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Teacher educator commitment to early Modern Foreign Language (MFL) teaching and learning in the education systems of England, France and Scotland

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It was the best of times, it was the worst of times,
it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness,
it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity,
it was the season of light, it was the season of darkness,
it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair,
we had everything before us, we had nothing before us,
we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way.

Charles Dickens: A Tale of Two Cities (1859)

Résumé

Engagement des formateurs pour l'enseignant-apprentissage précoce des langues vivantes dans les systèmes éducatifs anglais, français et écossais.

Cette thèse examine comment se manifeste l'engagement des formateurs d'enseignants en langues vivantes étrangères (LVE) qui interviennent dans la formation initiale des enseignants du primaire au regard des défis et des obstacles que ces derniers rencontrent. L'étude qualitative est située dans trois systèmes éducatifs différents de l'Union européenne : l'Angleterre, la France et l'Écosse. L'alignement idéologique des décideurs politiques européens avec l'agenda néolibéral remet explicitement en question l'engagement, les standards professionnels et les valeurs communes à la profession de formateurs d'enseignants. Cette orientation est préoccupante pour ces personnels qui ont un rôle crucial à jouer dans le système éducatif comme facilitateurs d'apprentissage des futurs enseignants du primaire et du secondaire. La focalisation se centre sur les formateurs d'enseignants en LVE, puisque les langues sont perçues comme ayant un rôle important à jouer dans un monde centré sur l'économie de marché. Les résultats des entretiens semi-structurés montrent que tous les participants manifestent un réel dévouement qui se décline en motivation, continuation et engagement. Cependant, les résultats montrent aussi que la mise en œuvre des politiques concernant l'enseignement des LVE ne prend pas toujours en compte les enseignements apportés par la recherche. Par conséquent, dans les systèmes éducatifs qui ne donnent pas à ces professionnels la possibilité de peser collectivement et d'avoir une influence sur les politiques nationales d'enseignement des langues, l'engagement dont ces professionnels font la démonstration n'a qu'un impact limité sur la qualité et sur l'offre de formation précoce en langue étrangère.

Mots clés : engagement - formateur d'enseignants du primaire en LVE – langues vivantes étrangères (LVE) – pédagogie – politiques des langues - néolibéralisme

Abstract

Teacher educator commitment to early Modern Foreign Language (MFL) teaching and learning in the education systems of England, France and Scotland

This thesis examines how Modern Foreign Language (MFL) teacher educators working in higher education (HE) demonstrate their commitment to primary foreign language learning and teaching in the education systems of England, France and Scotland. European Union (EU) policymakers influenced by the neoliberal agenda challenge the commitment, professional standards and values of the teacher educator profession in the EU. This represents a serious concern given the crucial role these professionals play in primary and secondary teacher education. This study focuses on primary MFL teacher educators because languages are perceived to play a key role in a market orientated economy. Qualitative data drawn from semi-structured interviews suggest that all the participants demonstrate strong commitment in terms of motivation, continuation and engagement towards early foreign language learning at primary school, despite the challenges and obstacles they face as a profession. However, findings also highlight that language policy implementation does not always take into account research in the domain. Consequently, in those education systems which do not provide collective empowerment to MFL teachers in terms of national language education policy influence, MFL teacher commitment does not have a significant impact on the provision of early foreign language teaching and learning.

Key words: commitment – primary MFL teacher educator – modern foreign languages (MFL) – pedagogy – language policy – neoliberalism

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Résumé substantiel en français

Cette thèse propose une investigation qualitative de l'engagement des formateurs d'enseignants en langues étrangères. Il s'agit d'examiner comment se manifeste l'engagement des formateurs d'enseignants en langues étrangères qui interviennent dans la formation initiale des enseignants du primaire, au regard des défis et des obstacles que ces derniers rencontrent. Cette recherche prend appui sur notre propre engagement à la fois personnel et professionnel dans la formation en langues des enseignants du primaire. Ainsi motivée, l'étude est située dans trois systèmes éducatifs différents de l'Union européenne, s'agissant de l'Angleterre, de la France et de l'Écosse.

La réflexion prend tout d'abord appui sur le constat, désormais établi, que l'apprentissage d'une autre langue à l'école primaire est bénéfique pour les jeunes enfants. Cet apprentissage a le « potentiel » de contribuer de manière significative et valable à l'éducation des enfants au sens large du terme, notamment pour ce qui relève de la conscientisation culturelle et interculturelle, de la conceptualisation linguistique et du développement langagier. D'autres avantages sont aussi mis en exergue, tels que le développement d'attitudes sociales positives et/ou d'une appétence pour l'apprentissage des langues, dès lors fondée sur un socle de compétences linguistiques transversales. Il convient toutefois de souligner que ce « potentiel » dépend étroitement des compétences et des connaissances acquises en langues étrangères par l'enseignant lui-même, ainsi que de la qualité d'une pédagogie bien adaptée à cette tranche d'âge, sans oublier de mentionner l'effet bénéfique d'une attitude positive envers la langue elle-même dans le contexte de la classe. On observe cependant que malgré l'engagement des formateurs impliqués dans cette formation, il leur est de plus en plus difficile de travailler dans des conditions propices pour parvenir à de tels objectifs. L'une des raisons qui guide, malgré tout, l'investissement de ces formateurs réside dans le fait qu'ils souhaitent résoudre un problème fréquemment soulevé par le constat que les élèves entrant dans le secondaire ont trop souvent une expérience négative de l'apprentissage de l'anglais, qui fait suite à leur vécu dans le primaire.

Or, certains de ces enfants ont eu d'excellents professeurs de langue, et, pour ces enfants-là, ce fut le chemin de la réussite dans l'apprentissage de la langue étrangère. À l'inverse, à l'issue de l'école primaire d'autres enfants ont abordé les langues à la rentrée scolaire avec anxiété, voire avec hostilité. Ils ont aussi bien souvent appris des bases erronées de

prononciation, de structures grammaticales et de vocabulaire. On peut également déplorer de nombreux cas de perte de motivation qui perdurent au fil de la scolarité et au-delà. Signalons par ailleurs que les résultats de l'enquête européenne sur les compétences langagières publiée en 2012 donnent un certain nombre d'indications préoccupantes sur la politique mise en œuvre pour l'apprentissage des langues à l'école primaire. Ce constat intervient alors que l'apprentissage précoce des langues étrangères est devenu une priorité de l'Union européenne (Kelly, 2010 ; Grin, 2005) et ce, depuis 1997, date de la parution de la résolution du Conseil sur l'apprentissage précoce dans l'Union européenne. Même si cette situation semble évoluer, en particulier grâce à l'investissement des formateurs d'enseignants de langues pour l'école primaire, on a pu constater que ces formateurs sont parfaitement conscients des difficultés qu'il reste à résoudre dans le cadre de la formation initiale et continue, assurée à présent dans les écoles supérieures du professorat et de l'éducation (ESPE) autrefois appelées IUFM[1]. Des efforts réels sont prodigués par ces formateurs, tant au niveau local que national (dans des conférences et dans des associations comme par exemple l'APLV). Cependant, ces efforts sont loin d'offrir à ce jour des solutions susceptibles de parvenir à convaincre les politiciens et les administrateurs locaux.

Dans ce travail de recherche, il est dès lors devenu nécessaire de tenter de comprendre pourquoi le système pose de sérieux problèmes dans l'enseignement des langues à l'école primaire, et pour quelles raisons ces enfants ne bénéficient toujours pas à ce jour d'un enseignement correct des langues. Au fil de l'examen des causes éventuelles, il apparaissait, en première approche, que les politiques n'avaient peut-être tout simplement pas pris en compte toute la portée des résultats des recherches sur le sujet. C'était compréhensible, puisque l'apprentissage des langues par les jeunes apprenants demeure un sujet complexe, comme l'indique la recherche sur le domaine. On a cependant pu constater que les défis rencontrés par les formateurs en langues étrangères vont bien au-delà des questions de recherche généralement explorées, telles que celles traitant de la cognition dans l'apprentissage des langues secondes, de la sociolinguistique ou des aspects socioculturels, tels que l'influence des langues parlées à la maison sur les apprentissages langagiers en classe, par exemple.

[1] Instituts universitaires de formation des maîtres : university institutes for teacher training

Pour étayer et approfondir cette recherche, il fallait donc élargir le point de vue et envisager aussi comment les aspects politiques et économiques, guidés en particulier par l'idéologie néolibérale, interviennent et façonnent ce contexte bien particulier. Une mise en relation de ces problématiques avec la rhétorique des années Thatcher (telle qu'elle accompagnait à cette époque les décisions politiques du contexte britannique dans lequel nous évoluions) nous montre que la mise en œuvre des décisions relève avant toute chose de préoccupations économiques plutôt que de préoccupations éducatives.

La mise en perspective de notre expérience de formatrice avec la littérature scientifique sur le sujet, rend manifeste que les formateurs français en langues étrangères étaient, et sont encore, bien plus affectés par l'agenda néolibéral qu'on aurait pu l'imaginer.

L'idéologie néolibérale : hier et aujourd'hui

Nous commençons par un aperçu des origines de l'idéologie néolibérale et de la manière dont cette idéologie est parvenue à devenir la doctrine économique dominante du XXIe siècle. Le néolibéralisme est un terme qui remonte aux années 1930 lorsque Friedrich Hayek (1936) a eu pour la première fois l'idée que toute réalité pouvait être structurée sur le modèle de la concurrence économique. Son hypothèse est que pratiquement toute activité humaine peut être réduite à une forme de calcul économique en termes de richesse, de valeur, d'échange, de coût et de prix. Ainsi, les ressources rares sont allouées efficacement grâce à leur prix qui est fonction des besoins et de l'utilité et elles sont donc régies par l'offre et la demande. Hayek estime que les marchés doivent être libres et concurrentiels pour que le système de prix fonctionne efficacement. À cet égard, le marché ne constitue pas un élément de la société, mais bien la société dans son ensemble.

Il s'agit là d'un changement par rapport à la vision de l'économie qu'avait Adam Smith, avec sa théorie de la « main invisible » (Smith, 1776). Selon lui, bien que le marché soit une « sphère autonome de l'activité humaine », une société régie par « le marché n'est pas une société du tout »[1] (Metcalf, 2017, p.2-3). À l'inverse, le livre largement diffusé de Hayek, *The Road to Serfdom*, publié en 1944, offrait aux très riches une idéologie dépourvue de tout complexe, qui les libérerait de la réglementation et de la fiscalité.

Hayek a ensuite fondé la Société du Mont Pelerin en 1947, qui a diffusé cette doctrine. La popularité du néolibéralisme était telle « qu'il était soutenu financièrement par les

[1] https://www.theguardian.com/news/2017/aug/18/neoliberalism-the-idea-that-changed-the-world

millionnaires et par leurs fondations » (Monbiot, 2016)[1]. La transformation vers le modèle économique néolibéral actuel a été précipitée par l'effondrement des politiques keynésiennes à la suite de « diverses pressions économiques internationales, notamment l'effondrement du système de Bretton Woods de 1971, la crise pétrolière de 1973 et l'effondrement qui en a résulté du consensus d'après-guerre » (Crines, 2014, p.117).

