Congrès AFSP Paris 2013

ST14 : Gouverner les langues

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From the production of the monolingual citizen to that of the multilingual citizen: a Franco-German comparison

Abstract:

Through a comparison of France and Germany, this paper investigates why the overall conception of multilingualism promoted by the education systems of the two countries favour the teaching of 'useful' European standard languages over that of minority and migrants languages that are conceived in merely cultural terms. Adopting a theoretical framework of historical neo-institutionalism, the analysis will argue that the tension between the utilitarian and the cultural dimension characterizing contemporary multilingual education policies in France and Germany results from the separate institutionalization of general foreign language education policies on the one hand and language-of-origin, regional and minority language courses on the other hand. Based on an analysis of policy documents, press archives and interviews conducted with education officials, policy makers, language teachers associations and parental organizations, this paper will show that despite trends towards their incorporation and unification of these two sectors of language education after the diffusion of the paradigm of multilingualism since the beginning of the 1990s in Europe, it is the historically more deeply entrenched utilitarian logic of the sector of general language education that remains prevalent in the conception of contemporary multilingual education policies in France and Germany.

Keywords:

multilingualism, language education policies, utilitarian dimension of language, cultural and linguistic diversity, historical institutionalism, Franco-German comparison.

Introduction

In much of the literature on language planning and policies, France and Germany are considered as ideal-typical of linguistically homogeneous nation-states where the boundaries between state, nation and language tend to coincide. Historically, the national education systems have played a central role in the linguistic unification and the transmission of the national language to all citizens in both countries in the 19th century (Baggioni, 1997; Bielefeld, 2003). Given the important macro-sociological changes affecting the international environment of these countries since the middle of the 20th century, notably processes of European integration and globalization, the same education systems have currently not only the mission to ensure pupils' proficiency in the country's national language but also to convey foreign language skills to all citizens. Since the end of the Second World War, foreign language education, which beforehand involved only a minority of pupils, has thus been progressively extended to all citizens. This extension is first of all the by-product of long-term-trends characterizing the field of education in France and Germany and in particular the efforts of democratization and lengthening of the compulsory schooling period undertaken in the 1960s and 1970s. It is only at the beginning of the 1990s under the influence of the European integration process, and notably the policy proposals formulated by the Council of Europe and the European Commission, that the objectives of foreign language education is reformulated around the concept of 'multilingualism' in both countries (Christ, 2002, p. 82).

Currently, a large consensus exists around the concept of 'multilingualism' in most European countries, among which France and Germany. Certain authors go as far as qualifying multilingualism as the 'new dominant ideology' in European education policies (Maurer, 2011). In the contemporary context, the idea of multilingual education policies is indeed defended almost unanimously by the different types of actors involved in language education: policy-makers, education officials, and language teachers associations – and increasingly the population at large, as have shown the three special Eurobarometer surveys on 'Europeans and their languages' conducted in 2001, 2005 and 2012 (cf. Eurobarometer 54, 243 & 386). Despite this apparent consensus around multilingual education policies, the concept of multilingualism and its implications are rather weakly defined – both in the policy documents elaborated on the European level and in the so-called 'multilingual' education policies implemented by France and Germany since the 1990s. In both countries language education policies remain to a large extent shaped by each country's self-perception as monolingual nation-state and are characterized by an absence or a limited recognition of the internal linguistic diversity and the marginalization of so-called immigrant languages in general language education programs (Garcia, 2013). More generally, foreign language education continues to be centred on European standard languages, the teaching of which was historically encouraged partly for diplomatic considerations. Finally, English has come to occupy a pivotal position in the in both the French and German education system, with far over 90% of pupils learning this language considered as most useful given its 'hyper-central' position in the global language constellation (De Swaan, 1993).

The primacy of the utilitarian dimension over the cultural dimension of language in foreign language education policies has often been analysed as linked to contemporary developments in the global economy and the transformation of capitalism, characterized by increased individual mobility, post-industrialism and the development of the knowledge economy. Given the requirement of mobility of the work force inside the European labour market, directly applicable language skills have indeed been increasingly recognized as a key

competence or 'transnational linguistic capital' (Gerhards, 2012) by policy-makers and society at large. An analysis of press articles and public speeches and positions shows that discourses criticizing the inefficiency of foreign language teaching have been multiplying over the last decades and calls for reorganizing and 'modernizing' the foreign language courses provided by national education systems have been voiced by policy officials, journalists and the larger public in both France and Germany. In a context of economic downturn and high rates of unemployment, practical foreign language skills appear indeed as central for increasing chances of insertion on the job market in the eyes of many pupils and their parents (Bilbao, 2004, p. 15).

