| FINLAND    | 67.59 | 20.63         | 6.25    | 100     |
| FRANCE     | 48.01 | 21.41         | 0       | 100     |
| NETHERLAND | 65.00 | 22.00         | 0       | 100     |
| NORWAY     | 66.36 | 20.40         | 0       | 100     |
| SPAIN      | 58.75 | 23.30         | 0       | 100     |
| SWEDEN     | 64.23 | 20.43         | 0       | 100     |

Figure 2. Linguistic Competencies scale.



The countries' results are between fifty and sixty percent on average. The ordering of the countries looks similar to that in the oral comprehension scale but the gap between them is not so large. The pupils from the seven countries have on average a good to satisfactory level in the competencies assessed through this scale, with France a little below.

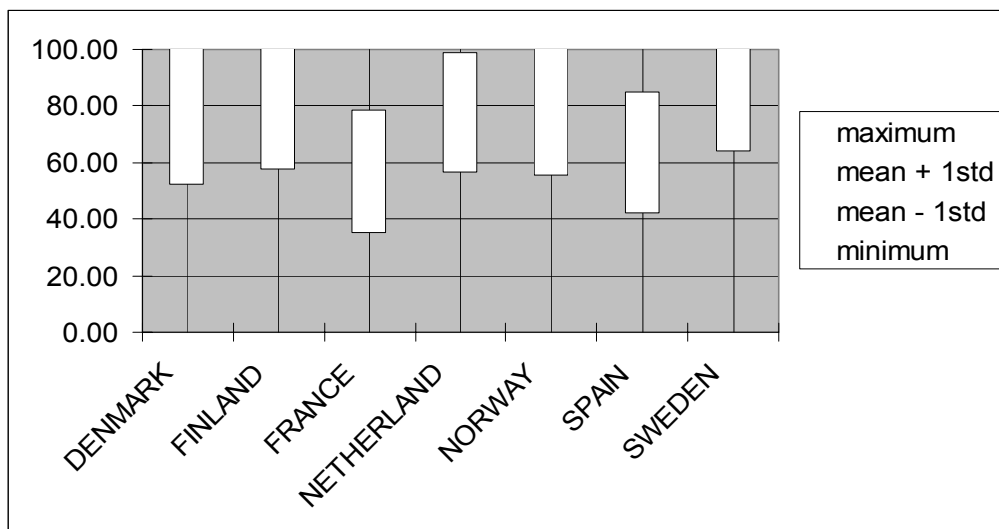
## Reading Comprehension

This scale is made up of 16 items : ex8qs1 + ex8qs2 + ex8qs3 + ex8qs4 + ex8qs5 + ex8qs6 + ex8qs7 + ex8qs8 + ex8qs9 + ex8qs10 + ex8qs11 + ex8qs12 + ex8qs13 + ex8qs14 + ex8qs15 + ex8qs16.

Table 4. Reading Comprehension scale.

|            | Mean  | Std Deviation | Minimum | Maximum |
|------------|-------|---------------|---------|---------|
| DENMARK    | 78.32 | 26.26         | 0       | 100     |
| FINLAND    | 80.29 | 23.07         | 0       | 100     |
| FRANCE     | 56.84 | 21.85         | 0       | 100     |
| NETHERLAND | 77.47 | 21.54         | 0       | 100     |
| NORWAY     | 82.03 | 26.82         | 0       | 100     |
| SPAIN      | 63.57 | 21.66         | 0       | 100     |
| SWEDEN     | 85.88 | 22.31         | 0       | 100     |

Figure 3. Reading Comprehension scale.



This scale shows the best results of all four scales for all the countries. The large number of pupils attaining a very high level for this scale demonstrates the presence of a ceiling effect: the items of this scale were too easy with regard to the pupils' ability. The ordering of the countries is similar to that of the other scales; the pupils from the seven countries have on average a high level of mastery of the competencies assessed through this scale.

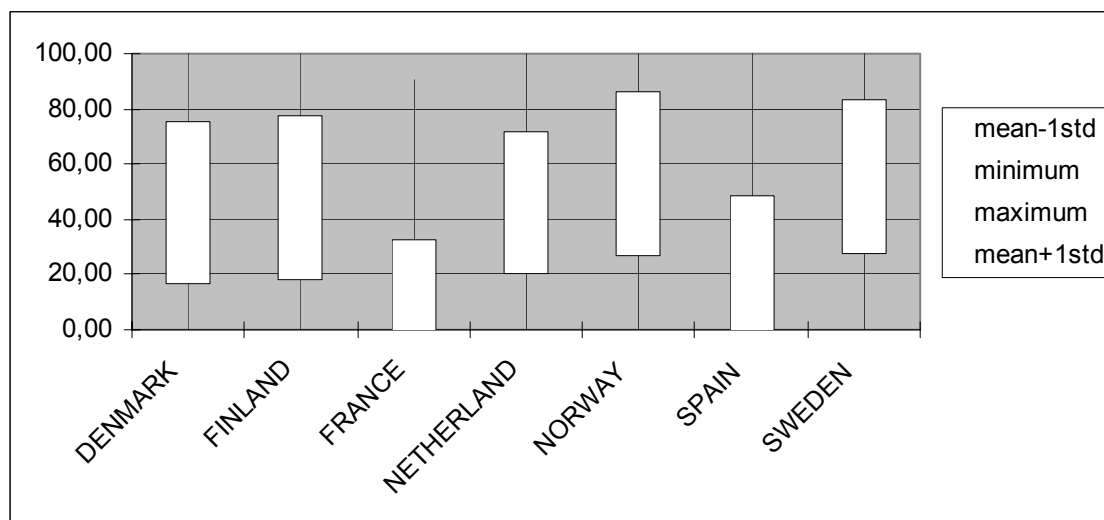
## Written Production

This scale is made up of 21 items : ex9qs1 + ex9qs2 + ex9qs3 + ex9qs4 + ex9qs5 + ex10qs1 + ex10qs2 + ex10qs3 + ex10qs4 + ex10qs5 + ex10qs6 + ex10qs7 + ex10qs8 + ex10qs9 + ex10qs10 + ex10qs11 + ex10qs12 + ex10qs13 + ex10qs14 + ex10qs15 + ex10qs16.

Table 5. Written Production scale.

|            | Mean  | Std Deviation | Minimum | Maximum |
|------------|-------|---------------|---------|---------|
| DENMARK    | 46.17 | 29.33         | 0       | 100     |
| FINLAND    | 47.70 | 29.47         | 0       | 100     |
| FRANCE     | 14.55 | 17.81         | 0       | 90.48   |
| NETHERLAND | 46.04 | 25.67         | 0       | 100     |
| NORWAY     | 56.30 | 29.69         | 0       | 100     |
| SPAIN      | 23.41 | 25.50         | 0       | 100     |
| SWEDEN     | 55.39 | 28.04         | 0       | 100     |

Figure 4. Written Production scale.



Pupils' achievement here is not so good as for the preceding scales. The highest results stay around 50% on average. These exercises seem very difficult for the French and, to a lesser extent, for the Spanish pupils.

## Conclusion for the general analysis of the four scales

For the four scales the order of countries' achievement looks very similar. However the gap between countries differs from scale to scale. A large gap appears mainly between the low results obtained by the French and Spanish pupils, specially on the oral comprehension and writing production scales, and



the other five countries. Scandinavian pupils (in particular Finnish, Norwegian and Swedish) demonstrate the best performance for each of the four scales, except for Denmark for linguistic competence.

### Further analysis: Gender by country interaction

Gender is said to have an effect on the performance for language competencies. The following tables aim at investigating whether, in this study, this difference is to be found in the seven countries and if the size of this effect is the same everywhere.

Table 6. Oral Comprehension scale, gender by country interaction.

|            | boys  |       |         | girls |       |         | difference |                          |
|------------|-------|-------|---------|-------|-------|---------|------------|--------------------------|
|            | Mean  | Std   | Valid N | Mean  | Std   | Valid N | mean       | Effect size <sup>°</sup> |
| DENMARK    | 65.46 | 20.07 | 712     | 64.33 | 19.87 | 732     | 1.13       | 0.06                     |
| FINLAND    | 58.84 | 24.31 | 802     | 60.52 | 24.74 | 756     | -1.67      | -0.07                    |
| FRANCE     | 30.70 | 20.56 | 531     | 30.46 | 20.05 | 581     | 0.23       | 0.01                     |
| NETHERLAND | 63.92 | 20.74 | 707     | 59.99 | 21.78 | 768     | 3.93       | 0.18                     |
| NORWAY     | 73.20 | 19.10 | 653     | 73.38 | 20.14 | 648     | -0.18      | -0.01                    |
| SPAIN      | 37.28 | 22.57 | 1350    | 39.37 | 23.51 | 1363    | -2.08      | -0.09                    |
| SWEDEN     | 72.34 | 19.94 | 679     | 72.04 | 19.40 | 730     | 0.29       | 0.01                     |

$$^{\circ} d = (m_{\text{boys}} - m_{\text{girls}}) / \text{Std}_{\text{whole}}$$

Table 7. linguistic Competencies scale, gender by country interaction.

|            | boys  |       |         | girls |       |         | difference |                          |
|------------|-------|-------|---------|-------|-------|---------|------------|--------------------------|
|            | Mean  | Std   | Valid N | Mean  | Std   | Valid N | mean       | Effect size <sup>°</sup> |
| DENMARK    | 56.08 | 21.26 | N=712   | 52.09 | 22.62 | N=732   | 3.99       | 0.18                     |
| FINLAND    | 64.46 | 21.68 | N=802   | 70.90 | 18.90 | N=756   | -6.44      | -0.31                    |
| FRANCE     | 46.53 | 21.62 | N=531   | 49.41 | 21.13 | N=581   | -2.88      | -0.13                    |
| NETHERLAND | 64.53 | 22.29 | N=707   | 66.09 | 21.30 | N=768   | -1.56      | -0.07                    |
| NORWAY     | 63.41 | 21.36 | N=653   | 69.34 | 18.95 | N=648   | -5.93      | -0.29                    |
| SPAIN      | 56.27 | 23.16 | N=1350  | 61.56 | 22.93 | N=1363  | -5.29      | -0.23                    |
| SWEDEN     | 62.48 | 20.62 | N=679   | 65.86 | 20.14 | N=730   | -3.38      | -0.17                    |

$$^{\circ} d = (m_{\text{boys}} - m_{\text{girls}}) / \text{Std}_{\text{whole}}$$

Table 8. Reading Comprehension scale, gender by country interaction.

|            | boys  |       |         | girls |       |         | difference<br>mean | Effect size <sup>o</sup> |
|------------|-------|-------|---------|-------|-------|---------|--------------------|--------------------------|
|            | Mean  | Std   | Valid N | Mean  | Std   | Valid N |                    |                          |
| DENMARK    | 80.60 | 22.95 | N=712   | 76.55 | 28.49 | N=732   | 4.05               | 0.15                     |
| FINLAND    | 79.13 | 24.61 | N=802   | 81.52 | 21.26 | N=756   | -2.39              | -0.10                    |
| FRANCE     | 55.84 | 23.85 | N=531   | 57.89 | 19.86 | N=581   | -2.05              | -0.09                    |
| NETHERLAND | 78.40 | 22.62 | N=707   | 77.10 | 20.28 | N=768   | 1.30               | 0.06                     |
| NORWAY     | 79.60 | 29.33 | N=653   | 84.68 | 23.57 | N=648   | -5.08              | -0.19                    |
| SPAIN      | 62.82 | 22.67 | N=1350  | 64.51 | 20.47 | N=1363  | -1.69              | -0.08                    |
| SWEDEN     | 86.20 | 22.81 | N=679   | 85.58 | 21.85 | N=730   | 0.62               | 0.03                     |

$$^o d = (m_{\text{boys}} - m_{\text{girls}}) / \text{Std}_{\text{whole}}$$

Table 9. Written Production scale, gender by country interaction.

|            | boys  |       |         | girls |       |         | difference<br>mean | Effect size <sup>o</sup> |
|------------|-------|-------|---------|-------|-------|---------|--------------------|--------------------------|
|            | Mean  | Std   | Valid N | Mean  | Std   | Valid N |                    |                          |
| DENMARK    | 49.02 | 28.57 | N=712   | 43.56 | 29.69 | N=732   | 5.46               | 0.19                     |
| FINLAND    | 44.27 | 29.87 | N=802   | 51.34 | 28.63 | N=756   | -7.07              | -0.24                    |
| FRANCE     | 13.96 | 17.94 | N=531   | 15.18 | 17.64 | N=581   | -1.22              | -0.07                    |
| NETHERLAND | 47.58 | 25.54 | N=707   | 45.29 | 25.57 | N=768   | 2.28               | 0.09                     |
| NORWAY     | 52.21 | 29.70 | N=653   | 60.44 | 29.17 | N=648   | -8.23              | -0.28                    |
| SPAIN      | 21.43 | 24.27 | N=1350  | 25.47 | 26.56 | N=1363  | -4.03              | -0.16                    |
| SWEDEN     | 53.98 | 28.08 | N=679   | 56.71 | 27.96 | N=730   | -2.73              | -0.10                    |

$$^o d = (m_{\text{boys}} - m_{\text{girls}}) / \text{Std}_{\text{whole}}$$

### Conclusion on gender effect

Gender effect seems to be small ( $d < .20$ ) in most countries and for the four scales. In all countries and for all the scale it goes in favour of girls except for Denmark (linguistic competencies, reading comprehension, and written production) and in the Netherlands (oral comprehension). Its size varies slightly between countries and scales. The main effects (medium size) are observed for the “linguistic competencies” scale in Finland, Norway and Spain, and the “written production” scale in Finland and Norway.

## INTERNATIONAL ANALYSIS OF THE SELF-ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENT

The questions about self evaluation were made up two parts : the first one dealt with how pupils feel about the difficulty of the test (three questions) ; the second one with the self assessment of their efficacy for different competencies and situations of English language understanding. In this section as well the German data are not taken into account.

### Test difficulty

This was made up of three questions. Only the first one “How did you find this test?” was administered in all the countries. A four point scale was used everywhere excepted in Denmark where a five points scale was used. This is why it was decided not to include the Danish data in this analysis. It should also be noted that the Swedish data are somewhat different to the extent that they are an aggregated number<sup>8</sup>.

|            | easy  | Rather/quite easy | Rather/quite difficult | difficult | TOTAL |
|------------|-------|-------------------|------------------------|-----------|-------|
| FINLAND    | 8.5%  | 44.5%             | 37.9%                  | 9.0%      | 1539  |
| FRANCE     | 9.2%  | 1.2%              | 62.5%                  | 27.1%     | 1099  |
| NETHERLAND | 23.3% | 49.8%             | 22.3%                  | 4.5%      | 1495  |
| NORWAY     | 19.1% | 43.4%             | 33.7%                  | 3.9%      | 1033  |
| SPAIN      | 10.0% | 9.5%              | 40.0%                  | 40.5%     | 2693  |
| SWEDEN     | 31.8% | 44.2%             | 17.8%                  | 6.3%      | 1328  |

Table 1a : Relative frequency for the question “How did you find this test?”.

|            | Easy & rather easy | Rather difficult & difficult |
|------------|--------------------|------------------------------|
| FINLAND    | 53.0%              | 47.0%                        |
| FRANCE     | 10.4%              | 89.6%                        |
| NETHERLAND | 73.1%              | 26.9%                        |
| NORWAY     | 62.4%              | 37.6%                        |
| SPAIN      | 19.5%              | 80.5%                        |
| SWEDEN     | 75.9%              | 24.1%                        |

<sup>8</sup> The Swedish pupils were asked to rate each task separately, immediately after it had been completed. The figures in the table are the aggregated mean values for all tasks.

Table 1b : Relative frequency for the question “How did you find this test?” with aggregated responses for all countries.

The ranking of the countries in this question seems quite similar to the ranking obtained through the different competency scale. The majority of the pupils in the countries with highest performance in the test find the test rather easy or easy; conversely the pupils in the countries with the lowest performance find predominantly the test difficult or rather difficult.

Questions were asked about which part of the test pupils found easiest and most difficult. This was administered in four countries only : Finland, France, Netherlands and Spain. The pupils could choose to designate one of the four competencies.

Table 2a : Relative frequency for the question “Easiest part of the test?”

|            | listening exercises | linguistic exercises | reading exercises | writing exercises | Total |
|------------|---------------------|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------|
| FINLAND    | 53.9%               | 11.9%                | 28.2%             | 6.0%              | 1524  |
| NETHERLAND | 79.7%               | 8.5%                 | 9.9%              | 1.8%              | 1500  |
| SPAIN      | 33.1%               | 29.7%                | 30.1%             | 7.1%              | 2656  |
| FRANCE     | 39.7%               | 32.8%                | 17.1%             | 10.4%             | 1135  |

Table 2b : Relative frequency for the question “Most difficult part of the test?”

|            | listening exercises | linguistic exercises | reading exercises | writing exercises | Total |
|------------|---------------------|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------|
| FINLAND    | 11.3%               | 32.2%                | 8.9%              | 47.7%             | 1519  |
| NETHERLAND | 3.1%                | 24.3%                | 10.5%             | 62.2%             | 1471  |
| SPAIN      | 23.2%               | 6.7%                 | 13.7%             | 56.4%             | 2683  |
| FRANCE     | 9.6%                | 5.1%                 | 2.8%              | 82.5%             | 1135  |

The relative frequency of the pupils’ choices demonstrates a clear-cut difference between, on one side, Finland and the Netherlands where “oral comprehension” is predominantly considered as easy, “written production” as most difficult and, on the other side, Spain where opinions are more divided about the easiness of the proposed tasks, one half considering “written production” as the most difficult. For the majority of French pupils “written production” is considered as the most difficult part of the test.

### **Self assessment**

The self assessment scales were made up of 13 questions which can be merge into three competency domains : oral comprehension (4 questions), reading comprehension (4 questions) and written production (5 questions). The 13 questions were administered in the seven countries. To simplify the analysis and the result presentation, only the pupils who answered all 13 questions are used here.

To make easier the reading of the results and to allow for the comparison between the three scales made up of a different number of items, the results are presented as a percentage of the score maximum for each scale (the ratio of the score by the maximum score available for the scale multiplied by 100).

As the main tendencies are very much alike throughout the 13 questions, comments are made about only one table which summarises the responses. Table 3 is constructed from the relative frequency of the pooled answer “easy” and “rather easy”. This relative frequency being the complement of the opposite answers : “rather difficult” and “difficult”, this is sufficient to have an idea of the pupils’ representation of their self efficacy.

The results in table 3 demonstrate that the self evaluation is high for all the situations and all the countries. The variation between situations is small for the Netherlands and Sweden. The range is more important in France and Spain : in these countries where pupils perform less well than in the five other countries, pupils seem to have a differentiated representation of their self efficacy according to the task mentioned. It is interesting to note that there is little variation in the Dutch pupils’ answers. They agree predominantly that the different tasks and situations are easy or rather easy for them.

One must however be careful in the interpretation of these data as the first two questions may have been understood by pupils to apply to either oral comprehension or to reading comprehension.

|            | Oral comprehension | Reading comprehension | Written production |
|------------|--------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| DANEMARK   | 80%                | 67.5%                 | 64,%               |
| FINLAND    | 95.5%              | 88.9%                 | 83,3%              |
| FRANCE     | 63.6%              | 56%                   | 43,9%              |
| NETHERLAND | 94.9%              | 87.3%                 | 87,1%              |
| NORWAY     | 89.9%              | 77.8%                 | 79,8%              |
| SPAIN      | 83,0%              | 78.6%                 | 66,5%              |
| SWEDEN     | 91.4%              | 82.3%                 | 80,4%              |

Table 3. Relative frequency of the aggregate answers “easy” and “rather easy” for oral comprehension, reading comprehension and written production questions.



## INTERNATIONAL ANALYSIS OF THE PUPIL QUESTIONNAIRE

This reports on the data from the pupils' questionnaire. As discussed in the section on the development of the instruments, not all questions from this questionnaire have been included in the sets in all countries. For the interpretation of the data it should be kept in mind that descriptive data only is presented here. The differential effects of the various factors will be taken into account in the overall analyses of the total data set.

### 1. Number of pupils from different countries

Table 1 presents the number of students that filled out the questionnaire in different countries. The figures also show the distribution of the pupils over countries. By far the largest sample has been tested in Spain with a total of 2843, while the German group is the smallest with 458 pupils.

Table1 1: Number of students present at administration of questionnaire

|         |             | count | pct   |
|---------|-------------|-------|-------|
| Country | Netherlands | 1515  | 12.9  |
|         | France      | 1134  | 9.7   |
|         | Spain       | 2843  | 24.2  |
|         | Finland     | 1607  | 13.7  |
|         | Denmark     | 1486  | 12.7  |
|         | Sweden      | 1383  | 11.8  |
|         | Norway      | 1314  | 11.2  |
|         | Germany     | 458   | 3.9   |
| Total   |             | 11740 | 100.0 |

## 2 Pupils' characteristics

### 2.1 Year of birth and gender

For the total sample years of birth range from 1980 to 1990, the mean age is 16 years and 1 month. The median age of the total sample + Spain, Finland, Norway is 16 years, while for The Netherlands, France, Denmark, Sweden and Germany the median age is 15 years.

20.1% of the Spanish pupils is older than 16 years, while 22.4% of the Dutch pupils is younger than 15. Also the German group shows a larger number of younger pupils. The data on age show that there are differences between the groups with the Finnish pupils being the oldest group and the Swedish groups the youngest, but it should be noted that the Swedish data gathering was done several months later than in most of the other countries.

The data on gender show that differences between countries are very small in this respect.

### 2.2 Country of birth, home language and parents' native language

Table 2 presents data on two aspects: country of birth, and for pupils not born in country of testing, whether they come from an English speaking country or another country. The data show that numbers for pupils born in a country where English is the first language are very low. 4.6% of the total sample comes from another country with Germany (14.3%) and Sweden (9.0%) having the highest figures.

Table 2: Question 3, Country of birth\*

|  | Country     | Country of birth   |  |       | Valid Total |       | Total |
|--|-------------|--------------------|--|-------|-------------|-------|-------|
|  |             | country of testing | country with English as first language | other | missing     |       |       |
|  |             | %                  | %                                      | %     | N           | %     | N     |
|  | Netherlands | 96.9               | .3                                     | 2.7   | 1506        | .6    | 1515  |
|  | France      |                    |  |       |             | 100.0 | 1134  |
|  | Spain       | 96.7               | .1                                     | 3.2   | 2838        | .2    | 2843  |
|  | Finland     | 98.1               |  | 1.9   | 1561        | 2.9   | 1607  |
|  | Denmark     | 94.4               | .5                                     | 5.1   | 1463        | 1.5   | 1486  |
|  | Sweden      | 90.4               | .7                                     | 9.0   | 1373        | .7    | 1383  |
|  | Norway      | 95.6               | .2                                     | 4.2   | 1314        |       | 1314  |
|  | Germany     | 85.7               |  | 14.3  | 456         | .4    | 458   |
|  | Total       | 95.2               | .3                                     | 4.6   | 10511       | 10.5  | 11740 |

\* percentages of pupils in valid categories are based on the total valid N, percentages missing on total N.



Table 3: Question 4, Home language\*

|         |             | Home Language     |         |       | Valid Total | Total |       |
|---------|-------------|-------------------|---------|-------|-------------|-------|-------|
|         |             | National language | English | other | missing     |       |       |
|         |             | %                 | %       | %     | N           | %     | N     |
| Country | Netherlands | 94.9              | .8      | 4.3   | 1497        | 1.2   | 1515  |
|         | France      | 93.5              | .1      | 6.4   | 996         | 12.2  | 1134  |
|         | Spain       | 98.7              | .2      | 1.1   | 2839        | .1    | 2843  |
|         | Finland     | 98.1              | .1      | 1.7   | 1607        |       | 1607  |
|         | Denmark     | 93.9              | 1.1     | 5.0   | 1460        | 1.7   | 1486  |
|         | Sweden      | 89.0              | .7      | 10.4  | 1370        | .9    | 1383  |
|         | Norway      | 95.5              | .9      | 3.6   | 1308        | .5    | 1314  |
|         | Germany     | 83.2              |         | 16.8  | 458         |       | 458   |
| Total   |             | 94.9              | .5      | 4.6   | 11535       | 1.7   | 11740 |

\* percentages of pupils in valid categories are based on the total valid N, percentages missing on total N.

Table 3 provides data on Home languages of pupils. 0.5% of the pupils speak English at home, while the figure for other languages is 4.6%. Again, and not surprisingly, Germany and Sweden show the highest figures. The data on home language and parents' languages provide us with some interesting information: while 0.5% of the pupils mention English as their home language, 1.5% of the pupils mention that one or both of their parents have English as their native language. By far the largest group is found in Denmark: while only 16 pupils mention English as their home language, 82 appear to have English speaking parents. Apparently Danish (or another language) remains the home language in that setting.

Table 4: Question 5, Parents' native language\*

|         |             | Parents speak English as native language |                 | Valid Total | Total |       |
|---------|-------------|--|-----------------|-------------|-------|-------|
|         |             | yes, one or both                         | no, neither one | missing     |       |       |
|         |             | %.                                       | %.              | N           | %     | N     |
| Country | Netherlands | 1.3                                      | 98.7            | 1504        | .7    | 1515  |
|         | France      |  |                 |             | 100.0 | 1134  |
|         | Spain       | .4                                       | 99.6            | 2837        | .2    | 2843  |
|         | Finland     | .4                                       | 99.6            | 1591        | 1.0   | 1607  |
|         | Denmark     | 5.8                                      | 94.2            | 1412        | 5.0   | 1486  |
|         | Sweden      |  |                 |             | 100.0 | 1383  |
|         | Norway      |  |                 |             | 100.0 | 1314  |
|         | Germany     | .2                                       | 99.8            | 458         |       | 458   |
| Total   |             | 1.5                                      | 98.5            | 7802        | 33.5  | 11740 |

\* percentages of pupils in valid categories are based on the total valid N, percentages missing on total N.

### 2.3 Estimated levels of English language proficiency of parents and siblings

Level of education of parents and estimated levels of English proficiency of parents and siblings are seen as important types of information on socio-economic background of the pupils over countries. Earlier attempts to make lists of professions and label these for SES failed, and we decided to include the data on English language proficiency for this purpose. Table 5 presents data on the highest proficiency of both parents. In the table the categories 'very bad' and 'bad' have been combined and also the categories 'good' and 'very good'.

Table 5: Question 14, Estimated levels\* of English language proficiency of parents (with the minimum, maximum and mean score, the standard deviation (s.d.) and the number of students from whom data are available (N))

|         |             | Mean level of either parent |      |      |      |      | Highest level of either parent |      |      |      |      |
|---------|-------------|-----------------------------|------|------|------|------|--------------------------------|------|------|------|------|
|         |             | min.                        | max. | mean | s.d. | N    | min.                           | max. | mean | s.d. | N    |
| Country | Netherlands | 1                           | 6    | 4.49 | 1.03 | 1463 | 1                              | 6    | 4.94 | 1.02 | 1463 |
|         | France      | .                           | .    | .    | .    | 0    | .                              | .    | .    | .    | 0    |
|         | Spain       | 1                           | 6    | 2.31 | 1.40 | 2805 | 1                              | 6    | 2.75 | 1.73 | 2805 |
|         | Finland     | 1                           | 6    | 4.06 | 1.15 | 1584 | 1                              | 6    | 4.58 | 1.20 | 1584 |
|         | Denmark     | 1                           | 6    | 4.55 | 1.04 | 1444 | 1                              | 6    | 5.03 | 1.01 | 1444 |
|         | Sweden      | 1                           | 6    | 4.72 | 1.01 | 1365 | 1                              | 6    | 5.14 | .99  | 1365 |
|         | Norway      | 1                           | 6    | 4.65 | .98  | 1304 | 1                              | 6    | 5.06 | .98  | 1304 |
|         | Germany     |                             |      |      |      | 0    |                                |      |      |      | 0    |
| Total   |             | 1                           | 6    | 3.87 | 1.51 | 9965 | 1                              | 6    | 4.32 | 1.59 | 9965 |

\* Scale 1=not at all, 2=very bad, 3=bad, 4=not good/not bad, 5=good, 6=very good

The data in table 5 show that the highest scores can be found for the Nordic countries and the Netherlands, while the scores are much lower for Spain. The differences between fathers and mothers are very small in all countries.

In addition to the information on level of proficiency of parents, we also gathered data on estimated English proficiency of siblings. On average, levels are fairly high (between 4 and 4.5 on a 6-pointscale), with only small differences between countries. The highest level are mentioned for Sweden. For this question we have to keep in mind that these are pupils' estimations, which are likely to be influenced by their own proficiency in English. Interestingly the pattern for Spain is very similar to that of the other countries, which might suggest that the next generation is 'catching up' with respect to English proficiency.

## *2.4 Age of starting learning English, and other languages learnt at school*

The range of ages at which pupils start learning English at school is very wide, though we may assume that the 0-4 are based on misinterpretations of the questions. Clearly, most children start learning English at age 8 to 11, which in most school systems is the second part of primary education. The patterns are largely similar for all countries except Spain where the starting age is 8 rather than 10, and for Sweden and Norway is it 9 rather than 10.

In addition to English, other languages may be learned as well. There was a question on this in the questionnaire, but it turned out that it was phrased differently in different countries, making a comparison between countries problematic.

## *3.1 Opportunities for contact with English*

For this variable there were the following categories:

- Parents
- Siblings
- Friends
- Radio music
- TV
- CD's/Cassettes
- Cinema
- Books
- Computer games
- The Internet
- Travelling abroad

The outcomes for this question are summarised in table 6.

Table6: Question 21a-m, Scores on a four point scale\* about opportunities to get into contact with the English language (with the mean, the standard deviation (s.d.) and the number of students from whom data are available\*\*)

|              | Country     |      |        |      |       |      |         |      |         |      |        |      |        |      | Total |      |
|--------------|-------------|------|--------|------|-------|------|---------|------|---------|------|--------|------|--------|------|-------|------|
|              | Netherlands |      | France |      | Spain |      | Finland |      | Denmark |      | Sweden |      | Norway |      | Total |      |
|              | mean        | s.d. | mean   | s.d. | mean  | s.d. | mean    | s.d. | mean    | s.d. | mean   | s.d. | mean   | s.d. | mean  | s.d. |
| parents      | 1.64        | .80  | 1.31   | .58  | 1.14  | .46  | 1.48    | .60  | 1.67    | .68  | 1.71   | .83  | 1.61   | .79  | 1.46  | .70  |
| siblings     | 1.58        | .76  | 1.45   | .64  | 1.31  | .56  | 1.59    | .65  | 1.57    | .67  | 1.63   | .79  | 1.50   | .71  | 1.49  | .68  |
| friends      | 1.77        | .77  | 1.52   | .68  | 1.38  | .65  | 1.93    | .76  | 2.00    | .73  | 2.03   | .82  | 1.98   | .79  | 1.74  | .78  |
| radio music  | 3.20        | .86  | 2.92   | 0    | 2.97  | .88  | 3.13    | .88  | 3.37    | .81  | 3.33   | .86  | 3.29   | .88  | 3.14  | .90  |
| TV           | 3.20        | .86  | 2.04   | .89  | 1.62  | .78  | 2.95    | .89  | 3.52    | .64  | 3.61   | .61  | 3.66   | .58  | 2.75  | 3    |
| CD/cassettes | 3.01        | .97  | 2.78   | 4    | 3.10  | .91  | 3.46    | .76  | 3.30    | .93  | 3.32   | .88  | 3.52   | .74  | 3.20  | .92  |
| cinema       | 2.82        | 4    | 1.56   | .78  | 1.29  | .60  | 3.40    | .76  | 2.68    | .86  | 2.95   | .88  | 3.10   | .92  | 2.38  | 6    |
| papers       | 1.54        | .68  | 1.31   | .58  | 1.18  | .46  | 1.71    | .68  | 1.45    | .60  | 1.54   | .61  | 1.70   | .74  | 1.45  | .64  |
| magazines    | 1.86        | .79  | 1.53   | .70  | 1.39  | .63  | 1.80    | .69  | 1.97    | .81  | 1.57   | .65  | 2.09   | .82  | 1.69  | .76  |
| books        | 1.70        | .72  | .      | .    | 1.77  | .72  | 1.61    | .70  | 1.65    | .68  | 1.88   | .80  | 1.88   | .83  | 1.75  | .75  |
| PC: games    | 2.78        | 1    | 2.47   | 2    | 2.58  | .98  | 2.74    | 5    | 2.71    | 8    | 2.59   | 3    | 2.68   | 0    | 2.64  | 6    |
| PC: Internet | 2.98        | .94  | 2.08   | 0    | 2.45  | 1.09 | 3.01    | .88  | 2.78    | .90  | 3.12   | .87  | 3.11   | .88  | 2.75  | 3    |
| travelling   |             | 1.0  |        | 1.0  |       |      |         | 1.0  |         | 1.1  |        | 1.1  |        | 1.1  |       | 1.0  |
| abroad       | 2.54        | 1    | 2.08   | 9    | 1.46  | .77  | 2.37    | .97  | 2.10    | .92  | 2.46   | 6    | 2.64   | 5    | 2.12  | 5    |

\* Scale: 1=never, 2=sometimes, 3=often, 4=very often

\*\* Number of pupils statistics are based on: Netherlands=1292, France=1046, Spain=2694, Finland=1348, Denmark=1087, Sweden=1239, Norway=1133, Total=9839.