Des éléments du néolibéralisme, telles que les prescriptions en matière de politique monétaire, ont donc été adoptés par l'administration de Jimmy Carter aux États-Unis et par le gouvernement de Jim Callaghan au Royaume-Uni; cependant, c'est sous Margaret Thatcher et Ronald Reagan que le néolibéralisme s'est imposé, non sans difficulté d'ailleurs pour Thatcher car sa version du néolibéralisme étant « loin d'être universellement populaire auprès de son propre parti ou de son électorat, elle avait déjà été considérée comme une idée extrême ou atavistique en marge du Parti et promulguée par des groupes de réflexion 'New Right' quichotiques » (Crines, 2014, 120). Cependant, elle a tout mis en œuvre pour que le néolibéralisme parvienne à entrer dans la politique traditionnelle, en affirmant que, du fait que l'opposition avait une idéologie que ses membres pouvaient mettre à l'épreuve de leur politique, le Parti conservateur devait lui aussi adopter une idéologie (Wheatcroft, 2005, p.147). Tout comme Reagan, elle avait réussi à imposer sa volonté et par conséquent, « la société britannique est aujourd'hui très marquée par les décisions néolibérales des gouvernements des dernières décennies » (Leydier et Mullen, 2017, p.1). George Monbiot (2016) décrit les résultats qui ont suivi : « réductions massives d'impôts pour les riches, écrasement des syndicats, déréglementation, privatisation, sous-traitance et concurrence dans les services publics » (p.3). Ces effets ont concerné le pays mais ils ont aussi été ressentis à l'échelle mondiale « par le biais du FMI, du Monde Bank, le traité de Maastricht et l'Organisation mondiale du commerce, des politiques néolibérales ont été imposées – souvent sans consentement démocratique – à une grande partie du monde » (idem). Le plus remarquable de tout, pour Monbiot, fut l'adoption de cette idéologie par des partis ayant appartenu à la gauche, tels que les travaillistes et les démocrates. Nous revenons ci-après sur les principales mesures de politique économique du néolibéralisme. On peut notamment relever les faits suivants : une privatisation à grande échelle d'industries anciennement nationalisées; des réductions importantes dans la fiscalité directe (notamment l'impôt sur le revenu), en particulier pour les hauts revenus; l'introduction de principes et de pratiques de marché

[1] https://www.theguardian.com/books/2016/apr/15/neoliberalism-ideology-problem-george-monbiot

dans l'éducation et le NHS [National Health Service] ; une déréglementation de la banque, des services financiers et de « la ville » ; une émasculation des syndicats par une combinaison de législation normative, de chômage, de désindustrialisation et de restauration du « droit de la direction à gérer » sur le lieu de travail ; la permission accordée au « marché » de déterminer les salaires, ce qui a entraîné des augmentations massives pour les plus haut placés ; une augmentation constante et conséquente des inégalités, avec un fossé toujours plus grand entre les riches et les pauvres ; un État-providence plus maigre et plus mince, avec des restrictions plus strictes concernant le droit aux prestations de sécurité sociale et leur taux; la vente de maison de HLMs (extension de l'accession à la propriété et de la propriété privée) (Dorey, 2014, p. 34 cité dans Crines, 2014, p. 120). La déclaration faite par le Fonds monétaire international (FMI) en 2016 souligne le fait que le néolibéralisme est bien l'idéologie économique dominante mondiale :

> La tendance mondiale au néolibéralisme est forte et généralisée depuis les années 1980, selon un indice composite qui mesure dans quelle mesure les pays ont introduit une concurrence dans diverses sphères de l'activité économique pour favoriser la croissance économique.

Ceux qui adhèrent aux principes du néolibéralisme ont clairement réussi à promouvoir cette idéologie avec un grand succès. Comment ont-ils réalisé cela ? D'une part, Crines (2014, p.118-9) explique que les principaux acteurs politiques utilisent des moyens rhétoriques pour promouvoir des politiques néolibérales et convaincre l'électorat que de telles politiques sont le seul moyen d'avancer. Parmi les divers dispositifs rhétoriques utilisés par les locuteurs ou les écrivains néolibéraux, il y a ceux qui se fondent sur des principes aristotéliciens. Ils sont l'ethos (crédibilité / caractère), le pathos (émotions) et les logos (logique). Crines explique que les orateurs qui déploient ces dispositifs « réussissent mieux à rallier leur public à leurs à arguments et peuvent même générer des réponses particulières à des arguments spécifiques » (*idem.*). Ces dispositifs rhétoriques seront présentés plus en détail dans le cadre de l'analyse du discours concernant les documents de politique du chapitre quatre. Ils illustrent la manière dont les néolibéraux transmettent leurs idées et parviennent à manipuler les populations en leur faveur. D'autre part, le néolibéralisme a très bien réussi à s'infiltrer dans tous les aspects de nos vies grâce à « un réseau vivant de groupes de réflexion, de lobbyistes et d'universitaires promouvant les doctrines de Hayek » (Monbiot, 2016). Les personnes et les entreprises les plus riches

du monde financent ces partisans du néolibéralisme mais sont dans une large mesure des « bailleurs de fonds invisibles » :

> Lentement, très lentement, nous avons commencé à découvrir les noms de quelques-uns d'entre eux. Nous constatons que l'Institut des affaires économiques, qui s’est vigoureusement opposé à la réglementation de l’industrie du tabac dans les médias, est financé secrètement par British American Tobacco depuis 1963. Nous découvrons que Charles et David Koch, deux des hommes les plus riches du monde, ont fondé l’institut qui a mis en place le mouvement Tea Party. Nous constatons que Charles Koch, en établissant l’un de ses groupes de réflexion, a souligné : « qu’afin d’éviter toute critique indésirable, la manière dont l'organisation est contrôlée et dirigée ne devrait pas être largement annoncée. (Monbiot, 2016, p. 6)

Les « groupes de réflexion, lobbyistes et universitaires » néolibéraux mentionnés par Monbiot[1] se multiplient. Karen Fischer écrit pour le magazine en ligne de l’Association internationale de sociologie, Global Dialogue :

> La montée des groupes de refléxion néolibéraux a contraint les intellectuels à se tenir en marge des débats politiques publics. Le professionnel des think tanks a ainsi remplacé le professeur d’université en tant qu’« expert» dans les médias. Les professionnels des think tanks cherchent à s’y présenter comme des opérateurs technocratiques voués au savoir neutre et aux approches factuelles. En outre, la conception américaine traditionnelle d'un groupe de réflexion met insidieusement l'accent sur l'expertise indépendante et l’intérêt public. En effet, contrairement aux images promotionnelles, la plupart des groupes de réflexion sont axés sur les politiques (…) Connectés et coordonnés au-delà des frontières et ayant pour la plupart un caractère élitiste, ils tentent de conquérir un public plus large et d’influencer les questions de gouvernance à l’échelle nationale et internationale. Ils consacrent beaucoup de créativité et d’argent provenant des entreprises pour développer des scénarios et pour diriger la politique dans la direction qui leur est favorable. Dès lors, l'architecture néolibérale transnationale domine à présent, en l’absence de forces concurrentes, avec le soutien des grandes entreprises et des milliardaires qui s'appuient largement sur la droite politique[2].

Dans ce contexte, il est donc très difficile d'identifier qui sont les principaux acteurs du groupe de réflexion néolibéral et leur influence sur les mesures politiques adoptées par l’Union européenne et ses institutions. Cependant, il est clair que « depuis 2005, un ensemble de politiques et de programmes d’éducation orientés vers le monde, modelés par un nouvel ensemble d’idées sur la production d’une économie européenne de la connaissance » (Robertson, 2008, p. 3) a émergé, ce qui marque « un passage significatif d'un éloignement du modèle du marché social /‘Europe forteresse’ comme moyen de

[1] https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/nov/14/neoliberalsim-donald-trump-george-monbiot
[2] http://globaldialogue.isa-sociology.org/neoliberal-think-tank-networks/

créer une économie fondée sur la connaissance vers une nouvelle vision: une Europe plus ouverte économiquement orientée vers le monde et plus libre » (*idem)*. Ce changement est une conséquence de la perception de la stratégie de Lisbonne de 2000 en crise. Robertson poursuit en expliquant que « la révision à mi-parcours (Commission européenne, 2005b), informée par les travaux du groupe de haut niveau présidé par Wim Kok (2004), a conclu que la stratégie de Lisbonne n'avait pas abouti à un résultat positif ni une croissance économique satisfaisante et que l'Europe se situait loin derrière à la fois aux États-Unis et en Asie » (Robertson, 2008, p.6).

Cela a abouti à la « nouvelle stratégie de Lisbonne » dans laquelle l'innovation s'appuie sur les théories du capital humain et la « connaissance » est réduite à la recherche et au développement afin de produire de la valeur sur le marché (*idem*, p. 7). Se référant à la communication de la Commission européenne intitulée « Mobiliser les cerveaux européens»: permettre aux universités de contribuer pleinement à la stratégie de Lisbonne (CE, 2005b), Robertson (idem, p. 9) souligne que « l'éducation, la recherche et l'innovation sont toujours présentes comme des idées clés, mais étayées par un cocktail de théories néolibérales ; capital humain, marché libre et économie schumpétérienne » (idem); il ajoute que « l'élite intellectuelle serait ancrée dans des disciplines telles que la science et la technologie plutôt que dans les arts et les sciences humaines » (*idem*, p. 10) et que la Commission européenne indique que « les établissements d'enseignement supérieur doivent s'ouvrir aux financements privés s'ils veulent «activer la connaissance » (*idem*). Ce passage au modèle néolibéral a pour résultat que l'UE « soude actuellement de nombreux États-nations différents en une force plus ou moins unique en matière d'éducation » (Vinther et Slethaug, 2013, p. 799).

L'échec de la stratégie de Lisbonne de 2000 n'a pas été considéré comme lié au climat économique difficile qui a suivi l'effondrement de dot.com, mais plutôt à « un agenda politique surchargé de coordinations défaillantes et de priorités parfois contradictoires » dans les États membres et dans la région (Commission européenne, 2005, p.4). Robertson souligne ensuite le fait que malgré le discours de crise en 2005 mobilisé « de manière stratégique par des forces sociales au sein de l'UE engagées dans un programme néolibéral pour la réforme des universités » (*Idem*) afin de s'attaquer aux raisons pour lesquelles la stratégie de Lisbonne de 2000 n'avait pas réussi à obtenir une croissance

économique satisfaisante, la Commission Européenne n'était pas en mesure de surmonter ce problème à cause de son statut.

La proposition de Kok (2004) de « 'name and shame' les États récalcitrants afin d'assurer une plus grande conformité » n'a donc pas été retenue par la Commission européenne « essentiellement à des fins tactiques et de légitimité » (Robertson, 2008, p.16).

Étant donné que la Commission est composée d'un seul Commissaire nommé par le gouvernement de chaque pays, cela signifie qu'il existe un lien direct entre la Commission Européenne et les gouvernements nationaux de chaque État membre, car il est hautement improbable qu'un Commissaire ne puisse recevoir ni instruction ni conseil de ce gouvernement national. Toutefois, cela signifie également que les recommandations de la Commission européenne ne concordent pas nécessairement avec la position de chaque gouvernement national de l'UE.

Dans cette optique, lorsqu'il est fait référence aux décideurs politiques de l'UE, il s'agit pour notre propos de la Commission Européenne elle-même et de ses consultants, sachant que ses rapports, communications et recommandations législatives ne reflètent pas nécessairement la position du gouvernement national de chaque État membre de l'UE. En effet, les États membres de l'UE sont libres d'adopter la législation proposée par la Commission européenne surtout en ce qui concerne l'éducation. La focalisation intervient ici uniquement sur les décisions de politique linguistique éducative adoptées par les systèmes éducatifs dans cette étude et qui découlent de la législation de l'UE. Par conséquent, nous n'analysons pas le rôle ou la fonction des décideurs nationaux dans cette thèse, car cela dépasse les paramètres de cette étude.

À cet égard, l'apprentissage précoce des langues étrangères est l'une des priorités de l'agenda néolibéral. C'est le chapitre 3, qui traite plus en détail de ce sujet où nous présentons les raisons de cet accent mis sur l'apprentissage précoce des langues étrangères ainsi que ses conséquences et implications pour l'apprentissage des langues, pour les enseignants de LVE en général et pour les formateurs en LVE des enseignants du primaire.