Some scholars have analysed this seemingly increased public demand for directly applicable foreign language skills as linked to the imposition of a utilitarian framing of foreign language learning and multilingual education policies by the European Commission and the Council of Europe (Maurer, 2011). Especially the adoption of the Common European Reference Framework for Language Learning (CEFR) by a resolution of the European Union Council in 2001 has triggered more or less intense contestations in the different European member states during its implementation. Indeed, many left-wing teachers' unions[i] have criticized the utilitarian approach to language teaching promoted by the CEFR and subsequent European policy reports and recommendations. Notably the recommendations issued in the European Strategic Framework for Education and Training (ET2020), such as the 2011 expert report 'Languages for Jobs – providing multilingual communication skills for the labour market' have faced important criticism from teachers' unions. The adoption of a long-term perspective allows however to show that the primacy of the utilitarian dimension of foreign language learning and multilingualism over its cultural component can be traced back to the end of the 19th century. Building on a historical analysis, based on existing scholarly literature on the history of language learning and on the examination of the language education policies adopted in France and Germany since the 1950s, this article will show that the utilitarian dimension of foreign language learning has been almost constantly predominant already since the institutionalization and the generalization of foreign language education at the turn of the 20th century and that the central justification for the promotion of foreign language learning has been characterized by great continuity: adapting pupils to a changed and changing *external* context – both European and international. The increased *internal* linguistic diversity of the French and German societies resulting from inter- and extra-European migration movements on the other hand has only very marginally influenced the multilingual education policies adopted in the two countries.

Adopting a theoretical framework of historical neo-institutionalism (Hall, 2010; Palier & Surel, 2010; Pierson, 2004), this paper will thus demonstrate that the tension between the utilitarian and the cultural dimension characterizing contemporary multilingual education policies in France and Germany results from the separate institutionalization of general foreign language education policies on the one hand, and language of origin courses for migrants and linguistic minorities on the other hand. While the general foreign language education policies have emphasized the transmission of practical and applicable foreign language skills to all, language policies targeting migrants and linguistic minorities stressed on the contrary the importance of language for the cultural identity of these specific groups. Since their institutionalization, both sectors have followed separate developments and have only been linked very marginally. The emergence of the concept of multilingualism in the didactics literature and the diffusion of the paradigm of multilingual education policies since the beginning of the 1990s in Europe has supported and accelerated the trend towards the incorporation and the unification of these two sectors of language education policies. As the

sector of general language education has a longer historic tradition and is much more deeply institutionally entrenched, it is the utilitarian logic of this sector that remains prevalent in the conception of contemporary multilingual education policies. Actors of the language of origins and minority language courses on the other hand have little voice or weight in the conception of these multilingual education policies that remain firmly in the hands of general education policy-makers and officials. As a consequence, despite the increased integration of migrants' and minority languages in general school curricula, the overall conception of multilingualism promoted by the French and German education system continues to be shaped by a utilitarian logic, favouring the teaching of the 'useful' languages over those that are conceived in merely cultural terms.

A first section will show how in both France and Germany, foreign language education policies have been characterized since their institutionalization by a primacy of utilitarian dimension and were guided by imperatives of adaptation to a changed external context (1). A second paragraph will retrace how language of origin and minority language teaching policies have on the other hand been conceived mainly in terms of the preservation of a cultural identity and not as a useful knowledge to be conveyed to all pupils (2).

1. *Conveying 'useful' foreign language skills to all pupils: the institutionalization of foreign language education policies as a practical knowledge*

The policy objective of extending foreign language teaching to all pupils since the beginning of the 20th century can be paralleled to the 19th century education policies aiming to convey the national language to all citizens during the nation-building period. While the national education system has historically been instrumental for the linguistic unification of France and Germany and the spread of the *national* language over the whole territory, in the contemporary context the teaching of *foreign* languages has become a central mission of this same education system. This shift in policy objectives can thus be conceptionalized as transition from the production of the monolingual citizen to the production of the multilingual citizen (Garcia, 2013). However the ideology and the rationale behind the two policy objectives are significantly different: While utilitarian concerns, such as economic imperatives and ensuring communication throughout national markets (Deutsch, 1966) played undoubtedly an important role in the linguistic unification of the French and German nation-state, these language policies also contained a very strong cultural component (Trabant, 2002; Weber, 1976). Although France and Germany have often been contrasted as exemplifications of opposite types of nationalism[ii], it remains nevertheless that in both societies, the national language played a central role as identity marker and that one of the functions of its teaching was to foster the citizens' allegiance to the newly created nation-states (Baggioni, 1997; Bielefeld, 2003). As the following section will show, this cultural dimension of language was however only of secondary concern for the introduction of foreign language learning, where the focus was on the transmission of a practical and useful knowledge to all citizens.

The predominance of the utilitarian dimension of language during the institutionalization of foreign language education policies

Different history of education and language planning scholars have indeed shown that historically, foreign language education policies were institutionalized as a 'useful' or 'practical' knowledge at the end of the 19th century (Pouly, 2010, p. 266). Unlike ancient languages such as Latin and Greek that were considered an essential component of the

classical French conception of general education and the neo-humanist German ideal of *Allgemeinbildung*, the teaching of foreign languages was introduced at first only in commerce schools and in the newly emerging vocational branches of the two education systems: foreign languages were thus taught initially in the 'modern sections' created in 1891 alongside the classical sections in France, and in the vocational *Realschulen* created in the middle of the 19th century as professionalizing alternative to the general education conveyed in the *Gymnasien* in Germany. The primacy of the utilitarian dimension of language during the introduction of foreign language education is also visible in the didactical controversy marking the debate around foreign language teaching at the end of the 19th century. Significantly, the disagreement followed very similar lines in France and in Germany: In both countries the traditional 'synthetic' method of foreign language learning, emphasizing the teaching of grammatical rules and putting great weight on translations, was increasingly criticized by the defenders of the 'direct' method, stressing the importance of directly applicable oral skills (Brethomé, 2004; Christ, 2002, p. 62).