In all countries radio music, CD/cassettes, and the computer appear to be important opportunities to get into contact with English. This is also the case for TV and to a lesser extent cinema in those countries where programs are subtitled rather than dubbed TV and cinema are much more important as opportunities in the Nordic countries and the Netherlands than in France and Spain. Differences between countries are small overall though there are some relevant differences. One example is the use of the Internet in Finland and Spain: Clearly, pupils in Finland have more access to the internet than pupils in Spain.

### 3.2 Contact with English through media

In addition to opportunities for contact with English, we also asked the pupils to indicate the use of media. There are not always data from all countries for all questions, but it was decided to include the information we have because we think this is still useful from a policy perspective.

We have data on general media use from the Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden and Norway. The data for video, TV, computer games and use of internet as summarised in table 7.

Table 7: Question 15a-d, General media use

|                              |           | Country     |         |        |        | Total  |
|------------------------------|-----------|-------------|---------|--------|--------|--------|
|                              |           | Netherlands | Denmark | Sweden | Norway |        |
|                              |           | %           | %       | %      | %      | %      |
| Use of video                 | yes       | 82.5        | 78.7    | 78.4   | 82.5   | 80.5   |
|                              | no        | 17.5        | 21.3    | 21.6   | 17.5   | 19.5   |
|                              | N (=100%) | (1500)      | (1486)  | (1383) | (1314) | (5683) |
| Use of TV                    | yes       | 89.7        | 94.9    | 96.1   | 96.4   | 94.2   |
|                              | no        | 10.3        | 5.1     | 3.9    | 3.6    | 5.8    |
|                              | N (=100%) | (1500)      | (1486)  | (1383) | (1314) | (5683) |
| Use of computer:<br>games    | yes       | 76.3        | 61.3    | 58.1   | 65.4   | 65.4   |
|                              | no        | 23.7        | 38.7    | 41.9   | 34.6   | 34.6   |
|                              | N (=100%) | (1500)      | (1486)  | (1383) | (1312) | (5681) |
| Use of computer:<br>internet | yes       | 84.6        | 79.9    | 87.3   | 86.5   | 84.5   |
|                              | no        | 15.4        | 20.1    | 12.7   | 13.5   | 15.5   |
|                              | N (=100%) | (1500)      | (1486)  | (1383) | (1312) | (5681) |

The data in table 7 show that all media are used. For this subset of countries, computer use and internet also show high figures. Clearly the internet is an important source of contact generally and therefore also for contact with English.

For the question language of music we also have data from Finland. In table 8 we present data on the language of music using three categories: more national than English/more English than national/ about equal.

Table 8: Question 19, Language of music

|         |             | Language of music          |                            |               | Total     |
|---------|-------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------|-----------|
|         |             | more national than English | more English than national | about equally |           |
|         |             | %                          | %                          | %             | N (=100%) |
| Country | Netherlands | 4.5                        | 75.9                       | 19.6          | 1459      |
|         | Finland     | 8.8                        | 66.7                       | 24.6          | 1494      |
|         | Denmark     | .6                         | 86.4                       | 13.0          | 1427      |
|         | Sweden      | .7                         | 82.2                       | 17.0          | 1363      |
|         | Norway      | .5                         | 91.7                       | 7.8           | 1301      |
| Total   |             | 3.2                        | 80.2                       | 16.6          | 7044      |

It is unfortunate that for this question we have no data from France and Spain, since they might show an interesting contrast with the data from the Northern-European countries in which English is clearly dominant as the language of music.

While the music may be in various languages, the crucial issue is to what extent the pupils are really interested in the lyrics. Only when attention is being paid to the lyrics that type of input can play a role in language acquisition. For this question we have data from the Netherlands, France and Finland only. Data on the importance of lyrics in the national language are summarised in table 9. Data on the importance of lyrics in English are given in table 10.

Table 9: Question 20a, Importance of lyrics in national language

|         |             | Importance of lyrics in national language |                |                  |                | Total     |
|---------|-------------|---|----------------|------------------|----------------|-----------|
|         |             | not at all important                      | less important | rather important | very important |           |
|         |             | %   | %              | %                | %              | N (=100%) |
| Country | Netherlands | 17.1                                      | 44.5           | 29.2             | 9.2            | 1457      |
|         | France      | 4.5                                       | 17.5           | 44.3             | 33.8           | 1120      |
|         | Finland     | 1.6                                       | 8.4            | 48.8             | 41.2           | 1591      |
| Total   |             | 7.8                                       | 23.5           | 40.7             | 28.0           | 4168      |

Table 10: Question 20b, Importance of lyrics in English

|         |             | Importance of lyrics in English |                |                  |                | Total     |
|---------|-------------|---------------------------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|-----------|
|         |             | not at all important            | less important | rather important | very important |           |
|         |             | %                               | %              | %                | %              | N (=100%) |
| Country | Netherlands | 11.9                            | 45.9           | 28.7             | 13.4           | 1467      |
|         | France      | 15.8                            | 42.2           | 30.5             | 11.5           | 1124      |
|         | Finland     | 2.6                             | 19.5           | 56.3             | 21.5           | 1592      |
| Total   |             | 9.4                             | 34.9           | 39.7             | 16.0           | 4183      |

The comparison between countries shows that for the Netherlands the language of lyrics doesn't seem to be that important, while for both France and Finland lyrics in the national language are important. The Finnish pupils value the lyrics in English most with 78% indicating that they find the lyrics (very) important. On the basis of these findings it is to be expected that language of music will be more important for learning English for Finnish pupils than for Dutch or French pupils.

For the interpretation of the above data it is useful to relate this to the data on time spent listening to music. The mean and median number of hours per week for different countries is presented in table 11.

Table 11: Question 18, Time spent to music listening (in hours per week)

|         |             | Time spent to music listening (in hours per week) |      |      |       |       |        |      |
|---------|-------------|---|------|------|-------|-------|--------|------|
|         |             | N   | min. | max. | mean  | s.d.  | median | mode |
| Country | Netherlands | 1422  | 0    | 168  | 16.41 | 19.30 | 10     | 10   |
|         | France      | 1056  | 0    | 50   | 13.73 | 10.91 | 10     | 10   |
|         | Spain       | 0   | .    | .    | .     | .     | .      | .    |
|         | Finland     | 1572  | 0    | 168  | 22.62 | 24.10 | 15     | 10   |
|         | Denmark     | 1424  | 1    | 168  | 20.39 | 20.86 | 14     | 10   |
|         | Sweden      | 1247  | 0    | 98   | 21.00 | 19.60 | 15     | 10   |
|         | Norway      | 1297  | 0    | 168  | 22.54 | 27.63 | 11     | 10   |
|         | Total       | 8018  | 0    | 168  | 19.69 | 21.58 | 12     | 10   |

The data show that the number of hours listening to music is considerable for all groups with a somewhat lower figure for France. The data on the median are probably more relevant here than the mean data, because in the median extreme values (like 168 hours a week) have less of an effect. All in all music and language through music can be considered an important source of input for the pupils.

### *3.3 Listening to English radio*

For this variable there are data from all countries except Spain. Information on whether pupils listen to English Radio. The most remarkable finding is that almost all Danish pupils indicate that they listen to English radio. To what extent the wording of the question may have led them to include listening to music in English in their responses is unclear. For the other groups figures are between 6 and 18.9%, but without an indication of the amount of time spent listening it is difficult to meaningfully interpret these data.

### *3.4 Watching English language TV programs*

Here, we have no data for Spain and France, probably because the national networks do not provide (non-dubbed) English TV programs. The findings for the other groups are presented in table 12. A distinction is made between dubbed and non-dubbed programs.



Table 12: Question 17, Watching English language TV programs

|         |             | Watching English language TV programs |                           |                          |      | Total<br>N (=100%) |
|---------|-------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|------|--------------------|
|         |             | yes, with<br>subtitles                | yes, without<br>subtitles | yes, with<br>and without | no   |                    |
|         |             | %                                     | %                         | %                        | %    |                    |
| Country | Netherlands | 33.9                                  | 4.2                       | 37.9                     | 24.0 | 1297               |
|         | Finland     | 61.2                                  | 3.6                       | 25.0                     | 10.2 | 1592               |
|         | Denmark     | 61.6                                  | 38.4                      |                          |      | 1449               |
|         | Sweden      | 56.5                                  | 7.3                       | 35.2                     | .9   | 1376               |
|         | Norway      | 58.6                                  | 12.7                      | 26.0                     | 2.7  | 1311               |
| Total   |             | 54.8                                  | 13.3                      | 24.4                     | 7.4  | 7025               |

The findings for the Dutch group are remarkable in the sense that it is very unlikely that 24% of the pupils do not watch English language TV programs, since English is so pervasive on Dutch television that one can only avoid it by consciously switching to another channel when an English spoken program comes up. Maybe the question has been interpreted as 'watching English TV channels' rather than programs. For all other countries subtitled programs is the most frequently chosen option.

### 3.5 Use of English while living abroad

'Living abroad' was included as a sort of control variable: if in a national sample a large proportion would have lived in an English speaking environment, this could give a flawed picture of the role of education and other contact variables. Figures are less than 4% for all groups with a maximum of 3.9% for Sweden.

### 3.6 Use of English during vacations

In particular for the age group in this study, peer groups are very important during holidays and it is quite likely that for such contacts, English is the language used as a lingua franca between teenagers with different language backgrounds. In the questionnaire there was a question on holidays abroad, but unfortunately the phrasing of the questions in different countries was so different that it is difficult to compare between countries.

### 3.7 Attitudes towards English

In the questionnaire there were two questions related to attitudes towards English: one on likeability or appreciation of English, and one on the importance of English. The findings on these questions are summarised in table 13. In the

table four categories of answers have been reduced to two: for the question 'Do you like English?' the categories 'not at all' and 'more dislike than like' have been combined as are the categories 'more like than dislike' and 'very much'. For the question on importance the two remaining categories are 'less or not important' and 'very or rather important'. The outcomes show that English is really liked in the Nordic countries with Sweden's 96.1% as the top score. Slightly lower but still positive outcomes are found for France, Spain and the Netherlands. A similar pattern is found with respect to importance of English, though here figures are higher than for likeability: in all countries percentages are 80% and higher.

Table 13: Question 22-23, Likeability and importance of English

| Country     |  | Likeability of English |                  | Total<br>N (=100%) | Importance of English    |                                | Total<br>N (=100%) |
|-------------|--|------------------------|------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------|
|             |  | (rather)<br>dislike    | (rather)<br>like |                    | less or not<br>important | very or<br>rather<br>important |                    |
|             |  | %                      | %                | %                  | %                        |                                |                    |
| Netherlands |  | 22.7                   | 77.3             | 1447               | 18.2                     | 81.8                           | 1443               |
| France      |  | 28.7                   | 71.3             | 1111               | 16.7                     | 83.3                           | 1112               |
| Spain       |  | 38.5                   | 61.5             | 2788               | 14.6                     | 85.4                           | 2836               |
| Finland     |  | 10.4                   | 89.6             | 1594               | 7.3                      | 92.7                           | 1596               |
| Denmark     |  | 9.8                    | 90.2             | 1434               | 4.0                      | 96.0                           | 1457               |
| Sweden      |  | 3.9                    | 96.1             | 1379               | 2.0                      | 98.0                           | 1380               |
| Norway      |  | 11.2                   | 88.8             | 1309               | 8.4                      | 91.6                           | 1307               |
| Total       |  | 20.1                   | 79.9             | 11062              | 10.6                     | 89.4                           | 11131              |

### 3.8 Advantages of knowing English

Additional information on attitudes has been gathered through questions on the advantages of knowing English. In the questionnaire the pupils had to indicate to what extent they agree that specific advantages are important. The advantages listed were the following:

- Communication abroad
- Comprehension of music texts
- Facilitation of working with computers
- Sounds better in English
- No expression in national language
- Needed for further education
- Better chance to get a good job
- Read books in English
- Understand English language TV program without subtitles
- Easier contact with foreigners
- Access to new developments in science and technology

The outcomes are summarised in table 14. Here the combined answers of the categories 'rather agree' and 'completely agree' are presented.

Table 14: Question 24, Advantages of knowing English: percentages of pupils in the combined answer categories 'rather agree', 'completely agree' (with N= the number of pupils from whom data are available=100%)

|  | Country         |        |         |         |        |        | Total |
|--|-----------------|--------|---------|---------|--------|--------|-------|
|  | Netherlan<br>ds | Spain  | Finland | Denmark | Sweden | Norway |       |
|  | N=1337          | N=2807 | N=1561  | N=1193  | N=1281 | N=1241 |       |
|  | %               | %      | %       | %       | %      | %      | %     |
| Communication abroad                                     | 94.6            | 93.0   | 98.6    | 96.1    | 96.6   | 88.7   | 94.5  |
| Comprehension of music texts                             | 86.2            | 89.7   | 94.1    | 61.1    | 95.3   | 86.8   | 86.7  |
| Facilitation of computer work                            | 85.5            | 85.9   | 96.6    | 79.9    | 90.6   | 79.5   | 86.7  |
| Sounds better in English                                 | 60.4            |        | 66.9    | 49.8    | 70.5   | 70.3   | 63.8  |
| No expression in national language                       | 40.8            |        | 63.0    | 43.6    | 59.5   | 47.2   | 51.4  |
| Needful for further education                            | 72.0            | 88.9   | 93.7    | 85.8    | 82.8   | 68.7   | 83.4  |
| Better chance to get a good job                          | 70.8            | 93.6   | 93.7    | 91.5    | 85.9   | 74.0   | 86.5  |
| Read books in English                                    | 80.0            | 81.4   | 76.3    | 52.1    | 84.0   | 59.7   | 74.1  |
| Understand English language TV-program without subtitles | 84.0            | 79.5   | 93.8    | 79.3    | 95.2   | 89.8   | 86.0  |
| Easier contact with foreigners                           | 91.7            |        | 97.6    | 80.2    | 94.1   | 75.7   | 88.5  |
| Access to new developments in science and technology     | 58.8            | 84.8   | 68.9    | 59.8    | 72.2   | 60.5   | 70.4  |

The data in this table show that the patterns are different for different countries and these differences are probably more interesting than the overall percentages for the total sample (which does not include France and Germany for this question). For the Netherlands, Finland and Sweden, Communication abroad and Easier contact with foreigners are dominant as advantages, while for Spain also job opportunities have a high priority. Sounds better in English and No expression in national language do not seem to be important advantages. It is very likely that e.g. reading books in English is in fact part of Needed for further education, and that Facilitation of computer work and Access to new developments in science and technology are closely related.

### 3.9 English classes: length of periods and number of periods per week.

The number of periods for English language teaching shows some variation between countries, but in most countries the mean is three periods per week. Only in Sweden the number seems to be somewhat lower. This is related to the finding that the average length of teaching periods is somewhat greater in Sweden as well.

### 3.10 English classes: Homework

In table 15 means and medians are given for the number of minutes per week spent on homework. Again the median is the better measure here because some pupils give extremely high figures (960 minutes per week for Sweden). The median is not sensitive to such incidental outliers, while they do influence the mean.

Table 15: Question 28, Homework for English (in minutes per week)

|         |             | English classes: homework (in minutes per week) |      |      |        |       |        |      |
|---------|-------------|---|------|------|--------|-------|--------|------|
|         |             | N   | min. | max. | mean   | s.d.  | median | mode |
| Country | Netherlands | 1402  | 0    | 360  | 47.95  | 42.99 | 30     | 30   |
|         | France      | 1070  | 0    | 300  | 61.15  | 54.36 | 46     | 60   |
|         | Spain       | 2573  | 30   | 600  | 144.14 | 96.87 | 120    | 60   |
|         | Finland     | 1573  | 0    | 520  | 55.39  | 54.63 | 30     | 30   |
|         | Denmark     | 1456  | 60   | 480  | 102.61 | 57.49 | 120    | 60   |
|         | Sweden      | 1227  | 0    | 960  | 72.16  | 79.92 | 60     | 60   |
|         | Norway      | 1276  | 0    | 900  | 84.18  | 90.35 | 60     | 60   |
| Total   |             | 10577   | 0    | 960  | 88.49  | 81.97 | 60     | 60   |

The data show that there are marked differences between countries with respect to the amount of time spent on homework. The median is 60 minutes and the median 81.97 minutes. Most time is spent on homework in Spain and Denmark with a median of 120 minutes per week, least time in the Netherlands with a median of 30 minutes.

### 3.11 English classes: language use

With respect to teaching activities of the teacher three options were presented:

- teacher talks to class
- teacher talks to 1 or 2 pupils
- Pupils work in groups

The pupils had to indicate whether these situations happened on a 4-points scale ranging from 'never' to 'most of the time'. The findings for these questions are summarised in table 16 in which the 4-points scale is reduced to a 2 points scale.

Table 16: Question 29a-c, Normal situation in English classes: percentages of pupils in the combined answer categories 'never/every now and then' (=1) and 'half/most of the time' (=2)

|                                     |           | Country    |        |         |         |        |        | Total  |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|------------|--------|---------|---------|--------|--------|--------|
|                                     |           | Netherland | France | Finland | Denmark | Sweden | Norway |        |
|                                     |           | ds         |        |         |         |        |        | %      |
|                                     |           | %          | %      | %       | %       | %      | %      | %      |
| Teacher talks                       | 1         | 16.8       | 51.2   | 14.0    | 27.1    | 26.4   | 24.1   | 25.4   |
|                                     | 2         | 83.2       | 48.8   | 86.0    | 72.9    | 73.6   | 75.9   | 74.6   |
|                                     | N (=100%) | (1390)     | (1038) | (1473)  | (1357)  | (1336) | (1268) | (7862) |
| Teacher talks with<br>1 or 2 pupils | 1         | 82.1       |        | 85.8    | 72.6    | 70.3   | 61.4   | 74.9   |
|                                     | 2         | 17.9       |        | 14.2    | 27.4    | 29.7   | 38.6   | 25.1   |
|                                     | N (=100%) | (1390)     |        | (1473)  | (1357)  | (1336) | (1268) | (6824) |
| Pupils work in<br>groups            | 1         | 86.6       |        | 77.1    | 65.3    | 55.1   | 61.8   | 69.5   |
|                                     | 2         | 13.4       |        | 22.9    | 34.7    | 44.9   | 38.2   | 30.5   |
|                                     | N (=100%) | (1390)     |        | (1473)  | (1357)  | (1336) | (1268) | (6824) |

The data clearly show that in most countries it is basically the teacher who does the talking. For France the picture seems to be different, but unfortunately there are no data for the other two options, so it is not clear what happens when the teacher is not talking to the class as a whole.

In the light of new insights for language teaching that stress the importance of interaction in the classroom, the findings are remarkable: overall some 70% of the pupils never work in groups and 75% indicate that the talking teacher is the normal situation. It is obvious that there is some room for educational improvement here. Of course there are clear differences between countries. In the Nordic countries group work is much more common than in the Netherlands.

The next question to ask then is, what language does the English teacher use when he or she is talking. Table 17 presents the data on the use of English in the three settings mentioned above.

Table17: Question 30a-c, Use of English in English classes: percentages of pupils in the four answer categories\*

|  |              | Country     |        |        |         |         |        |        | Total   |
|--|--------------|-------------|--------|--------|---------|---------|--------|--------|---------|
|  |              | Netherlands | France | Spain  | Finland | Denmark | Sweden | Norway |         |
|  |              | %           | %      |        | %       | %       | %      | %      | %       |
| Teacher talks English                    | 1            | 5.3         | 2.2    | 9.0    | .6      | 1.2     | 2.1    | 1.8    | 3.9     |
|  | 2            | 38.8        | 9.4    | 22.5   | 20.9    | 9.2     | 9.8    | 10.8   | 18.4    |
|  | 3            | 26.8        | 23.1   | 32.1   | 39.6    | 43.5    | 28.3   | 30.9   | 32.5    |
|  | 4            | 29.1        | 65.3   | 36.4   | 39.0    | 46.1    | 59.8   | 56.5   | 45.2    |
|  | N<br>(=100%) | (1398)      | (1075) | (2836) | (1549)  | (1441)  | (1361) | (1286) | (10946) |
| Teacher talks English with 1 or 2 pupils | 1            | 29.3        | 55.8   | 21.4   | 21.9    | 7.2     | 16.4   | 8.8    | 21.9    |
|  | 2            | 54.7        | 21.4   | 30.6   | 62.1    | 26.1    | 43.7   | 40.3   | 39.3    |
|  | 3            | 9.5         | 10.3   | 29.0   | 12.3    | 38.7    | 25.7   | 32.8   | 23.6    |
|  | 4            | 6.5         | 12.6   | 19.1   | 3.8     | 28.0    | 14.2   | 18.2   | 15.2    |
|  | N<br>(=100%) | (1397)      | (1067) | (2831) | (1481)  | (1402)  | (1337) | (1266) | (10781) |
| Pupils work in groups and talk English   | 1            | 48.3        | 47.6   | 51.7   | 11.3    | 20.4    | 12.8   | 14.7   | 32.0    |
|  | 2            | 41.2        | 39.6   | 31.7   | 60.0    | 37.4    | 42.9   | 43.0   | 41.1    |
|  | 3            | 6.8         | 8.1    | 11.4   | 21.2    | 32.0    | 28.4   | 26.7   | 18.4    |
|  | 4            | 3.7         | 4.7    | 5.2    | 7.5     | 10.1    | 15.9   | 15.6   | 8.5     |
|  | N<br>(=100%) | (1395)      | (1068) | (2833) | (1499)  | (1410)  | (1349) | (1271) | (10825) |

\* answer categories: 1=never, 2=every now and then, 3=half of the time, 4=most of the time

The teacher appears to be using English most of the time with a remarkable low figure of 55.9% for the Dutch pupils. For the other settings the figures go down even further. It is quite likely that Dutch is the language of normal classroom management. It is interesting to note that the percentage of English is higher for the setting where the teacher is talking as compared to the settings with the teacher talking with 1 or 2 pupils of the pupils working in groups. In the latter two settings English is hardly used at all in the Netherlands, France and Spain.

### 3.12 Resources used in teaching

In the questionnaire there was a lot of options. Table 18 summarises the results with the four answer categories reduced to two.

Table 18: Question 31a-g, Resources used in English classes: percentages of pupils in the combined answer categories 'never/sometimes' (=1) and 'often/very often' (=2)

|                               |              | Country         |        |        |         |         |        |        | Total<br>% |
|-------------------------------|--------------|-----------------|--------|--------|---------|---------|--------|--------|------------|
|                               |              | Netherlan<br>ds | France | Spain  | Finland | Denmark | Sweden | Norway |            |
|                               |              | %               | %      | %      | %       | %       | %      | %      |            |
| Audio cassettes               | 1            | 40.6            | 18.7   |        | 18.7    | 38.7    | 34.2   | 26.3   | 29.8       |
|                               | 2            | 59.4            | 81.3   |        | 81.3    | 61.3    | 65.8   | 73.7   | 70.2       |
|                               | N<br>(=100%) | (1395)          | (1089) |        | (1543)  | (1423)  | (1361) | (1295) | (8106)     |
| Video cassettes               | 1            | 91.4            | 96.7   |        | 92.3    | 82.2    | 88.5   | 91.2   | 90.1       |
|                               | 2            | 8.6             | 3.3    |        | 7.7     | 17.8    | 11.5   | 8.8    | 9.9        |
|                               | N<br>(=100%) | (1383)          | (1083) |        | (1512)  | (1424)  | (1351) | (1286) | (8039)     |
| Computer programmes           | 1            | 96.3            | 98.3   |        | 94.5    | 96.0    | 95.8   | 97.7   | 96.3       |
|                               | 2            | 3.7             | 1.7    |        | 5.5     | 4.0     | 4.2    | 2.3    | 3.7        |
|                               | N<br>(=100%) | (1381)          | (1086) |        | (1503)  | (1401)  | (1351) | (1279) | (8001)     |
| Newspapers, magazines, comics | 1            | 89.7            | 86.5   |        | 97.6    | 89.3    | 88.7   | 94.8   | 91.3       |
|                               | 2            | 10.3            | 13.5   |        | 2.4     | 10.7    | 11.3   | 5.2    | 8.7        |
|                               | N<br>(=100%) | (1378)          | (1083) |        | (1497)  | (1400)  | (1348) | (1280) | (7986)     |
| Internet                      | 1            | 90.9            | 99.2   | 94.9   | 96.7    | 85.8    | 93.0   | 91.3   | 93.2       |
|                               | 2            | 9.1             | .8     | 5.1    | 3.3     | 14.2    | 7.0    | 8.7    | 6.8        |
|                               | N<br>(=100%) | (1379)          | (1087) | (2830) | (1497)  | (1384)  | (1352) | (1282) | (10811)    |
| Books for extensive reading   | 1            | 64.9            | 30.6   |        | 56.3    | 32.2    | 76.3   | 68.2   | 55.4       |
|                               | 2            | 35.1            | 69.4   |        | 43.7    | 67.8    | 23.7   | 31.8   | 44.6       |
|                               | N<br>(=100%) | (1378)          | (1084) |        | (1518)  | (1390)  | (1338) | (1275) | (7983)     |
| English speaking visitors     | 1            | 95.6            | 96.1   | 93.2   | 98.1    | 96.7    | 95.7   | 97.0   | 95.7       |
|                               | 2            | 4.4             | 3.9    | 6.8    | 1.9     | 3.3     | 4.3    | 3.0    | 4.3        |
|                               | N<br>(=100%) | (1377)          | (1071) | (2825) | (1507)  | (1396)  | (1353) | (1280) | (10809)    |

As these data show the range of resources used in all countries is very limited, it is basically limited to Audio-cassettes and Books for extensive reading. More modern resources like computer programs or the internet are very rarely used. Whether this reflects constraints and availability of such media in the classroom

or pedagogical preferences is not clear. In light of the data on the use of internet and computers by pupils as mentioned in table 7 it is clear that hardly any use is made of the skills pupils have in this respect. Differences between countries are small here.

### 3.13 School, media and other sources of learning English

In order to find out what in the pupils' perception are the most important sources in learning English, we asked them to indicate in percentages what the contributions were of the school, the media and other sources. The results are presented in Table 19 .

Table 19: Question 32a-c, Acquisition of the English language: portions in percent attributed by the pupils to school, media and other sources

|         |             | N    | Acquisition of the English language |       |                 |       |              |       |
|---------|-------------|------|-------------------------------------|-------|-----------------|-------|--------------|-------|
|         |             |      | % through school                    |       | % through media |       | % other ways |       |
|         |             |      | mean                                | s.d.  | mean            | s.d.  | mean         | s.d.  |
| Country | Netherlands | 1335 | 53.76                               | 22.54 | 30.82           | 20.15 | 15.42        | 16.02 |
|         | Spain       | 2242 | 63.36                               | 24.79 | 14.55           | 15.77 | 22.09        | 25.80 |
|         | Finland     | 1525 | 61.01                               | 21.59 | 23.50           | 17.40 | 15.50        | 15.95 |
|         | Denmark     | 1267 | 54.49                               | 19.46 | 31.21           | 17.88 | 14.30        | 14.97 |
|         | Sweden      | 1258 | 55.33                               | 19.96 | 30.66           | 18.68 | 14.01        | 15.29 |
|         | Norway      | 1203 | 52.07                               | 20.96 | 34.48           | 19.85 | 13.45        | 15.82 |
| Total   |             | 8830 | 57.55                               | 22.43 | 25.96           | 19.51 | 16.50        | 19.03 |

Overall, school seems to contribute between 52% and 64% with a mean of 57%. There is a wider range for the role for media as a source: while in Spain it was estimated to be about 15%, it was close to 35% for Norway. Other sources, probably including the ones reported on earlier for sources of contact with English, amount on average to 16.5%.



## INTERNATIONAL ANALYSIS OF THE TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

This chapter is devoted to the information gathered from the questionnaire addressed to the teachers who were teaching English to the assessed pupils in the study. In this questionnaire teachers were asked about different aspects of their teaching profession concerning not only their teaching practice but also their initial and in-service training, their professional experience and some other aspects of their professional environment.

### Descriptive analysis of the Teachers' questionnaire

Five hundred and twenty eight teachers from eight European countries participated in the study. The distribution of teachers per country is given in table 1.

Table 1. Number and percentage of teachers per country.

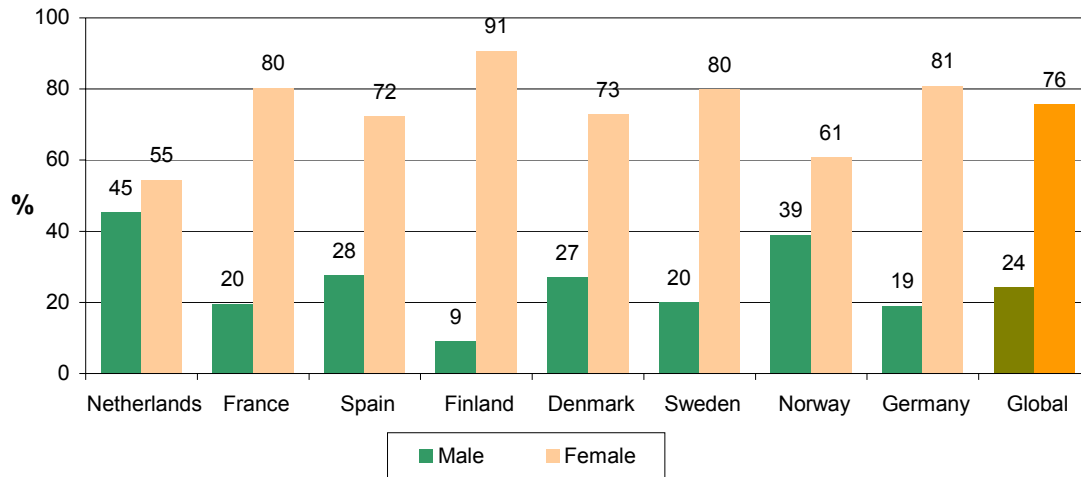
| Country         | Number of teachers | Percentage |
|-----------------|--------------------|------------|
| The Netherlands | 33                 | (6%)       |
| France          | 51                 | (9%)       |
| Spain           | 123                | (22%)      |
| Finland         | 109                | (19%)      |
| Denmark         | 89                 | (16%)      |
| Sweden          | 70                 | (12%)      |
| Norway          | 65                 | (12%)      |
| Germany         | 21                 | (4%)       |
| Total           | 561                | 100%       |

It should be stressed that these teachers do not constitute a representative sample of all the teachers who teach the English language in the grade where the pupils of this study are enrolled, since the study sample was based on schools and pupils. It should also be explained there are some variables which some countries did not include in their respective questionnaires; but these are exceptions. Germany, however, has just a few variables in common with the rest of the countries, so the information about teachers in Germany will only appear exceptionally in the comments of some questions.

