

8. Bilingual teaching: immersion in Switzerland

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1 Introduction

Opinions abound on the linguistic skills of the Swiss population: Some foreign authors extrapolate the four-language Swiss situation, i.e. its official and institutional multilingualism, to the individual inhabitants, and state that all are at least trilingual. Others assert that because of the territorial principle – i.e. the legal and constitutional principle in accordance with which a language is allocated to a territory – there are actually only monolinguals. The truth is somewhere in between, and naturally depends on the criteria used to define the term "plurilingual".

Various biographical scenarios lead to plurilingualism. In a country that officially has four languages and a high rate of immigration, this plurilingualism can develop within the family and as a result of international or domestic migration. Informal contacts between the different language communities at the language borders also lead to the spontaneous acquisition of a second language. For a long time, foreign language teaching in the schools has been the institutional response to the social, political, economic and cultural challenges of a multilingual country in the heart of Europe, and this has led to a certain democratisation of foreign language learning. However, the implementation of foreign language teaching has been very uneven as a result of the federal system in Switzerland. The start and the intensity of foreign language teaching has always depended on the 26 individual cantons – and the majority or minority status of the language community in question and the proximity of a language border are major factors. The success of this teaching has been assessed very differently, both objectively and subjectively. Whereas certain people are able to develop (near) mother-tongue skills, others admit that they are totally unable to speak a language since "they only learned it in school". In the course of communicative and post-communicative approaches to foreign language teaching from the 1970s onwards, efforts have been made to find ways of optimising language learning through, for example, exchange programmes and bilingual teaching.

2 A short historical summary of bilingual teaching in Switzerland

Certain forms of bilingual teaching have been in use for a relatively long period of time in Switzerland. For instance, as early as the 19th century and in a few cases the 17th century, teaching in a number of schools on the German-French language border was bilingual or in the second language, and there are historical evidence of unusual forms. Thus Zimmerli writes about the teaching situation in Marly bei Freiburg, "Until 1840 the school was bilingual. The teacher namely combined the German-speaking and French-speaking pupils class by class in the same classroom, and gave the German speakers work to do in writing, while he taught the French speakers orally, and vice versa. An older woman of French origin told me that she had acquired a decent knowledge of German in this system 'simply by listening to the others read'... Church Parish Council minutes dated 1832 expressly state that the teacher must have a command of both languages" (Zimmerli 1895, 106). The famous Swiss educational reformer Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746-1827) and the Fribourg/Freiburg priest Grégoire Girard (1765-1850) also used bilingual teaching in their reform pedagogy. Academic secondary schools and vocational schools on the language border traditionally tended to develop bilingualism among the language minorities – in the case of Fribourg/Freiburg, the German-speaking Freiburger, and in the case of Biel/Bienne, the French-speaking Biennois, since the minority had to adapt to the majority. There are families on the language border that have maintained bilingualism for generations by sending their children to the "other-language" school or section, as also happens in other language border areas that offer completely parallel school systems. This is referred to as "spontaneous immersion". Early on, private schools created niches for bilingual teaching, such as the "Guglera" in Giffers near Fribourg, which was founded in 1886, three years before the bilingual university of Fribourg/Freiburg. Other private schools in the Geneva-Lausanne-Montreux region also set up bilingual educational structures. The Romansh and Italian speaking school system in the Canton of Grisons has also been bilingual since the introduction of compulsory schooling. Transitional phases in the school system or before starting a job have been used to improve language competence through practical experience, exchange programmes, stays abroad and the like. These are above all documented for temporary migration by German-speaking Swiss citizens to west Switzerland, but many cases of French speakers staying for a year in the German-speaking area are also known. The latter organised themselves into networks, i.e. the farmers, vintners, mechanical and technical trades, as well as bakers sent their apprentices to the other language area, and banks, insurance companies and public service companies also sent their employees. Before the existence of European exchange programmes, a semester in Vienna or Heidelberg was considered good form for students of law at the universities of western Switzerland. However, generalised political and academic discussion of bilingual teaching and learning only developed in the course of the 1980s. Thus the terms "two-language" or "bilingual" teaching and learning refer to two different situations. On the one hand, it refers to a more or less spontaneous use of

existing resources and on the other, much later, to a deliberate process in development at school. Generally, in Switzerland the term "two-language teaching" is preferred to the term "bilingual teaching". The term "immersion" is also used, having been adopted from Canadian research, and describes a learning situation in which a relatively large proportion of subject material is taught over a longer period of time in the second language, in principle without recourse to the first language. The use of these individual terms is, however, not consistent.