This importance given to the utilitarian dimension of language in the foreign languages education policies at the end of the 19th century is linked to the sociological composition of the social groups and actors who mobilized for their teaching in the school system: In France, the introduction of foreign language teaching in national education curricula was defended by a commercial bourgeoisie on the rise in a context of capitalist development (Pouly, 2007). In the same way, in Germany foreign language teaching was largely supported not only by political actors but also by representatives of the industry, commerce, the army and the marine a context of increased competition between nations at the end of the 19thcentury (Christ, 2002, p. 60). Especially after the Franco-German war of 1870, foreign language education policies were increasingly influenced by diplomatic relations between European nations and determined to a large extent by foreign policy considerations. While in France the 1870 defeat led temporarily to a regain of interest for learning German, in order to be better protected against the enemy (Mombert, 1998), the end of the 19th century was marked by a rapid expansion of English in a context of economic competition with the United Kingdom and the British Empire in both France and Germany. At the turn of the 20th century, an economic framing of foreign language learning thus prevailed in both countries; the objective of foreign language education policies being to allow France, respectively Germany, to regain 'their relative rank among the nations' (Mombert, 2001, p. 119) in the industrial, economic and scientific competition engaged between the European countries.

The promotion of foreign language learning as response to a changed external context marked by European integration and globalization since the 1950s

This utilitarian tradition conceiving foreign language learning as response to economic and diplomatic concerns has continued to shape the foreign language education policies promoted by French and German state actors since the end of the Second World War. As during the period of institutionalization of foreign language teaching at the end of the 19th century, the promotion of foreign language learning – and subsequently multilingualism – was envisaged first of all as a response to external changes in the 1950s. A long-term analysis of the policy documents adopted by the French Ministry of Education and the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the *Länder* in the Federal Republic of Germany since 1945 shows that in both countries, the arguments justifying the necessity for all citizens to learn foreign languages refer systematically to a 'changed international context'. This leitmotiv encompasses the new imperatives linked to the process of European integration on the one hand, and an increased conscience of the emergence of English as world-wide

lingua franca on the other hand. The relative importance awarded to the global compared to the European level in the different policy documents of the French Ministry of Education and the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the *Länder* in the Federal Republic of Germany varies in function of the specific context of elaboration of the documents. While references to foreign languages as tool for the promotion of peace and rapprochement between the European peoples are also present, they are less central and play only a secondary role. Overall, the vision of foreign language education policies defended is indeed primarily oriented towards the transmission of directly applicable communication skills and foreign language competences appear more than ever as a 'useful' knowledge on an increasingly European and global labour market.

The utilitarian dimension of language clearly prevailed in the establishment of English as compulsory first foreign language for all pupils in Germany in 1955 and its only slightly less rapid diffusion as most learned foreign language in France, notwithstanding the absence of education policies publicly recognizing its importance and encouraging its teaching. The end of the Second World War and the rise of the United States as dominant actors on the international level marked indeed the beginning of the unbroken trend towards the establishment of English as world-wide *lingua franca* (Van Parijs, 2000). The significant discrepancy observed between France and Germany in the political recognition of English as first foreign language for all pupils is linked to historical reasons and differences in the two countries foreign policy rather than to distinct conceptions of education policies (Trabant, 2002). While up to today voices expressing concerns that the world-wide dominance of English may threaten the country's cultural identity remain relatively rare in the German context and are for the most part restricted to linguists and scholarly circles, the defence of the French language against the encroachment of English has a long tradition as institutionalized policy in France (Ager, 1999; Safran, 1999). In Germany, the setting of English as first foreign language for all pupils in the 1950s (*Düsseldorfer Abkommen* in 1955 & *Hamburger Abkommen* in 1964) was linked first of all to the fact that foreign language learning was institutionalized when Germany was occupied by the allied forces (Ingrid Harks-Hanke, 1981). As approximately two thirds of the population was living in the British or American zone of occupation, speaking English had a direct use for the population and was much less perceived as a threat. Herbert Christ thus notes that 'the use of foreign language skills – notably of the languages of the occupying powers – was evident, and correspondingly the acceptance to learn foreign languages was high among the young as among the adults' (Christ, 2002, p. 69, my translation). The second reason for setting English as compulsory first foreign language was paradoxically linked to the federalized nature of the German education system: English was thus declared first foreign language for all in order to allow the circulation of pupils inside the territory of the German Federal Republic and guarantee a certain degree of unity in a system composed of different regulations in all 10 (and later 16) *Länder* [federal units]. In France on the other hand, the different attempts undertaken to institutionalize English as first foreign language for all pupils were abandoned after the resistances they encountered. In the after-war period, the proposition of the 1947 Langevin-Wallon report to make English lessons compulsory for all students was rapidly discarded (Doublier, 2005, p. 139). In the same way, more recent reform projects such as the proposal of the 2004 Thélot report to count the learning of 'English of international communication' among the 'fundamentals' to be transmitted to all pupils, were rejected. Although in their choice of first foreign language pupils and their parents massively opt for English, none of the different ministers of education have recognized its specific status inside the national education system. Some authors have interpreted this non-intervention by the French government as tacit support for a policy promoting English that is carried out by the parents.