On note dans leurs propos qu'ils sont contraints d'assumer des décisions de politique linguistique, considérées pour la plupart comme incohérentes et ne tenant pas compte des besoins et valeurs professionnelles de la profession. Devoir prendre en charge ces décisions, dictées à l'échelle nationale et européenne dans une perspective néolibérale, s'avère difficile pour les formateurs. Bien qu'elles aillent à l'encontre de leur conception du métier, ils doivent s'y conformer, et cela les amène parfois à mettre en doute l'apport de l'Europe dans le domaine de l'éducation. Au fil de cette recherche, le constat de l'influence des préceptes néolibéraux sur les politiques européennes s'est avéré déterminant. L'impact du néolibéralisme sur les systèmes éducatifs concerne le monde entier (Connell, 2013) et n'a pas épargné la France. Ce constat peut paraitre paradoxal au regard du rôle pivot que jouent la fonction publique et les institutions françaises, censées garantir une protection contre les dérives dans le système éducatif.

La culture de l'audit semble désormais établie au niveau européen, et les formateurs d'enseignants sont depuis peu l'objet de ces enquêtes. Cela pourrait indiquer que ce qu'on a pu considérer comme une profession cachée (Snoek et al, 2011 ; Murray and Male, 2005) semble devenir « finalement plus visible » (European Commission, 2013, p.6). L'examen de cette évolution et des documents afférents montre que les décideurs politiques remettent explicitement en question l'engagement, les standards professionnels et les valeurs communes à cette profession. Cette orientation est préoccupante pour ces personnels qui ont un rôle crucial à jouer dans le système éducatif comme facilitateurs d'apprentissage des futurs enseignants du primaire et du secondaire. La formation devrait leur permettre d'intégrer la profession avec succès, en élargissant le socle de leurs connaissances et compétences pour une bonne adaptation au terrain (Murray and Male, 2005, p.2) et, dès lors, il incombe à ces formateurs de les amener à un très haut niveau professionnel (Lunenberg et al., 2014, p.1). Tout en partageant ce point de vue, nous estimons que cet objectif semble de plus en plus illusoire dans le climat néolibéral actuel, étant donné que les documents d'orientation de l'UE mettent clairement en cause l'autonomie et la crédibilité des formateurs d'enseignants, en tant que professionnels. Une partie de cette recherche est donc consacrée à une étude détaillée des textes de l'UE sur lesquels se fondent les orientations politiques concernant, d'une part l'enseignement-apprentissage des langues, et d'autre part la profession de formateur d'enseignant, pour pouvoir distinguer le lien qui pouvait être établi entre la position adoptée par les décideurs

politiques européens envers la profession et les difficultés que rencontrent dans leur vie de tous les jours les formateurs d'enseignants en langues du primaire.

Pour apporter des éléments de réponse, l'examen s'est focalisé sur les documents suivants : le rapport de la Commission Européenne qui porte spécifiquement sur les formateurs d'enseignants *Supporting Teacher Educators for better learning outcomes*, publié en 2013 ; la législation basée sur le contenu de ce rapport qui est publiée dans les conclusions de 2014 sur l'efficacité de la formation des enseignants ; ainsi que le livre publié par l'organisation de coopération et de développement européenne (OCDE) qui s'intitule *Pedagogical Knowledge and the Changing Nature of the Teaching Profession*. On note que non seulement le livre de l'OCDE reprend les points soulevés en 2013 dans le rapport de la Commission européenne mais aussi qu'il prend appui sur ces points pour discréditer de manière encore plus explicite les formateurs d'enseignants et leur professionnalisme.

Dans ce contexte, cette thèse vise à jeter un regard critique sur le traitement par les décideurs politiques européens de l'engagement des formateurs d'enseignants, en concentrant le propos sur les formateurs des enseignants de l'école primaire. L'accent est mis sur la recherche de l'impact de l'idéologie néolibérale sur ce groupe de professionnels de l'enseignement.

Une approche comparative

La recherche se focalise sur l'état de la formation des enseignants pour l'apprentissage précoce des langues dans trois systèmes éducatifs : français, anglais et écossais. La mise en perspective vise à examiner dans quelle mesure les formateurs de ces trois contextes rencontrent les mêmes problèmes, ainsi qu'à comprendre comment ils y font face. L'approche comparative adoptée est informée par notre statut personnel et professionnel, enrichi dans deux systèmes éducatifs en Angleterre et en France, autrement dit dans deux systèmes éducatifs européens. Formée en tant que professeur de géographie en Angleterre pour un enseignement dans le secondaire de ce pays, j'ai ensuite été recrutée en France pour y enseigner l'anglais, puis pour former en langue étrangère les enseignants du primaire. L'ajout de l'Écosse comme terrain d'investigation s'explique par le fait que le système éducatif est différent de celui de l'Angleterre, bien que l'Écosse fasse encore partie du Royaume-Uni et que le parlement de Westminster y demeure souverain. Sous le

système de la dévolution depuis 1998, l'éducation est supervisée en Écosse par le gouvernement écossais et l'acte écossais de 1998 donne au parlement écossais le contrôle législatif sur toutes les questions d'éducation, qui sont en outre définies et cadrées par un acte légal écossais datant de 1980. De plus, l'Écosse a son propre cadre national de certification, différent de celui qui a été établi pour l'Angleterre, le pays de Galles et l'Irlande du Nord. Ainsi, en Angleterre, l'enseignement doit se conformer au programme national (*National Curriculum*), alors qu'en Écosse, il s'agit du programme dit d'excellence (*Curriculum for Excellence*) qui s'adresse à tous les enfants scolarisés, depuis la maternelle jusqu'au secondaire.

Pour aborder une étude comparative de systèmes d'enseignement, il est important de pouvoir comparer des pays qui partagent suffisamment de caractéristiques similaires pour être comparables, mais qui présentent aussi des spécificités qui leur sont propres, de telle sorte qu'il soit possible d'établir des points de convergence et de divergence. Le choix de la France, de l'Angleterre et de l'Écosse respecte ces critères, puisque les trois pays ont en commun des caractéristiques démographiques et socio-économiques ainsi qu'un héritage sociolinguistique et socioculturel. La langue française et la langue anglaise partagent le statut de *lingua franca* : l'anglais prédomine dans les langues étrangères étudiées en France, alors que le français est la langue étrangère la plus enseignée en Angleterre et en Écosse. Pour cette raison, en Angleterre et en Écosse, la focalisation se centre sur les formateurs d'enseignants en langues étrangères qui interviennent dans l'enseignement du français langue étrangère, et, pour la France, sur les formateurs qui interviennent auprès des enseignants en anglais. Dans chacun des cas, il s'agit de formateurs d'enseignants qui enseignent la langue en tant que L2, ce qui exclut les formateurs qui enseignent la langue en tant que L1, c'est-à-dire les locuteurs natifs de la langue-cible du système dans lequel ils travaillent.

Les questions de recherche

Les questions de recherches qui guident cette étude sont les suivantes :

Comment les formateurs d'enseignants en langues étrangères manifestent-ils leur engagement envers la formation des enseignants en langues étrangères du primaire en Angleterre, en France et en Écosse dans un contexte de plus en plus contraignant, et

malgré les défis à surmonter dans leur travail auprès des apprentis professeurs en langues du primaire ?

Les sous-questions qui découlent pour proposer une réponse à cette question de recherche centrale sont les suivantes :

Quelle contribution personnelle pensent-ils apporter à la formation en langues des enseignants du primaire, en termes de standards professionnels et d'expertise ?

Quels obstacles rencontrent-ils et quelles ressources mobilisent-ils dans le cours de leur vie professionnelle pour parvenir à ces objectifs ?

Quels efforts font-ils pour parvenir à leurs objectifs et dans quelle mesure pensent-ils y parvenir effectivement, que ce soit au niveau individuel ou collectif ?

Cadre théorique

Les questions posées ci-dessus font l'objet d'une investigation à la lumière d'un cadre théorique qui positionne la notion d'engagement comme un construit unidimensionnel. L'engagement est défini dans ce modèle comme un lien psychologique volitif qui témoigne du dévouement et de la responsabilité en relation avec un objectif particulier (Klein et al., 2012, p.137). Dans cet ancrage théorique, on considère que les individus s'engagent à partir d'une évaluation cognitive et affective de l'objectif representé d'une part par un sentiment de l'efficacité personnelle et de l'efficacité collective (Bandura, 1993) par rapport à cet objet, et d'autre part, par un attachement positif à cet object ; une évaluation qui est déterminante car elle leur donne la confiance, la force et la volonté d'accepter d'être lié à la mise en œuvre de cet engagement. L'identification de ces paramètres étant fondamentale pour appréhender l'engagement de notre public cible, cette étude s'est attachée à identifier dans quelle mesure les formateurs d'enseignants en langues se sentent concernés par les questions relatives à l'enseignement des langues à l'école primaire et comment ils assument les prises de responsabilités. Pour ce faire, le recours aux manifestations de l'engagement définies dans le modèle a permis d'établir leur expression selon trois axes comme preuves de l'engagement des formateurs : la continuation, la motivation et le devoir. L'expertise de ces formateurs d'enseignants a été explorée comme une autre manifestation caractéristique de l'engagement s'agissant de l'action.

Revue de la littérature

La littérature recensée offre un aperçu de ce que représente la fonction de formateurs d'enseignants en termes de pédagogie adaptée à une tranche d'âge spécifique, d'acquisition des langues étrangères, d'apport des langues pour la conscientisation culturelle et interculturelle, ainsi que pour la contribution au développement d'attitudes sociales positives et de motivation pour l'apprentissage des langues. L'exploration de la littérature concerne aussi l'idéologie du néolibéralisme pour une identification de la nature des obstacles rencontrés par les formateurs d'enseignants en langues, afin de mieux comprendre pourquoi ces professionnels envisagent ces orientations comme une atteinte à leurs standards professionnels et aux valeurs qu'ils défendent dans leur profession.

Méthodologie de recherche

Dans cette étude, une méthodologie de recherche qualitative a été adoptée pour une triangulation des données, afin de mieux cerner la réalité complexe de la formation des enseignants en langues et les défis auxquels les formateurs d'enseignants sont confrontés. Un premier ensemble de données a été généré par une analyse du discours de deux documents : le premier étant un document de politique publié par la Commission européenne et le second, un document publié par des formateurs d'enseignants écossais. Il s'agissait d'identifier des traces de l'idéologie dans les discours de l'Europe et des manifestations de l'engagement dans le discours du document produit par les formateurs écossais. Un second ensemble de données provient d'entretiens semi-structurés menés auprès de neuf formateurs d'enseignants : trois pour l'Angleterre, trois pour la France et trois pour l'Écosse. Le positionnement dans cette recherche est celui du chercheur impliqué, car étant membre de la communauté des formateurs d'enseignants en langues. Les entretiens comportent deux parties. La première consiste en une exploration des histoires de vie des participants, sur le style narratif, pour mettre en lumière les expériences professionnelles, les sentiments et les croyances propres à leur contexte de travail. La seconde partie se focalise sur le visionnement et l'analyse de trois clips vidéo d'un étudiant professeur qui enseigne l'anglais à l'école primaire. L'objectif de la démarche est de collecter des données relatives à la perception et aux conceptions des participants à propos de la prestation de cet étudiant professeur, ainsi que d'identifier les manifestations des connaissances pédagogiques pour ces formateurs.

L'analyse du discours apporte des preuves concernant l'alignement idéologique des décideurs politiques européens avec l'agenda néolibéral, alors, que, au contraire, le document écossais d'orientation pour les langues (*National Framework for Languages*), fondé sur le plurilinguisme la diversité, la politique ouverte et les pratiques transformatives, témoigne de l'engagement en faveur de la formation des enseignants du primaire en langues.