As far as terminology is concerned, it should also be noted that the term "second language" in Switzerland refers to a different national language, while the term "foreign language" tends to mean an external language such as English or Spanish. This contrasts with the terminology used in the Federal Republic of Germany, in which "second language" refers to the learning of German in a German-speaking environment, while "foreign language" denotes learning in a foreign-language environment. As far as the diglossia situation between standard German and the Swiss-German dialect is concerned, there are big differences in attitudes among both the German-speakers and among speakers of the other national languages. Certain German speakers refer to standard German as a foreign language that is taught and learned by immersion from the first primary school year, and others see it as a supplementary variety of German that has many forms in common with the dialect. In general, dialect plays a major role in the discourse about the relationship between the language communities and the learning of languages in Switzerland, above all in western Switzerland.

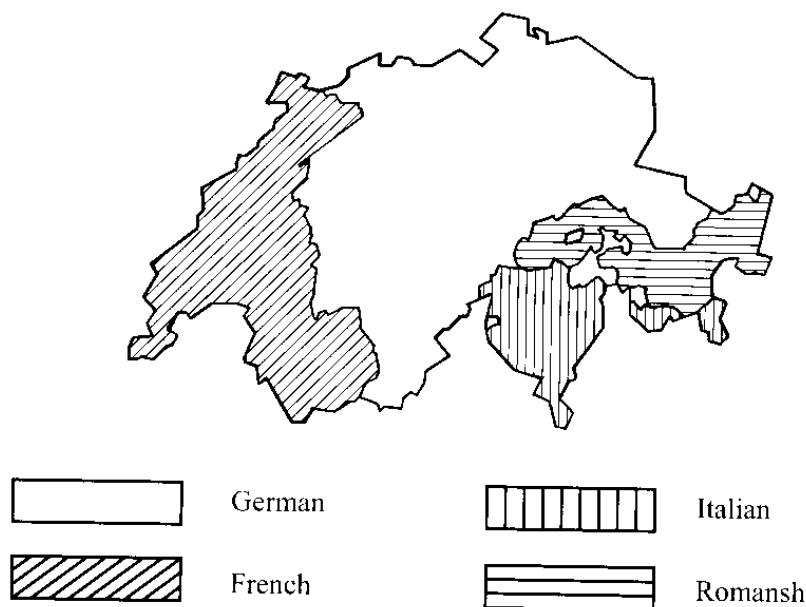


Fig. 1: Geographical distribution of the language groups

Even the age of starting and the intensity of learning – just two parameters – yield a broad range of models.

Model	Start	Intensity		
		L2 100%	L2/L1 \approx 50%	L2 < 40%
Early	Playgroup Preschool 1 Preschool 2			
Middle	Primary 3 Primary 4 Primary 5			
Late I	Sec. I			
Late II	Sec. II			
Late III	Tertiary			
Late IV	Quaternary			

Fig. 2: Bilingual teaching and the parameters "start" and "intensity"

A number of countries and regions use "strong" models of bilingual teaching, i.e. models in which the initial stage is entirely in the second language, followed by a reduction to roughly 50% in this language (Canada, Finland), or those that from the very beginning divide the teaching into roughly equal shares of the first and the second language (Sitten, Siders, Monthey in Valais; Aosta, Alsace; USA, Australia). Certain countries and regions use flexible transitions between the languages (the French-speaking part of the Canton of Grisons, Luxembourg, Singapore). Most "strong" models are *optional*, i.e. the parents can choose the bilingual school alternative, but there are also cases in which bilingual teaching is firmly integrated in the curriculum for linguistic and educational policy reasons, and cannot be selected or rejected (the Romansh-speaking part of the Canton of Grisons, Luxembourg, Aosta, Catalonia).

On and along the Swiss German-French language border, models are currently being developed that can be classified as "light" models of bilingual teaching. These are characterised by:

- an *early* start (preschool or first primary school year);
- compulsory participation by the children (class or school projects);

- two to four teaching units per week in L2;
- communication of *content subject* through the second language (not language teaching).