## Personal data

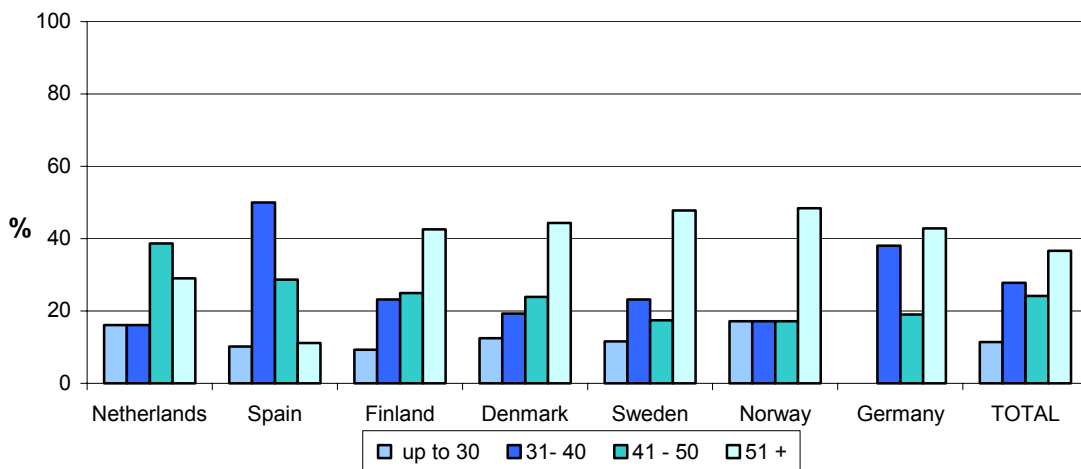
Most of the teachers in the different countries are females. The proportion between males and females does not vary greatly among countries, it stands at around 75% of women and 25% of men. Some exceptions can be found, this is the case of the Netherlands where there are similar numbers for both genders, 45% of women and 55% of men, and in Finland where 91% of the teachers in the study are female and a 9% are male, (see graph 1).

Graph 1. Percentage of teachers by gender and by country



As far as the ages of the teachers are concerned, the majority of teachers in the study are between 23 and 63. The mean for all the countries is 44 with a standard deviation of 10, France and Germany are not included in this mean. France did not ask this question and Germany asked the question in the ranges which appear in the graph. The mean of the Spanish teachers is the lowest, 39, and the mean of the rest of the countries is very similar around 45 years of age (see graph 2).

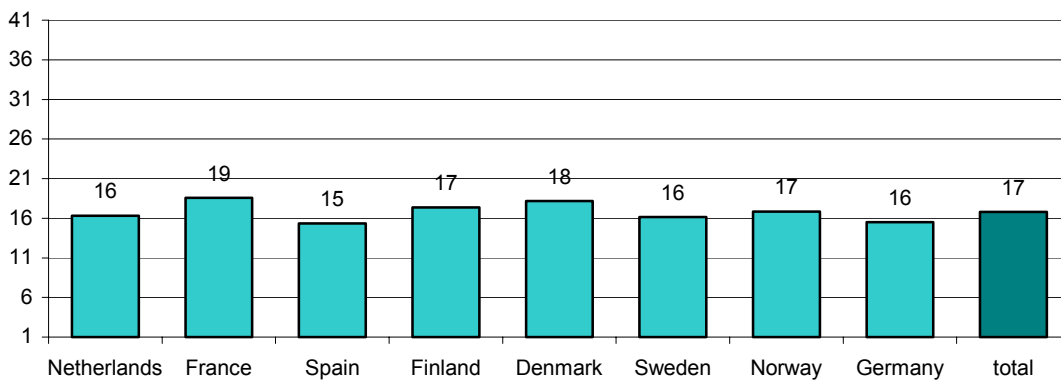
Graph 2. Percentage of teachers by age range and by country.



## Professional experience

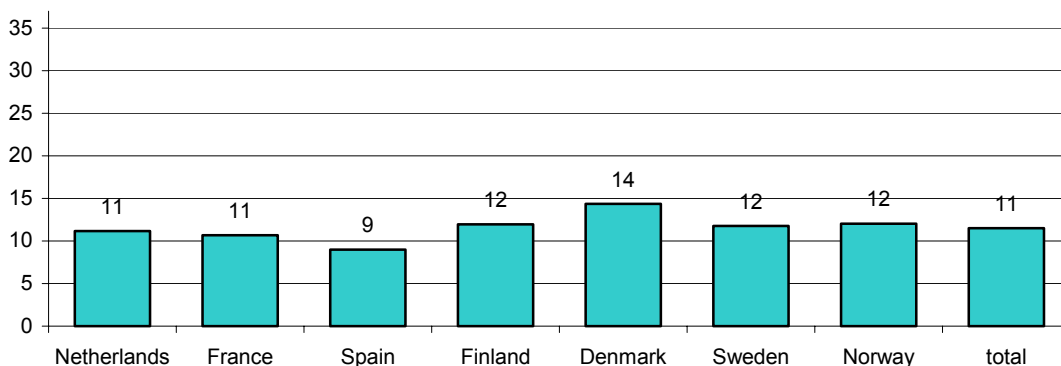
Regarding the teachers' experience as teachers of English language, it can be said that this is an experienced group,. Only ten per cent has been teaching English for 3 years or less, but the statistic mean in the different countries, included Germany, goes from 15 years in Spain to 18 years in Denmark, 17 years being the mean of the whole group (see graph 3).

Graph 3. Years teaching English.



With respect to the number of years they have been teaching English at the school where the survey was carried out, the average number of years in different countries is very much alike as it can be observed in graph 4. Teachers from Denmark are the ones with a longer permanence at the same school, 14 years, whereas teachers from Spain are the ones with a shorter one, 9 years, being the mean of all the countries 11.

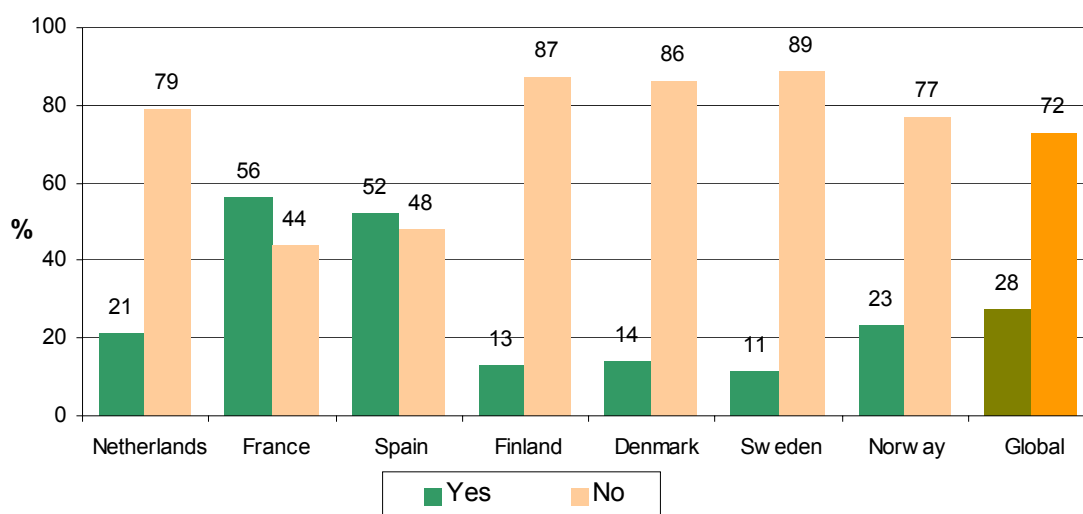
Graph 4. Years at the same school.



## Initial training

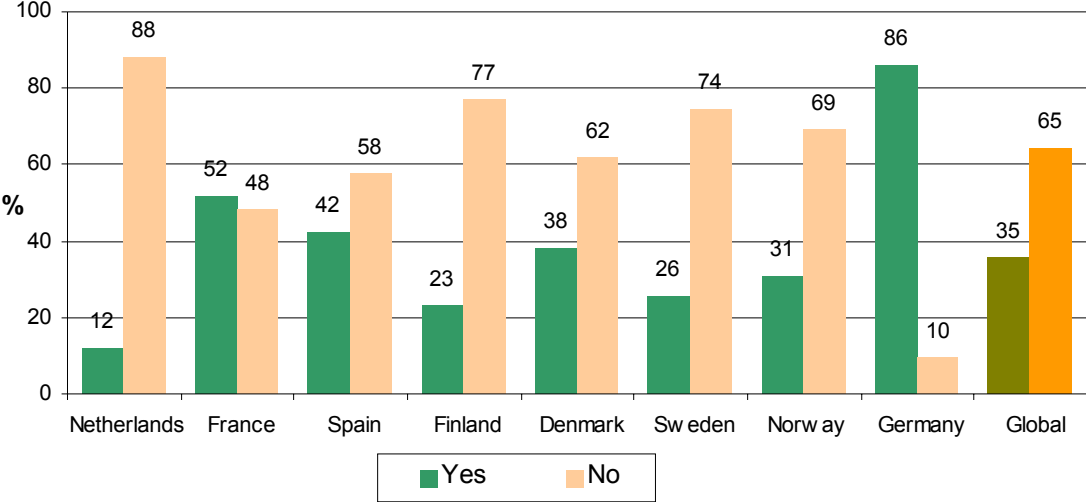
Regarding the answers to the following question: “Before becoming a teacher did you complete any studies (six months minimum) in an English speaking country?”, 28% of the surveyed teachers answered that they have completed some kind of studies in an English speaking country for more than six months. France and Spain are the countries with a higher proportion of teachers who have followed those studies, 56% of teachers from France and 52% from Spain. However, the French figure needs to be qualified since it refers not to teacher who studied abroad but to teachers who spent time (but not necessarily to study) abroad during their period of study. Sweden is the country with the lowest percentage, 11%, (see graph 5). These differences in the proportion of teachers who have completed these studies could be explained because teachers from France and Spain must go to an English speaking country to learn English whereas teachers from the Scandinavian countries can learn it properly without leaving their country. It could also be due to the fact that teachers may have interpreted the question in a different way in the various countries.

Graph 5. Percentage of teachers who have studied English in an English speaking country.



35% of the surveyed teachers have stayed for more than six months in an English speaking country for different reasons than those related to their studies. As can be seen in graph 6, 86% of the German teachers have done so, followed by the 52% of the French teachers and the 42% of the Spanish teachers. It can also be seen that only 12% of the Dutch teachers have stayed for more than six months in an English speaking country.

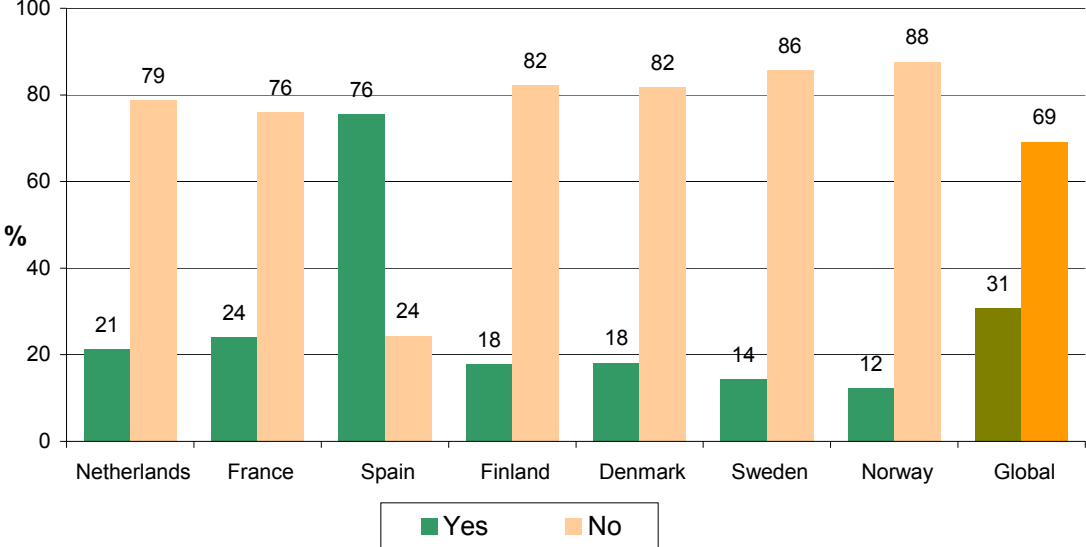
Graph 6. Percentage of teachers who have stayed in an English speaking country.



**In-service training**

The surveyed teachers were asked about their participation in in-service courses with a duration of more than thirty hours over the last four years. As can be observed in graph 7 the global percentage of teachers giving an affirmative answer to this question reflects the influence of the ninety-three teachers from Spain (76%) giving a positive answer.

Graph 7. Percentage of teachers who have participated in in-service courses.



## Teaching profession

67% of the surveyed teachers answered that they chose their studies with the intention of becoming a teacher of English. It can be highlighted that the French teachers are the ones with the highest percentage, 82%, and the Finnish ones with the lowest percentage, 56%. The percentages of the rest of the countries are very similar to the global percentage indicated.

Teachers seem very happy with the profession they have chosen, since more than 80% in all the participating countries would not leave their profession if they had the chance to do so.

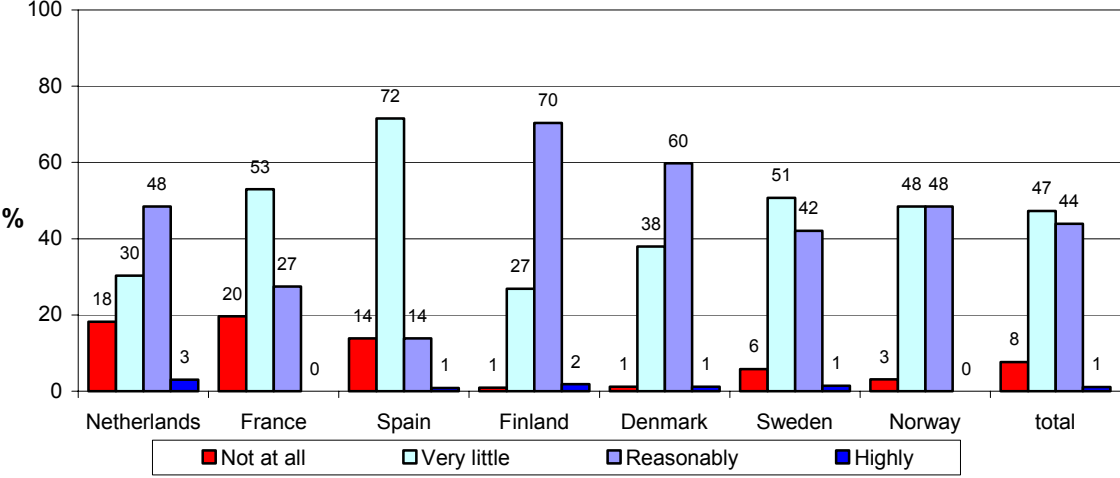
Table 2. Teachers' opinion about their profession

| Country         | Yes | No  | I don't know |
|-----------------|-----|-----|--------------|
| The Netherlands | 32% | 68% | *            |
| France          | 12% | 88% | *            |
| Spain           | 11% | 51% | 38%          |
| Finland         | 11% | 46% | 43%          |
| Denmark         | 12% | 65% | 23%          |
| Sweden          | 9%  | 51% | 40%          |
| Norway          | 16% | 56% | 28%          |

\* *The Netherlands and France did not include this option in the questionnaires.*

Teachers were asked about their opinion of how society and their pupils value the teaching profession. Answers to those two questions were on a scale with the following values: "not at all", "very little", "reasonably" and "highly". Concerning the value that society gives to their profession, it is remarkable that only 1% out of the total number of teachers who answered this question answered "highly", the majority of the answers were concentrated in the intermediate values: "very little" (47%) and "reasonably" (44%). Graph 8 shows the teachers' answers in the different countries.

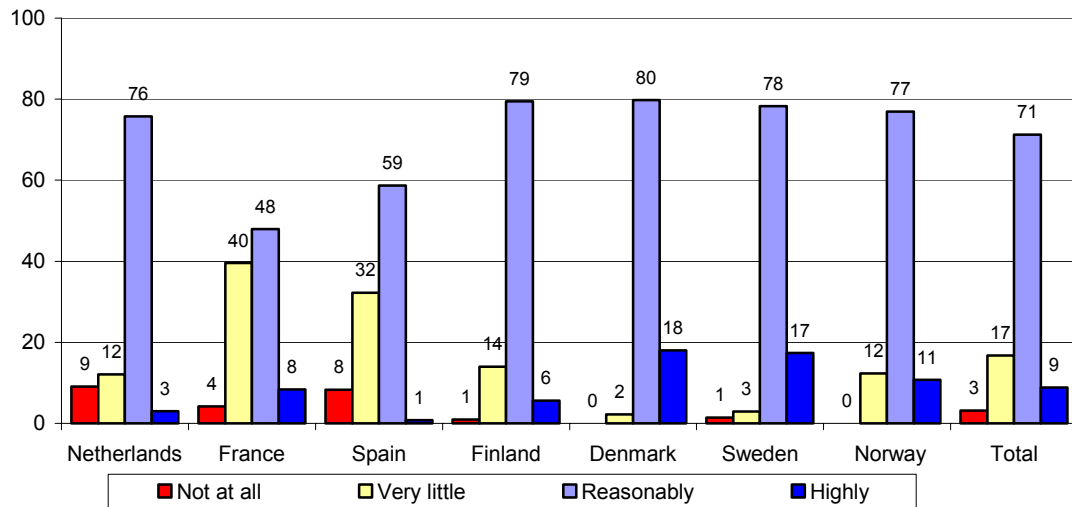
Graph 8. Percentage of teachers according to their opinion about how society values their work.



With respect to the value that their pupils give to the teaching profession, 71% of teachers answered “reasonably”, 17% answered “very little”, 9% answered “highly” and only 3% answered “not at all”. The distribution of these percentages among the participating countries is very similar, nonetheless some differences can be found. Teachers from France and Spain were around 50% to think that their pupils value their work “reasonably” and a 35% that they value it “very little”. Graph 9 shows the teachers answer in the different countries.

It is remarkable that teachers feel much more confident about their pupils’ than about society’s appreciation.

Graph 9. Percentage of teachers according to their opinion about how their pupils values their work.



### Teaching conditions

The variables that this heading deals with refer to some aspects of the teachers' teaching conditions such as the number of pupils in the class of English and the number of teaching periods per week that teachers have. The data from these variables are presented in table 3.

Table 3. Teaching conditions

| Country          | Number of pupils | Hours per week of English | Hours per week of other subjects | Total number of hours per week |
|------------------|------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| The Netherlands  | 25               | 19                        | 1                                | 20                             |
| France           | -                | 17                        | 1                                | 18                             |
| Spain            | 25               | 17                        | 4                                | 19                             |
| Finland          | 20               | 16                        | 6                                | 22                             |
| Denmark          | 18               | 8                         | 13                               | 21                             |
| Sweden           | 24               | 7                         | 10                               | 17                             |
| Norway           | 23               | 7                         | 12                               | 17                             |
| Germany          | -                | -                         | -                                | -                              |
| Statistic mean   | 22               | 13                        | 8                                | 19                             |
| Stand. deviation | 6                | 7                         | 6                                | 5                              |

As can be observed in the table the average number of pupils that teachers have in their class of English varies only a little in the different countries. It goes from 25 in the Netherlands and Spain to 18 in Denmark. Regarding the number of teaching periods per week, teachers from Finland are the ones with the highest average number of periods, 22, whereas teachers from Norway and

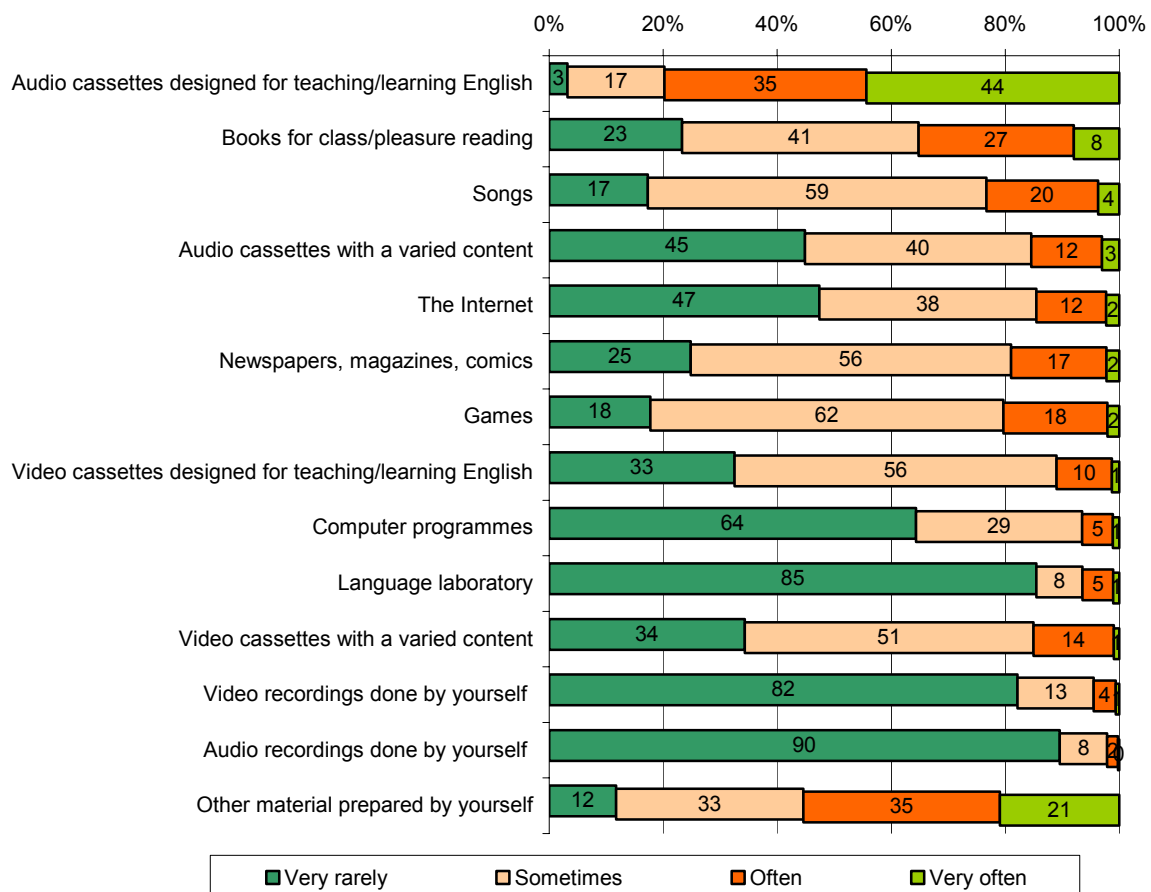


Sweden are the ones with the lowest number, 17. It is also remarkable that Scandinavian teachers teach in a greater proportion other subject areas. This is due to the fact that these teachers work in teams and are specialised subject teachers with a university education, but have studied more than one subject.

## Methodology

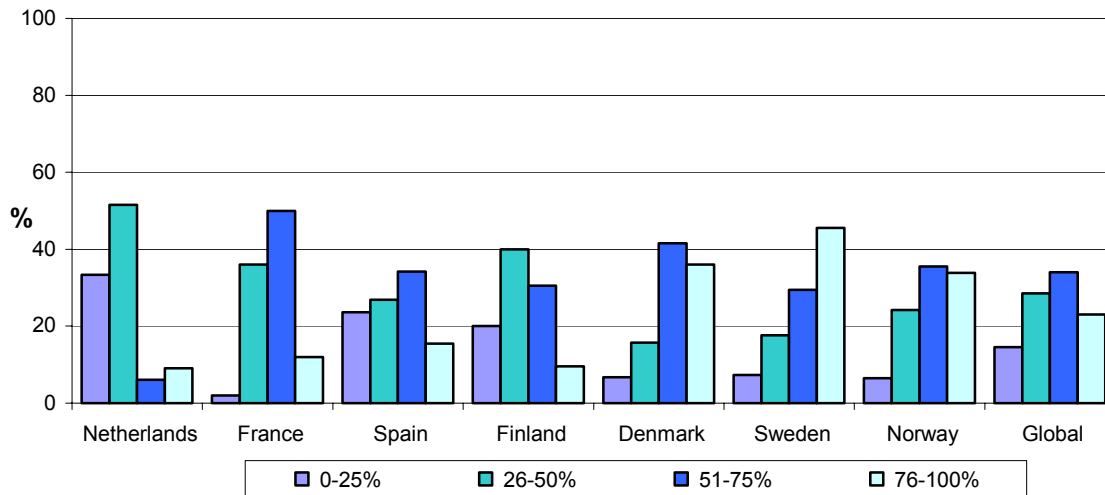
96% of the teachers who participated in the survey use a textbook to teach English to the target groups. Apart from the textbook the majority of teachers use some other resources for their lessons. There appears to be very little difference in the use of these resources among the participating teachers. However some differences in the use of the Internet as a resource can be found: around 85% of the French and Spanish teachers mention that they use it “very rarely” whereas in the other countries this percentage is much lower. Around 50% of the rest of the teachers say they use it “sometimes”. Because of the small differences found, graph 10 shows the global percentages of use of these resources by all the participating teachers. These resources are shown in the graph by frequency of use.

Graph 10. Use of resources.



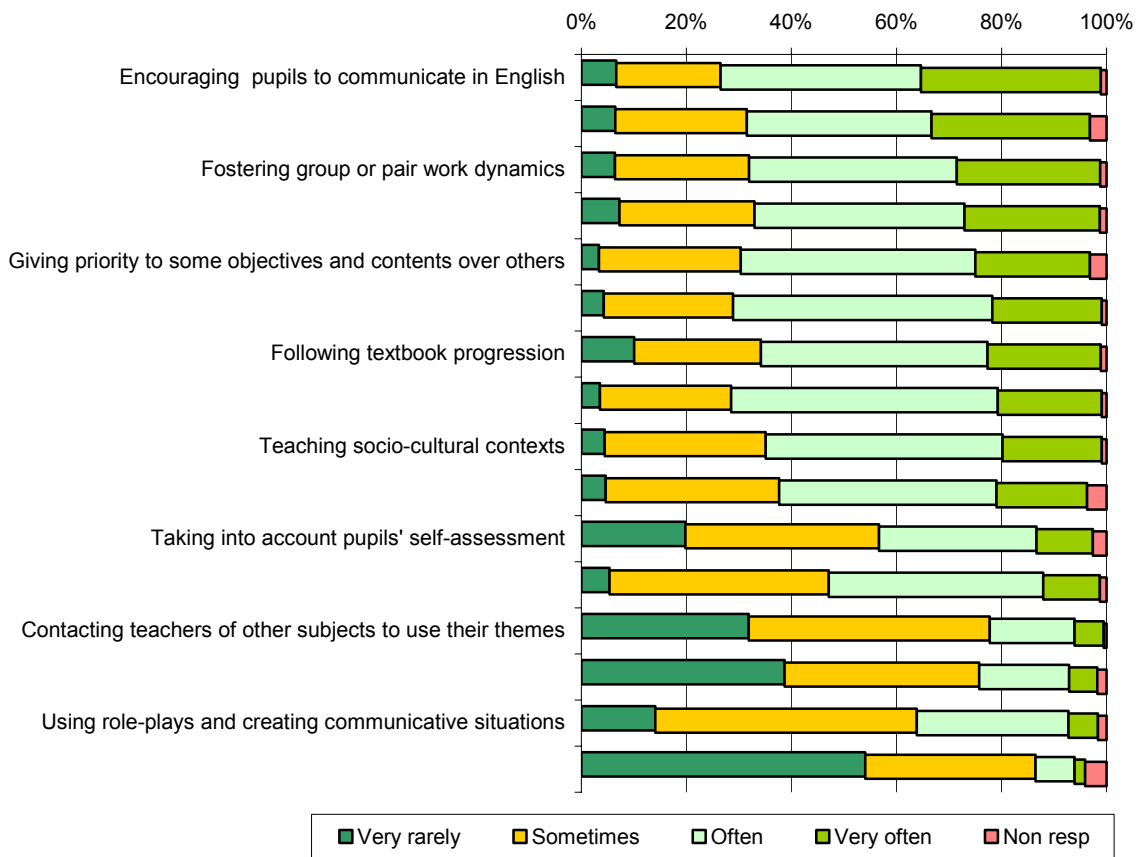
Teachers were also asked how much English they speak in their lessons out of the total speaking time. This question was formulated in terms of percentages in four intervals: 1<sup>st</sup> 0%- 25%; 2<sup>nd</sup> 26%-50%; 3<sup>rd</sup> 51%-75%; 4<sup>th</sup> 76%-100%. The answers of teachers per country show some differences: teachers from Sweden, Denmark and Norway are the ones with the highest use of the English language in their lessons, whereas teachers from the Netherlands, Spain and Finland are the ones with the lowest use of English in their lessons (see graph 11).

Graph 11. Use of the English language in the class of English.



Sixteen questions were devoted to asking teachers about different aspects of their teaching methods. The questions were formulated in terms of frequency of use of techniques or activities put into practice with their pupils. The frequency was formulated in a scale of four values: “very rarely” – “sometimes” – “often” – “very often”. As the differences in the teachers’ answers to these aspects vary very little, graph 11 shows the percentages of answers of the total number of teachers by frequency of practice.

Graph 12. Teaching aspects.



From the answers to those sixteen questions it is interesting to mention that:

- Concerning how they approach the explanation of new contents, teachers' answers show the same tendency in all the participating teachers: they "often" either follow the progression of the textbook or explain the new contents and then do activities in order to put these new concepts into practice, and "sometimes" they use role plays to create almost authentic communicative situations in the classroom.

- Regarding how often they encourage their pupils to use the English language inside and outside the classroom, the majority of teachers answer "often" but a higher proportion of teachers from the Netherlands and France answer "sometimes". Most of the teachers "often or very often" encourage their pupils to communicate in English when they speak about their own learning, school work and other personal matters.

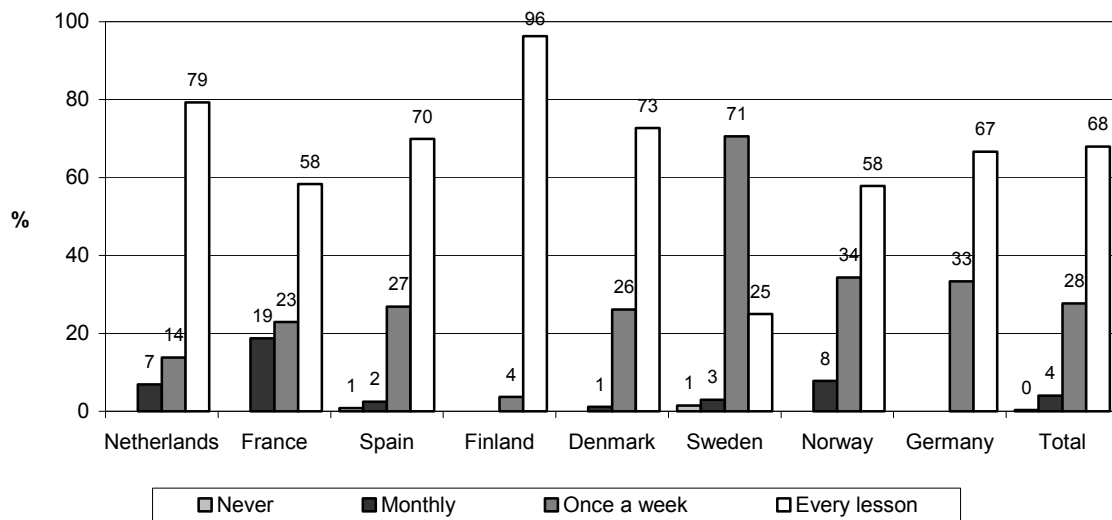
- With respect to the way they work with their pupils, most teachers "often," or "very often" in the case of the Finnish teachers, foster group or pair group dynamics in their classes.