Les données issues des entretiens montrent que, en dépit des obstacles, tous les participants manifestent un réel dévouement qui se décline en motivation, continuation et engagement. Il convient toutefois de signaler que les degrés de motivation varient en fonction des systèmes éducatifs dans lesquels les participants évoluent. Les participants anglais rencontrent des obstacles plus importants que ceux des deux autres systèmes, notamment en raison du risque que la formation en langues étrangères des enseignants du primaire, qui est assurée par des institutions d'enseignement supérieur, en vienne à disparaître petit à petit car elle n'attire que très peu d'étudiants professeurs recrutés au niveau des formations pour l'enseignement à l'école primaire.

L'impact à long terme des politiques néolibérales mises en place dans le système d'éducation britannique se traduit non seulement par une baisse significative du nombre d'étudiants inscrits en spécialité langues dans le primaire, mais aussi par une réduction drastique de l'offre des cours proposés par les institutions d'enseignement supérieur. En France, les formateurs d'enseignants en langues semblent à ce jour être encore à l'abri des problèmes rencontrés par leurs homologues anglais, car les langues vivantes font parti du cursus du Master MEEF[1] 1er et 2nde degré toutes disciplines confondues. Cependant, le grand nombre d'étudiants-professeurs qui ne parviennent pas à atteindre le niveau B2 du cadre européen représente une source d'inquiétude. Il est d'ailleurs probable que cet état de fait risque d'avoir un impact négatif à terme sur l'enseignement-apprentissage des langues à l'école primaire en France, s'il n'y a pas d'évolution de la politique qui y est menée. On observe que les formateurs français en langues ne manifestent que des niveaux faibles d'efficacité collective, parce qu'ils n'ont pas le sentiment que la situation pourrait évoluer. À l'inverse, pour les formateurs en langues du primaire en Écosse qui sont confrontés à des difficultés similaires à celles des français, en particulier pour ce qui est

[1] Master MEEF (Métiers de l'enseignement, de l'éducation et de la formation)

des compétences de leurs étudiants professeurs, on constate qu'ils vivent la situation de manière plus positive, d'une part parce que le gouvernement écossais a maintenu une politique d'élaborer une approche systématique et cohérente de l'apprentissage professionnel de longue durée axé sur la recherche[1], et d'autre part, en raison de leur prise en charge collective et de leur appui sur des politiques nationales d'éducation en langues qui sont soutenues par le groupe des formateurs en langues écossais (*Scottish Council of Deans of Education Languages Group*)[2] qui a joué un rôle clé dans l'élaboration d'un cadre de référence pour les langues qui promeut le plurilinguisme, la diversité et les pratiques innovantes.

Les systèmes éducatifs tels que ceux de la France et l'Angleterre feraient bien de suivre l'exemple de l'Écosse, car même le Fonds monétaire international reconnaît que « certains aspects de l'agenda néolibéral n'ont pas donné les résultats escomptés » (Ostry et *al.*, 2016, p.1). En effet, le FMI s'inquiète des coûts élevés en raison de l'inégalité croissante associée aux politiques néolibérales, mais aussi parce que l'inégalité accrue « nuit au niveau et à la durabilité de la croissance » (*Ibid.*, p.2).

Cette thèse a démontré que c'est grâce à la recherche et à leur engagement dans la formation des enseignants du primaire en LVE que les formateurs d'enseignants de cette étude ont acquis une expertise. Le système éducatif écossais est un exemple de ce qui peut être réalisé dans la formation des enseignants lorsqu'il existe une volonté politique d'autonomisation des formateurs d'enseignants et d'intégration des résultats de la recherche dans les décisions politiques. Cependant, la situation est actuellement beaucoup plus sombre pour les formateurs d'enseignants dans le système éducatif anglais. Les possibilités de recherche pour les enseignants en Angleterre semblent être de plus en plus limitées en raison du manque d'investissement financier dans la formation des enseignants. En outre, le savoir-faire en matière de la LVE est en train de devenir très rare, ce qui est un sujet de préoccupation pour la formation initiale des enseignants en LVE. Là encore, les politiques néolibérales ont un impact négatif sur la compétence de la LVE. L'enquête auprès des entreprises menée par Pearson CBI en 2016 « a révélé que 54% des employeurs n'étaient pas satisfaits des compétences en langues étrangères des employés (…) et il a été estimé que ce manque de maîtrise de la langue faisait perdre au

[1] https://www.bera.ac.uk/project/research-and-teacher-education

[2] https://www.scde.ac.uk/networks/

Royaume-Uni environ 3,5% de la performance économique ». Le système éducatif français est sur le point de s'orienter vers le modèle anglais. Cette thèse offre des indices qui suggèrent que l'Angleterre et la France (même si les deux pays se trouvent à des stades différents) sont sur la voie vers une société néolibérale aux enseignants privés de pouvoir et aux enfants privés d'une éducation qui leur permettrait d'être des penseurs critiques et de réaliser leur plein potentiel. La deuxième voie déjà empruntée par l'Écosse conduirait les anglais et les français vers un système éducatif faisant confiance à ses enseignants et à ses formateurs afin que tous les enfants bénéficient de la meilleure éducation possible. Dans un tel système, l'apprentissage des langues étrangères est valorisé non seulement pour faire du commerce mais aussi parce que la capacité d'utiliser les langues pour la communication procure du plaisir ainsi qu'une précieuse stimulation intellectuelle, contribue à la prise de conscience de la nature du langage et de l'apprentissage des langues, offre un éclairage sur les autres cultures et développe chez les jeunes des attitudes positives envers la diversité humaine et la conscience interculturelle.

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CHAPTER ONE: Introduction

General introduction to chapter

This thesis is a qualitative inquiry into the commitment of Modern Foreign Language teacher educators. It sets out to examine how Modern Foreign Language (MFL) teacher educators working in primary initial teacher education (ITE) at a higher education institution (HEI) in the three European Union (EU) education systems of England, France and Scotland demonstrate their commitment towards early foreign language learning and teaching and explores the challenges and obstacles they face. This thesis does not aim to draw conclusions about the teacher educator profession as a whole as it uses a qualitative-based case study approach which focuses on one category of teacher educator: the primary MFL teacher educator. Nevertheless, it is hoped that it will provide in-depth insights into the challenges facing teacher educators generally on a macro scale as a profession, and on a micro scale as professionals in their local contexts at work.

This chapter opens with a presentation of the general context of primary MFL teacher education in order to gain deeper insight into the relationship between neoliberal EU policy and the challenges experienced by primary MFL teacher educators in their everyday working lives. It opens with a presentation of the general context and my motivations for the research. In this section, I first explore the challenges facing primary MFL teacher educators that stem from the dynamics of neoliberal global aspirations within the national (England, France and Scotland) and supranational (EU) context and then I present the specific issues I faced as a secondary MFL teacher and later as a primary MFL teacher educator as a consequence of language policy measures which have an impact on classrooms from primary right up to university level. Having explained my reasons for undertaking this research, I then go on to compare the education systems of England, France and Scotland before moving on to a brief outline of the theoretical framework which I draw upon in this study, which builds upon the work of Klein et al., (2012) and Bandura (1993). This is followed by my research questions and then by an outline of the relevant literature to contextualise and examine the core research problem. The final section outlines the research method adopted and the chapter closes with an outline of the structure and content of the thesis.

1.1 Background to study

It is well-established that it is beneficial for young children to learn another language at primary school (Hedge, 2000; Deyrich, 2007). It has the potential to make a significant and valuable contribution to the general education of primary children in terms of cultural and intercultural awareness (Byram & Doyé, 1999), language awareness and literacy (Cummins, 1984), the development of positive social attitudes and motivation to learn languages (Gardner, Smythe & Clément, 1979) and as a foundation for linguistic competence in the foreign language(s) taught (Demont, 2001). However, this 'potential' is dependent upon the primary teacher's own subject knowledge of MFL and age-related pedagogy, an awareness of the value of MFL in its contribution towards pupils' own social and personal development, and a positive attitude towards the language itself and its delivery in their classroom. Raising awareness of the crucial role of each of these principles and how they interplay in a child's experience of MFL and the assisting of primary student teachers in achieving this 'potential' are what represent major goals of primary MFL teacher education for primary MFL teacher educators. Indeed, I embarked upon this research because of my own personal and professional commitment to MFL primary teacher education. However, primary MFL teacher educators do not work in isolation, as they are all part of the national education system in which they work and are therefore subject to macro-political and organizational forces on a national level (England, France and Scotland), and also on a supranational level (European Union).

Before expanding upon the specific issues that I encountered as a secondary MFL teacher and then as a primary MFL teacher educator, which made me question primary MFL education policy measures and their implementation, I will first present an overview of the ideology of neoliberalism and how it influences the national and supranational macro-political and organizational bodies that are responsible for the development and/or adoption of European policies.

1.1.1 Neoliberalism and education: the knowledge-based economy (or KBE)

I will first begin this section with an overview of the origins of this ideology and how it has managed to become the dominant economic doctrine of the 21st century.

Neoliberalism is a term that dates back to the 1930s when Friedrich Hayek (1936) first came up with the idea that all reality can be structured on the model of economic competition. His assumption is that practically all human activity can be reduced to a form of economic calculation in terms of wealth, value, exchange, cost and price. Scarce resources are allocated efficiently through prices according to need and utility, and are governed by supply and demand. Hayek holds that markets must be free and competitive for the price system to function efficiently and that, in this respect, the market was not just one piece of society but society as a whole. This marked a shift from the vision that Adam Smith held in terms of his "invisible hand" (Smith, 1776)[1] theory, which promoted the notion that although the market is "an autonomous sphere of human activity", a society governed by "transactional self-interest was no society at all" (Metcalf, 2017, pp.2-3)[2]. Hayek's widely-read book, *The Road to Serfdom*, published in 1944, provided the very wealthy with a complex-free ideology which would free them from regulation and tax. Hayek then went on to found the Mont Pelerin Society in 1947, which would spread this doctrine. The popularity of neoliberalism was such that "it was supported financially by millionaires and their foundations" (Monbiot, 2016)[3]. The transformation towards the current neoliberal economic model was precipitated by the falling apart of Keynesian policies as a consequence of "a range of international economic pressures, most notably the collapse of the Bretton Woods system from 1971, the oil crisis in 1973 and the consequent collapse of the post-war consensus" (Crines, 2014, p.117). Elements of neoliberalism such as its prescriptions for monetary policy were consequently adopted by Jimmy Carter's administration in the US and Jim Callaghan's government in the UK; however, it was under Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan that neoliberalism came into its own, albeit not without a struggle for Thatcher.