The implementation of compulsory models can be explained as follows:

- Switzerland has little experience with private education.
- There are no alternatives to the public school.
- There is little acceptance of specialised schools and they are not paid for by the state (as is the case in France).
- The neighbourhood and village schools are part of Swiss civic and educational culture.

Who, then, teaches these subjects, projects and activities in the second language? There are a number of approaches, listed here with the advantages and disadvantages.

	Advantages	Disadvantages	Corrective measures
Class teacher teaches in L2	A high degree of interdisciplinary teaching; L2 stages can be distributed throughout the entire curriculum; The class teacher is a model of bilingualism in action	Teachers must be bilingual or very competent in the second language; Self-discipline, to prevent L2 from being submerged; If pupils do not reply in the second language, teacher easily slips into L1; No allocation of language to person	Exchange activities with classes of a different language; Further training in L2 if the teacher is not bilingual
Pupil exchange (mixed language classes)	Peer teaching/ learning; L1-teachers; Teacher tandems; Intercultural didactics	Risk of dominance by the majority language; Complicated organisation; Only feasible on the language border	Didactic measures to strengthen the minority language; Good co-ordination between the school districts (start of school, holidays, gymnasium, etc.)
Exchange of teaching personnel	L1 teachers; Teacher tandems; Intercultural didactics	Relatively complicated organisation; Only feasible on the language border	Exchange activities; Further training in immersion didactics

Peripatetic teachers	L1 teachers	Little interdisciplinary teaching; Isolation in the school building	Class teacher introduces concepts in L1 teaching; Create a good working climate in the class
Combination of the above categories	Combined advantages	Combined disadvantages	Combined corrective measures

Fig. 3: Modalities

3 Measures at the federal (national) level

3.1. National language programmes

Switzerland has no federal ministry for education and teaching, and thus education from preschool until the end of the first secondary level (from the age of five to the age of sixteen) comes under the educational sovereignty of the cantons, in keeping with the principle of subsidiarity. This naturally also applies to language-learning in the compulsory schools. The Conference of Cantonal Directors of Education in Berne (EDK) and the four Regional Conferences (Western Switzerland and Ticino, Northwestern Switzerland, Central and Eastern Switzerland) are discussion and co-ordination bodies. The "Recommendations and resolutions concerning the introduction, reform and co-ordination of teaching in the second national language for all pupils during compulsory schooling", dated 30 October 1975 constitutes a major milestone in school language policies. These recommendations were supplemented on 30 October 1986 by the "Foreign language teaching at the transition from compulsory schooling to the higher schools". These documents, however, do not mention bilingual teaching.

At the level of Switzerland as a whole, bilingual teaching and learning were discussed for the first time during the preparations for the 7th Forum of the *L2 Commission*, a committee of the EDK that was given the task of introducing bilingual teaching at the primary level. This three-day Forum provided the participants with an opportunity to get know bilingual school models used in Switzerland and in neighbouring countries, and to discuss the academic effects of this approach. The conference was also intended to lead to a broader base for bilingual teaching. A number of follow-up activities resulted from the Forum – in 1994 the Working Party for the Promotion of Plurilingual Teaching in Switzerland was founded; in 1995 the proceedings of the Forum were published (*Multilingual Country – Multilingual Schools 1995*); and, also in 1995, the EDK issued a declaration on the promotion of bilingual teaching in Switzerland.

Towards the end of the 1990s, the need was felt for generally applicable guidelines for the learning of languages in Switzerland. At the same time, the Canton of Zurich announced that it intended to introduce English as the first foreign language in its

schools, and presented its "School Project 21", which provided for sequences in English from the first primary year onwards, under the motto of "Language across the curriculum". The "Global Language Concept" working party was founded and delivered its report on 15 July 15 1998. Of the 15 measures proposed on language learning, three deal with the topic of plurilingual learning:

1. Different forms of bi/plurilingual teaching are to be encouraged, tested and followed on a broad basis.
2. All pupils should have the opportunity to participate in forms of linguistic exchange integrated into the other language-teaching activities.
3. For the purposes of methodological diversification, alternative language learning and teaching methods should also be used, encouraged and developed. (Cf. "What languages should the pupils of Switzerland learn during compulsory schooling?")