- Regarding the frequency with which they teach their pupils to develop communicative strategies or support their pupils in developing learning strategies in order to become autonomous in their learning process, all teachers answer that they “often “ do so.

- Regarding assessment, teachers “often” adjust the assessment criteria for pedagogical purposes. They take into account their pupils’ self-assessment “very rarely”, as it is the case with the majority of the teachers from the Netherlands and France, or “sometimes” for the rest of the countries.

**Homework:** Teachers were asked how often they give their pupils homework in English. Their answers in the different countries are very much the same, most of them give their pupils homework after every lesson with the exception of the Swedish teachers, most of whom give their pupils homework once a week (see graph 13).

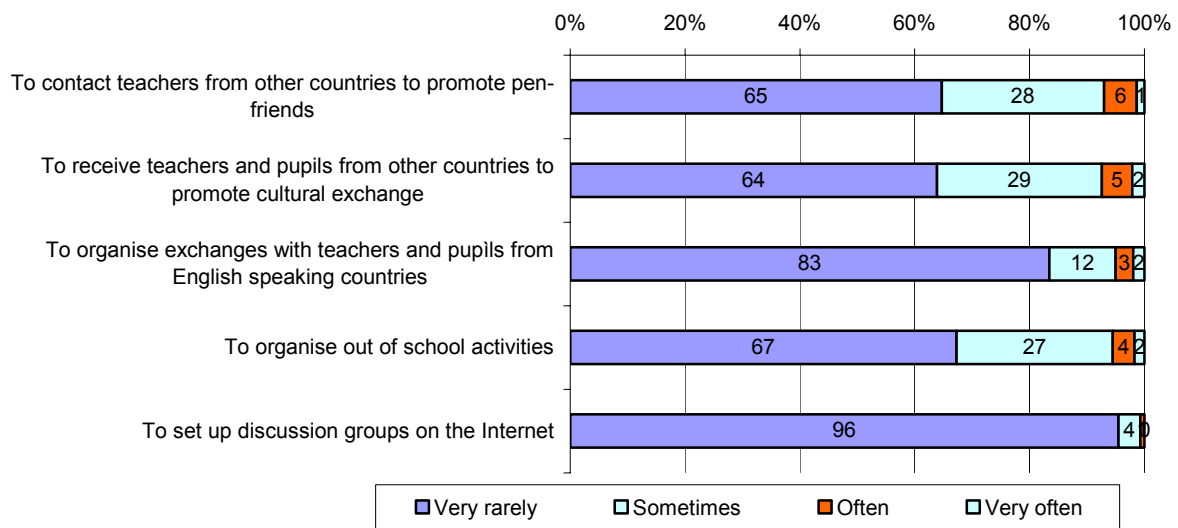
Graph 13. Homework.



### Activities for pupils to use English in real situations

Five questions were asked about how often teachers arrange activities for their pupils to use the English language in real situations. The frequency for each type of activity is given in relation to all the teachers in the study in graph 14.

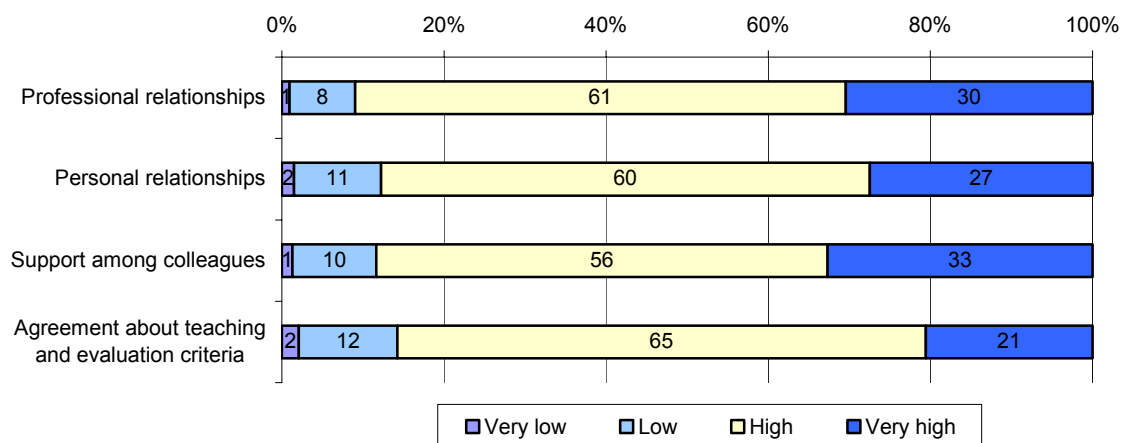
Graph 14. Percentage of teachers by activity and by frequency.



### Satisfaction with colleagues

All the participating teachers mention that they have a high level of satisfaction with their relationships with their colleagues. This relationship concerns both personal and professional aspects. Teachers also grade very highly the climate of collaboration and support among colleagues and their level of agreement about teaching and evaluation criteria. Graph 15 shows the global percentage of responses.

Graph 15. Satisfaction with colleagues.



### Level of difficulty of the test

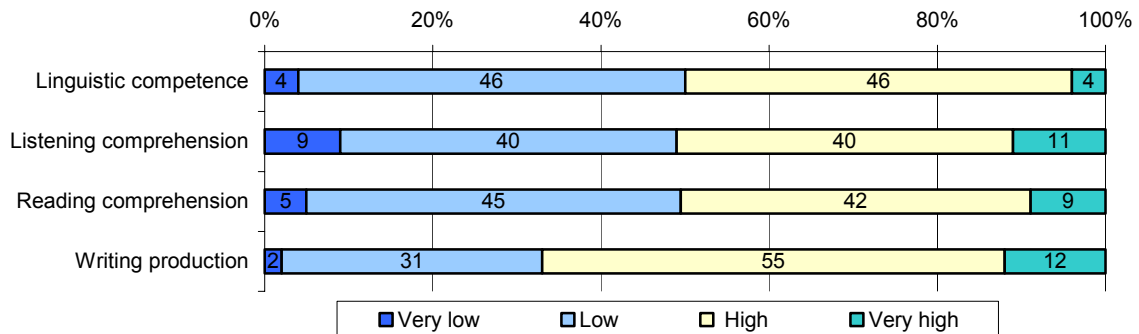
Teachers were asked about the level of difficulty of the different skills measured in the test administered to their pupils. Teachers were also asked

about their pupils' familiarity to the different types of exercises used in the test. The questionnaires from Denmark, Norway and Germany did not include any question concerning these matters, and the respective questions in the Swedish questionnaire were different, therefore the data from these countries are not included in the analysis.

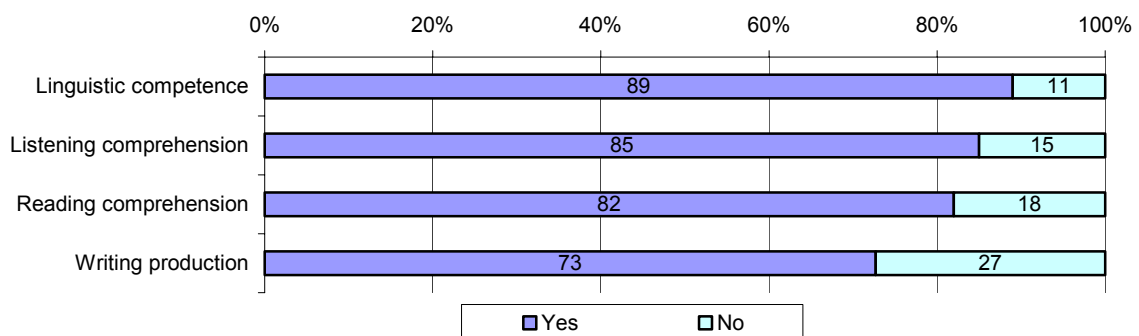
Regarding the difficulty of the text some differences can be found among the participating teachers: Most of the teachers from France and The Netherlands considered the difficulty of the part of the test devoted to the linguistic competence to be "low", whereas teachers from Spain and Finland considered it to be "high". The level of difficulty of the part devoted to the listening comprehension was considered to be "high" by the Spanish and French teachers, and "low" by the rest of the teachers. Concerning reading comprehension, most teachers from Spain considered it to be "high, whereas for the rest it was considered to be "low". The level of difficulty of the writing production, it was considered to be "high" by the majority of the teachers from France, Spain and Finland, and the opinion of the teachers from The Netherlands was divided into "low" and "high".

Graphs 16 and 17 show the global answers to both questions: test difficulty and familiarity of exercises.

Graph 16. Difficulty of the test.



Graph 17. Familiarity of the test exercises.



## V THE INTERNATIONAL RESULTS IN A NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Bearing in mind that the purpose of this survey is not so much the strict comparison of country results, which is not particularly useful in itself, as giving countries the opportunity to understand their results in the light of external information, such as comparison with others, it was deemed best to devote the last section of this international report to their own interpretation of the findings in the hope that this will be useful to national policy makers and practitioners.

The analyses presented under this section were prepared under the responsibility of each national co-ordinator of the survey. They are therefore strictly national views which, unlike the rest of this document, do not represent an international collective reflection on the data.

### DENMARK

During the school year 2002-2003 the Danish Evaluation Institute (EVA) carried out an evaluation of English studies in the primary and lower secondary schools. The aim of the evaluation was to examine the quality of teaching. The evaluation focussed therefore on the educational practice in the compulsory English studies and the framework and conditions that govern the teaching. The result of the evaluation is based on the following documentation:

- Self evaluation reports and follow-up visits to the schools including interviewing self evaluation groups, school management and representatives for the municipal authorities.
- Workshops for the pupils from the self evaluating schools.
- Classroom observations in two English lessons in each of the self evaluating schools.
- An electronic questionnaire survey among English teachers and school management in 485 primary and lower secondary schools.

The result of the evaluation may be found at [www.eva.dk](http://www.eva.dk) with a summary in English.

In order to be able to examine any correlation between the teaching and the learning process and the pupils' results, EVA decided also to participate in this assessment which is reported in this document.

## **The report of the Danish findings**

The Danish part of the survey was reported and reviewed in Denmark in October 2003 and the main points are summarised in this section. It should be noted that some results differ from those which appear in section IV. This is because Denmark has applied a coding system which to a larger degree than the international one allows for independent/creative use of language – a skill which is part of the national targets set for the teaching of English in Denmark. Another reason is that 10 items are left out in the analysis in section IV.

A fundamental characteristic of the international tests is that the national targets differ from country to country and several other factors also influence the result. Section III summarises several differences between the countries that have participated in this assessment.

## **The interaction of the test with the national targets for English in the primary and lower secondary schools**

This section explains how the ten tasks in the test reflect the national targets in Denmark, referred to as the ultimate targets, and the test results will be reviewed from this perspective. It is important to note that this test has not been designed on the basis of the national targets but is a repetition of a test from 1997 in which Denmark did not participate. The test covers many essential aspects of the target description for the compulsory teaching but it does not reveal the pupils' total capabilities in English. The productive part of the preliminary targets is only weakly represented in the test – both in the form of oral skills which are naturally absent, and written skills which are only evident in small partly reproducing steps. This is especially important to note considering the above evaluation of the teaching which demonstrates that Danish teachers in general prioritise communication skills. Furthermore, the national test at the end of the compulsory teaching in Denmark does not include testing of written skills.

The relationship between the national ultimate targets and the test may be described as follows:

- Tasks 1-3 which test listening and comprehension skills generally reflect targets at a level which is below the standard set at the 9th form level and only to a lesser degree the national ultimate targets.
- Tasks 4-7 relate primarily to the national targets for language production, formal skills and use of language after the 7th form level and the ultimate targets. The first tasks stipulate that the language must work so that it is meaningful. Seen from a Danish perspective the tasks may be described as moving from the functional level with an emphasis on content towards ever increasing requirements for formal skills including irregular verbs and independent language production. From tasks 4 to 7 the standard is raised for the pupils' ability to remember standard phrases.



- Task 8 testing comprehension of reading broadly mirrors the national ultimate targets.
- Tasks 9-10, which test integrated skills, i.e. skills and abilities including and covering the four proficiency areas. The skills tested here are largely in accordance with the national ultimate targets.

### The results of the test given to the pupils

| Task   | Number of questions | Number of correct answers |                    |              |                    | Deviation      |
|--|---------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|--------------|--------------------|----------------|
|  |                     | Average                   | 25% (1st quartile) | 50% (median) | 75% (4th quartile) | Std. deviation |
| 1. Listening exercise "South Dinkley"          | 4                   | <b>0.93</b>               | 1                  | 1            | 1                  | 0.19           |
| 2. Listening exercise "What are their jobs"    | 7                   | <b>0.76</b>               | 0.71               | 0.86         | 0.86               | 0.21           |
| 3. Listening exercise "An American friend"     | 6                   | <b>0.55</b>               | 0.33               | 0.50         | 0.67               | 0.25           |
| 4. Language proficiency 1                      | 4                   | <b>0.91</b>               | 1                  | 1            | 1                  | 0.19           |
| 5. Language proficiency 2                      | 4                   | <b>0.66</b>               | 0.50               | 0.75         | 0.75               | 0.25           |
| 6. Language proficiency 3                      | 5                   | <b>0.55</b>               | 0.20               | 0.60         | 0.80               | 0.32           |
| 7. Language proficiency 4                      | 12                  | <b>0.49</b>               | 0.33               | 0.50         | 0.67               | 0.24           |
| 8. Reading comprehension "Which story?"        | 16                  | <b>0.77</b>               | 0.63               | 0.88         | 1                  | 0.28           |
| 9. Language proficiency 5                      | 5                   | <b>0.51</b>               | 0.20               | 0.60         | 0.80               | 0.34           |
| 10. Language proficiency "Working in a family" | 16                  | <b>0.46</b>               | 0.19               | 0.50         | 0.75               | 0.31           |

The pupils do well with 93% and 76% correct answers in task 1 and 2, respectively, which mirror targets at a lower level than the ultimate targets, whereas they perform significantly worse when the targets correspond to the 9th form level. Here the average is 55% correct answers.

For the basic linguistic competencies it may be concluded that the Danish pupils perform well when the emphasis is on the functional skills but for the more formal abilities and when the pupils have to express themselves, the number of correct answers fall significantly, cf. the drop in the number of correct answers from tasks 4 to 7.

In contrast the pupils are very good at reading and comprehending the contents of a text, which is mirrored in the result for task 8. This is in stark contrast to a broad linguistic ability. In task 9, which primarily tests the area of language and

use of language, the percentage of correct answers is 51. And task 10, which tests integrated skills, is the task in which the pupils do worst with 46% correct answers.

The above demonstrates on the one hand a tendency to confidence considerably with the language in listening, reading and producing meaningful language regarding simple topics. On the other hand there is a tendency to problems with correct use of language and linguistically more complex and varied expressions. At the end of this section these trends will be compared with the main features in the teaching but first of all a few comments about the reasons pertaining to the pupils themselves.

### **Factors which may explain the results**

The survey shows that for the Danish pupils the most significant factors predicting the individual pupil test score are:

- The latest grade obtained in English at the end of term exam
- The pupils' own view of their abilities.

Together these two variables may explain approximately 48% of the standard variation in the total test result. The correlation is that the better mark and the more confidence in one's own competency in English the better the result of the test.

Apart from these two all dominating factors the analysis shows that many other background variables are important for the outcome of the pupils' test results. The factors are mentioned consecutively and start with the most important and finish with the least important. The factors which are mentioned below are all significant but their individual significance is very modest. This applies especially to the four last mentioned factors:

- It is important which language is spoken in the pupils' home as the majority language.
- Pupils from homes in which other languages than Danish are spoken or English/American perform significantly worse compared to others in average. This group, however, differs widely since there is considerable variation in the test results for the individual pupils. A disproportionately large group performs considerably below average whereas a smaller group is at the upper third or fourth. Thus there are trends towards an educational A and B team for this "foreign language" group.
- The pupils' view of the degree of difficulty of the test is a marker for their test score. The more difficult they think the test is the lower the test score.
- Pupils from schools with more than 500 pupils do on average better in the test score than average.

- The girls do on average better in the test score than the boys. The average for the girls is 63% compared with the boys at 59%.
- Pupils from private independent basic schools score higher in the test score than average.
- Many hours' homework in English indicate a lower test score.
- The higher the level of education of the father the higher the test score.

As a supplement to the above EVA has examined the correlation, if any, between a number of other background variables and the pupils' test results. There is a correlation between the pupils' test results and their contact with the English language, the importance they attach to the language and their reading ability. The supplementary analysis shows the following significant correlation:

- The more contact the pupils have with the English language via TV/video the better the test result.
- The pupils who have contact with the English language via CD/tapes, cinema, magazines, books or the Internet very often, often or sometimes obtain higher test results than the pupils who never have such contact.
- The more important the pupils think it important to know English the better their test results.
- The pupils who think there are very important advantages or important advantages in knowing English, that they will need it for their further studies and that they can have access to news in science and technology, will obtain higher results than the pupils who consider it not so important or not important at all.
- The pupils who consider the expression below true or often true will obtain higher test results than the pupils who consider it partly true or not at all true. "I read Danish texts quickly and fluently", "I understand all the words when I read Danish", "I find it easy to understand the meaning when I read Danish texts", "I understand the contents without problems when I read Danish texts" and "I understand all the words when I read English texts".
- The more the pupils consider the below expression true the higher the test result: "I read English texts quickly and fluently", "I find it easy to get the meaning when I read English texts", "I understand the contents without problems when I read English texts".

Finally, it should be noted that EVA is aware that, moreover, there may be other factors associated with the teachers but this is not part of the analysis since due to the selection process the participating teachers cannot be described as representative of English teachers in Denmark.

## Worth considering

EVA has as mentioned before found it interesting to examine whether some of the factors that the evaluation has highlighted about the pupils' learning processes correspond to some of the elements that the international survey identifies. The aim is not to lay claim to an unambiguous cause/effect link but to suggest a professional discussion about a possible correlation.

| <b>The international test and survey shows</b>  | <b><i>The evaluation of English teaching and learning processes in Denmark shows</i></b>   |
|---|--|
| <i>- about the findings of the test:</i>  |  |
| The pupils' score of correct answers in the assignments that reflect formal skills and language production is less than 50%.                          | There is not particular emphasis on the teaching of English in the proficiency area covering formal skills and language production.  |
| The "read-and-understand" test has the highest score, thus 77%.   | Much reading is done during the English classes and functional reading is a relatively high-prioritised individual activity.   |
| The pupils definitely have the lowest score in the part of the test that identifies integrated skills, i.e. best language understanding and aptitude. | A large part of the teaching is divided into short sequences. Therefore the pupils will not have experience in perceiving language-related contexts across several activities. |
| A relatively large group of the pupils do badly and no pupils are in the top.   | The teachers believe they take the weakest pupils best into account through classroom and teacher controlled teaching.   |
| <i>- about factors that stimulate and hamper good achievements:</i>   |  |
| Pupils whose mother tongue is not Danish generally perform worse in the test compared to pupils whose mother tongue is Danish.                        | Danish plays a prominent role in the English classes.  |
| Contact with the English language is a decisive stimulation in relation to the scores at the test.  | The pupils call for authentic texts and genuine language experience.   |
| The more important the pupils find it is to learn English the better the scores at the test.  | The teacher's approach to the teaching of English plays a large role for the pupils' level of motivation.  |
| The pupils in large schools do better than those in smaller schools.  | The quantitative survey shows that larger schools tend to be more systematic in their approach.  |
| <i>- about the pupils' assessments of their own competencies:</i>   |  |
| The pupils find that they master the English language at a functional level in terms of listening, reading, instructions and interviews.              | Classes divided into sequences are suitable for training in this type of assignment.   |
| The pupils make a low assessment of their ability to choose texts in English in connection with projects.   | English plays a minor role in inter-disciplinary projects and project work is rather invisible in English.   |
| The pupils assess that their skills are lowest in describing an event, expressing themselves in writing and writing clear texts.                      | The requirements at the tests are rather directing and there is only an oral test in English as a subject in the 9th form level.   |

If the conclusions implied in the comparison really exist, the following questions should be discussed:

- *How can English be promoted as the classroom language?*
- *How can the teaching be changed so that it better supports the pupils' language production?*
- *How can the pupils' well-developed functional reading skills, for example, be used in the work on language skills and use of language?*
- *How can differentiated teaching be developed so that it has more to offer both weak and strong pupils?*
- *How can the teaching be organised to make it possible to go in depth with and have more insight into the English language?*
- *How can the pupils' motivation and self-esteem be brought into play with the pupils' language skills?*

EVA's idea of linking achievements and processes is to allow the comparison to form the basis for a didactic dialogue. One aim is to increase the awareness that the pupils' score and assessment of their own competencies *may* reflect what and how they have been taught. Another aim is to safeguard that the findings of the test give cause to reflection on the opportunity for varying the education and *not* for limiting it.



## FINLAND

When comparing the foreign language test results of Finnish students with those of students from the other participating countries, we have to bear in mind that English really is a foreign language to speakers of Finnish. The other Nordic languages, as well as Dutch, German and English, belong to the Germanic language group. French and Spanish, which represent Romanic languages, have at least some vocabulary in common. Finnish belongs to the Finno-Ugric language group, which is very different from the other languages mentioned above. This was last shown in the 1999 Finnish national evaluation of English language competence where Swedish-speaking Finns scored about 10-15 percentage points higher than Finnish-speaking students, depending on the skills measured. In the report written on the results achieved in Finland in this international evaluation it was found that the average score percentage of Swedish-speaking students in the whole test was 16 percentage units higher than that of Finnish-speaking students. Because of the small sample, average score percentages in different skills were not calculated. Similar differences have been found in the Matriculation Examination (students aged 18-19).

In the tables below, the following are shown in the columns from left to right:

- The skills referred to in the Framework Curriculum for Comprehensive Education
- The aims of the teaching of English by the end of comprehensive education according to the Framework Curriculum
- The descriptors of the skills in English for an average comprehensive school student
- The respective grammar structures or communication skills measured in the test.

The Exercise/Item column shows which skills were tested in the respective tasks. In the last column the average score percentages achieved in the respective skills are shown. Since the Framework Curriculum does not include the descriptors, which were published later in a separate guide in 1999, the descriptors are placed here next to the different skills, resulting in the same descriptors appearing in more than one table.

To shorten the text, the headings only appear in Table 1.

## Oral Comprehension

Table 1. The objectives of Oral Comprehension

| Skills  | Framework Curriculum of the Comprehensive School 1994                                      | Descriptors for the level of grade 8 on the scale of 10-4   | Objective of evaluation            | Task/Item           | Average score % |
|---|--|---|------------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Oral Comprehension</b> (Listening Comprehension) | The pupil<br>- understands speaking concerning everyday things delivered at a normal tempo | The pupil can<br>- understand personal questions, orders and requests   |                                    |                     |                 |
|   | - has assimilated vocabulary central to the language, main phrases ...                     | - interact in the most common everyday situations, e.g. in a shop, bank, ticket office, post office or when ordering a meal or receiving directions | - determining speaker's intentions | Task 1<br>Items 1-4 |                 |
|   | - knows ways to communicate that are peculiar to the target language and culture           | - understand standard spoken language used by a native speaker on familiar topics if given the opportunity to ask for repetition or rephrasing      | - understanding details            | Task 3<br>Items 1-6 |                 |
|   |  | - understand the main points of clearly delivered standard speech on familiar matters, even in the media  | - listening for main ideas         | Task 2<br>Items 1-7 |                 |
|   |  | - identify different variants of the language and knows the most common differences in the vocabulary used in everyday life                         |                                    |                     | 60              |

As Table 1 shows, the test covered the aims set for listening comprehension skills quite well. The average score percentage is, however, rather low considering that the students found the test fairly easy. In this sub-test Finnish students' performance was below the average. This skill also proved to be on the weak side in the Finnish national evaluation of English in 1999.

The standard deviation in the Finnish results was rather large, 24.52, which shows that for some students the test was really hard while other students performed very well. The performance level was about two percentage points higher for girls than for boys. Only in the Netherlands was the difference greater than in Finland, but the other way round.

## Linguistic Competencies

Table 2. The objectives of Linguistic Competencies

|   |  |   |                                     |  |    |
|---|--|---|-------------------------------------|--|----|
| <b>Linguistic Competencies</b> (Grammatical Structures) | - (... has assimilated) basic structures | - write simple understandable letters or e-mails expressing opinions or feelings and describing events even though some mistakes may occur  | - indefinite pronouns<br>- articles | Task 4<br>Items 1-4<br>Task 5<br>Items 1-4 |    |
|   |  | - write simple connected texts and stories dealing with immediate surroundings, resorting to e.g. a dictionary if needed  | - tenses                            | Task 7<br>Items 1-12                       |    |
|   |  | - scan short and clear stories and factual information on familiar topics including newspaper articles, whereas some help may be needed for the understanding of more difficult texts about unfamiliar topics | - indirect speech                   | Task 6<br>Items 1-2                        | 68 |



Instead of lists, the Framework Curriculum presents social contexts where the basic grammatical structures could be used. Thus it is up to the individual teacher to decide which expressions to train and emphasise.

With Task 6 excluded, which was found to measure the skills poorly, the sub-test of linguistic competencies measured the structures called for in the Finnish Framework Curriculum. The number of items was small, though, and thus conclusions concerning these skills need to be seen as suggestive rather than well-founded.

The average score percentage was higher than in the Finnish national evaluation, and the highest of all in this international evaluation. The difference between the boys' and the girls' results was almost six percentage points. Differences of the same size and direction also appeared in the Norwegian and Spanish results, whereas the gender differences were lowest in the Netherlands.

The results in Finnish tests of grammatical structures have generally not been very good. Therefore, success in this evaluation was a positive surprise. One explanation may be that despite the importance of communication skills in the curricula, attention also has to be paid to teaching grammar due to the large differences between the Finnish and English languages.

### Written Comprehension

Table 3. The objectives of Written Comprehension

|   |  |   |                                     |                      |    |
|---|--|---|-------------------------------------|----------------------|----|
| <b>Written Comprehension</b><br>(Reading Comprehension) | - can understand fairly easy written language that discusses general things      | - scan short and clear stories and factual information with familiar topics including newspaper articles, whereas some help may be needed for the understanding of more difficult texts about unfamiliar topics | - scanning for specific information | Task 8<br>Items 1-16 |    |
|   | - has assimilated vocabulary central to the language, main phrases<br>...        | - find and understand everyday information e.g. in timetables, menus and advertisements   |                                     |                      |    |
|   | - knows ways to communicate that are peculiar to the target language and culture | - understand personal messages, descriptions of events, feelings and hopes in letters, postcards and e-mails  |                                     |                      | 80 |

The reading comprehension sub-test proved to be easy. Although the task consisted of several items, they only represented one type of task and so covered perhaps a third of the objectives of the Finnish Framework Curriculum.

The average score percentage for this skill high, at 80. The standard deviations for all results were rather large, though: 21.26 – 24.61.

Finnish boys and girls did not differ very much from each other in the results. The difference was about two percentage points in favour of girls. Norwegian girls scored about five percentage points better than boys.

## Written Production

Table 4. The objectives of Written Production

|                                     |  |  |   |  |    |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|---|--|----|
| <b>Written Production (Writing)</b> | - is able to produce short, narrative or descriptive written texts, for example, with help, if necessary | - fill in personal details, e.g. on a hotel registration form, and write short telephone, fax or e-mail messages and postcards needed in everyday contexts                             |   |  |    |
|                                     | - has assimilated vocabulary central to the language, main phrases                                       | - write simple understandable personal letters or e-mails expressing opinions and feelings, and describing events even though some mistakes may occur                                  |   |  |    |
|                                     | - knows ways to communicate that are peculiar to the target language and the culture                     | - write simple, connected narrative texts, even with some mistakes, dealing with everyday topics and personal life as well as understandable stories using e.g. a dictionary if needed | - filling in lines in a dialogue<br>- close | Task 9<br>Items 1-5<br>Task 10<br>Items 1-16 | 48 |

This sub-test was the most difficult for everybody, the highest average score percentage being 56 for Norway. In writing skills Norwegian and Finnish girls were clearly better (8 and 7 percentage points respectively) than boys whereas Danish boys scored about five percentage points better than the girls.

Most of the tasks included in the test were not of the type we usually place under the heading “Written Production” or “Writing” in Finland as can be seen in Table 4. Instead, we place a greater emphasis on creative writing. However, whatever the task type, writing tasks seem to cause difficulties.

### What was not measured

Table 5 explains what kind of oral and cultural competencies are expected from an average comprehensive school student in Finland.

Table 5. Objectives not included in the evaluation

|                                   |   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|
| <b>Oral Production (Speaking)</b> |   | - make himself understood though occasional mistakes may occur in pronunciation. Intonation is appropriate for the context and searching for words does not hinder conveying the message  |
|                                   | -can participate in a conversation on ordinary things by applying natural and fluent pronunciation, accent, rhythm and intonation | - interact in the most common everyday situations, e.g. in a shop, bank, ticket office, post office or when ordering a meal or receiving directions   |
|                                   |   | - participate in informal conversation on familiar topics when clearly articulated everyday language is used and the other person is prepared to repeat or rephrase himself   |
|                                   |   | - talk about himself and his everyday life fairly fluently as well as give a simple prepared presentation on a topic that interests him   |
|                                   | - knows ways to communicate that are peculiar to the target language and culture  | - use expressions typical of the target language in the most common contexts like introduction, thanking, apologising and greeting  |
|                                   |   | - express his personal opinions politely, agree and disagree as well as offer suggestions about what to do, where to go, how to organise an event, etc.   |
|                                   |   | - ask for repetition or clarification and simplify his expressions. In case of a communication breakdown he is able to rephrase his message.  |
| <b>Cultural Competencies</b>      | - knows ways to communicate that are peculiar to the target language and culture  | - understand the connection between language and culture (in the broad sense), is aware of the norms, values, beliefs and customs essential in the target culture, knows how they are reflected in communication, and is able to adapt his way of communicating to that of the target culture |
|                                   | - has assimilated knowledge about the countries, peoples and cultures of the language areas.                                      | - is familiar with the basic geographical, economic and cultural facts of the areas where the language is spoken  |

In basic education oral communication is considered the most important communication skill. This is shown, among other things, in the fairly large number of descriptors for the level required of an average student. Unfortunately, these important skills were not tested at all in this international evaluation. Although we already knew beforehand they would not be tested, it seems reasonable, however, to point out that the evaluation only covered part of what is expected to be taught in Finnish schools.

## Conclusion

It can be said that the evaluation met the objectives placed on it beforehand: comparative information was received about a number of language skills in the participating countries.

If we compare the results Finnish students achieved in this evaluation with those achieved in the Finnish national evaluation of 1999, a certain similarity can be observed. As was noted before, listening comprehension skills need attention. Since these skills are influenced by the students' pronunciation and speaking skills, they should also be developed more effectively in basic education. Listening strategies should also be studied and taught more effectively.

What needs special attention is boys' writing skills. Since Danish boys did quite well in this sub-test, it might be worth trying to find out what is said about writing skills in the Danish Framework Curriculum. A similar study could be conducted on reading comprehension skills in the Dutch Framework Curriculum.

Oral production seems to be regarded as an important skill in the curricula of all the participating countries. If we want to make sure that it is effectively trained and developed in teaching, testing of speaking should also be included in evaluations because of the expected wash-back effect. A start would be, e.g., adopting a few "pencil-and-paper" multiple choice tasks, of the following type:

Choose the best alternative answer:

- |                               |                              |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. I'll telephone you.        | 2. My granny died last week. |
| a) Don't mention it.          | a) What a pity!              |
| b) I'll expect your call.     | b) I'm very sorry.           |
| c) Thanks for the invitation. | c) Hard luck.                |

Answering tasks of this type does not require training of censors.

Judging from background surveys, teaching objectives in different countries do not differ very much. Yet there are very large differences in certain skills. The reasons for these should be investigated.