Her version of neoliberalism was "by no means universally popular with her own party or the electorate, having previously been viewed as an extreme or atavistic idea on the fringes of the Party and promulgated by quixotic New Right think tanks" (Crines, 2014, 120). However, she pushed for neoliberalism to enter mainstream politics arguing that because the opposition had an ideology to test their policies against so should the

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[1] Adam Smith, Recherches sur la nature et les causes de la richesse des nations, Livre IV, ch. 2, 1776 ; d'après réédition, éd. Flammarion, 1991, tome II p. 42-43.
[2] https://www.theguardian.com/news/2017/aug/18/neoliberalism-the-idea-that-changed-the-world
[3] https://www.theguardian.com/books/2016/apr/15/neoliberalism-ideology-problem-george-monbiot

Conservative Party have one too (Wheatcroft, 2005, p.147). Together with Reagan, she succeeded in imposing her will. George Monbiot describes the package that followed which involved "massive tax cuts for the rich, the crushing of trade unions, deregulation, privatisation, outsourcing and competition in public services" at home, while on a global level "through the IMF, the World Bank, the Maastricht treaty and the World Trade Organisation, neoliberal policies were imposed – often without democratic consent – on much of the world" (Monbiot, 2016, p.3). The most remarkable of all for Monbiot was its adoption among parties that once belonged to the left, such as Labour and the Democrats. The main characteristics of neoliberalism are illustrated by the following economic policies:

> Extensive privatisation of formerly nationalised industries; major cuts in direct taxation (most notably income tax), particularly for high earners; the introduction of market principles and practices into education and the NHS; deregulation of banking, financial services and "the city"; the emasculation of the trade unions through a combination of prescriptive legislation, unemployment, deindustrialisation and the restoration of "management's right to manage" in the workplace; allowing "the market" to determine pay, which yielded massive increases for those at the top; a consequent and constant increase in inequality, with an ever-widening gap between rich and poor; a meaner, leaner welfare state with stricter curbs on entitlement to and rates of social security benefits; selling of council houses (this extending home ownership and private property) (Dorey, 2014, p.34 cited in Crines, 2014, p.120)

The statement made by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in 2016 highlights the fact that neoliberalism is indeed the dominant global economic ideology:

> There has been a strong and widespread global trend toward neoliberalism since the 1980s, according to a composite index that measures the extent to which countries introduced competition in various spheres of economic activity to foster economic growth.[1]

Those who adhere to the principles of neoliberalism have clearly managed to promote this ideology with great success. How have they achieved this? On the one hand, Crines (2014, p.118-9) explains that key political actors use rhetorical devices to promote neoliberal policies and convince the electorate that such policies are the only way forward. Among the various rhetorical devices that neoliberal speakers or writers use are

[1] https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/fandd/2016/06/ostry.htm

those that have Aristotelian origins. They are *ethos* (credibility/character), *pathos* (emotions) and *logos* (logic). Crines explains that speakers who deploy these devices are "more successful in connecting their argument with their audience and can even generate particular responses to specific arguments" (ibid). I will present further details of these rhetorical devices which I adopt to analyse the discourse in policy documents in chapter four and which illustrate how neoliberals convey their ideas and manage to move populations in their favour. On the other hand, neoliberalism has been very successful in infiltrating all aspects of our lives through "a lively network of think tanks, lobbyists and academics promoting Hayek's doctrines" (Monbiot, 2016)[1]. The world's richest people and businesses finance these proponents of neoliberalism but are to a great extent "invisible backers":

> Slowly, very slowly, we have begun to discover the names of a few of them. We find that the Institute of Economic Affairs, which has argued forcefully in the media against the further regulation of the tobacco industry, has been secretly funded by British American Tobacco since 1963. We discover that Charles and David Koch, two of the richest men in the world, founded the institute that set up the Tea Party movement. We find that Charles Koch, in establishing one of his think tanks, noted that "in order to avoid undesirable criticism, how the organisation is controlled and directed should not be widely advertised". (Monbiot, 2016, p. 6)

The neoliberal 'think tanks, lobbyists and academics' that Monbiot refers to are proliferating. Karen Fischer writing for the online magazine of the International Sociological Association, 'Global Dialogue', states that:

> The rise of the think tank model has pushed university-based intellectuals to the margins of public political debates. The think tank professional has replaced the university professor as an "expert" in the media. Think tank professionals seek to present themselves as technocratic operators dedicated to neutral knowledge and evidence-based approaches. Also, the traditional American understanding of a think tank emphasizes independent expertise and the public interest. But contrary to promotional images, most think tanks are policy-oriented (…) Connected and coordinated across borders and mostly with an elitist character, they attempt to conquer a larger audience and influence governance matters on a national and international scale. They devote a lot of creativity and corporate money to develop story lines and push politics in a certain direction. The transnational

[1] https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/nov/14/neoliberalsim-donald-trump-george-monbiot

> neoliberal architecture is hitherto unmatched by competing forces – since powerful corporations and billionaires lean largely to the political right. [1]

Given this context, it is therefore very difficult to identify who the key neoliberal think tank actors are and their influence on policy measures adopted by the European Union and EU institutions. However, it is clear that, particularly "since 2005, a set of globally-orientated 'education' policies and programmes shaped by a new set of ideas about the production of a European knowledge economy" (Robertson, 2008, p.3) has emerged, which has marked a "significant shift away from a social market/'fortress Europe' as the means to create a knowledge-based economy toward a new vision: a more open, globally-oriented, freer market Europe" (ibid). This shift was a consequence of the 2000 Lisbon strategy being perceived at this time as being in crisis. Robertson goes on to explain that "[t]he Mid-Term Review (European Commission, 2005b), informed by the work of the High-Level Group chaired by Wim Kok (2004), concluded that the Lisbon strategy had failed to deliver a satisfactory economic growth performance and that Europe was falling far behind both the USA and Asia" (Robertson, 2008, p.6). Kok stated that for Europe to compete it needed to "develop its own area of specialisms, excellence and comparative advantage which inevitably must lie in a commitment to the knowledge economy in its widest sense… Europe has no option but to radically improve its knowledge economy and underlying economic performance" (Kok, 2004, p. 12 cited in Robertson, 2008, p.6). This resulted in a 'new Lisbon' strategy in which innovation draws on theories of human capital and 'knowledge' is reduced to research and development to produce value in the marketplace (ibid, p.7). Referring to the European Commission communication, *Mobilising the Brainpower of Europe: Enabling Universities to Make Their Full Contribution to the Lisbon Strategy* (MBE) (EC, 2005b), Robertson (ibid, p.9) points to the fact that "[e]ducation, research and innovation all feature as the key ideas, again underpinned by a cocktail of neo-liberal theories; human capital, free market and Schumpeterian[2] economics"(ibid); "that the intellectual elite would be anchored in

[1] http://globaldialogue.isa-sociology.org/neoliberal-think-tank-networks/

[2]Social geographer David Harvey sums up the differences between Marx's usage of these concepts and Schumpeter's: "Both Karl Marx and Joseph Schumpeter wrote at length on the 'creative-destructive' tendencies inherent in capitalism. While Marx clearly admired capitalism's creativity he [...] strongly emphasised its self-destructiveness. The Schumpeterians have all along gloried in capitalism's endless creativity while treating the destructiveness as mostly a matter of the normal costs of doing business" (Harvey, 2010, p.46 cited in Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Creative_destruction)

disciplines like science and technology rather than in the arts and humanities" (ibid, p.10) and that the EC advise that "higher education institutions need to open themselves to private funding if they are to 'activate knowledge' (ibid). This move to the neoliberal model results in the EU "currently welding many different nation-states into a more or less single force for education" (Vinther and Slethaug, 2013, p.799). One area which is high on the neoliberal agenda in this respect is early foreign language learning and this is dealt with in more detail in chapter three: MFL teachers navigating neoliberal waters where I present the reasons for this focus on early foreign language learning as well as the consequences and implication for language learning, teachers of MFL generally and primary MFL teacher educators. The next section presents those national and supranational macro-political and organizational bodies that are responsible for the development and/or adoption of European policies: in discussing EU policymakers, I make clear those to whom I specifically refer.

1.1.2 EU Policymakers

Before expanding upon the specific issues that I encountered as a secondary MFL teacher and then as a primary MFL teacher educator which made me question primary MFL education policy measures and their implementation, I will first present an overview of the national and supranational macro-political and organizational bodies that are responsible for the development and/or adoption of European policies.

The main EU policymaking institution is the European Council, the EU decision-making institution is the Council of the European Union and, thirdly, the institution which proposes and enforces EU legislation is the European Commission.

The European Council[1] defines the general political direction and priorities of the European Union. Its members include heads of state or government of EU countries, the European Commission President, and the High Representative for Foreign Affairs & Security Policy. It became an official EU institution in 2009 and is located in Brussels (Belgium). The European Council brings together EU leaders to set the EU's political agenda. It represents the highest level of political cooperation between EU countries.

[1] https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/institutions-bodies/european-council_en

One of the EU's 7 official institutions, the Council takes the form of (usually quarterly) summit meetings between EU leaders, chaired by a permanent president. It decides on the EU's overall direction and political priorities – but does not pass laws. It also deals with complex or sensitive issues that cannot be resolved at lower levels of intergovernmental cooperation. It sets the EU's common foreign & security policy, taking into account EU strategic interests and defence implications and nominates and appoints candidates to certain high-profile EU level roles, such as the ECB and the Commission. On each issue, the European Council can ask the European Commission to make a proposal to address it.

The Council of the European Union[1] is the voice of EU member governments, adopting EU laws and coordinating EU policies. Its members include government ministers from each EU country, according to the policy area to be discussed and each EU country holds the presidency on a 6-month rotating basis. It was established in 1958 (as Council of the European Economic Community) and it is located in Brussels (Belgium). In the Council, government ministers from each EU country meet to discuss, amend and adopt laws, and coordinate policies. The ministers have the authority to commit their governments to the actions agreed on in the meetings. Together with the European Parliament, the Council is the main decision-making body of the EU. The Council negotiates and adopts EU laws, together with the European Parliament, based on proposals from the European Commission. It coordinates EU countries' policies, develops the EU's foreign & security policy, based on European Council guidelines, concludes agreements between the EU and other countries or international organisations and adopts the annual EU budget – jointly with the European Parliament.

The European Commission[2] promotes the general interest of the EU by proposing and enforcing legislation as well as by implementing policies and the EU budget. It is made up of a team or 'College' of Commissioners, one from each EU country. It was established in 1958 and is also located in Brussels (Belgium). The European Commission is the EU's politically independent executive arm. It is alone responsible for drawing up proposals for new European legislation, and it implements the decisions of the European

[1] https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/institutions-bodies/council-eu_en
[2] https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/institutions-bodies/european-commission_en

Parliament and the Council of the EU. Together with the Court of Justice, it ensures that EU law is properly applied in all the member countries. It also allocates EU funding and together with the Council and Parliament, it sets EU spending priorities. It draws up annual budgets for approval by the Parliament and Council and supervises how the money is spent under scrutiny by the Court of Auditors. The European Commission represents the EU internationally and negotiates international agreements for the EU. It speaks on behalf of all EU countries in international bodies, in particular in areas of trade policy and humanitarian aid.

However, according to Robertson (2008) the European Commission does not have "capacity, capability nor legitimacy" (p.16) as illustrated by Jean-Claude Juncker, president of the European Commission, and Tibor Navracsics, commissioner for education, culture, youth and sport, when they point out in their article published in Times Higher Education, November 17, 2017:

> While the EU *does not have direct powers* when it comes to education and culture, it uses the tools at its disposal to help member states better cooperate and to make it easier for artists and teachers to work across Europe (…) Today, the recognition of diplomas or degrees across Europe – based on what is known as the Bologna Process – is *non-binding* and, ultimately, at the discretion of the university where a candidate applies.[1] (my own emphasis)

Indeed, Robertson (2008, p.16) describes the European Commission's political project regarding the 'new' Lisbon 2005 strategy, which followed the crisis of the Lisbon 2000 as one which privileges a "neo-liberal set of ideas in shaping Europe's knowledge-based economy. In the education sector this has resulted in strategies directed at embracing the global as a potential market for the European Higher Education Area and as a source of human capital" (p.16). However, there remain 'considerable' gaps between the "new re-imagined European knowledge economy and the real multifaceted and multi-scalar economy of Europe" (ibid). She explains:

> By *capacity* I mean the limited and flexible nature of financial and human resources that can be directed toward the realisation of the EUs expanding agenda. By *capability* I mean the inability of the European-level actors, like the European Commission and the Council of Europe, to use technologies of power to direct and embed action. This arises largely as a result of the limited range of

[1] https://www.timeshighereducation.com/blog/role-education-future-european-union consulted 29/10/2018

> formal instruments the EU has at its disposal to govern Member States. By *legitimacy* I am referring to the perceived right to rule. This arises in the education sector because principle of subsidiary places political limits on the EU's governing of Member States in this sphere. Gaps arise because questions of capacity, capability and legitimacy place limits on the power of the EC to mobilise, strategise, materialise and embed the discursive into the institutional fabric of education in Member States. (Robertson, 2008, p.16)

The failure of the 2000 Lisbon strategy was not considered to be linked to the difficult economic climate following the dot.com collapse but more to "a policy agenda which had become overloaded, failing coordination and sometimes conflicting priorities" within Member States and across the region (European Commission, 2005, p.4). Robertson then highlights the fact that despite a crisis discourse in 2005[1], mobilised "strategically by social forces within the EU committed to a neo-liberal agenda for the reform of the universities" (ibid) in order to address the reasons why the 2000 Lisbon strategy had failed to deliver a satisfactory economic growth performance, the European Commission was not in a position to overcome this inherent problem of capacity or capability due to insufficient new resources and/or mechanisms. The proposal by Kok (2004) to "name and shame recalcitrant states in order to ensure greater compliance" was therefore not pursued by the European Commission, "largely for tactical and legitimacy purposes" (Robertson, 2008, p.16).