Pierre Encrevé thus considers parents' anticipations as 'an instrument which those who govern have been using very well for forty years, *volens nolens*, to progressively make English the common international language of the French' (Encrevé 2007:134, my translation). Despite the different policy options chosen in France and Germany, the establishment of English as first foreign language was thus marked primarily by utilitarian concerns in both countries: While in Germany the necessity for all pupils to learn English was institutionalized through the different education laws implemented since the 1950s, French education officials' refusal to officially recognize English as most 'useful' language has not prevented the utilitarian dimension of being prevalent in parents' and pupils' language choices.

The predominance of the utilitarian dimension of language is less evident in the French and German education policies promoting the learning of European languages. While economic considerations, and notably the realization of a common European market played undoubtedly a role in the promotion of foreign language learning for all pupils, after the end of the Second World War foreign language learning was also perceived as a tool for reconciling the nations formerly at war and creating a European political community. In 1954, the member states of the Council of Europe thus committed themselves to 'encourage the study by its own nationals of the languages history and civilization of the Contracting Parties' and to promote the study of its own language to the citizens of the other countries[iii]. The ambiguity between the functional imperative of constructing a supra-national democratic political system and the realization of a common economic market that characterizes the European Community's action in the field of language education policies is also visible in German and French foreign language education policies and the discourses of the different actors involved. In most cases different types of arguments justifying the importance of learning European languages are juxtaposed and no clear hierarchy is established between potentially contradictory motives for promoting foreign language education policies. These arguments range from increasing the countries' competitiveness on the international level, over furthering European integration to promoting peace among peoples.

It must also be noted that mechanisms of path-dependence played a significant role in the promotion of the learning of European languages. Given the long tradition of their teaching, European standard languages are indeed those that are the most firmly established, with recognized training, qualifications and diploma and qualified teachers. Through their different associations and unions, the teachers of European standard languages are among the actors that have the largest voice in the definition of language education policies where they play a role of potential veto-players (Tsebelis, 2002). As a consequence, the efforts of 'diversification' of foreign language teaching observed in both France and Germany in the 1970s have benefitted essentially the standard European languages traditionally taught in both countries, i.e. French, German, Spanish, Italian and Russian.In France the introduction of the principle of diversification in 1970 served to settle a conflict between the Ministry of Education and teachers unions fearing the suppression of teaching positions for languages other than English (Garcia, 2013). In the same way, in Germany the association of French teachers played a central role in the 1971 modification of the *Hamburger Abkommen*, making it possible for languages other than English to be taught as first foreign language (Olbert, 1979, p. 9). The utilitarian concerns guiding French and German education policies promoting the teaching of European languages seem less directly linked to the presumed 'usefulness' of these languages, than to other internal and external policy concerns. In the absence of a re-evaluation or assessment of the actual language needs of the two societies, the European

languages continue however to benefit from their past status of 'useful language' and it is on this foundation that their teaching continues to be politically supported in both countries.

The recognition of foreign language skills as fundamental knowledge for all citizens

Finally, it is on the grounds of their presumed 'usefulness' in a changed external context that foreign language skills were recognized as component of the fundamental knowledge to be conveyed to all pupils. In both France and Germany, the progressive extension of compulsory foreign language classes to all pupils can be analysed in a first stage as the by-product of the democratization efforts undertaken in the 1960s and 1970s to generalize access to the education system. The broadening of the target population of foreign language education policies to include pupils from all social classes operated however first towards the top: at the beginning of the 20th century, modern foreign languages started to be no longer restricted to the vocational branches of the education system and were progressively recognized as part of general education alongside the classical ancient languages Greek and Latin. In the context of massification of the school population at the end of the 1960s, the democratization movement functioned on the other hand from the top towards the bottom: In France the progressive extension of foreign language learning to all pupils was linked to the lengthening of compulsory schooling until the age of 16 through the 1959 Berthoin reform and the implementation of a common program for all pupils in compulsory secondary education with the creation of the *collège unique*[iv]. In Germany a decision of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the *Länder* in 1969 extended the obligation to learn a foreign language to the *Hauptschulen*, the lowest branch of the vocational training system in Germany (Christ, 2002, p. 70). The expansion of compulsory foreign language courses to the vocational branches of the education system shows that in both countries foreign language learning has come to be considered a fundamental knowledge to be conveyed to all future citizens. While up to today in the segmented German education system the learning of two foreign languages is compulsory only for those pupils preparing a high school diploma granting access to higher education, the French education law of 1989 institutionalized the knowledge of not only one but two foreign languages as fundamental educational objective for all pupils (Porcher & Faro-Hanoun, 2000, p. 65). The progressive introduction of early language learning in French and German primary schools since the beginning of the 1990s is a further illustration of the conception that foreign language skills are a useful and fundamental knowledge to be conveyed to all pupils and future citizens; the idea behind this measure being again that given the importance of foreign languages – i.e. mostly English – the education system should provide all pupils with a higher level of foreign language skills, and that this goal could be achieved best by starting to learn languages at an early age (Kierepka, 2010).