## FRANCE

### Trend over five years

France took part in the assessment of pupils' skills in English in both periods referred to in section I, in 1996 with Spain and Sweden,<sup>9</sup> and in 2002 with the eight countries.

The 1996 results show that French pupils were performing at a level well below that of the Swedes but similar to the Spanish level.

In 2002 the performance of the French pupils is significantly lower than that in the other six countries (German results are not comparable), as the table below indicates.

|             | Oral comprehension |        | Linguistic Competence |        | Reading comprehension |        | Written production |        |
|-------------|--------------------|--------|-----------------------|--------|-----------------------|--------|--------------------|--------|
|             | Mean               | St. d. | Mean                  | St. d. | Mean                  | St. d. | Mean               | St. d. |
| DENMARK     | 64.77              | 20.07  | 53.95                 | 22.10  | 78.32                 | 26.26  | 46.17              | 29.33  |
| FINLAND     | 59.65              | 24.52  | 67.59                 | 20.63  | 80.29                 | 23.07  | 47.70              | 29.47  |
| FRANCE      | 30.60              | 20.39  | 48.01                 | 21.41  | 56.84                 | 21.85  | 14.55              | 17.81  |
| NETHERLANDS | 61.63              | 21.44  | 65.00                 | 22.00  | 77.47                 | 21.54  | 46.04              | 25.67  |
| NORWAY      | 73.26              | 19.60  | 66.36                 | 20.40  | 82.03                 | 26.82  | 56.30              | 29.69  |
| SPAIN       | 38.33              | 23.08  | 58.75                 | 23.30  | 63.57                 | 21.66  | 23.41              | 25.50  |
| SWEDEN      | 72.18              | 19.65  | 64.23                 | 20.43  | 85.88                 | 22.31  | 55.39              | 28.04  |

On both years French pupils obtain their better results for reading comprehension and, in decreasing order, in linguistic competence, oral comprehension and finally written production.

<sup>9</sup> Espagne, France, Suède – Evaluation des connaissances et compétences en anglais des élèves de 15-16 ans. Les dossiers Education & Formations n°92 – DEP, Paris, Septembre 1997.

From one year to the other their performance has markedly decreased whatever type of competence is considered while the percentage of non-responses has doubled. It must be stressed that strictly identical items were used on both occasions.

There is no difference in the performance of boys and girls for each period.

The following table shows the mean scores for each type of competence of French pupils in 1996 and 2002. To make the national results truly comparable between the two years, the figures given for 2002 include all the items used in the test. This is why the 2002 figures in this table are different from the ones in the international comparison table shown above in which some items were removed in the international analysis due to their unreliability, as explained in section IV.

| Competences           | Mean score |        |
|-----------------------|------------|--------|
|                       | 1996*      | 2002** |
| Reading comprehension | 62 %       | 59 %   |
| Linguistic Competence | 50 %       | 50 %   |
| Oral comprehension    | 41 %       | 34 %   |
| Written production    | 22 %       | 15 %   |

\* Sample of 1394 pupils

\*\* Sample of 1126 pupils

The results of the assessment in eight European countries beg a number of questions regarding the French education system, its policy choices and the way English, and possible foreign languages in general, is taught. Is it possible to explain the French performance by looking at the context of foreign language teaching and learning in the country? The following is an attempt to identify a few problems and to suggest a few hypotheses based on the analysis of pupils' test results and the analysis of the pupil and teacher questionnaires.

### **Perceived level of difficulty of the test taken in 2002**

The pupils in the sample found this test difficult (62.5%), even very difficult (27.1%). Most of them (82.5%) said exercise 10 in written production was the most difficult of all. Judgement as to the easiest exercise is: oral comprehension (39.7%), linguistic competence (32.8%) and written production (17.1%).

The teachers of the classes in the sample found that the level of difficulty of the assessment was easy and consider that pupils were familiar with the test items, except for written production.

|                       | Difficulty      |                            |              | Familiarity |        |              |
|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|--------------|-------------|--------|--------------|
|                       | easy, very easy | Difficult , very difficult | Non-response | Yes         | No     | Non-response |
| Linguistic Competence | 69,7 %          | 25,5 %                     | 7,8 %        | 78,4 %      | 13,7 % | 7,9 %        |
| Oral comprehension    | 41,2 %          | 56,9 %                     | 1,9 %        | 76,5 %      | 13,7 % | 9,8 %        |
| Reading comprehension | 53 %            | 37,2 %                     | 9,8 %        | 66,7 %      | 19,6 % | 13,7 %       |
| Written production    | 19,6 %          | 70,6 %                     | 3,8 %        | 39,2 %      | 45,1 % | 15,7 %       |

The diverging perception of pupils and teachers is interesting to note. However the hierarchy of the levels of difficulty as expressed by the teachers goes in the same direction as the performance of the pupils: the highest average levels of performance are to be found in the areas where the teachers think that the exercises are rather easy. Also, the teachers say that the oral comprehension exercises are difficult although they think they are familiar.

Last some teachers in the sample when asked about the level of the pupils' performance say that they were not happy with the test. Their criticism has to do with the fact that the exercises break down global competences into "small" data bits, that the underlying lexical knowledge necessary to understand the exercises is too high for 15 year-olds and that the unfamiliarity of the pupils with the written production exercises and the lack of coherence of the test vis-à-vis the school curriculum is detrimental to success.

### **Pupils' attitude to learning English**

When asked to self-assess their work in English 43% of the pupils in the sample say that they are average, 30% good and 26% weak.

Pupils are on the whole motivated to learn English: 81% think it is important to now English as this will be useful in their future studies and to find a job.

However they claim not have any contact with English outside the school: they do not listen to radio programmes in English, except for lyrics, they do not watch films in English, do not read in English.

Pupils say that they spend an average of one hour per week doing homework for the English class. It is interesting to note that they think they have learnt

more English during linguistic stays abroad (30%) or through private lessons (46%).

Pupils' responses also denote a passive attitude during English classes. They are around 70% to think that their teacher does not take their opinion into account when selecting tasks and 50% to say that their teachers only the only ones to speak during the class. However 80% say that their teachers use English when speaking to them.

### **The profile of teachers of English**

The typical teacher of English is female (80%), fully qualified (82%), has been teaching for over 18 years, of which over 10 years in the same school, with no other teaching job (82%). In the course of their career half the teachers spent at least 6 months in an English-speaking country but 74 % did not take part in in-service training over the past four years.

A majority of teachers chose to become teachers (82%) and do not wish to leave the profession (86%) while considering that their job is no valued by society (72.5%) and is little valued by pupils (40%).

On average a teacher in a lower secondary school teaches English for 18 to 20 hours a week and spends 14 hours preparing for it.

### **Practices in the classroom**

The material used by the teacher is not much diversified: school books (92%), audio cassettes specific for teaching (86%). Resources such as video cassettes, specialised software newspapers, magazines, books, language laboratories are seldom resorted to.

60% of teachers say they speak English during more than half their lesson time.

In their teaching they follow the school book's progression (70%), encourage their pupils to communicate (92%), teach them to use the language and to develop communication strategies (76%).

Yet over half of them do not resort to games to create communication situations in the classroom (68%), do not take pupils' interests in the preparation of their lessons (59%), do not encourage pupils to use the language outside the lessons (59%).

Teachers do not distribute pupils in groups according to linguistic ability (70.6%) and do not take into account self-assessment by pupils (92%).



Moreover only around 10% of teachers say they set up extra curricular activities to foster the use of the language (pen pals, trips abroad, exchanges, etc.).

### **Comments on the results of the study**

Based on comments by educational policy makers several comments and hypotheses may be formulated with regard to the teaching of English in France.

Although since 1987 the national curriculum for English has been stressing the importance of communication situations, of being able to do, of activities conducive to the creation of a maximum of links to get to the meaning of texts, of dialogue, etc., rather than being content with grammatical correctness of sentences, it seems that teachers in the classroom do not follow these prescriptions in their everyday work.

Even though they are near the end of compulsory schooling pupils have far too little contact with English as a language and assume a passive attitude regarding learning it. It is as though the role of English as a “language of communication” is neither understood nor felt.

It would seem that for French teachers of English what comes first for learning a language remains grammatical correctness. This is why the representation given of learning a language is not conducive to communication. Teachers develop a hankering after perfection which hinders pupils. Thus it is necessary, in France, for teachers and for pupils alike, to have a perfect command of grammar in order to pick up the courage to speak, to express oneself. Furthermore French pupils did not have a wide range of lexical knowledge. The fact that they are constantly being corrected by the teachers leads to an excessive use of French during the English lesson: the teachers give grammatical explanations in French and pupils respond likewise to show they have understood an oral or written message. Teachers aim at “perfection” in the message.

In their teaching, when they set up “wrongly authentic” situations teachers create moments when information can be picked up but do not sufficiently allow a fluent use of the language to develop.

The present study shows essentially that it is not only the teaching of foreign languages but also the social status given to foreign languages in France which must be challenged.

In order to develop a strong foreign language policy within the education system and to integrate it within society at large it will be necessary to conduct a wide ranging reflection. This reflection should not stay within the education system but should also take into account all the political and social implications of the objective that every citizen should have an operational command of at least one foreign language.

Indeed the objectives which have been agreed by the European Heads of states and Governments in the context of the Lisbon process are very ambitious for linguistic policies. France, like other countries, will need to make significant efforts to meet them. In the years to come a European indicator in foreign language competence will, as per the conclusions of the spring 2002 Barcelona Summit, be implemented. This will be an unprecedented occasion for all European countries to measure their progress and the efforts which remain to be made.

## GERMANY

### **The German data: part of a pilot test**

The German data have been collected as part of the pilot study which has been undertaken in preparation for the national German “DESI” research project, as explained in section III. Thus the sample is very small and not representative. In addition to that the concepts of the pupils’ and the teachers’ questionnaires have been operationalised differently. However the achievement tests have been applied according to the agreements of the contributors to the international study. Despite the limitations which are due to the pilot character of the study some correlations might be interesting and shed some light on the possible impact of background and instructional factors on achievement in EFL.

### ***Pupil-based information about background, individual and instructional effects on achievement***

In order to evaluate the possible impacts of the pupils’ social, individual and instructional characteristics path models<sup>10</sup> for each of the four tests were formulated. The models explain between 30 and 70 percent of the total variance. The graphs of the fitted path models are shown in figures 1 to 4. As a consequence of the design of the pilot study not all of the variables have been included in the research here and are therefore not part of the path models analysed. Data regarding the self-assessment of the ability to respond correctly to the questions have been collected only for the tests “oral comprehension” and “linguistic knowledge”.

The explaining variables are arranged to form three groups. (1) *Background variables* refer to the “socio-educational family level” and the occasions offered by the family to pay attention to English as a foreign language (EFL): “EFL contact”. (2) *Individual variables* are composed of “attitudes towards EFL” according to the estimated usefulness of knowledge of English for further learning and better access to good jobs and “gender”. (3) *Instructional variables* comprise the use of computer programs, newspapers, magazines, comics, the internet, books for extensive reading and the occasional presence of English speaking visitors in the English classes “English at school” and the “amount of English homework”.

---

<sup>10</sup> Calculated by the LISREL-program (Jöreskog, K.G. & Sörbom, D. 2001, LISREL 8.51. Lincolnwood, USA).

The graphs represent the variables and the relationships between them. Only those relationships which proved to be significant are included. The curved lines at the left refer to correlations between explaining variables, the straight arrows signify significant paths representing impacts from explaining variables to dependent variables. Solid lines indicate positive, dotted lines negative effects.

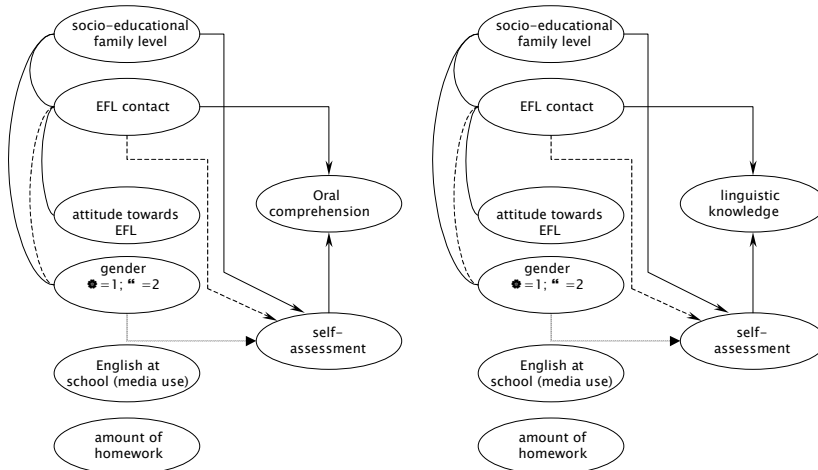


Figure 1: Path model: "oral comprehension"      Figure 2: Path model: "linguistic knowledge"

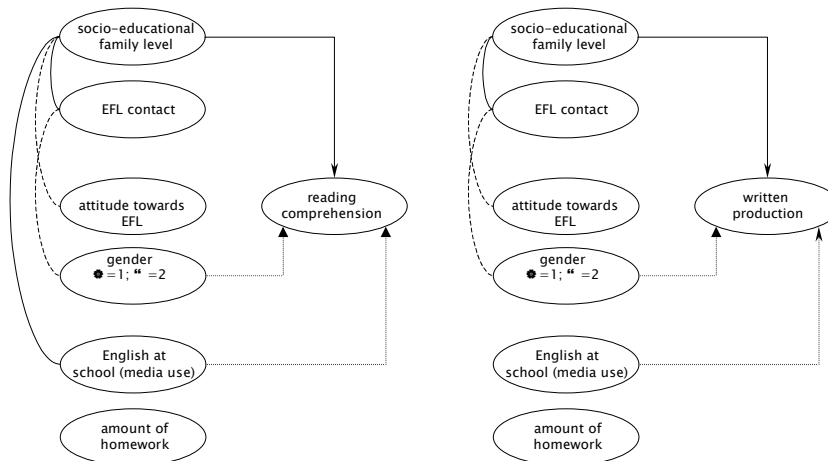


Figure 3: Path model: "reading comprehension"      Figure 4: Path model "written production"

## **Family background**

### **Socio-educational family level**

The socio-educational family level, as defined by the educational level of the father is an indicator for a family background promoting the academic achievement of children. The family with higher socio-educational status (father holds university entrance exam) most likely speaks German at home, the father is proficient in English, the child occasionally speaks English on vacations, listens to English radio programs, reads English books, and with high probability attends the “Gymnasium”.

As is shown in figures 1 and 2, the influence of the family’s socio-educational background on the dependent variables is indirect as reflected by a positive effect on the pupil’s self-assessment which in turn is related positively to oral comprehension and linguistic knowledge. Regarding reading comprehension and written production indirect paths could not be assessed, but the socio-educational level predicts the pupils’ achievement as well. Considering total effects, the socio-educational level of the family appears to be the main predictor of the test results.

### **English language contact through the media and in personal contacts (EFL contact)**

Various occasions to learn English at home and during vacations contribute to the achievements in oral comprehension and linguistic knowledge (figures 1 and 2). Considering single items, to attend English TV programs appears to be correlated positively with all the test results. Listening to English radio programs is positive for linguistic knowledge test results. If the father has good foreign language proficiency the pupil shows better results in the tests on listening (oral) comprehension, linguistic knowledge and written production.

There are negative relationships between language contacts and the self assessment regarding oral comprehension and linguistic knowledge (see figures 1 and 2). Do the experiences with high proficient English speakers (via TV, radio, own father, contacts with native speakers) decrease ones own self evaluation in EFL? Nevertheless the total effects between language contacts and EFL achievements are positive pointing to the possibility that a somewhat reduced self esteem can promote language achievement under the conditions given.

### **German as the language spoken at home**

In this particular pilot study 17 percent of pupils belong to families who speak another language at home besides or instead of German<sup>11</sup>. 29% of the pupils who don’t or partially speak German within the family (abbreviated here as “pupils from non-German speaking families”) belong to families where the father has obtained the university entrance exam compared to 38% of German speaking family backgrounds. Whereas 40% of the German pupils attend the

---

<sup>11</sup> They are not differentially treated in the path models, hence the German vs. non-German distinction is not included in the figures.

“Gymnasium<sup>12</sup>”, only 30% of the pupils from non-German speaking families do so. The fathers of the latter tend to be less proficient in English. On the average, pupils with non-German backgrounds have somewhat lower grades in English. Pupils from non-German speaking families assess themselves lower regarding their test proficiencies than the pupils from German speaking families. The pupils with German language family background are better in all tests.

A close look at the various school types reveals that in the “Gymnasium” the two groups do not differ with regard to listening (oral) comprehension and linguistic knowledge but pupils with a pure German speaking background are better in reading and written production. In the “Realschule” the pupils with non-German backgrounds are even somewhat better than their German counterparts with the sole exception of reading competence, both have the same mean score. In the “Hauptschule” the results of non-German background pupils are lower.

Effects that distinguish even clearer appear if gender is taken into account. Girls from non-German speaking family backgrounds always show higher mean scores than their male counterparts above all regarding written production. They are even somewhat better than girls and boys from purely German speaking families with reference to reading comprehension and written production. Figure 5 represents the deviations from the means based on the percentages of correct responses. One should cautiously interpret these results bearing in mind the small sample of this study.

---

<sup>12</sup> The terms “Gymnasium”, “Realschule” and “Hauptschule” are explained in section III, chapter about “Germany”.

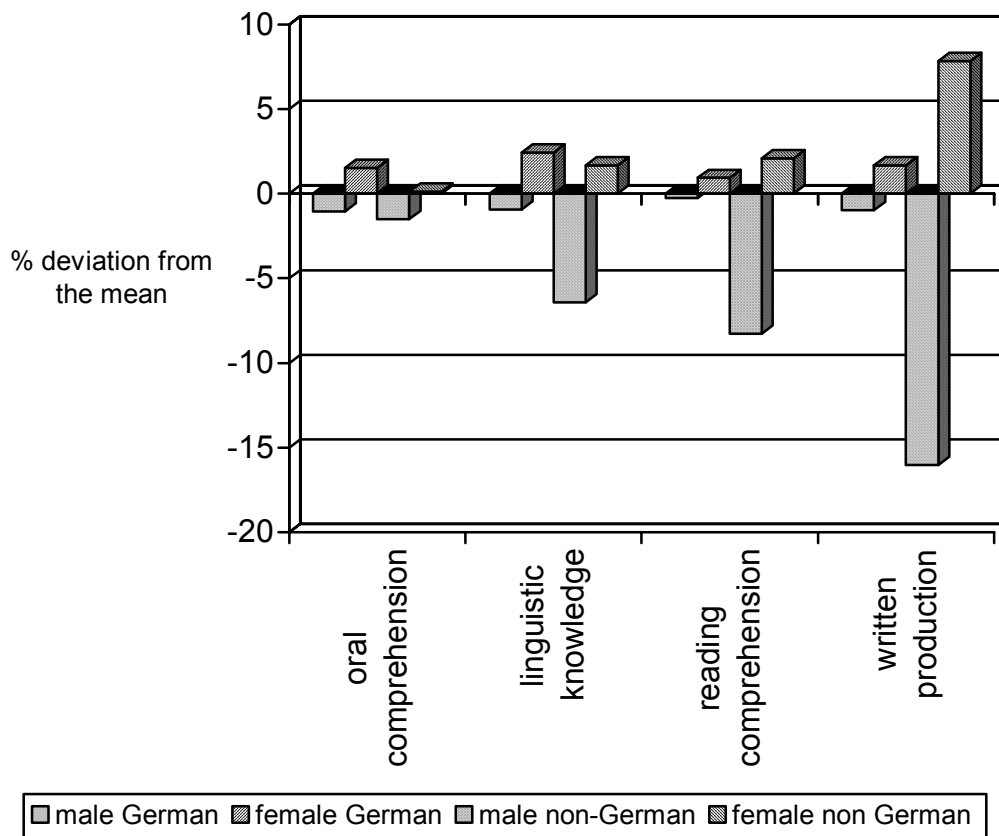


Figure 5: Deviations from the means of the test results for pupils with German and (partially) non-German speaking family backgrounds

### Individual characteristics

#### Grades in EFL

Grades in EFL were not included in the path models. Those pupils whose father passed the university entrance exam and speaks good English on the average attain better grades, but the differences are insignificant. Those who have better grades tend to use TV, listen to English radio programs and like books for extensive reading. On the other hand, English seems less important to them, not very needful for further education nor a prerequisite for a good job. Girls receive somewhat better grades than boys, but the difference is small.

#### Attitudes towards EFL

Unexpectedly favourable attitudes towards EFL as defined above appear not to enhance the test results. They are even related slightly negative with socio-educational level regarding reading comprehension and written production; they are positively related with EFL contact if oral comprehension and linguistic knowledge are considered. Presumably other subjects than English seem to be more important and needful for pupils with higher achievements.

## **Gender**

On the average girls obtain somewhat better grades in English (insignificant), they tend to use English more often on vacations. They report they have more and intense language contacts in English. Boys prefer English computer programs and the internet, they are more convinced than girls that English is important to get a good job. The results of gender differences are confounded with an uneven distribution of girls and boys with regard to the type of school they visit. In this sample boys are over-represented in the “Hauptschule” (2/3) – the lowest category of the German educational system – and slightly underrepresented in the “Gymnasium” (45%) – the highest category. There is a gender equilibrium in the other two school forms: “Realschule” and “Gesamtschule”, which is specific for this pilot study. Bearing in mind the small non representative sample the gender differences according to academic achievement reflect differences in school type and socio-educational background effects to some degree.

Gender effects seem here to have a small indirect relationship with academic achievement in English via the self-assessment in foreign language capacity (figures 1 and 2). The negative path from gender to self-assessment reveals a higher self-assessment of girls as compared to boys which in turn has a positive effect on foreign language (oral comprehension and linguistic knowledge) achievement. Regarding total effects, girls are somewhat better in all of the tests, none of the differences being significant.

## **Instruction**

### **English at school (use of media)**

Unexpectedly the spacious use of media in the class does not lead to good test results with the exception of written production (figure 4). When single items are considered the use of books for extensive reading enhances reading comprehension and written production. Despite there are only minor relationships with other variables.

### **Amount of homework**

The amount of homework in English reported by the pupils influences linguistic knowledge directly and via assessing one’s own proficiency indirectly (figure 2). The total effect is negative, meaning those who do better in linguistic knowledge report to spend less time on their homework. The data don’t show any other single relationship which is important in the context of the amount of homework.



**Teacher-based information about teacher- and instruction-bound effects on achievement.**

**Teachers' international experiences with English speaking countries**

77% of the English teachers spent some time in an English speaking country. Classes whose teachers can rely on such experiences on average are better in listening comprehension, reading comprehension and written production, but the differences are insignificant. The amount of time spent in an English speaking country during a teacher's educational or job history does not show up in distinguished pupils' achievements.

**Duration of teaching activity**

81% of the teachers taught English more than 15 years. Their pupils attain higher average scores in all the tests, the differences are significant (figure 6).

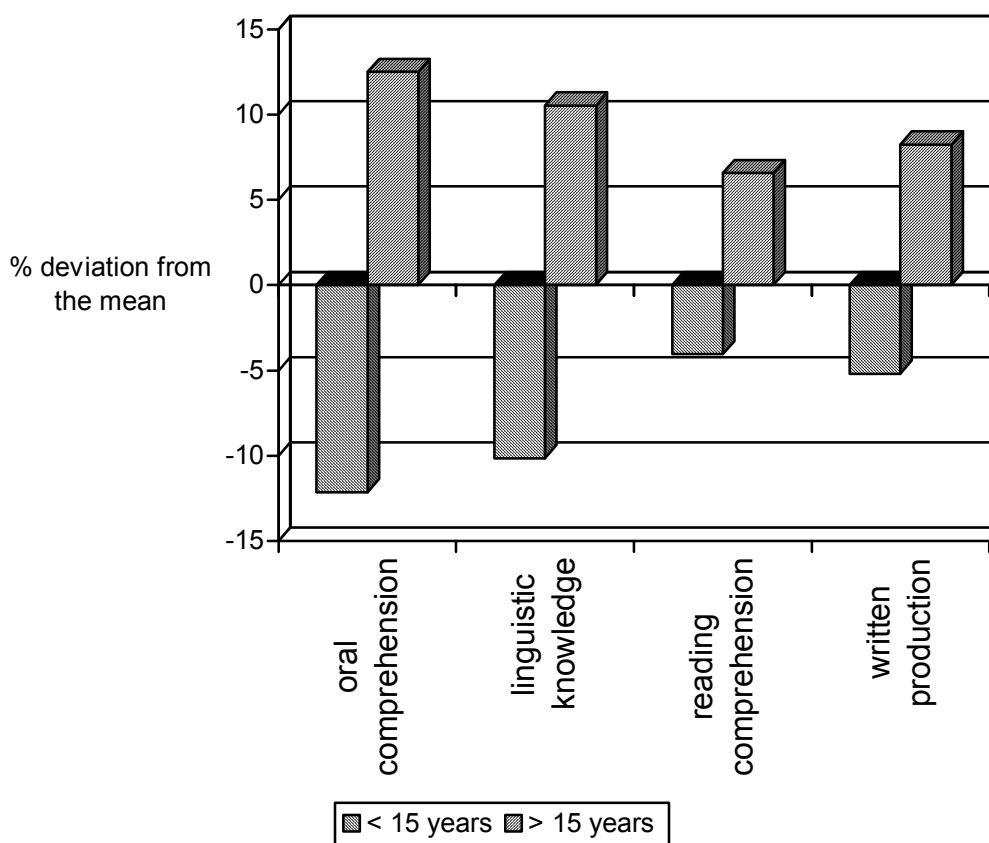


Figure 6: Test results of pupils instructed by teachers with different duration of teaching experiences

### **Error Correction**

On the average, the more a teacher corrects grammatical errors, the better pupils perform in English tests. Correlations range from 0.23 to 0.52. The correction of pragmatic errors in contrast, does not seem to be important in such a manner. Here the correlations range from -.79 to .17 with the exception of the test for written comprehension ( $r = .45$ ).

### **Conclusion**

Background variables are confounded with occasions for contacts concerning EFL, grades, attitudes towards EFL, gender and family members speaking another than the German language at home and type of school. Thus the effects cannot be considered separately. The data point to the predominance of background variables which show direct as well as indirect effects mediated by family- and individual-bound effects. Instructional variables appear to influence achievements more specifically. The patterns of the relationships between the sources and the results of language achievements differ according to the language domains tested. The highly complex picture points to the necessity to adapt instructional developments to the contexts given. This might be reflected by the success of experienced teachers. Thus family and individual characteristics should be taken into account for further developments in EFL education. Considering the small German sample, all interpretations must be regarded to be tentative, open to further examinations.

## THE NETHERLANDS

In this chapter we summarise the findings from the descriptive and correlation analyses of the data. In the next phase of the project in which the Dutch data will be compared to the data from the other participating countries we can test the findings of our national study against the other studies. In the following sections the main findings of our study are summarised. They are based on the quantitative data presented in full report on the Dutch study (de Bot, Peeters-de Quay & Evers 2003).

### *The sample*

The sample was taken from the schools in the VOCL project. Though the complete set of schools in that sample form a representative sample of Dutch schools in secondary education, the schools that agreed to participate in the present study are not. In our sample higher forms of secondary education are clearly over-represented. In addition, school from the big cities are underrepresented as are children with a non-Dutch ethnic background. So all in all, the global picture may suggest higher levels of proficiency than is to be expected in the larger population.

### *The instruments used*

The language proficiency tests and the self evaluation test appeared to be reliable instruments, and on the majority of the pupils indicate that they found the tests (rather) easy. The listening test is seen as the most easy part of the tests, while the writing test is seen as the most difficult part. This estimation is supported by the scores on the tests themselves: pupils scored higher on those parts of the test they found easier..

Correlations between language proficiency scores and self evaluations are moderately high suggesting an underlying proficiency dimension for all tests.

### *Language proficiency scores*

Without data from the other countries, it is difficult to establish 'how good the pupils are doing' and what causes differences between countries. In our data we find clear effects of school type and linguistic skill: Higher school types show higher proficiency scores, and scores for listening and reading are higher than those for writing and grammar. With respect to gender, differences are very small and if anything, than the boys are slightly better than the girls. Differences

between individual schools are small, and differences may reflect teaching practices and goals. At the same time the data on classroom practices show a high similarity between schools.

With respect to language background, the pupils with a non-Dutch 'western' background show the highest scores, even higher than the pupils with a Dutch background. Pupils with a 'non-western' background appear to have slightly lower scores, while the Friesian background pupils show the lowest scores on all tests. Further analyses showed that most speakers of Friesian are in the lower school types, so that differences in language background may reflect a difference between school types.

There is a clear effect of level of education of parents: for all proficiency tests there is a relation between level of education of parents and pupils' scores: higher proficiency scores are associated with higher levels of education of parents.

### **The pupils' questionnaire: background variables and proficiency scores**

#### *English in primary education*

Our data seem to support earlier findings on the effects of English in primary education: after three years in secondary education the differences between children who had English in primary education and those that didn't have it, have disappeared. The earlier data showed that the pupils do learn English in primary, so apparently there is no differentiation in the approach of children who have acquired some English and those that haven't: all pupils go through the same program, which in more than one way is a waste of time and energy.

#### *Contact with English*

The various types of contact with English can be brought under 4 major categories: contact through spoken language, contact through written language, contact through interaction with peers and family members, and contact through computer use. Music, radio, TV and computers/internet are the most important types of contact. English is the language of music for this group and the number of hours spent listening to music is considerable, even more than 4 hours a day for some groups. More than 40% of the pupils indicated that the lyrics of the songs in English are important, which suggests that the pupils actually listen to them and try to understand.

As for TV, English spoken programs are common. This is not surprising given the dominance of English spoken programs on Dutch channels and the popularity of music channels for this group. Still a surprising more than 30% indicate to watch BBC programs that are typically not subtitled.

During holidays, English is widely used both in English-speaking countries and in non-English speaking countries. More than 80% of the pupils indicate that

they use English in non-English speaking countries. This shows that English is used as the lingua franca in contact with peers from different language backgrounds.

#### *Appreciation and importance of English and advantages of knowing English*

The outcomes for these questions were clear: a large majority of the pupils like English and think its important. This holds for all school types. There appear to be many advantages of knowing English, but communication abroad, use of the computer and understanding English TV programs are highest on the list. After these, career opportunities are mentioned.

#### *Contribution of school, media and other sources to the acquisition of English*

School is considered to be the most important source of acquisition of English, while about 30% of the acquisition is estimated to come from the media. The role of the school is more important in the higher school types.: in lower school types like VMBO-K/B/LWOO the contribution of the school is estimated to be less than 50%. It should be stressed that these are the pupils' estimates, and it is difficult to evaluate this against more objective data.

#### *Relations between background variables and proficiency scores*

In the second part of the analysis relations between background variables and proficiency scores have been tested.

If we look at the relations between family characteristics and scores on language proficiency tests, a first finding is that correlation coefficients are generally low which means that the impact of those factors on language proficiency scores is small. The strongest effects are found for level of education of parents and level of proficiency in English of parents: there is a positive correlation between these levels and scores on proficiency tests.

If we look at different types of contact with English, we see weak relation between test scores and use of English abroad. Listening to music appears to have a much stronger effect. In particular for listening comprehension, listening for English music plays a role. Radio is not very popular in this group, while watching TV is a favoured activity. Watching TV and how frequently this is done has an impact on language proficiency, again particularly for listening. Other types of contact with English cluster in four groups: family/friends, audio-visual media, written media and computer/Internet. Audio-visual media and computer use have both a mild effect..

If we look at attitudes towards English, the outcomes clearly show an effect on appreciation and importance of English, though more so on the Self Evaluation tests than on the proficiency tests. This suggests that in the Self evaluation construct attitudinal aspects play a role. As always with correlations between proficiency and attitudes, it not clear what causes what: does a positive attitude

towards the language have a positive effect on learning, or do positive experiences in learning lead to positive attitudes?