Bearing in mind that the Commission is made up of a single commissioner that is appointed by each nation's own government of the day means that there is a direct link between the European Commission and the national governments of each Member State. It is therefore highly unlikely that a commissioner does not receive instructions or advice from that national government. However, this also means that European Commission recommendations do not necessarily accord with the position of each EU national government.

In this light, when I refer to EU policymakers, I focus on the European Commission itself and its consultants, in the knowledge that its reports, communications and legislative recommendations do not necessarily reflect the stance of the national government of each EU Member State. Indeed, EU Member States are free to adopt or not the legislation

[1] The Mid-Term Review (European Commission, 2005b), informed by the work of the High Level Group chaired by Wim Kok (2004).

proposed by the European Commission particularly concerning education matters. I aim to focus only on those language education policy decisions which the education systems in this study have adopted and which proceed from EU legislation, and therefore the specific role or function of national policymakers in this thesis are only referred to briefly as this aspect goes beyond the parameters of this study. In this thesis, I focus on one particular report published by the European Commission, *Supporting Teacher Educators for better learning outcomes* (European Commission, 2013). The critical stance adopted against EU teacher educators indicates that the discourse strategy adopted by the European Commission appears to have shifted from a naming and shaming of recalcitrant states used to ensure greater compliance to its policies as described earlier by Robertson (2008), to a naming and shaming of recalcitrant professions, namely the teacher educator profession. Given that this report was used as a basis to inform EU legislation: *Council Conclusions of 20 May 2014 on effective teacher education*, it can also be assumed that the national governments who implement this EU legislation have been unwittingly influenced by the neoliberal discourse strategy employed in this report, or are in agreement with the principles presented which aim to both promote and 'ensure greater compliance' of both the teacher educator profession and EU Member States to the neoliberal agenda of the 'new' 2000 Lisbon strategy:

> The strong emphasis on knowledge, education and innovation in our renewed Lisbon strategy will give people the opportunity to climb the productivity ladder and guarantee that overall our productivity grows quickly" (ibid:13); while 'education' will endow learners with "…the human capital and skills needed in a dynamic knowledge-based economy". (European Commission, 2005, p.27)

Accordingly, I carry out a discourse analysis of the European Commission report, *Supporting Teacher Educators for better learning outcomes* (European Commission, 2013) with the objective of identifying the neoliberal discourse in this document to better understand the challenges facing the teacher educator profession and this is presented in more detail in chapter four. In the following section I will now outline the challenges I experienced on a personal and collective level as a secondary teacher and as a teacher educator as a consequence of these policies.

1.1.3 Classroom teacher to teacher educator: challenges at every level

Teaching is a profession which is complex and demanding, and more so than ever in the current context of the global knowledge economy, where teachers are expected to incorporate ongoing educational reform into their daily practice (Crosswell and Elliott, 2004, p.1). As a former classroom teacher now working in teacher education, I can vouch that teacher educators are no exception to this and, like other teaching professionals, they face constant challenges on an individual and a collective level. There is a consensus that without commitment, it would be unlikely for any teaching professional to be successful in their job (Crosswell & Elliott, 2004; Eisenberger, Fasolo & Davis-LaMastro, 1990). The level of teacher commitment is perceived as a key factor in teacher performance (Ingersoll et al., 1997, p.4). Committed teachers are valued because they are ready to invest personal resources of time and energy even at the expense of their personal lives, in order to become 'good teachers'. In itself, this appears innocuous given that teaching is considered a vocation and people who are enthusiastic about their career are usually ready to make this investment and find that investment personally satisfying. Indeed, Day (1999) describes a study in which secondary school teachers identified commitment as one of the principal characteristics of professional teaching behaviour:

> displaying … degrees of dedication and commitment, working long hours as a matter of course and accepting the open-ended nature of the task involved, which often impinged upon home and personal life … it also entailed maximum effort to "do the best you possibly can" and a constant quest for improved performance. (Helsby et al, 1997, pp.9-10)

This motivation to 'do the best you possibly can' is an intrinsic form of motivation and an exceptional quality. However, the reach of neoliberal imperatives means that such conduct is no longer considered exceptional nor even valued: it is the norm to be seen as good and responsible (Rose, 1999)[1]. Foucault explains that to govern is to incite subjects to act in particular ways. He suggests that "to govern, in this sense, is to structure the possible field of action of others" (1982, p.790)[2], and accordingly neoliberalism's governance results in people feeling compelled to adopt certain behaviour. Vander Kloet and Aspenlieder (2013) describe in their autoethnographic study where they reflected on

[1] Rose, N. (1990). Governing the soul: the shaping of the private self. Taylor & Frances/Routledge.
[2] Foucault, M. (1982). The subject and power. Critical inquiry, 8(4), 777-795. http://www.unisa.edu.au/Global/EASS/HRI/foucault_-_the_subject_and_power.pdf

their own practices that neoliberalism prompted them “to be dutifully self-actualizing neoliberal subjects [in order to become] smart, good, industrious and *employable* […] mindful that it is our productivity – measurable and, ideally ever expanding, that elicits praise” (p.291)[1]. Barakos (2018), following Urciuoli (2008) describes the neoliberal worker as someone who is “adaptable, subject to certification and embodies entrepreneurial values […] morally obliged to work at self-improvement [yet experiencing] more individualised, insecure work conditions” (Barakos, 2018, p.3). The challenge for most workers, and in particular teaching professionals, is to recognise the point at which there was a transition from being intrinsically motivated to ‘do the best you possibly can’ to a fear of not being ‘seen’ to be doing the best you can. As a French civil servant (*fonctionnaire*), I have security of employment and in this respect, I was not exposed to ‘insecure work conditions’; however, this does not mean that I did not encounter challenges stemming from a neoliberal climate in terms of the values of being a ‘good teacher’ encroaching on the school environment, first as a secondary school teacher and then as a primary MFL teacher educator. However, since I have left high school teaching, I have been informed of changes which are certainly more explicitly linked to neoliberalism. My former colleagues have recently discovered that instead of having three classes in the new 6ème cohort next year they will only have two on the basis that there will be a total of 60 pupils arriving in the college in September 2019. This means that each class will have 30 pupils in it. For some schools this is not an issue, but in this particular school the actual classrooms are too small to be able to fit in 30 desks. In addition, new pupils always arrive during the school year which makes teaching and learning conditions very difficult for all concerned. When my colleagues went to see the Inspectorate to challenge this decision, they were informed that not only were they very fortunate that their high school was not being closed down for the time being, but that it was their responsibility as teachers to attract more children to their establishment. Indeed, the inspectors went on to explain that they had a ‘difficult choice to make’ – because of budget restrictions, they had to decide over the next few years which high school to close down, theirs or the neighbouring one. They informed my colleagues that unless they competitively set out to attract parents by attracting pupils at the expense of

[1] Vander Kloet, M., & Aspenlieder, E. (2013). Educational development for responsible graduate students in the neoliberal university. Critical Studies in Education, 54(3), 286-298.

the other high school (which is 23km away and a similar size) then their own school would be closed down, resulting in them being sent to work in schools which are likely to be far away from their homes given the rural context in which they work. From this example, it can be seen that although French civil servants cannot be 'sacked' neoliberal imperatives have resulted in the increasingly 'insecure work conditions' described by Barakos (2018) above. Before presenting the specific challenges facing MFL teacher educators in the French HE context, I will first set out the issues I experienced as a secondary MFL teacher in my small high school in a rural area of France.

1.1.4 Challenges in my MFL secondary classroom

I had noticed that ever since passing the CAPES[1] competitive exam to teach English, the disparity between the different cohorts of primary pupils entering the secondary school system each September in terms of their primary MFL experience was getting wider and more problematic as time went on. Although I did come across pupils who had received good quality primary MFL English lessons providing them with the grounding to progress in English during their high school years, there were too many other pupils who had not experienced any English teaching at all, and others whose experience was so detrimental that it was very difficult for these children to overcome a negative representation of the English language and culture. In addition, it was a challenge to eliminate from their repertoire those words and structures that were incorrect either in form or in pronunciation, in order to communicate effectively and guide them towards better pronunciation.

During the debriefing, after an inspection visit of a 6ème lesson[2], I discussed the challenges I was facing with the inspector. She agreed that teaching English to absolute beginners (at primary level or at secondary school) is much more complex than is imagined because the teacher is laying the foundation for future success in that language. She pointed out that this was because effective teaching at this level demands a sufficient command of the target language and its culture, a knowledge and understanding of early MFL learning and teaching pedagogy as well as the right conditions in terms of time and

[1] Le certificat d'aptitude au professorat de l'enseignement du second degré (CAPES)
[2] 6ème is the equivalent of year 7 in England and year S1 in Scotland (10-11 year olds).

resources. She also acknowledged that foreign language learning is hindered when these conditions are not met. She brought my attention to the fact that a majority of primary teachers in the local area did not have sufficient knowledge of English to teach effectively, nor was it likely that had they attended any MFL teaching pedagogy teacher education courses. Her views are reflected in second language acquisition (SLA) research, which indicates the importance of fluency, good pronunciation and intonation when teaching primary English (Brewster, Ellis & Girard, 2002; Ortega, 2009) as "nothing could be more counter-productive than inaccurate knowledge or language skills which result in the [secondary] teacher making constant corrections and having to go over what has supposedly already been learned" (Brewster, Ellis & Girard (2012, p. 11). However, Deyrich (2007) states that language skills are not enough and insists on the necessity of good teaching skills in MFL pedagogy **and** language skills for successful foreign language learning at primary level (Deyrich, 2007) [bold characters mine]. According to the inspector, good pedagogical teaching skills in primary MFL pedagogy was also an issue.

Not long after the conversation with the inspector, I was offered a post at the Bordeaux School of Education (*l'Institut Universitaire de Formation des Maîtres – IUFM*) as a teacher educator of MFL. I initially refused this post because I enjoyed teaching so much at my small secondary high school and lacked confidence: I got on well with the pupils and colleagues, I had my own classroom, great teaching resources and it was only a ten-minute drive away from my home. Although I was an effective classroom teacher, I was not sure that I had the ability to teach teachers or future teachers these skills.

However, the following September, when I found myself with three 6ème classes whose experience of primary English was even worse than it had been in previous years, I made up my mind to be proactive. At that point, I had no idea about what I could actually do to improve the situation but I knew that the first step involved understanding what was going wrong in primary MFL teaching and learning. So, I reapplied for the position at the IUFM and took up post in September 2011. Little did I know that I was arriving at the IUFM at a time of great upheaval and the next section will provide an outline of the political background influencing teacher education in France.

1.1.5 Challenges in the teacher educator classroom

EU ambitions to improve primary MFL: political upheaval in France

Before becoming a teacher educator, I considered teacher educators as 'experts' in the field: not only do they traditionally play a key role in the teaching and training of student teachers as role models in the field of innovative pedagogical practice but, given the university context, they are also very involved in research. What I had not fully anticipated before taking up the position myself was the extent to which they have to deal with ongoing EU and national language education policy measures, which make their work a constant challenge.