The utilitarian dimension of language that prevailed in the institutionalization of foreign language learning as practical knowledge at the end of the 19th century has thus continued to significantly shape the foreign language education policies conducted by France and Germany since the 1950s. In a context marked by dynamics of European integration and globalization, the promotion of foreign language learning thus continued to be conceived first of all as a response to a changed external economic and political environment. Especially the establishment of English as uncontested first foreign language in the French and German education system and the progressive extension of foreign language education policies to all pupils were guided primarily by considerations of usefulness while the cultural and identity aspect played a subsidiary role in the promotion of the learning of European languages in both countries. All in all the foreign language education policies implemented in France and

Germany since the end of the Second World War can hence be seen as prolonging the utilitarian tradition characterizing foreign language learning in the two countries since its institutionalization in the 19th century.

2. *'Cultural' Linguistic diversity for some: the limited impact of internal linguistic diversity on multilingual education policies*

The increased *internal* linguistic diversity of both French and German societies on the other hand has had a much more limited impact on the foreign language education policies adopted in the two countries. The self-perception of the two societies as monolingual nation-states seems to continue to shape the policy choices in the field of foreign language education. An analysis of the policy documents adopted by the French Ministry of Education and the German Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the *Länder* shows indeed that the school population continues to be implicitly envisioned as linguistically homogeneous by education officials. A census conducted by the French national statistics office in 1999 revealed however that 26% of the adult population declared that a language other than French was spoken in their home (Clanché, 2002; Héran, Filhon, & Deprez, 2002). Correspondingly, in the 2007 German socio-economic panel survey of 9,9% of the respondents indicated that their parents' mother tongue was not German (SOEP 2007, quoted in Meyer, 2008, p. 12). While the learning of English and standard European foreign languages has come to be considered as a useful and fundamental knowledge, these migrant and minority languages spoken by a significant part of the population are not recognized as skill to be transmitted to all pupils but continue to be seen as target-group specific additional measure. This section will show that the limited recognition of migrant and minority languages in language education policies is linked to the fact that their teaching was institutionalized as means of preservation of a group-specific cultural identity rather than as a modern means of communication or a useful knowledge. Despite the trend towards the mainstreaming of these languages since the 1970s and 1980s and their (limited) integration in the general scheme of foreign language education with the adoption of the multilingualism paradigm since the beginning of the 1990s, the emphasis on the cultural rather than the utilitarian dimension these languages continues to hamper their full recognition by the education system and accordingly by the population at large.

The institutionalization of the teaching of minority and regional languages as means of preservation of a cultural heritage

In the case of France, the internal linguistic diversity is first of all due to the presence of a large number of regional languages on the French territory – which explains the high percentage of respondents declaring that a language other than French is spoken in their home compared to Germany. Historically regional languages have been perceived as threat to the unity of the French nation and their teaching has been excluded from the education system up to the 1950s. The hostility of the central state towards regional languages dates back to the Jacobin language policies implemented during the French Revolution (Certeau, Julia, & Revel, 1975) which continue to shape the perception of these languages up to today. One of the central objectives of the introduction of compulsory schooling in the 1880s was indeed precisely the linguistic unification of the country through the teaching of French to all pupils.

The progressive institutionalization of the teaching of regional languages in the French education system has thus to be analysed as the end of a century-long exclusion and a beginning recognition of the existing cultural and linguistic diversity. The teaching of regional languages was introduced in the French national education system for the first time in 1951 through the adoption of the so-called Deixonne law, allowing the use and the teaching of four 'local languages and dialects', i.e. Breton, Basque, Catalan and Occitan. While earlier legislative proposals formulated after the end of the Second World War inscribed the introduction of regional languages in the education system in the overall democratization effort of the education and as part of a pedagogical vision building on the actual linguistic background of the children from the popular classes, the democratic argument behind the Deixonne law is different: 'the teaching of these languages is no longer seen as part of the political framework of a democratisation process, it is a luxury allowed by democracy' (Gardin, 1975, p. 34, my translation). In other words, in a context of a consolidated democratic regime, regional languages were no longer seen as representing a risk for the unity the national community. Although the Deixonne law ended the interdiction of the teaching of regional languages in the education system, the concrete means of application of the law remained vague and depended on the will of the education officials in each school district and the implication of the individual teachers. Over the 1960s and 1970s, the many reform proposals of the Deixonne law claiming full recognition of regional languages inside the education system by MPs from the Brittany and Occitan regions faced the hostility of the successive governments who refused to inscribe the question on the parliamentary agenda. The analysis of the aborted reform proposals show that what was at stake was not a mere technical question but a 'new way of envisaging the national interest' and a new vision of the nation, according to which 'national unity is valuable only in as far as it favours the fulfilment of all individuals composing this community' (Report n°553, 1963, p. 3). The question of the integration of the teaching of regional languages into the 'public service of national education' was however only readdressed in the context of the decentralization reforms of the beginning of the 1980s, before the 1989 Jospin education orientation law opens the way to their mainstreaming and integration in the overall foreign language scheme.