If we look at the role of different classroom related variables, one of the more puzzling findings is that lower proficiency scores are associated with a higher contribution of the school in the acquisition process according to the pupils' estimates.

For a number of variables we gathered data from both the teachers and the pupils. The two groups appear to have sometimes very different views on what goes on in classes. There appears to be no relation between the teachers' and pupils' assumption about time spent on homework. Teachers assume that the pupils spent more time on homework than they actually report themselves. Other discrepancies between teachers and pupils were found for use of English by teacher (more according to pupils than according to teachers), use of internet in class, amount of group work and use of English by pupils (more according to teachers than according to pupils).

Since input is assumed to be an important factor in language acquisition, as is interaction in the classroom, these two variables might explain differences in language proficiency. The analyses show that the explanatory power of these variables as they have been operationalised in our project is extremely limited. Other resources in the class appear to show similar low correlations, but this may also be caused by the limited use that is made of them. Teachers appear to make use of sound cassettes for listening comprehension and books for extensive reading. More up to date resources like computer and internet are basically not used. If we look at teachers' activities in class, the picture is that it is the teacher who talks in front of the class, sometimes interacting with one or more pupils. Group work is very unusual. While recent theories and good practices in language teaching stress the importance of interaction in the class and various forms of output, this is clearly not what happened in Dutch English classes.

Summarising the correlation part of the study, the outcomes are somewhat disappointing in the sense that we can explain only a small part of differences in proficiency with the background variables used. In the international comparison we will make use of a statistical procedure in which differences between countries are included in the design. In a way the present study on its own cannot explain very much without comparative data from other settings and countries. General conclusions at this point are that school based teaching does play a role in acquisition, but what exactly makes a difference we do not know: amount of group work or frontal teaching has no significant impact and variation of use of English by the teacher also explains very little. Other types of input and contact play a significant role, in particular media like TV, music and computers. To what extent this is specific for the Netherlands will become clear in the next phase of the project when the cross-national data are compared.

## **NORWAY**

### **Summary of test results**

The European report gives no overall score for test results, but presents results for the four components that the test consists of; oral comprehension, linguistic competence, reading comprehension and written production. Figure 1 below gives an overview of test results in the form of country profiles. A general trend for all countries is to score best on reading comprehension, lower on linguistic competence and lowest on written production. The Scandinavian countries and the Netherlands score relatively high on oral comprehension, while Spain and France score quite lower on that skill. The Nordic countries and the Netherlands have all considerably better results than France and Spain. The Norwegian pupils seem to master the receptive skills, in particular oral comprehension. The result for reading comprehension is relatively good for Norwegian 10-graders, but there is a considerable standard deviation (26.82), the largest of all countries in fact, indicating a spread in reading performances for Norwegian pupils. Norway performs relatively well on written production, but has the highest standard deviation even here.

**Figure 1 A proficiency profile of each participating country for oral comprehension, linguistic competence, reading comprehension and written production.**

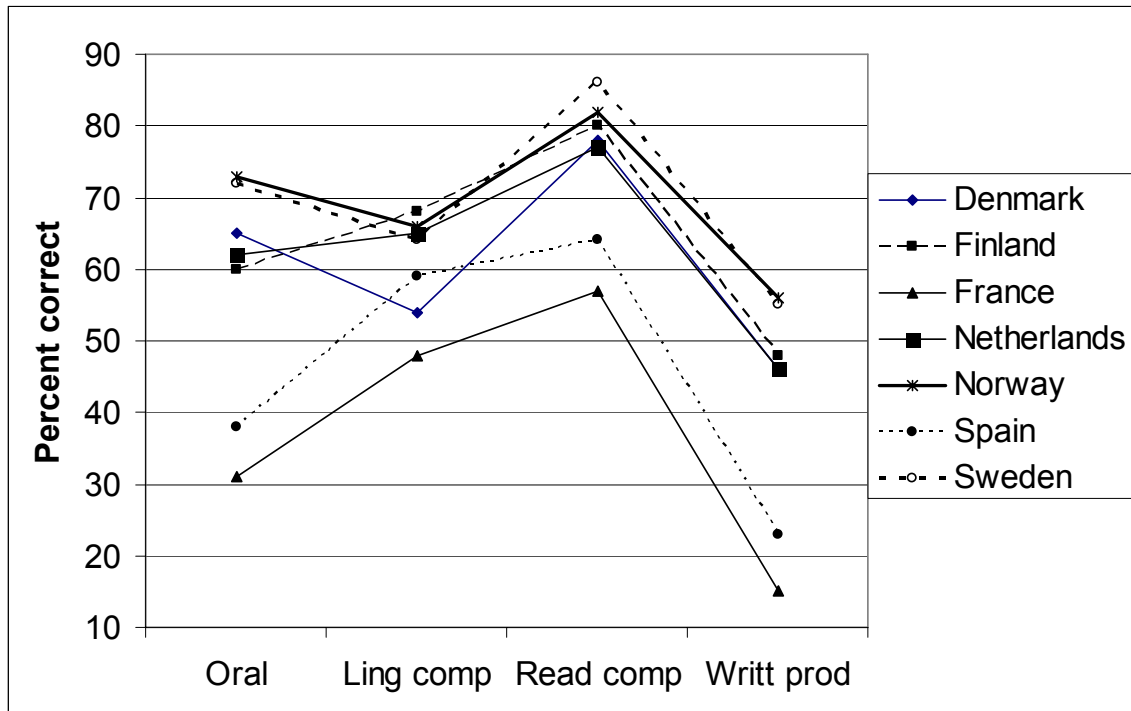


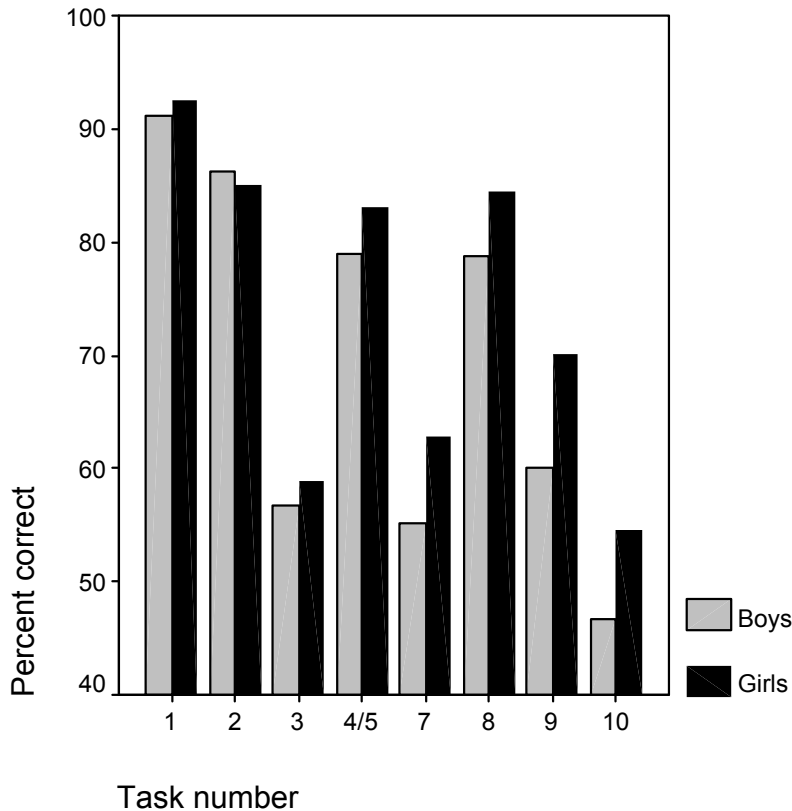
Figure 2 below illustrates Norwegian performance on the separate tasks for boys and girls. We see that Norwegian pupils score high on all the “ticking off tasks”; Tasks 1 and 2 (oral comprehension), Tasks 4 and 5 (grammatical correctness), and Task 8 (reading comprehension). Norwegian pupils score lower on Tasks 3, 7, 9 and 10, tasks requiring correct production and also correct spelling, and on the whole boys score lower than girls. There is no significant difference between boys and girls on the three listening tasks, but on the other tasks there is a significant difference. The largest difference between the genders is found in Tasks 9 and 10 (written production). The average percentage of correct answers for the two tasks is 56.3%. For boys the mean is 52%, for girls the mean is 60.4%, a considerable and significant difference.

There is no large gender difference in comprehension for the countries taking part in the survey. For linguistic competence Danish boys perform better than girls; for the other countries girls outperform boys. Girls on the whole perform better on written production, and there is a large significant difference for



Finland and Norway in favour of girls. Danish and Dutch boys perform better than girls on written production.

**Figure 2 Results on the different tasks related to gender. N=1314. (Task 6 is removed from the test)**



For Norwegian pupils there is significant correlation between test results and self-assessment (0.56), i.e. the pupils seem to a reasonable extent to be able to assess their own performance on the basis of the can-do statements. Some pupils have high confidence in their English proficiency but low results, which is not so unexpected. On the other hand, a small number of pupils with good results show a lack of confidence in their own English proficiency. There is no significant difference between boys and girls. Grades given at Christmas also correlate positively with results on the test.

**Results from the pupils’ questionnaires**

The analysis of the answers to the pupils’ questionnaires show that a majority of the pupils are born in Norway, 0.2% are born in an English-speaking country and 4.2% are born in another country. 0.9% of the pupils speak English at home, i.e. more pupils than those born in an English-speaking country use English as the main language of communication at home. 62% of the pupils have chosen a second foreign language to study at school, 42% of these have

chosen German, 17% French, 0.2% Norwegian as a second language, and 2.7% another foreign language. Those who study a second foreign language have significantly better results on the English test than those who do not study a second foreign language. Those who study French have significantly better results on the test than those who study German.

The 10-graders think they have learnt about half of what they know of English at school. We find high results among the pupils who do not think of school as their main source of English input. Pupils consider parents as a relatively modest source of input. Likewise, siblings and friends and traditional written material are less important as sources of input. However, Norwegian pupils are massively exposed to English in many different ways in their spare time through the media: radio, TV, CDs, cinema, internet, and computer games. Pupils believe that as much as 34% on average of their knowledge of English is learnt from the media. Almost all of them watch TV, and those who watch English TV programs with or without subtitles have good test results. Furthermore, Norwegian pupils are motivated for learning English primarily in order to communicate abroad, to understand English TV, films and song lyrics better, and to make better use of computers and the internet. Norwegian pupils' attitudes to English as a foreign language and English as a school subject are very positive. Norwegian pupils are highly motivated for developing their proficiency in English and they clearly see the advantages of learning English.

### **Results from the teachers' questionnaires**

In order to present results more holistically the typical Norwegian English teacher will be presented as a case by using the available 65 anonymous teacher questionnaires and the mean value of the survey statistics. The typical English teacher in Norway will be called Mina. Mina is female, around 50 and well qualified with 20 or 30 credits in English. Mina likes being a teacher and is satisfied with her colleagues, both personally and professionally. She has been teaching English for about ten years at the school where she now is working. Mina has not been to an English-speaking country for a longer period, nor has she received any in-service training of longer duration. She teaches about 18 lessons per week, of which six are in English. It takes her about 20 to 25 minutes to prepare for an English lesson. Like the majority of her colleagues Mina wanted to become a teacher when she started her studies and she does not consider leaving the profession, even though she feels that society does not highly estimate the job she does. Her pupils, on the other hand, are "reasonably" appreciative.

Mina uses English a lot in the classroom, half the time or somewhat more. She encourages her pupils to speak English in and outside school. Like almost all of her colleagues she relies on the English textbook extensively, though she is willing to choose and prioritize between different topics. At times she uses her own developed materials. Like most of her colleagues Mina focuses on

teaching pupils about situational language and the socio-cultural context of the English speaking countries. To make them practise the language she uses pair-work frequently and role-plays somewhat less frequently. On the other hand, other sources of language input than the textbook, such as the internet, books, magazines, and videos, are used less frequently, if at all. Mina has not been able, or willing, to participate in international exchange programs, nor has she kept up with new technology. She runs a relatively traditional English classroom, where learning to learn, new technology and project work seem to play a minor role, while the textbook provides the safety and structure a teacher needs or wants. And again, Mina does not exist, she is only a statistical construct based on mean values.

### **Discussion and implications**

In the *Curriculum for the 10-year Compulsory School in Norway (L97)* there are no specifications as to language levels to be achieved in English and therefore few criteria to be used for analyzing the European test results in the light of English syllabus requirements. At the end of the 10<sup>th</sup> grade Norwegian pupils are expected to know about the structure and function of the language, about English-speaking cultures and societies, how to solve language problems when encountered and, and how to make use of a broad spectrum of language learning aids. In the exam requirements these objectives are concretized, and we see that pupils are expected to be able to communicate and interact in English and produce fairly long and coherent stretches of oral and written text. The European test is a proficiency test only and therefore cannot be said to comply with the Norwegian syllabus and has consequently low construct validity. Oral production is not tested at all in the European test, and written competence in the form of longer coherent texts is not tested. Caution must therefore be exercised in regard to interpretation of results. Still, the test results give information about what Norwegian pupils master and what cause problems as compared to pupils in other countries, even if the test was administered differently and taken at different times in the final school year for all the participating countries.

Norwegian pupils score high on the European test, but results show a relatively large standard deviation and the distribution of results in each classroom is also considerable. The between-school part of the variance is about 13 %, a relatively low value in an international perspective. Combined with the rather large overall spread this means that there is a pronounced spread of English proficiency within classrooms. The Norwegian compulsory school system has as its main goal to provide equal conditions for all pupils and even out social differences. The data reveals a tremendous challenge for Norwegian teachers of English.

In the *Curriculum for the 10-year Compulsory School in Norway (L97)*, there are quite a few requirements related to working methods, and L 97 states principles

of communicative competence, for instance the use of English as a classroom language, the use of authentic texts, the fostering of autonomy, and the use of ICT in English. Pupils are supposed to “be able to communicate about and assess learning materials and learning methods in relation to objectives, and to make choices that are useful for further language learning.” From the Norwegian survey results we see that about 66% of the teachers state that they speak English more than half the time in the classroom. This must be seen in relation to the requirement in the English syllabus “Most classroom communication shall be in English”. The fact that 30% state that they use English “never/rarely” or “sometimes” in the classroom does not comply with expectations of the teacher as a language model. Still, in the European survey we see that only the Swedish teachers use English more in class than the Norwegian teachers. The most positive correlation between classroom activities and test results for Norway is the use of English as a means of communication.

Another positively correlated activity is the use of the textbook, meaning that those who follow the progression provided by the textbook “very often/often” obtain good results for their classes. However, one teacher in the survey who does not use a textbook at all has pupils with very good results. This specific teacher, according to the questionnaire, varies his resources, has spent more than six months in an English speaking country and uses English extensively and enthusiastically as the classroom language.

The survey shows that Norwegian pupils often use the media and that they believe they learn considerably from different kinds of media. The teachers, on the other hand, still run classes relying primarily on the textbook and hardly ever use ICT in the classrooms, although this is specifically required in the English syllabus as noted above. Not many years ago the teacher of English in Norway was almost the sole source of input, and the authority of the teacher was primarily founded on his or her English communicative skills. In Norway today we are practically bombarded by massive input of English language and culture, and there seems to be a mismatch between the motivation of the pupils and the classroom practices of the teachers. However, teachers need to feel comfortable with new methods and new technology, and what matters most is not the activity in itself, but the quality of what goes on in the classroom. The present-day generation of teachers probably feels confident with the textbook and its progression, a situation that probably leads to constructive communication and positive interaction in the classroom. Still, this period of reliance on the textbook may come to an end soon because of the focus on ICT in schools in Norway, so that future teachers will have to make use of and make meaning of the vast resources of English available on the net for the purpose of authentic comprehension and communication.

Results from the Norwegian part of the survey are found in Norwegian and in English on [www.ils.uio.no/forskning/engelsk](http://www.ils.uio.no/forskning/engelsk)

## **SPAIN**

The Spanish participation in this study involved 123 schools with 2,957 pupils in the final grade of Compulsory Secondary Education (ESO) from all the Autonomous Communities. The efficient collaboration of the autonomous representatives in the national co-ordinating commission has been essential for the appropriate participation of Spain in this comparative evaluation.

### **The achievement test**

The Spanish pupils, as well as the pupils from the other countries, had to answer a test composed of sixty five items whose objective was to measure the pupils' attainment in four different blocks of contents: linguistic knowledge and the command of three communicative competences, oral comprehension, reading comprehension and written production. The test was administered in two consecutive lessons during the first fortnight of May.

The results obtained by the Spanish pupils in the different competences assessed and by the pupils in the other participating countries are shown in table 1. Table 2 shows some statistical indexes of the Spanish pupils' performance. It is important to point out that in the national statistical analyses the scores of all the pupils who completed both or one of the two parts of the test have been considered, whereas in the international analyses only pupils who completed both parts of the test were considered.

**Table 1. Mean percentage and standard deviation of correct answers in the achievement test.**

|                    | Oral comprehension |              | Linguistic Competence |              | Reading comprehension |              | Written production |              |
|--------------------|--------------------|--------------|-----------------------|--------------|-----------------------|--------------|--------------------|--------------|
|                    | Mean               | St. d.       | Mean                  | St. d.       | Mean                  | St. d.       | Mean               | St. d.       |
| <b>DENMARK</b>     | 64.77              | 20.07        | 53.95                 | 22.10        | 78.32                 | 26.26        | 46.17              | 29.33        |
| <b>FINLAND</b>     | 59.65              | 24.52        | 67.59                 | 20.63        | 80.29                 | 23.07        | 47.70              | 29.47        |
| <b>FRANCE</b>      | 30.60              | 20.39        | 48.01                 | 21.41        | 56.84                 | 21.85        | 14.55              | 17.81        |
| <b>NETHERLANDS</b> | 61.63              | 21.44        | 65.00                 | 22.00        | 77.47                 | 21.54        | 46.04              | 25.67        |
| <b>NORWAY</b>      | 73.26              | 19.60        | 66.36                 | 20.40        | 82.03                 | 26.82        | 56.30              | 29.69        |
| <b>SPAIN</b>       | <b>38.33</b>       | <b>23.08</b> | <b>58.75</b>          | <b>23.30</b> | <b>63.57</b>          | <b>21.66</b> | <b>23.41</b>       | <b>25.50</b> |
| <b>SWEDEN</b>      | 72.18              | 19.65        | 64.23                 | 20.43        | 85.88                 | 22.31        | 55.39              | 28.04        |

**Table 2. Spanish pupils' statistical indexes**

| Statistical indexes                          | Oral comprehension | Linguistic competence | Reading comprehension | Written production |
|--|--------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Mean</b>                                  | 37.57              | 58.23                 | 63.44                 | 21.74              |
| <b>Median</b>                                | 33.33              | 62.50                 | 62.50                 | 14.29              |
| <b>Standard deviation</b>                    | 22.82              | 23.49                 | 21.80                 | 24.51              |
|  |                    |                       |                       |                    |
| <b>10% pupils with the best achievement</b>  | 81.42              | 96.21                 | 96.09                 | 77.19              |
| <b>10% pupils with the worst achievement</b> | 5.97               | 13.58                 | 21.42                 | 0.00               |
|  |                    |                       |                       |                    |
| <b>First quartile</b>                        | 11.22              | 25.74                 | 31.88                 | 0.00               |
| <b>Second quartile</b>                       | 29.37              | 50.60                 | 56.93                 | 6.66               |
| <b>Third quartile</b>                        | 45.71              | 68.85                 | 71.85                 | 20.35              |
| <b>Fourth quartile</b>                       | 70.48              | 88.29                 | 88.24                 | 56.63              |

### *Oral comprehension*

It has been difficult for most of the Spanish pupils to command the oral comprehension exercises, only the pupils in the fourth quartile reach a 70% of correct answers. As the standard deviation shows the results of the Spanish pupils are highly varied. There are pupils with a low average percentage of right answers, 6%, and pupils with quite a satisfactory score, 82% of correct answers.

### *Linguistic competence*

As it can be observed the average percentage of right answers is eight points over fifty per cent, percentage that could be considered satisfactory in a 0 – 100 scale. It can also be observed that in this block of contents Spanish pupils perform in a similar way to those from the other countries, there is only 7.61 percentage points between the Spanish pupils and the Norwegian pupils, the ones with the highest score.

### *Reading comprehension*

The score obtained by the Spanish pupils in this skill is the highest of the test. Pupils in the second quartile have a score over fifty per cent of correct answers. The ten per cent of pupils with the best results have a percentage of right answers very close to hundred per cent. Compared with the other assessed skills, the pupils with the worst results have a score six points higher minimum.

### *Written production*

Spanish pupils score very low in this skill. Fifty per cent of correct answers is only achieved by the students in the fourth quartile, and the score of the ten per cent of pupils with the best results is five percentage points minimum lower than in any of the other skills. It is also a remarkable fact that the score of the pupils in the first quartile is 0% and 7% in the second one.

An overall view of the Spanish pupils' performance indicates that this performance is very varied, with both pupils with good achievement, and others with a very poor one. It also indicates that lessons may not be methodologically approached as communicatively as they should be, bearing in mind the existing communicative oriented curriculum. Grammar and reading command have been the most successfully achieved competences in this survey.

### **The self-assessment test**

The surveyed pupils had to answer thirteen questions about how difficult they find different tasks in English. The scale used had four values: easy, quite easy, very difficult and impossible. These questions were based on the level B1 established by the European Common Reference Framework. Spanish pupils' answers partially coincide with the test results. According to their answers the easiest skill is reading comprehension and it is in this skill where there have been better results. However, written production was also appreciated as an easy competence but the results in the assessment of this skill do not show at all that pupils could succeed in it.

This lack of coincidence between what pupils consider they know or they do not know and the test results could be explained as a consequence of the lack of self-assessment practice at schools.

Pupils from the other countries, with the exception of French pupils, have been much more realistic in their answers and very little differences have been found between their performance and their opinion on what they think they know in the use of the language.

### **Pupils' questionnaire**

2,843 Spanish pupils answered a questionnaire with twenty-four questions about their learning environment. They represent nearly a fourth, 24,2%, of the total number of the surveyed pupils. They are followed by the Finnish pupils that represent 13,7%. The most remarkable differences between the Spanish pupils and the pupils from the other participating countries are described below.

The Spanish pupils' average age is 16, the same as the pupils from Finland and Norway. The average age of the rest of the pupils is 15.

The Spanish pupils' parents' level of command of the English language differs quite a lot from the other pupils' parents' command. 49% of the Spanish pupils indicate that their parents do not speak English at all, 21% indicate that they speak it very badly and only 13% think that their parents speak English well or very well. When taking as a reference the nearest percentages, the case of the Finnish pupils, we found that 12% of their parents do not speak English at all, 25% speak very badly and 37% speak English well or very well. The percentages from the rest of the pupils are far higher. However it is interesting to point out that percentages are much higher regarding the Spanish pupils' siblings' command of the English language, what can suggest that the new generation may change this view.

The Spanish pupils are the ones who practice the English language out of school with the lowest frequency when the practice refers to: to speaking in English with parents, siblings or friends; to watching television in English; to watching films in English in the cinema; to reading magazines, newspapers or books; to travelling abroad. But when it refers to listening to music in English on the radio or in CD or cassettes, or to playing computer games, then the frequency is rather similar to the one of the pupils from the other countries. This lack of practice of the English language out of the school time could be considered as an important fact with a big influence in the Spanish pupils' achievement. When in most of the participating countries the presence of the English language around the learner is something usual (different kind of television programmes in English in the national channels, movies in their original version, no existing any type of dubbing) in Spain this presence does not exist at all.

Regarding the pupils' attitude towards the English language, the Spanish pupils are the ones who like this language in a lower proportion, 38.5% do not like English at all and 61.5% like it quite a lot. French pupils are the nearest to this opinion, 28.7% do not like English and 71,3% like it quite a lot. The most distant percentages correspond to the Swedish pupils, 96.1% like the English



language very much. However the Spanish pupils are not the last ones in appreciating the importance of learning English, 85.4% think that is very or quite important to learn it. They are over 83,3% of pupils from France and 81,8% of pupils from the Netherlands, but under the rest of the pupils.

Another remarkable difference concerns the use of the English language during the lessons. Pupils had to indicate whether teachers used the English language when talking to the whole class or to one or two pupils, or when pupils were working in groups. Spanish teachers appear to be using the English language in the first setting for 68,5% of their pupils, whereas these percentages are much higher in other countries as Denmark, Sweden, Norway or France with around a 90%. In the second setting figures go down much further in all the countries. With respect to the third setting only 16,5% of the Spanish pupils indicate the use of English when they work in groups, whereas more than 40% of Swedish, Norwegian or Danish pupils indicate so.

An important difference has been found with respect to the amount of time devoted to homework. The mean in Spain is 144.14 minutes per week, 56 minutes over the mean of the whole participating countries. The mean in the other countries goes from 102.61 in Denmark to 47.95 in the Netherlands.

Finally regarding the pupils' perception about the most important sources in learning English, specifically: the school, the media or other sources, indicated in percentages, Spanish pupils declared a lower role of the media as a source and a higher role of the school and the other sources (out of school classes) in their learning of the English language.

### **Teachers' questionnaire**

One hundred and twenty-three Spanish teachers participated in the survey. These teachers as well as the teachers from the other participating countries answered a questionnaire with twenty-eight questions. Some of these questions were left out in the international analysis as they referred to specific features of their respective education systems.

This section presents the most remarkable differences between the Spanish teachers' data and the data gathered from the other participating teachers. It is very important to bear in mind that these teachers do not constitute a representative sample of the Spanish teachers in the last grade of secondary compulsory education, as the study sample was based on schools and pupils. Therefore the data described below must be understood as indicative data of the group of teachers participating in the survey.

A difference regarding the teachers' personal characteristics has been found. It can be highlighted that the Spanish teachers are the youngest in the study, with an average age of 39 years old, being 44 years the global mean of the whole teachers.

Regarding their initial training, 85% of the Spanish teachers have a university degree in English Philology (“Licenciatura”) and 52% have completed different types of courses in an English speaking country with a minimum duration of six months. This is quite remarkable as the average percentage of teachers taking those courses in the other countries, with the exception of France, is much lower, it goes from 11% in Sweden to 23% in Norway. This could be due to the lack of a favourable environment for the learning of English in their own country and therefore the necessity of finding it in an English speaking one

With respect to in-service training it is also quite remarkable the fact that the Spanish teachers participate in a much higher proportion in in-service training courses than the other teachers. 76% of the Spanish teachers indicate participation, whereas the percentage of teachers from the other countries ranges from 12% in Norway to 24% in France.

Teachers were asked several questions on methodological aspects. Few differences have been found in the way that Spanish teachers approach their lessons compared to the teachers from the other countries. Most of them, 99%, usually use a textbook. Together with the textbook they very often use a cassette specially designed for the teaching and learning of the English language and in a smaller proportion they sometimes use reading books, either to make use of them during the lessons or for homework. Differences have been found in the use of resources such as videos, computers or the Internet. 83% of the Spanish teachers rarely use them, whereas half of the teachers from the Scandinavian countries sometimes use them.

A quite remarkable difference has been found regarding the use of the English language during the lessons. Only 15% of the Spanish teachers state that they always speak in English in their lessons, whereas 40% of teachers from countries such as Norway, Sweden or Denmark usually do so.

The Spanish teachers, as well as the other teachers, are very happy with the profession they have chosen and most of them would not leave it even if they had the chance to do so. Most of them also think that society does not value their work very much. Spanish teachers are among these teachers, actually 72%, the highest percentage, think that society values their work very little.

All the participants mention to have very satisfactory relationships with their colleagues both in personal and professional aspects. They grade very high the climate of collaboration among them and their level of agreement with teaching and assessment criteria.

## **SWEDEN**

The general impression is that most Swedish grade 9 students have a satisfactory command of English, demonstrate considerable confidence about their language proficiency, and express a very positive attitude to the English language, in general and as a subject in school. The Swedish teachers are, on the whole, well educated, but the majority have not spent a long period of time—more than six months—in an English-speaking country, nor have they recently taken part in any extensive in-service training course. They seem to be quite confident about their work and their students, but many of them do not feel that the teaching profession is sufficiently valued by society. The teaching methods described involve substantial use of course books, whereas, e.g., computers are not at all common. English is used to a large extent in the classroom, both by the teachers and the students, and student interactive work is relatively frequent. This corresponds well with the general ambition expressed by the teachers to further promote their students' language confidence and communication skills.

### ***Summary of results***

Overall the Swedish students performed well on the tests, especially on the parts focusing on receptive skills. The results within the four domains tested, grouped from the best results to the poorest, are (p-values for the whole sample within brackets): reading comprehension (.86), listening comprehension (.72), linguistic competence (.64) and written production (.55). However, the distribution of results both within and between classes is considerable. There is a small group of students with very poor results, especially on tasks requiring some kind of written production.

### ***Background and attitudes of students***

Nine out of ten students were born in Sweden (94% in 1987), and roughly the same number use mainly Swedish in their homes. Most parents are fairly well educated, 83 per cent of the fathers and 88 per cent of the mothers having more than basic compulsory education, and approximately one third a university education of three years or more. Roughly two out of three are considered, by their teenage children, to have good or very good English language proficiency.

Eight out of ten students started learning English at the age of nine or earlier. Very few have stayed for more than six months in an English-speaking country, and only 14 per cent claim that they have used English during a long vacation abroad. More than seven out of ten learn a second foreign language, among

which German is the most common. Only about four per cent learn a third foreign language.

Swedish students are exposed to English in many different ways in their spare time, for instance through watching television and videos, using computers and listening to music with English texts. TV programmes and most films are not dubbed in Sweden; instead Swedish subtitles are used. To a certain extent students also watch English TV programmes without subtitles. However, reading papers or magazines in English is less common.

The Swedish students' attitudes to the English language and English as a school subject are very positive. 75 per cent find knowing English essential, another 23 per cent consider it quite important. Incentives for learning English are clearly functional/communicative: making oneself understood abroad, getting into contact with people from other countries, understanding TV programmes, films and song lyrics without subtitles and translations.

### *English at school*

An English class in the Swedish compulsory school normally consists of 24 students with a relatively even distribution of boys and girls. The teachers teach 17 hours a week on average. Seven of those hours are English lessons, the remaining teaching hours being occupied with the other subject(s) included in the individual teacher's training.

Students usually have two English lessons per week. As opposed to many of their European peers, they are usually given English homework only once a week, and the average time per week spent on this is one hour and ten minutes. Learning other subjects through English is not common. However, in the questionnaires students claim that teachers speak a great deal of English during lessons and that students are encouraged to use the language actively. The same information is given in the teacher questionnaire.

In the pupil questionnaire, students are asked to indicate how they think they have learnt English: the mean values are 55 per cent through English as a subject in school, 31 per cent through media and 14 per cent through other contacts, such as travelling.

### *Girls and boys*

Overall, there are only minor gender differences in the Swedish data both concerning test results and self-assessment, most of them not significant. It is worth noticing, however, that boys watch television and videos to a greater extent than girls do, and play computer games to a much larger extent. In general, boys use computers more, e.g. the Internet, whereas girls listen more to music and are slightly more positive to English, both in general and as a school subject. Girls also regard English as even more useful than do boys.

They also find they learn more English at school, and, consequently, they consider the role of media somewhat less important.

### ***Discussion***

It needs to be emphasised, of course, that test results can only be regarded as indicators of the construct being focused upon. In this case it should also be borne in mind that the tasks used in the present study cover only limited domains of foreign language proficiency. For example, productive competence is hardly assessed, interactive not at all: writing is tested only in a very narrow way, e.g. in a cloze test, and oral proficiency is not assessed at all. Aspects of cultural/inter-cultural competence are not included. In relation to, e.g., the Swedish national syllabus for English as a foreign language (EFL), it must therefore be concluded that construct validity is not optimal. Consequently, the results should be interpreted with caution. The same, of course, applies to direct comparisons between countries.