On the basis of this language programme, the EDK issued 19 recommendations concerning the co-ordination of language teaching in compulsory schooling in November 2000. Since a two-thirds majority was not achieved, the decision was postponed. (13 were in favour of a second national language and 12 in favour of English, with one abstention). Two of these recommendations directly concerned bilingual teaching:

Recommendations put forward in November 2000:

1. Language acquisition can be encouraged through particular measures introduced before the beginning of foreign language teaching in the schools.
2. An improvement in quality and an increase in the efficiency of language teaching can be achieved by using appropriate didactic forms, specifically through integrated language didactics and through a targeted use of various forms of language teaching and learning, including in particular subject teaching in a foreign language.

3.2. Federal Act on National Languages and Understanding between Language Communities

The Federal Act on National Languages and Understanding between Language Communities, known as the Language Act, (the preliminary draft of which is currently being revised¹) provides for a Competence Centre for the Promotion of Plurilingualism, to be concerned with the development, monitoring and evaluation of plurilingual school models:

¹ This future Act will supplement Art. 70 (the so-called Language Article) of the 2000 Federal Constitution.

Art. 21 – Institution for the Promotion of Plurilingualism

- The Federal Government and the Cantons shall jointly maintain an academic institution for the promotion of plurilingualism.
- The institution shall have the following functions:
 - It shall pursue applied research on plurilingualism.
 - It shall develop, monitor and evaluate new forms of plurilingual education and training.
 - It shall maintain an information and documentation centre.
 - It shall assist the co-ordination of research on plurilingualism in Switzerland.
 - It shall promote understanding for plurilingualism in the population.
- The Federal Government and the Cantons shall establish an advisory board to provide guidance for the institution.

3.3. Bilingual school leaving certificate (Matura/Abitur)

After the twelfth or thirteenth school year (depending on the canton, and not including preschool), pupils who are not in vocational schools complete their education at the upper secondary level with an examination known as the "Matura". Passing this examination entitles the pupils to study at Swiss universities. The recognition of this school-leaving certificate is regulated at the federal level.

Since the beginning of the 1990s, it has been possible to conclude academic secondary school with a bilingual Matura. This possibility was first introduced at private schools and in the bilingual cantons, then in western Switzerland, which offers more bilingual models than German-speaking Switzerland, and now also applies in many German-speaking cantons and in Grisons. The Federal Office for Education and Science sets out guidelines on the number of hours to be taught in the second language and regarding the subjects that can be included. Thus 600 hours in the second language (exclusive of language subjects) and at least one humanities subject taught in the second language are the conditions for the "bilingual Matura" certification.

There are a number of bilingual Matura models on the language border. At certain academic secondary schools, far more than 600 hours are taught in the second language – the percentage can amount to approx. 50%. Some schools offer "reciprocal immersion" in mixed language classes. Certain schools with two language sections offer "bilingualism à la carte", i.e. the pupils can attend the other language section for a period of time at their own choice; in others, in turn, it is possible to take a Matura with two mother tongues.

3.4. Regulation dated 15 February 1995 on the Recognition of Academic Secondary School-leaving Certificates (Matura)

Art 18 – Bilingual Matura

The Bilingual Matura certificate issued by a canton according to its own regulations may also be recognised.

Art 20 – Formal Requirements of the Certificate

- The Matura Certificate must include:
 - the heading "Swiss Confederation" and the designation of the canton;
 - the stamp "Matura Certificate, issued pursuant to ...";
 - the name of the school issuing the Certificate;
 - the holder's family name, given name, place of residence (for foreigners: nationality and place of birth) and date of birth;
 - details regarding the time during which the holder attended the school;
 - the marks in the nine Matura subjects pursuant to Article 9;
 - the topic of the Matura project and the mark it received;
 - where appropriate, a reference to the bilinguality of the Matura, with details of the second language;
 - the signature of the competent cantonal authority and of the school headmaster.
- The marks received in subjects required by the canton or in other subjects can also be listed in the Matura Certificate.

3.5. Regional language programmes

All the Regional Conferences of the EDK have language commissions that are currently developing programmes on language learning in the schools. The key points of these considerations are the learning objectives to be achieved at the end of primary and secondary school, the cornerstones being the *European Framework of Reference* and the *Portfolio*, continuity at points of transfer, the sequence of languages and the starting age of the teaching of the different foreign languages, immersion approaches and subject teaching in the foreign language. The Western Swiss Conference (Conférence intercantonale de l'instruction publique de la Suisse romande, CIIP) has, for instance, resolved to introduce German as the first foreign language in the 3rd primary school year, followed by English in the 1st secondary year (7th school year).