Furthermore, not only were colleagues who work in other secondary schools experiencing similar challenges in their English lessons but one EU survey, the European Survey on Language Competences (ESLC) published by the European Commission (2012), indicated that the policy of early language learning at primary school had not been as successful as anticipated on a national scale. Indeed, despite the fact that early foreign language learning had been an official European Union priority since 1997 (Kelly, 2010; Grin, 2005) when the Council Resolution on the early teaching of European Union languages was passed[1], its successful implementation continued to present a challenge in both England and France. Despite the European Council calling for an improvement in the mastery of basic skills with special regard to the teaching of at least two foreign languages from a very early age at Barcelona in March 2002[2], the results of the first European Survey on Language Competences (ESLC) ten years later, in 2012 (see figure 1), indicated that pupils at the end of compulsory schooling in England and France had not managed significantly to improve their levels of proficiency in their first MFL and indicated relatively little progress compared to other EU countries in the ten years following the Barcelona Agreement (Jones, 2012). In addition, the impetus to improve basic linguistic skills at primary school which followed the publication in 2012 by the European Commission of the findings of the ESLC signaled for policymakers relatively little progress in the linguistic competence of French and English schoolchildren

[1] Official Journal C 1 of 03.01.1998
[2] http://ec.europa.eu/invest-in-research/pdf/download_en/barcelona_european_council.pdf

compared to those in other EU countries in the ten years following the Barcelona Agreement.

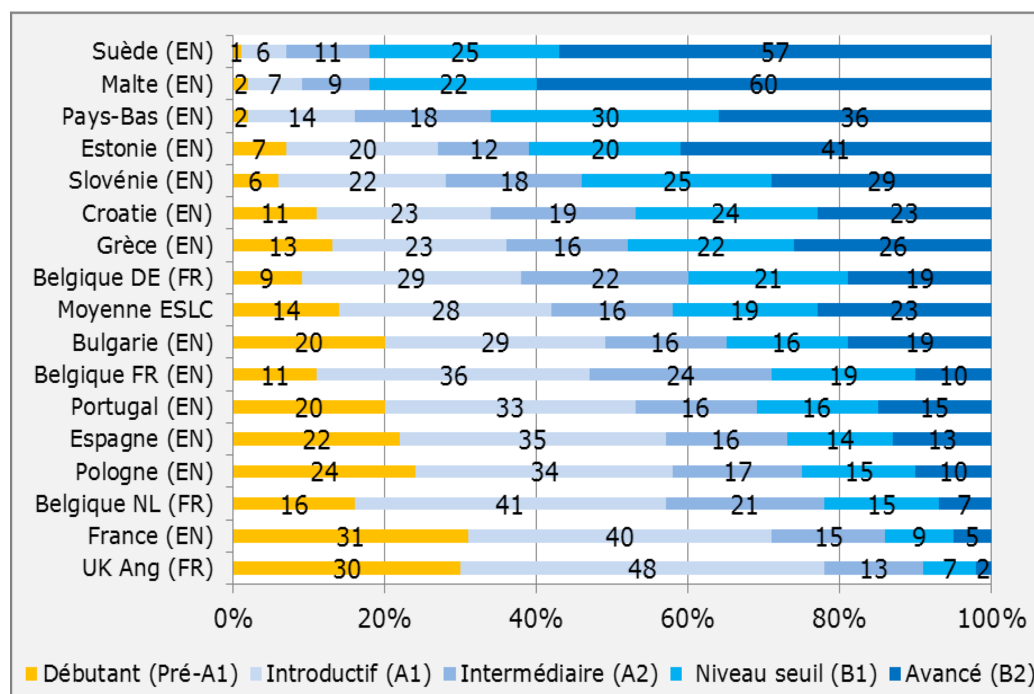

Figure 1 European Survey on Language Competences (ESLC) (2012)

The results shown in figure 1 are categorised in terms of the levels of language proficiency according to CEFRL levels A1 to B2. The table shows that only one third of English and French children aged 15 to 16 reach level A1 in their first foreign language studied at school (French and English respectively) whilst in Sweden or Malta almost two thirds of children of the same age reach level B2 in their first foreign language. Hence, an immediate consequence of the survey results was a wave of educational reform in France[1], and England[2]. Indeed, both countries adopted similar language education policy measures regarding the early teaching of MFL within the same time frame. The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment, (CEFR or CEFRL)[3] is a guideline used to describe achievements of learners of foreign languages across Europe and, increasingly, in other countries and was part of

[1] LOI n° 2013-595 du 8 juillet 2013 d'orientation et de programmation pour la refondation de l'école de la République NOR: MENX1241105L ELI: http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/eli/loi/2013/7/8/MENX1241105L /jo/texte

[2]https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-languages-progammes-of-study

[3] https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/level-descriptions

the Council of Europe project "Language Learning for European Citizenship" between 1989 and 1996. Its principal aim is to provide a method of learning, teaching and assessing which applies to all languages in Europe. In November 2001, a European Union Council Resolution recommended using the CEFR to set up systems of validation of language ability. The six reference levels are becoming widely accepted as the European standard for grading an individual's language proficiency. The adoption of the CEFRL has had an impact on language teaching in France in recent years. Though the CEFRL does not in any way advocate any particular teaching method, there is a clear intention to provide a basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses and curriculum guidelines, the design of teaching and learning materials, and the assessment of proficiency. The two key notions are tasks and interaction. Language use is seen as purposeful, involving communication of meanings which are important to learners, in order to achieve goals. The principle underlying this is that learning will be more effective where language is used purposefully. Focusing on tasks and interaction is supposed to give teachers the opportunity to understand students' performance level at "the level where they can tackle reasonably successfully tasks at a level of challenge appropriate to their ability" (Cambridge, 2011). Vinther and Slethaug (2013) propose that this approach is unproductive for three reasons:

> First, the general-level descriptions are far too imprecise to be used as testing matrices. Second, the imprecision leaves a given set of concepts open to interpretation. And third, the CEFR by its very nature is de-contextualised and not observant of national traditions and educational practices. The Council for Cultural Co-operation of the Council of Europe (2001) hails the 'rich heritage of diverse languages and cultures,' and yet it advocates 'greater convergence at the European level by means of appropriate arrangements for ongoing co-operation and co-ordination of policies' (CEFR document, 2). The CEFR document illustrates the […] paradox that diversity leads to unification and convergence. (Vinther and Slethaug, 2013, p.803)

Indeed, instead of using holistic assessment, the CEFR is an example of making skill demonstration the object of pedagogy (Grundy, 1987, p.77). Skill demonstration is on the rise where the increasingly international agenda demands standardised testing. However, Vinther and Slethaug (2013) point out that research indicates that different educational systems interpret level and competencies differently and they conclude that rather than an expression of academic ability, the CEFR is instead a taxonomy of communicative skills

and "its application as a testing taxonomy problematic" (ibid). These issues illustrate the importance of situated assessment, the need to adapt assessment to the type of knowledge to be assessed that goes beyond skill development, and a focus on pedagogical evaluation which is absent from 'can-do' taxonomies. Maurer (2011) is critical of this 'can-do' approach because it implies that language learning is straightforward and almost effortless:

> Les descripteurs sont toujours formulés par des verbes employés à la forme affirmative renvoyant à un pouvoir ou un savoir de l'apprenant : tout est référencé en termes de « je peux », « je sais », ce qui masque le long chemin linguistique à parcourir pour pouvoir un jour employer ces verbes à propos des compétences en regard. (Maurer, 20°11, p.81)

However, "can do" statements are very powerful tools in view of improving pupil/student motivation (Faez et al., 2011). The challenge for MFL teachers is to incorporate them into a coherent, structured evaluation procedure where learning objectives are clear not only for the teacher but for the learner rather than a tick list. Maurer points out that according to EU policymakers, language learning is straightforward and easy, and learnt by simple contact with people who speak that language:

> Cette acquisition, fondée sur la capacité de langage, peut s'effectuer en dehors de toute forme d'enseignement explicite, par contact prolongé et interactions avec des locuteurs de cette variété linguistique non connue. L'enseignement est une institutionnalisation de l'acquisition dite souvent naturelle. (Guide des politiques, 2007, p.95)[1]

Maurer is also critical of the way in which humanist notions such as plurilingualism and interculturality have been hijacked by EU policymakers, who instead promote their own conception of these notions through the CEFR:

> Les différents pays du Conseil de l'Europe ont chacun des traditions différentes en matière d'enseignement des langues étrangères qui donnent souvent d'excellents résultats par des voies et moyens divergents. On pourrait espérer que l'affirmation du principe du plurilinguisme comme « liberté »[2] aille de pair avec une grande liberté pédagogique au sein de laquelle l'éclectisme régnerait, les sensibilités nationales s'exprimeraient et où la didactique s'enrichirait de la confrontation de pratiques différentes. Il n'en est rien. (…) L'idéologie du plurilinguisme repose sur la promotion d'une pensée didactique unique qui fait

[1] https://rm.coe.int/16802fc3ab
[2] Charte européenne du plurilinguisme :
https://www.observatoireplurilinguisme.eu/images/Fondamentaux/resumchartev4.10.pdf

> référence à un unique instrument, à ses principes, et à ses propositions, le CECR. (Maurer, 2011, p.77)

The principles that Maurer calls into question regarding the CEFR relate to its utilitarian conception to language learning. He refers to a paper by Pierre Frath (2002) which identifies a shift from the humanist model to the utilitarian one:

> Ainsi, une secrétaire devrait avoir, mettons, un niveau C1 en compréhension et production orale, pour répondre au téléphone, C2 en production écrite si elle doit rédiger des lettres elle-même, seulement B1 si elle doit les recopier. Un ingénieur qui n'est pas au contact d'une clientèle étrangère devrait atteindre le niveau B2 en lecture, de manière à pouvoir lire des textes dans son domaine. En revanche, il n'est pas besoin d'investir dans ses autres compétences, et ainsi de suite. (Frath, 2002 cited in Maurer, 2011, p.83)

This is a far cry from a holistic perspective of education and is symptomatic of the marketisation of language education, according to Maurer:

> Cette conception est adaptée à la marchandisation de l'enseignement de langues, que l'on peut à loisir découper en offres adaptées à tel niveau, telle compétence, en vendant un sur-mesure : « ce dont vous avez besoin, mais juste ce dont vous avez besoin. » On est bien loin d'une perspective holistique de « l'éducation », prenant en compte l'individu dans son intégralité, et bien plus près d'un "formation" techniciste qui optimise coûts et rendements et raisonne en termes d'investissement et de retour sur investissement. (Maurer, 2011, p.84)

Indeed, today the neoliberal worker is "someone who is adaptable, subject to certification and embodies entrepreneurial values" (Barakos, 2018, p.3) and consequently the growing need to respond to the dynamics of market change and demands have resulted in "reduced and essentialist treatment of the concept of culture [and] specifically the equation of culture with national stereotypes in intercultural communication training literature" (ibid, pp. 3-4). Given this context, it is a concern that the CEFR is also used as a means of high stakes testing because, given the findings of the ESLC, the French Education Reform Act of 8th July 2013 made it a statutory requirement for Master MEEF[1] (primary) students to certify a minimum B2[2] level by the end of the two-year course of study, to ensure that students reach a sufficient level of linguistic competence before taking up post, failure to obtain the Master MEEF degree would prevent recruitment as a French civil servant. In addition, the government lowered the age at which learning a foreign language at school

[1] Master MEEF (Métiers de l'enseignement, de l'éducation et de la formation)
[2] https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/9._languages_common_european_framework_of_reference_en.pdf

would be mandatory to the age of six whilst demanding a stronger link between primary and secondary school MFL learning and teaching. This had direct consequences for the student teachers in my classroom, and I outline the challenges this created in more detail in chapter 3. My first years as a teacher educator in France were also marked by an upheaval of the education system in general.