In view of this, it can nevertheless be noted that the results of the *Assessment of English* study are of considerable interest. Some of them correspond fairly well with other studies of EFL conducted in Sweden, where a somewhat “uneven” linguistic profile emerges, with better results, comparatively speaking, for receptive skills than for other competencies. For example, in the summative, national test of EFL for the same age group (“Äp 9”), students have been found to achieve very well on listening and reading comprehension tasks. The results in oral interaction and production are almost equally positive, whereas written production turns out to be somewhat weaker— although still at a level which must be considered quite satisfactory in relation to the national goals, defining a minimum level of what is to be attained (Skolverket, 2003).

Linguistic competence is not assessed *per se*, in separate tasks, in the Swedish national assessment materials, but integrated in the productive and interactive parts of the different tests. This is due to the fact that the tests are constructed to provide support for teachers in their decisions regarding students’ competencies in relation to the goals for English as set out in the national syllabuses. Here subsystems like vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation are seen as important prerequisites but not as goals as such (National Agency for Education, 2001). Thus, no direct comparisons can be made between the national tests and the present study. However, the results are clearly interesting and will be further analysed. An interesting follow-up, for example, would be to make performance-based analyses to determine to what extent the weaknesses shown in the *Assessment of English* results also appear when students use their English orally or in writing, or if they are rather a consequence of the gap-technique used.

The results in the self-assessment section of the study indicate that Swedish students are quite confident about their English. The activities described in the can-do statements are all valued as very easy or quite easy. The outcome of the self-assessment corresponds well with the results of the tasks in the test.

Activities including reception of oral or written language are perceived as easier than activities like note taking and reporting about information, read or heard. Thus, the students seem to have a reasonably accurate picture of their own competencies. This is further confirmed by the retrospective evaluation of the difficulty of each task that the Swedish students were requested to make. The results here show considerable agreement between perceived and real level of difficulty. This will be further analysed, partly in relation to what has been noted in other studies of the same kind (Erickson, 1998).

Since there is reasonable enough agreement between the students' total scores in this study and the latest grades of English awarded, the grades have been used in the analyses to group the students according to ability. This shows, for example, that whereas certain tasks in the present study had distinct ceiling effects for the more proficient students, others proved overwhelmingly difficult for the weakest group. The latter category of tasks usually involved writing of some kind. These observations, too, correspond well with what has been noted in the national tests. It can also be mentioned that the matching task (Exercise 8) was the only one that the students did not assess quite accurately—all categories of students perceived it as difficult, whereas it was actually one of the easiest tasks for the vast majority. This indicates that the type of exercise, presumably in combination with the type of reading required, was fairly unfamiliar to many students and therefore possibly regarded as quite complicated.

As compared to other countries, the distribution of results in Sweden is not very wide. However, it needs to be pointed out that the small group of distinct low-achievers in English is equally conspicuous in the *Assessment of English* study as in the national tests. The proportion of students born in another country than Sweden and/or mostly speaking another language than Swedish at home is somewhat larger in this group than in the sample as a whole, both in the present study and in the national tests, but this fact only accounts for part of the difference. Although the low-achieving group is relatively small, it is obviously of vital importance to find ways of helping this category of students improve their competence in English. In the Swedish national curriculum it is also strongly emphasised that schools are responsible for ensuring that *all* pupils completing compulsory school have basic communication skills in English. Since this is the minimum level of what is considered acceptable, it means that the vast majority of students are expected to reach further.

The overall Swedish results reveal only minor gender differences. However, analyses of the different tasks show that girls achieve significantly better within the field of linguistic competence and somewhat better when it comes to writing, whereas there seem to be no differences in tasks focusing on receptive competence. Since several factors, e.g. content and format, are likely to interact, the differences should not be over-interpreted. The same applies to the self-assessment section, where some statements indicate certain differences between boys' and girls' perception of their own competencies. However, the general picture is that there are far more similarities than differences with regard to evaluating different aspects of one's own language proficiency.

The answers in the pupils' questionnaire confirm what is already well known: people in Sweden in general, and young people in particular, are exposed to lots of English. In spite of this, however, it is worth noticing that the students with the poorest results do not at all seem to be less exposed to English than the rest. Thus, exposure can only be one of the factors explaining students' achievements, obviously interacting with many other variables. Also, in spite of all the input of English, pupils still see school as the most important source of learning the language.

The opinions of Swedish teachers of English correspond fairly well with what is stated by their colleagues in other countries, especially in the other Scandinavian countries. Unfortunately, however, more than half of them do not think that society values their profession enough—a larger proportion than in most other countries. Clearly, this will have to be further analysed, possible reasons will have to be identified and efforts made to improve the situation. It should be emphasised, however, that the Swedish teachers are very confident about the relationship with their students: less than five per cent doubt that their students value their work.

One considerable difference between what is reported by the Swedish teachers and their European colleagues needs to be pointed out, viz. the amount of homework given to students. Whereas in all other countries, students seem to be given homework for every lesson, the large majority of Swedish teachers report that assignments are given only once a week. There might be several reasons for this, e.g. different interpretations of the question. More likely, however, Swedish teachers of English prefer one extensive assignment per week to two or three shorter ones. The reason may be the number of lessons per week—much more often two than three—but there may very well also be pedagogical reasons. By giving one extensive assignment, many teachers probably aim at promoting students' planning and responsibility for their own learning, which is a clearly articulated goal both in the Swedish national curriculum and in the syllabuses for English.

The challenges for English education in Sweden expressed by the teachers in the questionnaire seem generally relevant: ways to help students increase their motivation and strategies to learn will have to be further developed, as well as means to further promote language confidence and communicative ability. Also, more individualised teaching methods will have to be found, to better meet the needs of all students. An important factor here is to make use of all the English that students come across outside school, i.e. to optimise—in the teaching and learning process—the large exposure to English typical of today's Swedish society.

Finally, it should be emphasised that, although the Swedish results are quite satisfactory, there is obviously plenty of room for improvement, both generally and within specific areas highlighted in the present study.





## Selected references

Bonnet, G. (Ed.), 1998. The effectiveness of the teaching of English in the European Union, *Report of the colloquium and Background documents*, 210 p., ministère de l'éducation nationale, DPD Edition diffusion, Paris.

de Bot, K., de Quay-Peeters, P., & Evers, R., 2003. *English proficiency in lower secondary education: a cross-national comparison. First Report*. Nijmegen: Department of Applied Linguistics.

Council of Europe, 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: learning, teaching, assessment*. Cambridge University Press.

DESI, 2001. Vergleichsuntersuchungen zum Leistungsstand von Schuelerinnen und Schuelern im Englischen und in der aktiven Beherrschung der deutschen Sprache, proposal submitted by Deutsches Institut für Internationale Pädagogische Forschung (DIPF), Frankfurt am Main.

Erickson, G., 1998. Test-taker feedback - Elevers synpunkter som del av arbetet med nationella prov i engelska. I B. Ljung och A. Pettersson (red.), *Perspektiv på bedömning av kunskap*. Lärarhögskolan i Stockholm, Institutionen för pedagogik.

Hasenbrink, U., M. Berns, et al. (to appear). The English Language within the media worlds of European youth. *Media Psychology in Europe*. P. Winterhoff-Spurk and T. van der Voort.

Goethe-Institut Inter Nationes (Ed.), 2001. *Gemeinsamer europäischer Referenzrahmen für Sprachen: lernen, lehren, beurteilen*, Berlin: Langenscheidt.

Levasseur, J. & Shu, L., 1997. Espagne, France, Suède, Evaluation des connaissances et compétences en anglais des élèves de 15 à 16 ans. Les dossiers d'éducation et formation, n°62. MEN/DEP. Paris.

Ministère de l'éducation nationale, 2000. *Les langues vivantes dans le second degré en 1999-2000*. Note d'information n° 00-40. Paris.

Ministère de l'éducation nationale, 2001. *L'enseignement des langues vivantes étrangères dans le premier degré en 1999-2000*. Note d'information n° 01-18. Paris.

Ministère de l'éducation nationale, 2002. *Repères et références statistiques*. Paris.

Ministry for Education and Science in Sweden and National Agency for Education, 2002. Curriculum for the compulsory school system, the pre-school class and the leisure-time centre, Lpo 94. Stockholm: Fritzes Offentliga Publikationer.

Ministry of Education, 1999. *Education in Finland*. Sävyypaino.

Ministry of Education, 2002. Klare mål, Engelsk. [www.umv.dk](http://www.umv.dk)

National Agency for Education, 2001. Languages. Syllabuses, grading criteria and comments. Gy2000:18. Stockholm: Fritzes Offentliga Publikationer.

National Board of Education, 1994. *Framework Curriculum for the Comprehensive School 1994*. Helsinki: Painatuskeskus.

Opetushallitus, 1999. *Perusopetuksen päättöarvioinnin kriteerit*. Arvosanan hyvä (8) kriteerit yhteisissä oppiaineissa. Helsinki: Edita.

Pohjala, K., 1998. *The Foreign Language Education in Finland*. In Bonnet, Gerard (Ed.) *The Effectiveness of the Teaching of English in the European Union. Report of the Colloquium. Background Documents. October 20<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup>, 1997, Paris, 73-75*. Ministère de l'éducation nationale.

Pohjala K., 1998. *The English Curriculum in Finland*. In Bonnet, Gerard (Ed.) *The Effectiveness of the Teaching of English in the European Union. Report of the Colloquium. Background Documents. October 20<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup>, 1997, Paris, 101-102*. Ministère de l'éducation nationale.

Pohjala, K., 1998. *Teaching Methods and Practices in Finland*. In Bonnet, Gerard (Ed.) *The Effectiveness of the Teaching of English in the European Union. Report of the Colloquium. Background Documents. October 20<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup>, 1997, Paris, 101-102*. Ministère de l'éducation nationale.

Skolverket, 2003. Ämnesproven skolår 9, 2002. Ämnesprovet i engelska (Erickson, G). Stockholm: Skolverket.

The Danish Evaluation Institute, 2003, Engelsk i grundskolen - om indhold, organisering og vilkår. [www.eva.dk](http://www.eva.dk)

Timm, J-P., 1998. *Englisch lernen und lehren*, Berlin: Cornelsen.

Tuokko, E., 2000. *Peruskoulun 9. vuosiluokan englannin (A1-kieli) oppimistulosten kansallinen arviointi 1999*. Oppimistulosten arviointi 3/2000. Helsinki: Yliopistopaino.

Tuokko, E., 2001. *The 1999 National Evaluation of the English Language Skills of Finnish 9<sup>th</sup> form Pupils*. In *Dialogos* Nr. 4/2001, Evaluation and Language Teaching, 93-105. Academia de studii economice Bucuresti. Bucuresti: Editura ASE.

# **Annexes**

The following are the instruments used in the project for:

## **THE ASSESSMENT TEST and THE SELF-ASSESEMNT QUESTIONNAIRE**

**P. 165**

## **THE CODING INSTRUCTIONS**

**P. 181**

## **THE PUPIL QUESTIONNAIRE**

**P. 193**

## **THE TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE**

**P. 203**



# THE ASSESSMENT TEST

## The Assessment of Pupils' Skills in English in Eight European Countries

DENMARK – FINLAND – FRANCE – THE NETHERLANDS –  
NORWAY – SPAIN – SWEDEN – GERMANY

2002

The education authorities in eight countries in Europe (France, Germany, Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain and Sweden,) are, in co-operation, conducting a survey of pupils' attainment in English as a foreign language at the end of compulsory education. The age of the pupils in the survey is comparable, the number of hours of learning English is equivalent and the learning conditions at school are relatively alike in the various countries concerned.

This project follows from previous surveys which were carried out from 1995 to 1997 when English assessment tests were organised in France, the Netherlands, Spain and Sweden using a partially common test instrument.

The aims of the present survey are to compare the attainment in English of pupils in 8 countries in Europe and, for those countries which took part in the original surveys of the 90's, to observe differences in attainment over time. In order to do this the test instrument used is the same as the one administered 1995/97. This is why you may find this test different from the ones you are used to.

The results of this survey will be useful for educational policy makers at the national and European levels at a time when co-operation between European countries in the field of education is increasing. Clearly, attainment of foreign language skills has a major part to play in the construction of Europe.

In this context, we ask you to do your best in answering each question.

The final questionnaire is intended to allow you to express your opinions as precisely as possible. Your answers are very important because they will help with the analysis of the results. They are protected by the clause of secrecy which applies to all statistical surveys.

Do not write in the following type of boxes used to give a code to your answers:

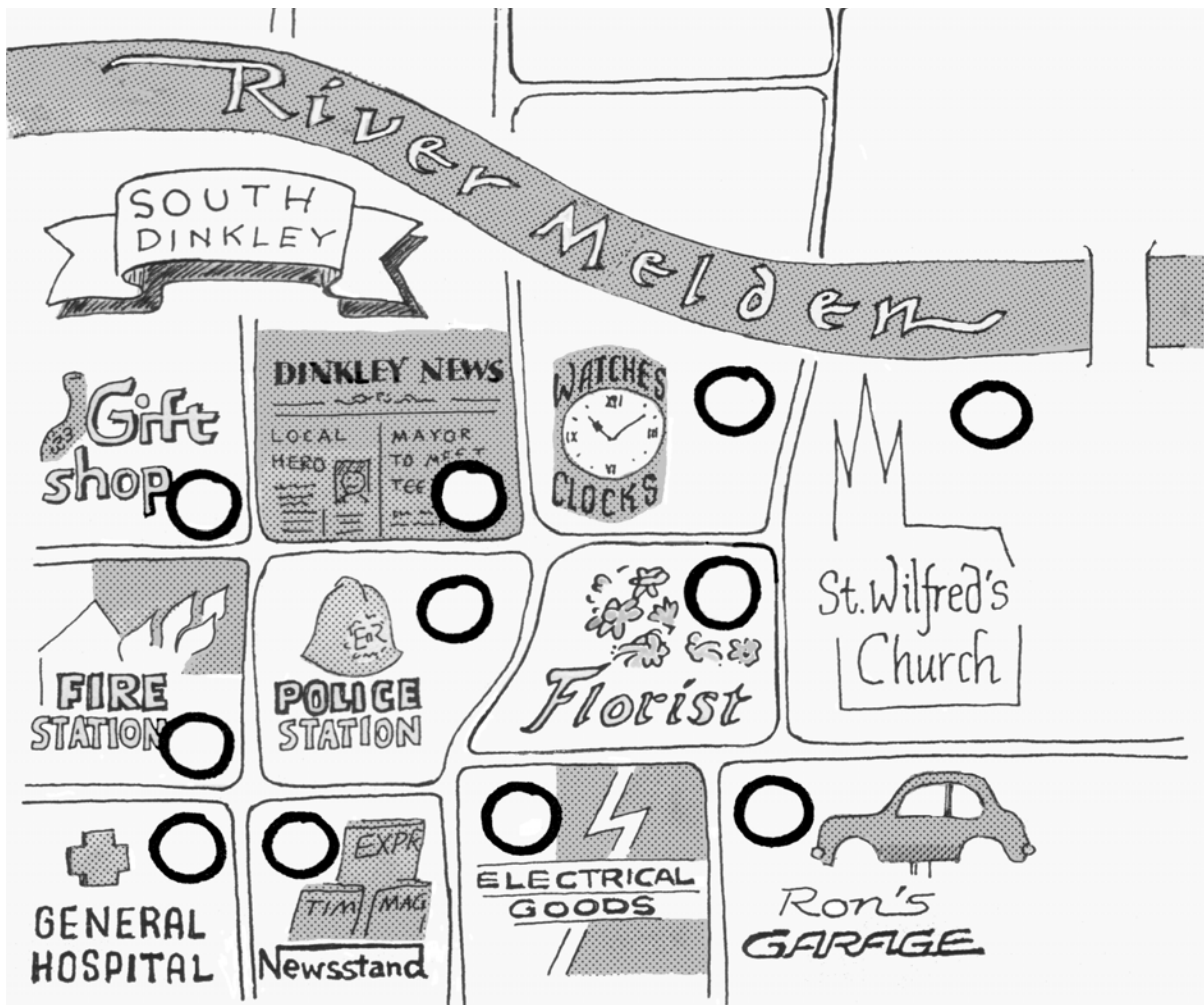
|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 9 | 0 |
|---|---|---|

# I. LISTENING COMPREHENSION

## Exercise 1

### SOUTH DINKLEY

This is a map of a town called Dinkley. Take a good look at it and follow the instructions on the CD.



1 2 3 4 9 0  
12

## Exercise 2

# WHAT ARE THEIR JOBS?

You are going to listen to some instructions and then to seven short dialogues. Answer by putting a cross in the circle after the correct job. You will hear each dialogue *only once*.

### 1. What's the woman's job? (item 13)

- a. police officer
- b. housewife
- c. photographer
- d. secretary
- e. hairdresser

### 2. What's the man's job? (item 14)

- a. photographer
- b. police officer
- c. mechanic
- d. taxi driver
- e. doctor

### 3. What's the woman's job? (item 15)

- a. housewife
- b. painter
- c. doctor
- d. veterinary surgeon
- e. dentist

### 4. What's the woman's job? (item 16)

- a. nurse
- b. photographer
- c. hairdresser
- d. housewife
- e. dentist

### 5. What's the man's job? (item 17)

- a. police officer
- b. taxi driver
- c. sailor
- d. fireman
- e. car salesman

|    |   |   |
|----|---|---|
| 1  | 9 | 0 |
| 13 |   |   |

|    |   |   |
|----|---|---|
| 1  | 9 | 0 |
| 17 |   |   |

### 6. What's the woman's job? (item 18)

- a. photographer
- b. painter
- c. housewife
- d. dentist
- e. hairdresser

|    |   |   |
|----|---|---|
| 1  | 9 | 0 |
| 14 |   |   |

|    |   |   |
|----|---|---|
| 1  | 9 | 0 |
| 18 |   |   |

### 7. What's the man's job? (item 19)

- a. airline pilot
- b. police officer
- c. car salesman
- d. taxi driver
- e. sailor

|    |   |   |
|----|---|---|
| 1  | 9 | 0 |
| 15 |   |   |

|    |   |   |
|----|---|---|
| 1  | 9 | 0 |
| 19 |   |   |

|    |   |   |
|----|---|---|
| 1  | 9 | 0 |
| 16 |   |   |

### Exercise 3

#### ***AN AMERICAN FRIEND***

Listen carefully! Write the end of each sentence as you listen to the CD. When needed, write numbers, not words. You will hear the telephone message *only once*.

1. The friend's first name is \_\_\_\_\_

| 1 2 9 0 |  
20

2. Her last name is \_\_\_\_\_

| 1 2 9 0 |  
21

3. Cathy's telephone number is \_\_\_\_\_

| 1 9 0 |  
22

4. Cathy's address is \_\_\_\_\_

| 1 9 0 |  
23

5. You can phone the apartment after \_\_\_\_\_

| 1 9 0 |  
24

6. Cathy will be back on \_\_\_\_\_

| 1 2 9 0 |  
25



## II. LINGUISTIC COMPETENCIES

### Exercise 4

Circle the alternative that makes the sentence correct.

1. There isn't \_\_\_\_ milk left in the fridge.

|         |          |             |        |
|---------|----------|-------------|--------|
| 1) many | 2) every | 3) a little | 4) any |
|---------|----------|-------------|--------|

| 1 2 3 4 9 0 |  
26

2. I have \_\_\_\_ money.

|          |             |          |        |
|----------|-------------|----------|--------|
| 1) every | 2) a lot of | 3) a few | 4) any |
|----------|-------------|----------|--------|

| 1 2 3 4 9 0 |  
27

3. We go skiing \_\_\_\_ weekend.

|        |       |          |         |
|--------|-------|----------|---------|
| 1) all | 2) no | 3) every | 4) some |
|--------|-------|----------|---------|

| 1 2 3 4 9 0 |  
28

4. I don't know \_\_\_\_ people who can speak Japanese.

|         |       |         |         |
|---------|-------|---------|---------|
| 1) most | 2) no | 3) many | 4) much |
|---------|-------|---------|---------|

| 1 2 3 4 9 0 |  
29

## Exercise 5

Circle the alternative that makes the sentence correct. (The Ø sign means no word, i.e. an empty gap.)

1. They are fond of \_\_\_\_ science fiction films.

|        |      |      |       |
|--------|------|------|-------|
| 1) the | 2) a | 3) Ø | 4) an |
|--------|------|------|-------|

|    |   |   |   |   |   |
|----|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 9 | 0 |
| 30 |   |   |   |   |   |

2. I've bought you \_\_\_\_ interesting book.

|      |      |       |         |
|------|------|-------|---------|
| 1) a | 2) Ø | 3) an | 4) some |
|------|------|-------|---------|

|    |   |   |   |   |   |
|----|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 9 | 0 |
| 31 |   |   |   |   |   |

3. Did you like \_\_\_\_ book I gave you ?

|       |        |      |      |
|-------|--------|------|------|
| 1) an | 2) the | 3) Ø | 4) a |
|-------|--------|------|------|

|    |   |   |   |   |   |
|----|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 9 | 0 |
| 32 |   |   |   |   |   |

4. In my new school there are \_\_\_\_ very young teachers.

|      |       |        |      |
|------|-------|--------|------|
| 1) Ø | 2) an | 3) the | 4) a |
|------|-------|--------|------|

|    |   |   |   |   |   |
|----|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 9 | 0 |
| 33 |   |   |   |   |   |

**Exercise 6**

Complete the following two conversations.

1. **Sandra:** – What time is my train leaving?

**Jim:** – What did Sandra ask?

**Tom:** – She \_\_\_\_\_

|    |   |   |
|----|---|---|
| 1  | 9 | 0 |
| 34 |   |   |

|    |   |   |
|----|---|---|
| 1  | 9 | 0 |
| 35 |   |   |

|    |   |   |
|----|---|---|
| 1  | 9 | 0 |
| 36 |   |   |

2. **Mark:** – Dr Trickey will come tomorrow.

**Jim:** – What did Mark say?

**Tom:** – He \_\_\_\_\_

|    |   |   |
|----|---|---|
| 1  | 9 | 0 |
| 37 |   |   |

|    |   |   |
|----|---|---|
| 1  | 9 | 0 |
| 38 |   |   |

## Exercise 7

First read the whole text and then fill in the correct form of each verb in brackets.

Do you know what happened to me recently?

A week ago, when I (come) \_\_\_\_\_ home in the evening,

|    |   |   |
|----|---|---|
| 1  | 9 | 0 |
| 39 |   |   |

I (find) \_\_\_\_\_ a little note on the kitchen table saying:

|    |   |   |
|----|---|---|
| 1  | 9 | 0 |
| 40 |   |   |

*“Dear Bob, Granny (just ring) \_\_\_\_\_ .*

|    |   |   |
|----|---|---|
| 1  | 9 | 0 |
| 41 |   |   |

*She is sick. I (tell) \_\_\_\_\_ you how she feels*

|    |   |   |
|----|---|---|
| 1  | 9 | 0 |
| 42 |   |   |

*when I (be) \_\_\_\_\_ back.*

|    |   |   |
|----|---|---|
| 1  | 9 | 0 |
| 43 |   |   |

*You (find) \_\_\_\_\_ some food in the kitchen.*

|    |   |   |
|----|---|---|
| 1  | 9 | 0 |
| 44 |   |   |

*Doris”.*

I (sit) \_\_\_\_\_ down at the table

|    |   |   |
|----|---|---|
| 1  | 9 | 0 |
| 45 |   |   |

and (start) \_\_\_\_\_ eating.

|    |   |   |
|----|---|---|
| 1  | 9 | 0 |
| 46 |   |   |

I (enjoy) \_\_\_\_\_ it.

|    |   |   |
|----|---|---|
| 1  | 9 | 0 |
| 47 |   |   |

A little later, I (go) \_\_\_\_\_ to bed and shortly after

|    |   |   |
|----|---|---|
| 1  | 9 | 0 |
| 48 |   |   |

I (feel) \_\_\_\_\_ very sick. When Doris arrived home,

|    |   |   |
|----|---|---|
| 1  | 9 | 0 |
| 49 |   |   |

she exclaimed : “I am not surprised you’re sick.

You (eat) \_\_\_\_\_ the dog’s dinner!”

|    |   |   |
|----|---|---|
| 1  | 9 | 0 |
| 50 |   |   |

**III. READING COMPREHENSION**

**Exercise 8**

**WHICH STORY?**

Each description below (1-16) fits one of the six short newspaper articles on the next page. Which article fits which description? Write the letter for each text (A, B, C, D, E or F) in the box to the right of each description.

NOTE that several descriptions can fit the same article. Therefore, you may have to write the same letter more than once.

|  |   |             |
|--|---|-------------|
| Example: A boy was playing .....                         | A |             |
| 1. A train was attacked .....                            |   | 1 9 0<br>52 |
| 2. A person working on a ship.....                       |   | 1 9 0<br>53 |
| 3. A building on fire .....                              |   | 1 9 0<br>54 |
| 4. A child who played in the toilet .....                |   | 1 9 0<br>55 |
| 5. Somebody who didn't want to run over animals .....    |   | 1 9 0<br>56 |
| 6. An interview with a boxer .....                       |   | 1 9 0<br>57 |
| 7. Two young criminals .....                             |   | 1 9 0<br>58 |
| 8. A person who hurt her leg .....                       |   | 1 9 0<br>59 |
| 9. A boy who had to visit a fire station .....           |   | 1 9 0<br>60 |
| 10. A football supporter who was taken to hospital ..... |   | 1 9 0<br>61 |
| 11. A long race in an unusual place .....                |   | 1 9 0<br>62 |
| 12. A very brave girl.....                               |   | 1 9 0<br>63 |
| 13. A man who thinks he is a winner .....                |   | 1 9 0<br>64 |
| 14. A child who was helped by firemen .....              |   | 1 9 0<br>65 |
| 15. A traffic accident on a country road .....           |   | 1 9 0<br>66 |
| 16. A girl who saved some animals .....                  |   | 1 9 0<br>67 |

### **A. Potty trained**

*FIREMEN switched on their flashing bluelights to keep a year old toddler amused while they cut a toilet seat from his head.*

*Kim Smith got stuck while playing at his home in Easington, Durham. Firemen carried him to the station and used a saw to free him. Afterwards they rewarded the patient tot by letting him sit in the engine driver's seat.*

### **B. Teenager rescues horses**

A TEENAGER led five horses and a foal to safety after people set fire to a stable.

Niki Willis, 17, of Streatham, freed the trapped animals as the timber building in Stockwell went up in flames. Minutes before she had seen two youths running from the stable.

Detective Sergeant Roy Caines at Brixton Police said : "It took a lot of courage to do what she did."

Four stalls were destroyed in the blaze, which caused 15,000 worth of damage.

### **C. Fan hurt**

*A MAN was seriously ill in hospital today after being hit by a rock thrown at a train packed with Brighton football fans. The stone was hurled at the 9.31 p.m. Brighton to Portsmouth train near Shoreham.*

### **D. Honeyghan isn't worried**

DONALD CURRY is one of the sporting world's hardest hitters, but for Britain's Lloyd Honeyghan, who challenges the American for the championship title on Saturday, he is "just another man".

"I don't feel any extra pressure going up against Curry," said Honeyghan. "He is just another man and I'm walking out of Atlantic City with his title."

### **E. Running water**

*RUNNER David Hannah, 23, was unable to take part in his local Torbay marathon in Devon yesterday because he was at sea as assistant purser aboard the royal Princess cruiser liner off the coast of Canada—so he ran the distance 110 times round the deck instead.*

### **F. Shepherd hit by car**

A WOMAN motorist swerved to avoid a flock of sheep and ended up knocking down a woman who was helping them along a lane at Hedley-on-the-Hill, Northumberland. Diane Potts, 25, of Currock Hill, Hedley, was treated for minor leg injuries at Shotley Bridge Hospital and was allowed to go home later. The car driver, Alma Cameron, 57, of North View Terrace, Halfway, Prudhoe, was unhurt.

#### IV. WRITTEN PRODUCTION

### Exercise 9

Fill in what is missing in the dialogue below. It is a discussion about a film. Before you write anything, read the whole dialogue and study carefully what is written before and after each line. When there are words printed in brackets, you must use them.

**Jean:** I went to the cinema yesterday.

**Robert:** \_\_\_\_\_ ?

| 1 9 0 |  
68

**Jean:** I saw "Mrs Doubtfire".

**Robert:** Did you like it ?

**Jean:** Yes. (I/ very much) \_\_\_\_\_

| 1 9 0 |  
69

**Robert:** Did you really ?

**Jean:** Yes, I did.

**Robert:** Personally, I \_\_\_\_\_ that sort of film.

| 1 9 0 |  
70

**Jean:** O.K! That's why I (not ask) \_\_\_\_\_ to come.

| 1 9 0 |  
71

**Robert:** I see. Who did you go with, then ?

**Jean:** I \_\_\_\_\_

| 1 9 0 |  
72

## Exercise 10

### WORKING IN A FAMILY

Read the text in which there are gaps for words that are missing. Fill in the word that you think best fits in the context. Usually only one word fits, but sometimes there are several possibilities.

**Example:** In the sentence "You must come and \_\_\_\_\_ us soon", you can write either "see" or "visit".

**Write only ONE word in each gap.**

One possibility to go abroad is to work as an au pair, that is helping with everyday things in a family, looking after the children etc.

In this sort of job you get full board and pocket \_\_\_\_\_ .

| 1 2 9 0 |  
73

The chance of working as an au pair has been welcomed

\_\_\_\_\_ thousands of young people. They come from

| 1 8 9 0 |  
74

many different \_\_\_\_\_ outside Britain, for instance

| 1 2 3 9 0 |  
75

Holland, Sweden and France.

After maybe ten years at school many of them want to

\_\_\_\_\_ their English. But young people cannot

| 1 2 3 8 9 0 |  
76

usually afford to live away from home \_\_\_\_\_

| 1 2 3 8 9 0 |  
77

having some kind of work which can provide them with

\_\_\_\_\_ least the necessities of life.

| 1 8 9 0 |  
78



For a lot of these young people the chance to practise the language

is not as important \_\_\_\_\_  
79 the wish to enjoy the

| 1 8 9 0 |  
79

freedom of being \_\_\_\_\_  
80 from home. The excitement

| 1 3 8 9 0 |  
80

of living in a large city like London is also a big attraction.

Usually, the relationship \_\_\_\_\_  
81 the au pair and

| 1 8 9 0 |  
81

the family they work for develops into warm and lasting friendship.

To avoid problems, it is extremely \_\_\_\_\_  
82 that

| 1 8 9 0 |  
82

those who take jobs of this kind should have reached the

\_\_\_\_\_  
83 of eighteen and should be well able

| 1 8 9 0 |  
83

to look \_\_\_\_\_  
84 themselves. If possible, they should

| 1 8 9 0 |  
84

stay with a family that has a good reputation and that they

\_\_\_\_\_  
85 something about, perhaps through a friend

| 1 5 8 9 0 |  
85

who \_\_\_\_\_  
86 already worked there. Then living as

| 1 8 9 0 |  
86

an ordinary \_\_\_\_\_  
87 of the family and studying part-time

| 1 2 8 9 0 |  
87

will result in both a deeper understanding of the British

\_\_\_\_\_  
88 of life and a better knowledge of the English

| 1 3 8 9 0 |  
88

language.

## II. SELF-ASSESSMENT OF ENGLISH

What do you think about the different exercises in this test? How difficult are they?

Circle what fits best!

*Easy = 1   Rather easy = 2   Rather difficult = 3   Very difficult = 4*

### 1) How did you find this test?

easy.....1

rather easy.....2

rather difficult.....3

difficult.....4

### 2) Which exercise did you find the easiest?

Ex 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Circle what fits best!

### 3) Which exercise did you find the most difficult?

Ex 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Circle what fits best!