In the medium term, the latter is to be shifted forwards to the 5th year of primary school. As early as 1992, the "Commission romande pour l'enseignement de l'allemand" (CREA), which has in the meantime been dissolved, referred to immersion teaching in its recommendations. The Neuenberg "Institut de recherche et documentation pédagogique" (IRDPA), the research institute of the CIIP, monitors and evaluates bilingual teaching models, and its research committee, the "Groupe de recherche sur l'enseignement bilingue" (GREB) is a forum for exchange between researchers who are monitoring and evaluating immersion models.

3.6. The situation in the multilingual cantons of Grisons, Berne, Fribourg and Valais

3.6.1. Grisons

Grisons, the only officially trilingual canton in Switzerland, a mountain canton and the largest in terms of area, began bilingual teaching in the schools of the two language minorities (Romansh¹ and Italian) as early as the 19th century. This was in part also due to the fact that the medium of instruction in all secondary schools was and still is German. Another factor was that school leavers were unable to find appropriate training in their own canton and so were forced to complete their schooling in a different canton in the second language, German. In the Romansh-language area, the schools that have retained Romansh as the language of instruction are introducing more and more German from the 4th year of primary school on. It is de facto a compulsory and reciprocal bilingual model for all, since in every class bilingual Romansh-speakers and children who are originally monolingual German speakers learn together. A number of local communities have developed projects aimed at balanced bilingualism combined with a strengthening of Romansh, particularly at the lower secondary level (age 12 to 16). Samedan in the Engadine, for instance, approved a school project monitored by a pedagogic group and evaluation team from 1996 to 2000. Other local authorities are preparing plurilingual programmes tailored to their specific circumstances (different languages, mountain communities).

In Chur, the canton capital, it is possible to attend bilingual primary classes (Romansh-German and Italian-German). These pilot projects are being supervised by the University Research Centre for Plurilingualism (UFN) of the University of Berne. The educational programme also includes the Bilingual Matura.

¹ The 60 000 Romansh speakers have five written languages and one official language, Romansh Grischun.

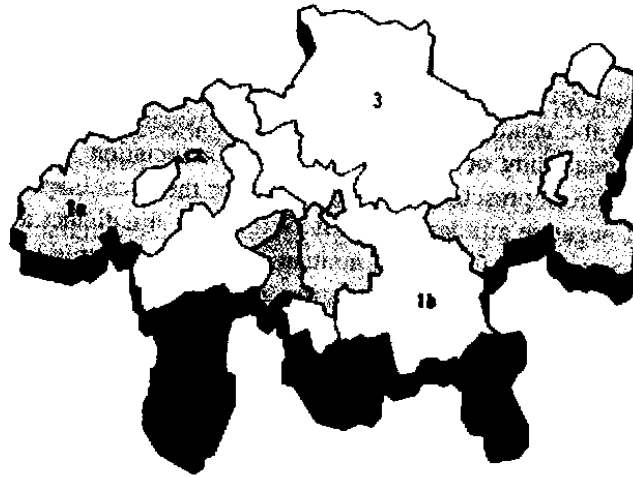


Fig. 4: Languages in Grisons: 1. Romansh area; a. Romansh majority; b. German majority; 2. Italian; 3. German

3.6.2. Berne

The Canton of Berne is bilingual and since the creation of the Canton of Jura out of three of its French-speaking districts, has a French-speaking minority of only 8%. Most of these people live in the officially French-speaking districts of La Neuveville, Moutier and Courtelary, in the bilingual district and bilingual town of Biel-Bienne and in and around the federal capital Berne.

In Biel-Bienne there are presently some bilingual models, although those who deal with the bilingualism of the town generally regret that there are still so few – considering that the schools all have a German-speaking and a French-speaking section. One primary school, Böezingen / Boujean, has an immersion model on an exchange basis (4 hours per weeks), monitored and evaluated by the Forum for Bilingualism and the Office de Recherche pédagogique du Canton de Berne in Trarclan. The other models are at academic secondary school, vocational school and technical school levels. Since 1998/99 there have been classes leading to the bilingual Matura, and there are also a number of pilot projects at the vocational school level. The principle of personal choice allows parents to select the school language. Thus mixed-language families can choose the child's "strong" or "weak" language as the language of schooling, while monolingual families sometimes also choose the school conducted in the other language.