In Germany on the other hand, regional languages played a less central role as their speakers represented not only a very weak percentage of the population but were moreover regionally concentrated. In the federalized German political system, the recognition of linguistic minorities being a competence of the *Länder* and only few were confronted with the issue. After their persecution under the Nazi regime, autochthonous minorities such as the Sorbs in Brandenburg and Saxony benefitted from linguistic rights since the end of the 1940s such as the right to education in their language.[v] The Sorbs were subsequently recognized as 'national minority' by the 1968 Constitution of the German Democratic Republic. After the reunification of Germany in 1990, the cultural and linguistic rights of the Sorbs have been constitutionally entrenched by the *Länder* of Saxony and Brandenburg. These rights include notably 'the right to the preservation and promotion of the sorb language and culture in public life and its transmission in schools and day-care centres for children'.[vi] In the same way, the Danish minority in Schleswig-Holstein has been granted a right to open specific schools and provide an education in their language. The attempts undertaken at the beginning of the 1990s to inscribe these minority rights into the federal constitution of Germany have however been unsuccessful (Krüger-Potratz, 2005, p. 60).

The primacy of the cultural and identity dimension of language in the institutionalization of the teaching of regional languages is visible first of all through the fact that in the two countries the teaching of these languages was conceived as a group-specific measure of

interest only for those pupils who have family ties or direct contact with the language in their everyday life. In contrast to the European languages, regional and minority languages were seen at best as an additional skill, which however could not replace the learning of a foreign language. In Germany the group-specific character is visible in the fact that the teaching of minority languages takes mostly place in specific schools instead of being integrated in the general education system. In France on the other hand, even after their progressive integration into the national education system, the learning of regional languages continues to be considered an option rather than part of the fundamental skills to be conveyed by the educational system. While the 1989 Jospin education law recognised regional languages as integral part of general education objectives, these languages were again excluded from the 2005 Fillon education law according to which the common core of knowledge to be transmitted to all pupils only includes 'the practice of at least one living *foreign* language'.[vii] Although currently eight regional languages have the status of second foreign language in the national school curriculum, regional languages have little space in the 'mother tongue plus two' language model of the French education system. In the hierarchy of languages, regional languages thus continue to rank not only behind the national language, French, but also behind the foreign languages taught in the national education system. The prevalence of the cultural dimension in the institutionalization of regional languages is moreover visible in the fact that they are conceived as means of preservation of a cultural heritage rather than a useful knowledge for the future. Regional languages thus 'constitute neither a modern and reasonable choice, nor a desirable option for National education' (Beacco & Cherkaoui Messin, 2010, p. 107, my translation). The backwards turned framing of regional languages remains visible even in the measures recognizing these languages, such as for instance the adoption in 2008 of the article 75-1 of the constitution which states that 'regional languages belong to the heritage of France'. In the same way, in Germany the teaching of national minority languages is framed in terms of the preservation of a cultural heritage rather than the transmission of a skill valuable for pupils' future life. The primacy of the cultural dimension in the institutionalization of regional and minority languages is finally visible in the fact that the teaching of these languages was either forbidden or promoted on the grounds that they were the expression of a distinct cultural identity standing in conflict to or complementing the national identity. In France regional cultural and linguistic identities were thus seen as standing in potential conflict or competition to the allegiance to the national culture and values. While less and less conceived as a threat, the teaching of regional languages continues to be strictly regulated: following a 2002 ruling by the French *Conseil d'Etat* immersion methods were prohibited in public schools and bilingual sections in regional languages were closely monitored (Bertucci, 2006, p. 102). These restrictions illustrate the continued suspicion of national education officials towards the teaching of regional languages, which are still seen as potentially divisive and linked to past conflicts. In Germany on the contrary, the recognition of linguistic rights including education in their language to 'national minorities' is linked to the will to operate a clear break with the assimilationist policies perpetrated under the Nazi regime. Nevertheless, the emphasis is also here on the cultural dimension of these minority languages, which are here seen as expression of a distinct 'national identity' and recognized on these grounds by the German *Länder*.

The limited integration of migrant languages into general foreign language education policies

This increased internal linguistic diversity of the French and German societies is furthermore linked to the migration movements that have been characterizing the two countries since the conclusion of labour migration agreements in the 1960s. After a first agreement with Italy in