Read the statements and decide if what is described is VERY EASY (1), RATHER EASY (2), RATHER DIFFICULT (3) or VERY DIFFICULT (4) for you to do. Circle what fits best!

| <b><i>For me the following is...</i></b>  | <b><i>very easy</i></b> | <b><i>rather easy</i></b> | <b><i>rather difficult</i></b> | <b><i>very difficult</i></b> |
|---|-------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. I can understand instructions and questions or requests in everyday English.   | 1                       | 2                         | 3                              | 4                            |
| 2. I can understand the main aspects of stories and short stories, if they deal with themes which are familiar to me from school and free time. | 1                       | 2                         | 3                              | 4                            |
| 3. I can get information which is important to me from radio and TV programmes, if they deal with familiar topics.                              | 1                       | 2                         | 3                              | 4                            |
| 4. I can understand radio and TV programmes, CDs or cassette programmes even if I do not know all the words.                                    | 1                       | 2                         | 3                              | 4                            |
| 5. I can read through texts to find out what they are all about or if they are useful.  | 1                       | 2                         | 3                              | 4                            |
| 6. I can understand texts written by other young people and react to their contents.  | 1                       | 2                         | 3                              | 4                            |
| 7. I can understand literary texts well enough to be able to say something about them.  | 1                       | 2                         | 3                              | 4                            |
| 8. I can choose texts from brochures, magazines, newspapers etc., and get information from them which I need to use for example in a project.   | 1                       | 2                         | 3                              | 4                            |
| 9. I can express my own opinion in writing about a drawing, picture or painting.  | 1                       | 2                         | 3                              | 4                            |
| 10. I can describe a journey, a weekend, an event or a party in a personal letter.  | 1                       | 2                         | 3                              | 4                            |
| 11. I can write down questions for an interview and report from it.   | 1                       | 2                         | 3                              | 4                            |
| 12. I can take notes from a text or lecture in order to report about it.  | 1                       | 2                         | 3                              | 4                            |
| 13. I can write texts that are perfectly understandable, even though they may contain some mistakes.  | 1                       | 2                         | 3                              | 4                            |

**Thank you for your co-operation!**



# THE CODING INSTRUCTIONS

[as used for the French test]

Déroulement de l'évaluation :

## SÉQUENCE I

**Temps indicatif : 1 séquence de cours de 55 minutes**  
dont, après l'installation des élèves et la présentation de l'évaluation :

Compréhension de l'oral : 20 minutes  
Connaissances linguistiques : 25 minutes

Relever les cahiers d'évaluation

## SÉQUENCE II

**Temps indicatif : 1 séquence de cours de 55 minutes**  
dont, après l'installation des élèves et la distribution des cahiers :

Compréhension écrite  
Production écrite  
Questionnaire élève : le reste du temps disponible

} 30 minutes

## AVANT L'ÉVALUATION

**Il est important que vous preniez connaissance des épreuves et des consignes et que vous écoutiez la bande sonore avant la date prévue pour la passation ;**

Comme indiqué précédemment, l'évaluation nécessite, pour la passation des épreuves, 2 séquences de cours de 55 minutes chacune. Les séquences I et II sont indépendantes et peuvent être passées à deux moments différents de la journée ou au maximum dans la même semaine.

Entre les deux séquences il vous faudra reprendre les cahiers.

Il conviendra de prévenir les élèves qu'il ne s'agit pas d'une épreuve comptant pour leur orientation, mais d'une évaluation de ce que savent les élèves en anglais dans différents pays européens.

## LE JOUR DE L'ÉVALUATION

Demandez à vos élèves de reporter le numéro d'établissement (N° UAI ou RNE) sur la couverture de leur cahier.

Demandez à vos élèves de personnaliser leur cahier en inscrivant leur nom et leur prénom, afin de pouvoir leur attribuer à chacun leur cahier lors de la deuxième séquence. Les noms des élèves ne seront pas saisis par la DPD lors du traitement des données.

## APRÈS L'ÉVALUATION

### SÉQUENCE I

#### COMPRÉHENSION DE L'ORAL (EXERCICES 1, 2, 3)

Pour les exercices de compréhension de l'oral, les consignes sont enregistrées ; des silences sont prévus pour laisser le temps aux élèves de répondre. Il suffit donc de laisser la bande sonore se dérouler.

#### Exercice 1

[Item 12]

**SOUTH DINKLEY**

**10 minutes**

**Pour cet exercice les codes 1, 2, 3, 4 correspondent au nombre de bonnes réponses**

Le code 9 est entouré s'il n'y a aucune bonne réponse

Le code 0 est entouré s'il n'y a pas de réponse.

**Exemple :** l'élève a 2 réponses exactes sur 4, on entoure le code 2 ( ce qui correspond au nombre de bonnes réponses écrites ) dans la case de l'item 1.

|   |   |   |   |   |    |
|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 9 | 0  |
|   |   |   |   |   | 12 |

**Réponses exactes :**

- 10. **A : police station**
- 11. **B : Florist**
- 12. **C : Watches Clocks**
- 13. **D : Dinkley News**

#### Exercice 2

**WHAT ARE THEIR JOBS ?**

**10 minutes**

**Pour chaque item :**

**[Items 13 à 19]**

|                         |        |
|-------------------------|--------|
| Bonne réponse.....      | code 1 |
| Réponse erronée.....    | code 9 |
| Absence de réponse..... | code 0 |

**RÉPONSES EXACTES : 1. D 2. C 3. D 4. B 5. D 6. E 7. E**

**Exercice 3**  
**[Items 20 à 25]**

*AN AMERICAN FRIEND*

**1. Item 20**

|  |        |
|--|--------|
| Réponse exacte : <b>Joan</b>                 |        |
| <b>Orthographe correcte exigée</b> .....     | code 1 |
| Réponse partielle : <i>J</i> minuscule ..... | code 2 |
| Réponse erronée .....                        | code 9 |
| Absence de réponse .....                     | code 0 |

**2. Item 21**

|  |        |
|--|--------|
| Réponse exacte : <b>Hearst</b>               |        |
| <b>Orthographe correcte exigée</b> .....     | code 1 |
| Réponse partielle : <i>H</i> minuscule ..... | code 2 |
| Réponse erronée .....                        | code 9 |
| Absence de réponse .....                     | code 0 |

**3. Item 22**

|   |        |
|---|--------|
| Réponse exacte : <b>7 9 8 4 0 0 3</b> ..... | code 1 |
| Réponse erronée .....                       | code 9 |
| Absence de réponse .....                    | code 0 |

**4. Item 23**

|   |        |
|---|--------|
| Réponse exacte : <b>117 Kent road</b> ..... | code 1 |
| Réponse erronée .....                       | code 9 |
| Absence de réponse .....                    | code 0 |

**5. Item 24**

|  |        |
|--|--------|
| Réponse exacte : <b>7.30 / 19.30</b> ..... | code 1 |
| Réponse erronée .....                      | code 9 |
| Absence de réponse .....                   | code 0 |

**6. Item 25**

|  |        |
|--|--------|
| Réponse exacte : <b>Tuesday</b>              |        |
| <b>Orthographe correcte exigée</b> .....     | code 1 |
| Réponse partielle : <i>T</i> minuscule ..... | code 2 |
| Réponse erronée .....                        | code 9 |
| Absence de réponse .....                     | code 0 |

## COMPÉTENCES LINGUISTIQUES (EXERCICES 4, 5, 6, 7)

### Exercice 4

[Items 26 à 29]

Pour codifier cet exercice, afin de pouvoir identifier le type d'erreur faite, il faut entourer le numéro de la réponse faite par l'élève.

Par exemple

|         |          |             |        |
|---------|----------|-------------|--------|
| 1) many | 2) every | 3) a little | 4) any |
|---------|----------|-------------|--------|

|   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 9 | 0 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|

Si *any* est entouré, il faut entourer le code 4 .

Si l'élève a coché 2 cases ou plus, on entoure le code 9

Si l'élève n'a pas répondu on entoure le code 0

### Réponses exactes :

Item 26 : 4, *any*

Item 27 : 2, I have a lot of money

Item 28 : 3, We go skiing every week-end.

Item 29 : 3, I don't know many people.

### Exercice 5

[Items 30 à 33]

Le principe de codification est le même : il faut entourer le numéro de la réponse faite par l'élève.

Si l'élève a coché 2 cases ou plus, on entoure le code 9

Si l'élève n'a pas répondu on entoure le code 0

### Réponses exactes :

Item 30 : 3, They are fond of (Ø) science fiction films.

Item 31 : 3, I've bought you an interesting book.

Item 32 : 2, Did you like the book I gave you ?.

Item 33 : 1, There are (Ø) very young teachers.

### Exercice 6

[Items 34 à 38]

Pour cet exercice suivre la codification item par item et entourer le code correspondant.

**Items 34 à 36 : Réponse correcte : “ She asked what time her train was leaving ”**

**Item 34 :**

L'ordre des mots est correct ..... code 1  
 L'ordre des mots est incorrect ..... code 9  
 Absence de réponse ..... code 0

**Item 35 :**

Le temps des 2 verbes est correct ..... code 1  
 Le temps est incorrect ..... code 9  
 Absence de réponse ..... code 0



|   |  |        |
|---|--|--------|
| <b>Item 36 :</b>                        |  |        |
| <b>Le pronom a été transformé</b> ..... |  | code 1 |
| Le pronom n'a pas été transformé .....  |  | code 9 |
| Absence de réponse .....                |  | code 0 |

**Items 37 et 38 : Réponse correcte : “ He said Dr Trickey would come tomorrow”**

|   |  |        |
|---|--|--------|
| <b>Item 37 :</b>                          |  |        |
| <b>L'ordre des mots est correct</b> ..... |  | code 1 |
| L'ordre des mots est incorrect .....      |  | code 9 |
| Absence de réponse .....                  |  | code 0 |

|  |  |        |
|--|--|--------|
| <b>Item 38 :</b>                               |  |        |
| <b>Le temps des 2 verbes est correct</b> ..... |  | code 1 |
| Le temps est incorrect .....                   |  | code 9 |
| Absence de réponse .....                       |  | code 0 |

**Exercice 7**  
**[Items 39 à 50]**

Pour cet exercice, le code 1 correspond à une réponse exacte ( les réponses sont indiquées pour chaque item ), le code 9 à une réponse erronée et le code 0 à une absence de réponse.

|                                      |  |        |
|--------------------------------------|--|--------|
| <b>Item 39 : come</b>                |  |        |
| - Réponse exacte : <b>came</b> ..... |  | code 1 |
| - Réponse erronée.....               |  | code 9 |
| - Absence de réponse.....            |  | code 0 |

|                                       |  |        |
|---------------------------------------|--|--------|
| <b>Item 40 : find</b>                 |  |        |
| - Réponse exacte : <b>found</b> ..... |  | code 1 |
| - Réponse erronée.....                |  | code 9 |
| - Absence de réponse.....             |  | code 0 |

|  |  |        |
|--|--|--------|
| <b>Item 41 : ring</b>  |  |        |
| - Réponse exacte : <b>has just rung</b> ou <b>'s just rung</b> ..... |  | code 1 |
| - Réponse erronée.....   |  | code 9 |
| - Absence de réponse.....  |  | code 0 |

|  |  |        |
|--|--|--------|
| <b>Item 42 : tell</b>  |  |        |
| - Réponse exacte : <b>will tell</b> ou <b>'ll tell</b> ..... |  | code 1 |
| - Réponse erronée.....                                       |  | code 9 |
| - Absence de réponse.....                                    |  | code 0 |

|   |  |        |
|---|--|--------|
| <b>Item 43 : be (back)</b>              |  |        |
| - Réponse exacte : <b>am / 'm</b> ..... |  | code 1 |
| - Réponse erronée.....                  |  | code 9 |
| - Absence de réponse.....               |  | code 0 |

**Item 44 : find**

- Réponse exacte : **will find** ou **'ll find** ..... code 1
- Réponse erronée..... code 9
- Absence de réponse..... code 0

**Item 45 : sit**

- Réponse exacte : **sat**..... code 1
- Réponse erronée..... code 9
- Absence de réponse..... code 0

**Item 46 : start**

- Réponse exacte : **started**..... code 1
- Réponse erronée..... code 9
- Absence de réponse..... code 0

**Item 47 : enjoy**

- Réponse exacte : **enjoyed**..... code 1
- Réponse erronée..... code 9
- Absence de réponse..... code 0

**Item 48 : go**

- Réponse exacte : **went** ..... code 1
- Réponse erronée..... code 9
- Absence de réponse..... code 0

**Item 49 : felt**

- Réponse exacte : **felt** ..... code 1
- Réponse erronée..... code 9
- Absence de réponse..... code 0

**Item 50 : eat**

- Réponse exacte : **have** ou **'ve eaten** ..... **code 1**
- Réponse erronée..... code 9
- Absence de réponse..... code 0

## SÉQUENCE II

### COMPRÉHENSION ÉCRITE (EXERCICE 8)

**Exercice 8**

**20 minutes**

#### WHICH STORY ?

**Pour chaque item :**

**[Items 52 à 67]**

|                          |        |
|--------------------------|--------|
| Bonne réponse.....       | code 1 |
| Réponse erronée .....    | code 9 |
| Absence de réponse ..... | code 0 |

**Réponses exactes :**

1. A train was attacked ..... C
2. A person working on a ship ..... E
3. A building on fire ..... B
4. A child who played in the toilet..... A
5. Somebody who didn't want to run over animals... F
6. An interview with a boxer..... D
7. Two young criminals..... B
8. A person who hurt her leg..... F
9. A boy who had to visit a fire station..... A
10. A football supporter who was taken to hospital ..... C
11. A long race in an unusual place ..... E
12. A very brave girl..... B
13. A man who thinks he is a winner..... D
14. A child who was helped by firemen..... A
15. A traffic accident on a country road..... F
16. A girl who saved some animals..... B

## PRODUCTION ÉCRITE (EXERCICES 9, 10)

### Exercice 9

[Items 68 à 72]

5 minutes

#### Item 68

- Réponse exacte : **What did you see? ou What film (picture, movie) did you see ?**..... code 1
- Réponse erronée..... code 9
- Absence de réponse..... code 0

#### Item 69

- Réponse exacte : **I liked it very much**..... code 1
- Réponse erronée..... code 9
- Absence de réponse..... code 0

#### Item 70

- Réponse exacte : **I hate / I don't like / I dislike**..... code 1
- Réponse erronée..... code 9
- Absence de réponse..... code 0

#### Item 71

- Réponse exacte : **I didn't ask you / did not ask you** ..... code 1
- Réponse erronée..... code 9
- Absence de réponse..... code 0

#### Item 72

- Réponse exacte : **I went with xxxx** ..... code 1
- Réponse erronée..... code 9
- Absence de réponse..... code 0

10 minutes

**Exercice 10**

[Items 73 à 88]

**WORKING IN A FAMILY**

Il peut y avoir d'autres réponses correctes que celles consignées ci-dessous.  
Une réponse est considérée correcte si elle a du sens et si elle est grammaticalement correcte.  
Une réponse juste/acceptable mais mal orthographiée est codée 2 en "réponse partielle".

**Item 73**

- **Réponse exacte : money** ..... code 1
- Réponse partielle : faute d'orthographe..... code 2
- Réponse erronée..... code 9
- Absence de réponse..... code 0

**Item 74**

- **Réponse exacte : by**..... code 1
- Réponse erronée : for, of, to :..... code 8
- Réponse erronée..... code 9
- Absence de réponse..... code 0

**Item 75**

- **Réponse exacte : countries**..... code 1
- Réponse partielle : faute d'orthographe ..... code 2
- Réponse partielle : places, states, lands ..... code 3
- Réponse erronée : ..... code 9
- Absence de réponse..... code 0

**Item 76**

- Réponse exacte : practise, improve, develop, use...better** ..... code 1
- Réponse partielle : faute d'orthographe..... code 2
- Réponse partielle : test, try sans faute d'orthographe..... code 3
- Réponse erronée : learn, speak, study, talk. .... code 8
- Autres réponses erronées..... code 9
- Absence de réponse..... code 0

**Item 77**

- **Réponse exacte : without** ..... code 1
- Réponse partielle : faute d'orthographe..... code 2
- Réponse partielle : not ..... code 3
- Réponse erronée : and..... code 8
- Autres réponses erronées..... code 9
- Absence de réponse..... code 0

**Item 78**

- **Réponse exacte : at** ..... code 1
- Réponse erronée : the ..... code 8
- Réponse erronée..... code 9
- Absence de réponse..... code 0

|   |        |
|---|--------|
| <b>Item 79</b>                                    |        |
| - Réponse exacte : as.....                        | code 1 |
| - Réponse erronée : like :.....                   | code 8 |
| - Autres réponses erronées.....                   | code 9 |
| - Absence de réponse.....                         | code 0 |
| <b>Item 80</b>                                    |        |
| - Réponse exacte : away.....                      | code 1 |
| - Réponse partielle : far.....                    | code 3 |
| - Réponse erronée : alone, free.....              | code 8 |
| - Autres réponses erronées : .....                | code 9 |
| - Absence de réponse.....                         | code 0 |
| <b>Item 81</b>                                    |        |
| Réponse exacte : between.....                     | code 1 |
| - Réponse erronée : of, with .....                | code 8 |
| - Autres réponses erronées.....                   | code 9 |
| - Absence de réponse.....                         | code 0 |
| <b>Item 82</b>                                    |        |
| - Réponse exacte : important.....                 | code 1 |
| - Réponse erronée : good, necessary.....          | code 8 |
| - Autres réponses erronées.....                   | code 9 |
| - Absence de réponse.....                         | code 0 |
| <b>Item 83</b>                                    |        |
| - Réponse exacte : age .....                      | code 1 |
| - Réponse erronée : year .....                    | code 8 |
| - Autres réponses erronées. ....                  | code 9 |
| - Absence de réponse.....                         | code 0 |
| <b>Item 84</b>                                    |        |
| - Réponse exacte : after.....                     | code 1 |
| - Réponse erronée : at, for, to :.....            | code 8 |
| - Autres réponses erronées.....                   | code 9 |
| - Absence de réponse.....                         | code 0 |
| <b>Item 85</b>                                    |        |
| - Réponse exacte : know.....                      | code 1 |
| - Réponse erronée : no, now .....                 | code 5 |
| - Réponse erronée : did, have, heard, learn ..... | code 8 |
| - Autres réponses erronées : .....                | code 9 |
| - Absence de réponse.....                         | code 0 |
| <b>Item 86</b>                                    |        |
| Réponse exacte : has .....                        | code 1 |
| - Réponse erronée : have, has, is .....           | code 8 |
| - Autres réponses erronées.....                   | code 9 |
| - Absence de réponse.....                         | code 0 |

**Item 87**

- **Réponse exacte : member**..... code 1
- Réponse partielle : faute d'orthographe ..... code 2
- Réponse erronée : child, friend, part, person..... code 8
- Autres réponses erronées..... code 9
- Absence de réponse..... code 0

**Item 88**

- **Réponse exacte : way**..... code 1
- Réponse partielle : kind, style..... code 3
- Réponse erronée : side..... code 8
- Autres réponses erronées..... code 9
- Absence de réponse..... code 0

**Les questions suivantes sont codées par les élèves eux-même.**





# THE PUPIL QUESTIONNAIRE

[This is the basic common framework of the international questionnaire.  
Individual countries may have made national adaptations]

## Goal of the survey:

This study is about the English language, and not only that which we encounter in school but also in many other situations. We would very much like to know what opportunities you have for contact with this language, what you think about it, and if and when you use it. What we are interested in is what you personally think about each question asked.

It takes about 20 minutes to fill out the questionnaire. When a line ('.....') follows a question, you are to write your answer on that line. When a 'O' appears you are to tick the option that corresponds to your answer. You will find additional instructions in the questionnaire.

-----

1. What is your birthday? Month:..... 19....

2. Sex:           O Male  
                  O Female

3. What is your place of birth? .....

4. Which language(s) do you speak at home? .....

5. What is your mother's native language?.....

6. What is your father's native language?.....

7. Parents' highest level of education:

[\*Adapt to national educational system]

|                      | Father | Mother |
|----------------------|--------|--------|
| 1. Primary education | O      | O      |

- 2. Secondary education
- 3. Higher vocational education
- 4. University education

8. What was your last school grade for English? .....

9. School type: .....

10. Grade level: .....

11. At what age did your start learning English at school

Age:.....

12. Are you learning any other foreign language than English. If so, specify.

Yes:.....

No

13a. Did you ever live for more than 6 months in a country where you've had to use English to make yourself understood?

Yes

No

13b. Have you ever been on vacation in a country where you've had to use English to make yourself understood?

Yes

No

If no, please continue with question 14.

We make a distinction between countries where English is normally spoken (e.g. UK, Canada) and countries where another language is normally used (e.g. French in France), but where you still used English.

If yes, indicate the type of the country, how often and the average length of your stays

|                                  | How many times | Average length of stay |
|----------------------------------|----------------|------------------------|
| - English speaking countries     | .....          | .....                  |
| - Non-English speaking countries | .....          | .....                  |

14. How well do your parents and siblings know English?

For each person mark the option that seems right to you. Please answer only about family members who live with you at home.

|                          | father | mother | siblings |   |   |   |
|--------------------------|--------|--------|----------|---|---|---|
|                          |        |        | a        | b | c | d |
| Very good                | 0      | 0      | 0        | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Good                     | 0      | 0      | 0        | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| not good/not bad         | 0      | 0      | 0        | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| bad                      | 0      | 0      | 0        | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| very bad                 | 0      | 0      | 0        | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Doesn't know any English | 0      | 0      | 0        | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Please give the ages of your siblings (in years)

.... .... .... ....

15. Which media do you use?

Answer the questions according to your use of the media in any case, even if you don't have access to a particular item at home.

|  | video                 | Satellite-TV          | computer<br>(games)   | computer<br>(internet) |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| a. Do you use it yourself?                         | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>  |
| b. How many hours per week do you yourself use it? | ....                  | ....                  | ....                  | ....                   |

16. Do you listen to radio broadcasts in English outside of school?

Yes

No

If no, please continue with question 17.

If yes,

a. On which stations? .....

b. How often do you listen to such broadcasts?

Less than once a month

1-3 times a month

Once a week

More than once a week

Daily

17. Outside of school, do you watch TV broadcasts in English?

Yes, with subtitles

Yes, without subtitles

No

If no, please continue with question 18.

If yes, list the networks you watch and indicate for each network how often you watch it.

| Network | less than<br>once a month | 1-3 times<br>a month  | once a week           | more than<br>once a week | daily                 |
|---------|---------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| .....   | <input type="radio"/>     | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>    | <input type="radio"/> |
| .....   | <input type="radio"/>     | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>    | <input type="radio"/> |
| .....   | <input type="radio"/>     | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>    | <input type="radio"/> |
| .....   | <input type="radio"/>     | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>    | <input type="radio"/> |
| .....   | <input type="radio"/>     | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/>    | <input type="radio"/> |

18. About how many hours a week do you listen to music?

Please write down the total number of hours in an entire week (Radio, on CD's and other media):

.....hours

19. Do you listen to music more often with English texts or with [\*Dutch/German/French/etc. select what applies in your country, more than one if necessary in separate questions] texts

1. Only English
2. Mainly English
3. Somewhat more English
4. About the same for each
5. Somewhat more \*
6. Mainly \*
7. Only \*

20. How important is the text to you in music?

- For \* language music

1. Very important
2. Rather important
3. Less important
4. Not at all important

- For English language music

1. Very important
2. Rather important
3. Less important
4. Not at all important

- For music with texts in other languages than \* and English

1. Very important
2. Rather important
3. Less important
4. Not at all important

21. Which opportunities do you have for contact with the English language outside of school?

Below is a list of opportunities in which one can come into contact with the English language. Mark with an 'X' the option that best matches your situation: '1' means 'very often', '2' means 'often', etc.

|                       | very often            | often                 | sometimes             | never                 |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| a. Parents            | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| b. Siblings           | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| c. Friends            | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| d. Music in the radio | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| f. TV/Video           | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| g. Cassettes/CDs      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| h. At the movies      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| i. Newspapers         | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| j. Magazines          | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| k. Books              | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| l. Computer games     | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| m. Computer Internet  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| n. Traveling abroad   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

22. Do you like the English language?

- Very much
- More like than dislike
- More dislike than like
- Not at all

23. How important is it for you to know English?

- Very important
- Rather important
- Less important
- Not at all important

24. What advantages are there for knowing English?

Below is a list of some advantages of English.  
 Indicate with an 'x' how strongly you agree with them.

|  | agree<br>completely   | rather<br>agree       | rather<br>disagree    | don't agree<br>at all |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| a. With English I can make myself better understood abroad                           | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| b. With English I can understand music texts better                                  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| c. With English I can manage more easily with computer and other technical equipment | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| d. A lot of things sound better in English   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| e. For a lot of things there's no equivalent * expression                            | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| f. You need English for further education  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| g. With English I have a better chance to get a good job                             | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| h. With English I can read books in English  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| i. With English I can understand English TV programs without subtitles               | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| j. With English it is easier to have contact with foreigners                         | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| k. English gives me access to new developments in science and technology             | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

l. What other advantages does the English language have in your opinion?

1.....

2.....

3.....

25. Are there any other subjects (apart from English) in your program that are taught in English? If yes, list them below

Yes:

1.....

2.....

3.....

4.....

No

26. How many periods a week do you have English classes?

.....periods

27. How long is one period in your school

.....minutes

28. How many minutes a week do you spend on your English homework on average?

.....minutes

29. During the English classes, what is the normal situation? Indicate how often the situations below happen:

|   | most of the time      | half of the time      | every now and then    | never                 |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| a. Teacher talks                        | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| b. Teacher talks with one or two pupils | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| c. Pupils work in groups                | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

30. How often is English used during the English classes?

|                          | most of the time      | half of the time      | every now and then    | never                 |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| a. Teacher talks English | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| b. Teacher talks English | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |



- with one or two pupils
- c. Pupils work in groups and talk English

31. Which of the following resources are used in your English classes?

|                                  | Very often            | often                 | sometimes             | never                 |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| a. Audio cassettes               | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| b. Video cassettes               | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| c. Computer programs             | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| d. Newspapers, magazines, comics | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| e. Internet                      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| f. Books for extensive reading   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| g. English speaking visitors     | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

32. We are interested in your opinion about where you have acquired English.

Which portion of your English knowledge have you acquired through school instruction, which portion through the media, and which portion in other ways, such as out of school classes, private tuition?

Give your approximate portions in percent. That is: write '100' if you think that you have learned all of your English in school, or write '0' if you think you haven't learned any of your English in school at all. Or whatever numbers between 0 and 100 you think is right .

Make sure the total adds up to 100%!

Through school:                      .....%

Through the media:                      .....%

In other ways                      .....%

\_\_\_\_\_

100%

**Thank you !**



# THE TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

[This is the basic common framework of the international questionnaire.

Individual countries may have made national adaptations]

1. Gender

Male  
Female

2. Age

(In years) .....

3. What qualifications (academic or professional) do you hold?:

*Each country please include the appropriate categories*

4. How long have you been teaching English (including this year)?

Years.....

5. How long have you been teaching English in your present school (including this year)?

Years .....

6. Before becoming a teacher, did you complete any course of studies (6 months minimum) in an English speaking country?

Yes  
No

7. Have you stayed for more than six months in an English speaking country for different reasons from those related to your studies?

Yes  
No

8. As a teacher, have you taken part in any in-service courses (more than 30 hours each) for the teaching and learning of the English language during the last four years?

Yes  
No

9. If your answer to the previous question is YES, please indicate their duration and where they took place. Specify line F. the theme of the course(s) if it does not fit in one of the categories below.

|  | Total amount of hours | Where did it take place? |                    |
|--|-----------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
|  |                       | English speaking country | (name own country) |
| A. Refresher courses in linguistics                              |                       |                          |                    |
| B. Refresher courses in didactics.                               |                       |                          |                    |
| C. Applying new technologies to the teaching of English          |                       |                          |                    |
| D. Courses in dealing with mixed ability in the class of English |                       |                          |                    |
| E. Courses in English literature                                 |                       |                          |                    |
| F. Others (specify) [e.g. course in a European framework]        | -<br>-                | -<br>-                   | -<br>-             |

10. Did you choose your university studies with the intention of becoming a teacher of English?

- Yes
- No

11. If you had the chance, would you leave the teaching profession?

- Yes
- No
- I do not know

12. Do you think society values the teaching profession?

- Not at all
- Very little
- Reasonably
- Highly

13. Do you think your pupils value your work?

- Not at all
- Very little
- Reasonably
- Highly

14. Type of school where you teach.

Public  
Private

15. How many pupils are there in the target class for this test?

Boys  
Girls  
Total

16. How many teaching periods of English does the target class have, and how many minutes does each period consist of?

| Number of periods a week | Minutes in each period |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
|                          |                        |

17. How many periods a week do you teach?

Number of periods teaching English .....  
Number of periods teaching other subjects .....  
Total number of periods a week .....

18. How much time do you devote to the preparation of each English lesson?

Minutes .....

19. Do you use a textbook to teach English to this group?

Yes  
No

20. Indicate how often you use the following resources, together with or instead of textbooks:

Very rarely / sometimes / often / very often

- A. Audio cassettes specially designed for teaching and learning English
- B. Video cassettes specially designed for teaching and learning English
- C. Computer programmes specially designed for teaching and learning English
- D. Language laboratory
- E. Games
- F. Songs
- G. Newspapers, magazines, comics
- H. Audio cassettes with a varied content
- I. Video cassettes with a varied content
- J. The Internet
- K. Audio recordings done by yourself
- L. Video recordings done by yourself or by your Department
- M. Other materials prepared by yourself or by your Department

- N. Books for class/pleasure reading
- O. Others (specify type and frequency)

21. How much English do you speak in your English class, out of the total speaking time? Estimate the average percentage.

- 0 - 25
- 26 - 50
- 51 - 75
- 76 - 100

22. How often do you introduce the following in your teaching practice?

Very rarely / sometimes / often / very often

- A. On starting a lesson you first explain the new concepts/words/grammar in it and then you organise appropriate activities in order to put this into practice.
- B. You follow the progression of the textbook.
- C. You use role-plays and simulations to create almost authentic communicative situations in the classroom.
- D. You encourage your pupils to communicate in English when they speak about their own learning, school work and other personal matters.
- E. You teach the pupils the essentials of the socio-cultural context of the countries where English is spoken.
- F. You use the Internet as part of your lessons.
- G. You take into account your pupils' likes and opinions in order to prepare the activities that are going to be developed in class.
- H. You contact teachers of other subjects to use the themes they use in their respective classes.
- I. You foster group or pair work dynamics in your class.
- J. You encourage your pupils to use the English language inside and outside the class.
- K. You teach your pupils to use situational language and to develop communicative strategies.
- L. You support your pupils in developing learning strategies in order to become autonomous in the learning process.
- M. You give priority to certain objectives and contents over others.
- N. You organise the class in homogeneous groups according to the pupils' linguistic competence.
- O. You set pupils complementary work (reinforcement and extension activities).
- P. You adjust the assessment criteria for pedagogical purposes.
- Q. When evaluating your pupils you take into account their own self-assessment.

23. How often do you arrange activities for pupils to use English in real situations:

Very rarely / sometimes / often / very often

- A. You contact teachers in other countries to promote pen friends.
- B. You receive teachers and pupils from other countries to promote cultural exchanges.
- C. You organise exchanges with teachers and pupils from English speaking countries.
- D. You organise out of school activities to foster the practice of English.
- E. You set up discussion groups on the Internet.

24. How often do you give your pupils homework in English?

Never  
Monthly  
Once a week  
Every lesson

25. How would you grade your level of satisfaction with the following aspects of your relationship with your colleagues?

Very low - low – high – very high

Professional relationship.  
Personal relationship.  
Climate of collaboration and support among colleagues.  
Level of agreement about the teaching and evaluation criteria.

26. In your opinion, what is the level of difficulty of the test administered to the target group.

Very low – low – high – very high

Linguistic competence  
Listening comprehension  
Reading comprehension  
Writing production

27. Do you think the types of exercises used in the test are familiar to your pupils?

Yes / No

Linguistic competence  
Listening comprehension  
Reading comprehension  
Writing production

28. Indicate three challenges which you face as a teacher of English:

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR COLLABORATION