3.6.3. Fribourg/Freiburg

There have long been a number of bilingual models in the bilingual canton of Fribourg/Freiburg, and here, too, parents have been able to choose the other-language school. In the 1980s the academic secondary schools began teaching in the second language and at the beginning of the 1990s a parents association began campaigning for bilingual teaching from preschool on, especially for the French-speaking majority, which as a result of negative attitudes towards German, to the dialect and diglossia in general often had no access to German – a situation that is still true today. In 1994 a working party at the education administration began developing proposals for a cantonal programme of language learning that included bilingual teaching. An initial programme entered the discussion stage in 1997. After criticisms and suggestions were received, a second programme was developed involving a small change in the Cantonal Schools Act to establish a legal basis for partial immersion teaching. The amendment of the Schools Act was adopted by the Cantonal Parliament (Grand Council) by a large majority (cf. Bertschy 1999, Brohy 1998). However, a referendum was launched against the parliamentary decision, thereby obliging the voting population to decide on the new article of the Schools Act. On 24 September 2000 the new article was rejected by a narrow majority (49,6% in favour, 50,4% against). Nevertheless, a number of bilingual teaching models launched before the referendum were continued under somewhat different conditions.

At university level the atmosphere is more relaxed. The impression created is that early-age immersion models tend to arouse anxiety, because they are seen as having a greater influence on the identity and the culture of children and because teachers encounter plurilingualism less often. Models at the upper secondary level and the tertiary level meet with greater acceptance. At the university of Fribourg/Freiburg,¹ which now proudly calls itself the "Bilingual University of Switzerland", bilingualism has been part of its identity since it was founded (1889). A number of evaluations and studies have shown that it is chosen by foreign students and students from outside the canton primarily because of its bilingualism. Bilingualism is implemented at a variety of levels: institutional bilingualism guarantees that services (regulations, libraries, etc.) are available in both languages and language policies aimed at promoting individual bilingualism have the effect that studying (in part) in the second language leads to both subject and language competence. In certain faculties studies can be concluded with a bilingual "Lizentiat" (licence) degree. Interfaculty agreements on standards and a charter have been drawn up. A language learning centre and a media centre help students cope with the challenges of plurilingual studies (cf. Langner *et al.* 2000). The teacher training college that began operations in autumn 2002 offers bilingual teaching for all future teachers and, as an option, even greater specialisation can be pursued.

¹ www.unifr.ch

Period	Description	Example
1960 to 1970	Demands for linguistic segregation in the school system to prevent the German-speaking minority being assimilated	Teacher seminar, Kollegium St. Michael, preschool, college of technology, vocational schools
1970 to 1980	Implementation of segregation	
From 1980	Reconciliation, exchange, immersion experiments	Tandem, bilingual degrees at the university, 10 th foreign language school year
From 1990	Demands for bilingual teaching, especially by French speakers	Fribourg/Freiburg (city), a number of local districts, especially on the language border, bilingual Matura
From 2000	Pilot classes from preschool on	

Fig. 5: Historical development of bilingual models in Fribourg/Freiburg

3.6.4. Valais

In the bilingual Canton of Valais, where it has long been possible for French speaking parents in the cantonal capital of Sion/Sitten and the language border town Sierre/Siders to opt for a German school, bilingual models have also been demanded by parents, as in the Canton of Fribourg/Freiburg since the beginning of the 1990s. In contrast to Fribourg, however, parents' demands have been more willingly accepted by cantonal and local government authorities. From 1994 to 2003 an immersion pilot scheme has been in progress in the French speaking communities of Sierre/Siders, Sion/Sitten and Monthey, monitored and evaluated by a research team from IRDP (Institut de recherche et documentation pédagogique) in Neuenburg. From preschool until the end of primary school, half of the teaching time is in German and half in French. At present around 600 children are participating in the project. The research team is advised by the GREB research group (Groupe de recherche sur l'enseignement bilingue¹). The research design takes into account the development of language skills in German, language behaviour in the family and language attitudes. In Siders/Sierre two further models are being compared with each other: Early immersion from preschool and an intermediate immersion from the third primary school year (cf. Bregy *et al.* 1997-2000, Diehl 2001). The results are positive, but the pupil population of the

¹ www.irdp.ch/greb

bilingual classes is not representative of the Canton, i.e. the middle and upper classes are over-represented. For the most part teachers' professional bodies are opposed to the introduction of bilingual teaching, especially at preschool, primary and lower secondary levels.