1955, Germany concluded labour migration agreements with Spain, Greece, Turkey, Morocco, Portugal, Tunisia and Yugoslavia between 1960 and 1968 (Woellert, Kröhnert, Sippel, & Klingholz, 2009, p. 12). During the same period, migration agreements were concluded between France and Spain (1961), Portugal (1963) and Morocco (1964). Furthermore migration from Tunisia, Algeria and Sub-Saharan Africa to France developed after 1964. As these migrants were initially perceived as a temporary work force bound to return to their country of origin, as illustrates the German term of *Gastarbeiter* (guest workers), the introduction of specific language courses for migrants' children in the official language of the country of origin of their parents followed the objective of facilitating their return. Facilitating the return of migrants' children through the teaching of the language-of-origin was explicitly encouraged by different measures adopted on the European level, according to which 'host Member States should also take, in conjunction with the Member States of origin, appropriate measures to promote the teaching of the mother tongue and of the culture of the country of origin of the abovementioned children, with a view principally to facilitating their possible reintegration into the Member State of origin' (European Council, 1977). The importance of these language-of-origin courses for migrants presented significant differences between France and Germany. Nikola Tietze thus notes that 'in the federal Republic political and pedagogical attention was concentrated between the 1970s and the 1980s almost exclusively on the teaching of the mother tongue, whereas in France these courses – called *Enseignement des langues et cultures d'origine* (ELCO) – remained largely auxiliary for integration policies' (Tietze, 2005, p. 215 my translation). Accordingly, the involvement of the education authorities in the organization of language of origin courses has not been the same in the two countries: in Germany, following a decision of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs courses in the mother tongue could thus be taken in charge by the school authorities of the *Länder* since 1971 (Kultusministerkonferenz, 1971). Given the German conception of education, which unlike in France is neither national nor centralized but places the emphasis on the individual, schooling authorities and politicians did not fear to apply specific measures to specific publics (Tietze, 2005, p. 208). In France on the other hand, the intervention of the ministry of education in the organization of language-of-origin courses was much more limited: the ELCO scheme introduced between 1973 and 1981 which was based on bilateral agreements between France and 8 countries of emigration thus foresaw that these classes would be ensured by teachers trained and paid by the country of origin. While these teachers were examined by the same body of French inspectors as the other language teachers, the ELCO scheme functioned only at the very margins of the education system.

As it became however increasingly clear that the vast majority of migrants would stay permanently in France or Germany, some of the so-called 'immigrant languages' began to be incorporated into the general education curricula. Since the 1990s, the importance of language-of-origin courses for migrants' children has been re-evaluated in France after different social actors raised the question of the utility of the ELCO scheme (Petek, 2004, p. 45). Thus in a 1995 report the High Council for Integration stated that 'integration requires a knowledge of oneself, and it is this knowledge which allows an integration which is reflected, self-assured and thus successful' and recommended that 'a real teaching of these languages as foreign languages, and not as languages-of-origin is desirable'[viii]. While the languages taught under the ELCO scheme were progressively integrated in the general foreign language education program, the trajectories of the different languages-of-origin presented stark differences. While Spanish and Italian were fully integrated into mainstream foreign language teaching and are currently learned by a significant share of pupils, this was the case to a much lesser extent for Portuguese, which continued to be perceived mainly as an immigrant

language (Peruchi, 2010). The stigma of 'immigrant language' persisted even more strongly in the cases of Turkish and Arabic in France. The same trend towards the integration of language-of-origin into the general education curricula can be observed in Germany. In the mid-1990s, the decisions of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs thus began to overcome the division between the sectors of foreign language learning and the teaching of languages of origin and to address the question of cultural and linguistic diversity in general, i.e. as result of both internal and external transformations (Krüger-Potratz, 2005, p. 68). In 1995, the Standing Conference has thus issued for the first time recommendations for the recognition of Turkish in the German high school degree *Abitur*.

The impact of this trend towards the mainstreaming of these 'immigrant languages' can however be considered as more symbolic than real: if school curricula in France and in some *Länder* in Germany theoretically allow the teaching of languages such as Arabic or Turkish, spoken by a large part of the population, the number of schools offering such courses, and consequently the number of pupils following them, remains extremely low. Although Arabic is used by more than 5 million people living on the French territory, pupils learning the language represent less than 0,1% of school population (Levallois, 2009, p. 7). The example of Arabic and Turkish show that objective criteria such as the diffusion and the number of speakers of these languages are not sufficient to explain why these languages are not recognized as useful in the French and German education system. Other factors such as mechanisms of path-dependence linked to the institutionalization of foreign language learning and the different social representation of language that prevail in the two countries must thus be taken into account.

In this perspective, the limited recognition of languages-of-origin in multilingual education policies is linked to the fact that as in the case of regional and minority languages, the institutionalization of the teaching of the so-called 'immigrant' languages was grounded essentially on their cultural dimension. In the case of immigrant languages, this cultural dimension was often framed as potential threat to the dominant culture and seen with suspicion rather than perceived as representing a positive contribution to the cultural diversity of France or Germany. In France the ELCO scheme faced indeed increased mistrust with teachers from Islamic countries being suspected of conveying religious ideas contrary to the Republican principles and the socialization mission of the French schools (Tietze, 2005, p. 215). The vice-president of the Senate Parliamentary commission for culture, education and communication thus noted that Arabic 'suffers from stereotypes confining it to the role of language of a country of origin and religious language, which favors a communitarian fall back detrimental to intercultural dialogue'[ix]. Interviews with education officials at different levels show, that this negative stereotype does not only guide pupils' decisions to learn the language or not, but also those of different actors of the education system, such as heads of schools, in their decision to offer classes of Arabic. The same phenomenon can be observed in Germany where language classes in the language-of-origin (*Muttersprachlicher Unterricht* or *Herkunftssprachlicher Unterricht*) have come to be increasingly seen as impeding second-generation migrants' integration into German society. As since the beginning of the years 2000s, the emphasis has been put increasingly on the necessity for migrants' to learn German, and the maintenance of their language-of-origin (in most cases Turkish) came to be seen as obstacle to this goal. As in the case of the minority languages, the prevalence of the cultural dimension in the institutionalization of migrant languages moreover entailed that the teaching of languages-of-origin was as backwards-turned preservation of a cultural identity rather than a positive projection towards the future. In France, a 2002 report by the High Council for

Integration thus stressed that the integration of the ELCO languages into mainstream foreign language teaching would not only serve the migrants, but also allow 'the nation to enrich its linguistic heritage' (quoted in Petek, 2004, p. 46, my translation). Finally, unlike the general foreign language education policies, language-of-origin courses continue to a certain extent to be conceived as 'target-group-specific exceptional or additional measures that can be revoked at any moment' (Krüger-Potratz, 2005, p. 67, my translation). In Germany, the hiatus between the linguistic rights granted to the 'national minorities' and the absence of recognition of similar rights to immigrant groups shows that the teaching of languages-of-origin is not seen as part of the mission of the general education system. In the same way in France, the fact that the teaching of Arabic continues to function mainly under the ELCO scheme implicitly conveys the idea that learning of this language is useful only for migrants' children. Despite the trend towards the integration of the so-called immigrant languages in the general foreign language scheme, traditional language-of-origin courses thus continue to exist in parallel at the margins of the education system and outside regular class hours.

All in all, while in the two countries the linguistic diversity linked to minority, regional and immigrant languages is increasingly recognized, it is only very marginally incorporated in the concept of multilingualism used in general foreign language education policies in spite both countries repeated commitments to multilingualism. The limited recognition of both 'immigrant' and 'regional' languages is more generally linked to the tension between the cultural and utilitarian dimensions of language. With pupils' language learning choices being guided primarily by the anticipated benefits, both types of languages suffer from the fact that they are not considered useful. Political and societal discourses show that the perceived utility of these languages remains indeed very low, even for those that such as Arabic or Turkish are spoken in large parts of the world. Individuals wishing to learn minority, regional or immigrant languages are thus seen as guided by cultural or identity motivations, while the learning of languages by all citizens does not appear as desirable. This tends to confirm that foreign language learning has remained since its institutionalization under the Third Republic primarily a 'useful knowledge' (Pouly, 2007). While the learning of English or other standard European foreign languages is considered a useful and fundamental knowledge, migrant and minority languages are not seen as skills to be transmitted to all pupils but continue to be framed as a problem rather than enrichment for each of the two societies.

Conclusion

Adopting a long-term perspective of historical neo-institutionalism, we have shown that the tension between the utilitarian and the cultural dimension of language characterizing contemporary multilingual education policies in France and Germany results from the separate paths of institutionalization followed by general foreign language education policies on the one hand and policies regulating the teaching of languages of origin and minority languages on the other hand. We have demonstrated that before the emergence and diffusion of the paradigm of multilingualism at the beginning of the 1990s, language education policies were segmented into two distinct policy sectors: the general national education sector and the sector of specific policies targeting migrants and minorities. The promotion of directly applicable language skills and the recognition of linguistic diversity were two developments that have operated in parallel, but were in fact hardly linked, even if certain *ex post* reconstructions in contemporary discourses promoting multilingualism tend to claim the opposite. While the decisions and policies responding to a changed external context and notably European integration, are not targeting a specific group, but aim to open the general

education system to Europe (through the teaching of foreign languages), minority and language of origin courses are conceived for a specific group of pupils that are seen as deviant from the norm of the general school population, that is implicitly considered as homogeneous. Contemporary multilingual education policies thus appear as the fusion between two formerly distinct policy sectors. As both policy sectors were characterized by very unequal degrees of institutionalization, in terms of their tradition, the weight of their administration, their budget and their social recognition, it is the logics and interests characterizing the general education sector that prevailed in the conceptualization of multilingual education policies in France and Germany.

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[i] The most important ones are the *Syndicat national des enseignants du Second Degré* (SNES) claiming 62 000 affiliated members in France and the *Gemeinschaft Erziehung und Wissenschaft* (GEW) claiming 260 000 members in Germany.

[ii] The division between 'civic' and 'ethnic' types of nationalism has been criticized by many contemporary scholars of nationalism (Brubaker, 1999; Dieckhoff, 2006).

[iii] European Cultural Convention. Paris, 19.XII.1954. Council of Europe, European Treaty Series – No. 18.

[iv] The creation of the *collège unique* a common first level of secondary education for pupils aged 11 to 14 has been implemented progressively between 1959 and 1977 through the law Berthoin (1959), the law Fouchet-Capelle (1963) and the law Haby (1977).

[v] *Gesetz zur Wahrung der Rechte der sorbischen Bevölkerung*, adopted by the Saxon Parliament on the 23rd March 1948, and *Erste Verordnung betreffend Förderung der sorbischen Volksgruppe* adopted by the Parliament of Brandenburg on the 12th September 1950.

[vi] Art. 25 of the Constitution of Brandenburg, adopted on the 20th August 1992.

[vii] Art. 9 of the Fillon education law, 23rd April 2005.

[viii] Haut Conseil à l'intégration. *Liens culturels et intégration*. Paris, La documentation française, 1995.
[ix] Written question n°10391by UMP Senator Jacques Legendre, published in the JO Sénat, 8.10.2009, p. 2344.