At the tertiary level there is bilingual teaching at the technical colleges and the teacher training college.

3.6.5. Western Switzerland and Ticino

The topic of bilingual teaching was addressed earlier in French-speaking western Switzerland than in the German-speaking part of the country, with above all parents campaigning in its favour. However, there are still very few early-learning models, merely small pilot projects in the Canton of Neuenburg, with German as the target language (cf. Broi 2002) and another one with Italian, which has already been concluded (cf. Grueb *et al.* 1996-1999). Also in the Canton of Jura, the youngest of the Swiss cantons, where for twenty years there was considerable distrust of German-Swiss culture and language, there is now a bilingual model with German as the second language from preschool on (10 classes with 10% immersion), and there are also models at the lower and upper secondary levels. The Canton of Jura operates exchange activities with the Canton of Basle-Land (county). In all of the cantons of western Switzerland it is possible to receive a bilingual Matura.

Like the Italian and Romansh-speaking populations of the Canton of Grisons, as a language minority the citizens of Ticino usually have greater language knowledge than the German and French speakers. A few pilot classes have introduced bilingual teaching, although this is not the rule. The new language plan of the canton, "Insegnamento delle lingue" (teaching of languages), provides for four languages (Italian, French, German and English) during compulsory schooling. What is new is that French, which is still taught from the 3rd primary school year on, can be stopped after the 2nd year of secondary school (7th school year), when immersion and exchange activities are available instead. The "Università della Svizzera italiana" (USI) envisages that students, alongside Italian, must at least have a passive command of French, German and English.

3.6.6. German-speaking Switzerland

There are fewer bilingual models in German-speaking Switzerland than in western Switzerland. This stems from a variety of factors, e.g. there has been less learner frustration and hence less demand for alternatives to "traditional" foreign language teaching; greater use is made of private learning opportunities; French enjoys greater prestige; and the existence of Swiss diglossia.

In the Canton of Zurich English has been introduced in partial immersion in pilot classes of the 1st primary year in a project called "School Project 21".

Characteristics of School Project 21:

- Participation was determined via competition
- Began in autumn 1999
- 11 school districts
- 100 classes
- Method: *embedding* (sequences and modules in English)
- Other innovations: sponsoring, computer science, mixed-age classes
- Project over 3 years
- External evaluation
- In-service training of the teachers

(cf. www.schulprojekt21.ch).

The detailed reports refer to a certain strain on teachers, and the mixed-aged classes are strongly criticised. In contrast, acceptance of English is high among parents, teachers and pupils.

As part of a research project of the Swiss National Fund, bilingual learning at the lower secondary level was initiated in eastern Switzerland, and was monitored and academically investigated by a research team (Stern, 1994, Stern *et al.* 1995). This project shows how well-prepared lessons in the second language (above all in history classes) can be used to develop learning techniques and strategies that make learning in the second language not only efficient but also enjoyable.

At the "Liceo artistico", a Swiss-Italian academic secondary school in Zurich that is focused on the arts, some subjects are taught in Italian. The bilingual Matura provides access to the Swiss universities and the academies of art in Italy. Other academic secondary schools offer a Matura in German and English. In the cantons of St. Gallen, Schwyz, Zurich and Zug, bilingual teaching is also offered at the vocational school level. This project, referred to as "bi.li. – bilingual learning in vocational schools" – is accompanied by training modules for teachers.

4 Outlook

What are prospects for bilingual teaching in Switzerland? On the following points there are still a number of open questions or, in some cases, basic principles must first be established:

- general or at least broader acceptance;
- consensus on the sequence of languages;
- teacher training (seminars for teachers, teacher training colleges, universities);
- preparation of teaching and learning materials;
- appropriate evaluation and selection procedures;
- didactics (cf. the article by Christine Le Pape Racine in this volume);
- integrated language didactics;
- integration of subject didactics;
- networking of innovations;
- greater attention to migrant languages;
- networking of research institutions.

Bilingual teaching would be more strongly anchored within the Swiss education scene if more attention were paid to these areas.

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