Indeed, not only had the IUFMs just begun to settle in after the masterisation process [1] implemented in 2008, but only five years later the recently elected socialist government under François Holland's presidency implemented the French Education Reform Act of 8th July 2013 (*LOI n° 2013-595 du 8 juillet 2013 d'orientation et de programmation pour la refondation de l'école de la République*)[2] which resulted in the IUFM being replaced by a new School of Education, the ESPE *(l'École Supérieure du Professorat et de l'Éducation).* The IUFMs were created in 1990 and it was decided that they would be independent institutions rather than part of the university. This changed in 2008 as a consequence of the LMD framework in compliance with the Bologna Process to harmonize university qualifications in Europe, when the universities integrated teacher training and education into their mission. Given that the recruitment competitive exams (for example, CRPE[3], CAPES or Agrégation) for future teachers are not diplomas, it was necessary to create a national Master's degree, the Master MEEF, during which student teachers combine academic courses and teacher practice periods in schools. This degree represents 5 years of HE studies as opposed to 3 years under the former system, where the minimum requirement to sit a teacher recruitment competition exam was a *licence*. Accordingly, this had an impact not only on the content and structure of the teacher education courses at the IUFMs but it also changed the status of newly recruited teachers. Each ESPE is part of a university, and each academy in France has one ESPE, which means that, in all, there are 32 ESPEs in France.

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[1]All higher education institutions and most of the courses they offer are structured into three study cycles (Bachelor's degree, Master's degree and Doctorate) and based on ECTS credits, in compliance with the Bologna Process principles. The LMD framework is the result of the Bologna Process to harmonize university qualifications in Europe. Prior to the LMD framework candidates sitting competitive exams to enter the teaching profession needed a Bachelor's degree (licence).
[2] https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000027677984&categorieLien=id
[3] *le Concours de Recrutement de Professeurs des Écoles (*CRPE)

Meanwhile, in England, following the ESLC results, the uptake of a foreign language was made mandatory at key stage 2 in England and there was a concerted effort to improve primary MFL recruitment: the English government set up financial incentives to encourage students to complete a Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) specialising in teaching foreign languages.

Three years later, the results of this survey were still at the forefront as can be seen when during a House of Lords debate on foreign languages in January 2015, the Schools Minister Lord Nash stated:

> We do feel that we need to redress the situation in languages. The *European Survey on Language Competences* in 2012 showed us that our 2011 GCSE students were the worst at languages across all the countries surveyed.[1]

Though Scottish data was not included in this European survey, the government of Scotland adopted the same stance as the English government on the basis that the English results were likely to reflect the Modern Foreign Language competence of Scottish pupils. However, the stance was not motivated by the ESLC results entirely, as the Scottish government had already published its manifesto commitment regarding foreign language learning in 2011 in line with EU policy promoting early language learning:

> We will introduce a norm for language learning in schools based on the European Union 1 + 2 model – that is we will create the conditions in which every child will learn two languages in addition to their own mother tongue. This will be rolled out over two Parliaments, and will create a new model for language acquisition in Scotland. (Scottish Government manifesto commitment, 2011)[2]

So, in sum, similar language policy measures were adopted in England, France and Scotland around the same time in a drive to comply with agreements on early MFL learning in the EU. At first glance, language education policy measures such as these may indeed appear to be positive for language learning in general and therefore be welcomed by MFL teacher educators. However, I soon realised that in practice these measures presented their own challenges. Derivry-Plard (2015) explains, however, that

[1] http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201415/ldhansrd/text/150126-0001.htm#15012613000051
[2] https://www.gov.scot/resource/0039/00393435.pdf

these challenges are to be expected given the interrelationship that has always existed between languages and politics:

> *En effet, [les enseignants de langue(s)] ont été de tous temps et en tous lieux soumis à des enjeux de politiques linguistiques enchâssées dans des politiques nationales et internationales, dans des politiques coloniales et militaires (*hard power*) de diffusion culturelle (*soft power*). Les enseignant de languages ont été soumis aux politiques éducatives et aux politiques d'enseignement des L1 et des L2, qui dépendent des politiques économiques et de leurs injonctions de compétitivité, d'efficacité et de résultats ralliées aux maîtres-mots actuels de l'informatique et de l'anglais.* (Derivry-Plard, 2015, p.59)

These challenges will be presented in the following section.

Making the transition

Although my colleagues had to deal with the changes being imposed upon them as a result of the upheaval in the French teacher education landscape, I was guided and supported by all these colleagues especially during the first few years when I went from schoolteacher to teacher educator. Nevertheless, I found the transition quite stressful and very demanding. Not only did I have to teach new courses, visit student teachers in the classrooms but I was also expected to take an active role in research. Murray and Male's (2005) findings indicate that my experience was typical of schoolteachers who become teacher educators. The authors explain that the transition from being a teacher-mentor working with student teachers in a classroom to being a teacher educator based in HE may look to outsiders like a small shift but that it does, in reality, represent a considerable and often stressful transition time as these teaching professionals make the change from first-order practitioners in school to second-order practitioners in HE. Murray and Male's (2005) findings suggest that it takes between 2 and 3 years for those who make the change to establish professional identities as teachers of teachers. The authors believe these findings to be significant when held up against the context of English ITE where key differences between the roles and practices of HE-based teacher educators and school teacher-mentors have been de-emphasised (Murray and Male, 2005, p.16)

It never occurred to me to ever question the professional commitment that my colleagues demonstrated as teacher educators or to their commitment to early foreign language learning at primary level, nor the professional standards that they value and strive to

uphold. I was struck by their expertise and their drive to overcome difficulties and obstacles in carrying out this responsibility as effectively as they possibly could and I found this new world in which I was now a part of inspiring.

However, I was also keenly aware of their disappointment, frustration and even indignation when faced with government rhetoric about the need to improve language learning at primary level and the reality of having to deal with policy measures in the teacher educator classroom that would, in point of fact, add to the challenges they faced rather than diminish them. I very quickly understood that my colleagues at the ESPE were just as bewildered by the language policy decisions that affected MFL primary teacher education as I had been by those affecting my teaching in the secondary classroom and I also realised that they were just as powerless. Despite their efforts, there was not very much room for manoeuvre. I will now provide a brief outline of some of these challenges that my colleagues and I faced as primary MFL teacher educators in the French context.

Despite the commitment of my primary MFL teacher educator colleagues and myself, it was getting more and more difficult to work in conditions likely to facilitate achieving these goals. One of the reasons I wanted to become a primary MFL teacher educator was because I wanted to address the problem of too many children moving up into secondary who had had negative experiences of learning English at primary. Some children had had excellent English teachers and these children went from strength to strength; however, others started English in September feeling anxious or even hostile to the language, had learnt incorrect pronunciation, grammatical structures or vocabulary and had lost all motivation.

Collectively, the primary MFL teacher educators I work with and those I have met in other ESPEs all express their awareness that there are obstacles in their path which result in too many primary pupils not being taught languages adequately well at school, and that problems continue to subsist at secondary level as highlighted by the ESLC findings. Despite efforts by French MFL teacher educators to tackle these issues and propose solutions either on a local scale in the ESPEs in which they work, or on a national scale

through conferences or associations such as the APLV[1], their voice sounds increasingly like the voice of one crying out in the wilderness.

1.2 Motivation for research

As a result of the negative reports about teacher educators and apparent failure of a considerable number of primary MFL teachers to be effective language teachers, I decided to investigate the possible reasons why the system was failing primary school children. Why was it not possible for all primary pupils to be taught languages adequately? What was going wrong? At first, I conjectured that French ministers of education had simply misinterpreted or misunderstood research findings. On one level, this is understandable, after all, early language learning at primary is complex and a wealth of research literature attests to that; however, the challenges that MFL teacher educators have been coming up against in recent times go beyond questions dealing with SLA, cognition, socio-linguistics or socio-cultural aspects such as the influence of the home language on L2 learning in the classroom for instance. In seeking the bigger picture, I realised that at the very heart of the challenges facing MFL teacher educators in promoting primary MFL was the world of politics and economics: the ideology of neoliberalism. I experienced at first hand the transformation of Britain under the government of Margaret Thatcher as well as the rhetoric that accompanies policy decisions that are more influenced by economic concerns than educational ones. As a child, I remember the Britain under Jim Callaghan just before the 'Iron Lady' came into power which was:

> probably more equal than it had ever been before – and certainly more equal than it has ever been since. Authorities on poverty rates and income distributions differ as to precisely when the optimum moment came, but some of their statistics for the period leap out. The Gini coefficient, a common measure of income inequality, reached its lowest level for British households in 1977. The proportion of individual Britons below the poverty line did the same in 1978. Social mobility, measured as the likelihood of someone becoming part of a different class from their parents, also peaked in the Callaghan era. (Beckett, 2009, p.409-410)

[1] https://www.aplv-languesmodernes.org/spip.php?article6591

However, these “social trends were relentlessly reversed” (Beckett, 2009, p.410) in a Britain presided by Thatcher. This background meant that careful observation of my working environment as a primary MFL teacher educator coupled with my reading of the literature helped me understand that French MFL teacher educators were possibly more vulnerable to the neoliberal agenda than I had previously imagined. Not only did it become clearer to me that French primary MFL teacher educators were increasingly having to contend with language education policy decisions that were incoherent, inconsistent and which failed to reflect the professional standards and values that the profession upholds, but that those policy decisions were made by national and EU policymakers influenced by the neoliberal agenda. The realisation that EU institutions were promoting neoliberal policies also shook a fundamental vision and confidence that I had held concerning Europe and its contribution to education.

Before starting my research, I had not suspected that both early language learning in the EU and the teacher education profession as a whole were the focus of EU policymakers influenced by the global neoliberal agenda. Although “education systems all over the world have been impacted by the rise of neoliberal ideology and practices of government” (Connell, 2013, p. 1), I had always assumed that the French were protected from the worst excesses of neoliberalism given the pivotal role of the state and civil service in French society. In addition, it was not only the French education system that was more exposed to the audit culture but also teacher educators across Europe who had up until very recently been overlooked by EU policymakers as opposed to other members of the teaching profession:

> Only recently has policymaking begun to focus on teacher educators, perhaps indicating that the so called ‘hidden profession’ (Snoek et al, 2011; Murray and Male, 2005) is finally becoming increasingly visible. (European Commission, 2013, p.6)

However, as can also be understood by the use of the word “finally” in this citation, the situation has since evolved. In point of fact, European Union (EU) policymakers have explicitly called into question teacher educator commitment as well as the professional standards and values they hold. Despite teacher educators being recognised as playing a crucial role in the education system as “facilitators of learning for intending teachers” of primary and secondary education responsible for induction into the profession and

furthering "the knowledge base of their specialist field through scholarly activities" (Murray and Male, 2005, p.2), it is therefore essential that they "are able to function at a high professional level" (Lunenberg et al., 2014, p.1). As an MFL teacher educator working in the French system of education, I agree that teacher educators should be able to function at a high professional level as we do indeed play a crucial role. However, in the current neoliberal climate, being able to function at such a level appears to be more and more illusory given that EU policy documents explicitly challenge the autonomy and credibility of teacher educators as professionals.

In addition to these challenges to their credibility, MFL teacher educators are also susceptible to neoliberal ambitions in terms of their MFL subject specialism. Indeed, foreign languages play a key role in the context of globalization and a market-orientated economy. As a consequence of the key role that languages are perceived to play in a market orientated economy, there is a general push in society towards a "purely instrumental approach to language learning" which is considered to fail in providing learners with "a thorough knowledge of the target language in grammatical, lexical and phonological terms, nor the ability to communicate spontaneously and fluently" (Block and Gray, 2015, p.2). This approach may contradict MFL teacher educator beliefs relating to foreign language teaching and learning at school not only because it may conflict with their own educational experience of how they learnt foreign languages but also because of the difficulties the instrumental or utilitarian approach presents for developing cultural awareness in children.

Further, supra-national neo-liberal EU education policies are currently influencing the education systems in all EU Member States. Therefore, in order to gain deeper insight into the relationship between the dynamics of global neo-liberal processes and EU policy, and the practices and working conditions of these professionals in their different local settings, I set about examining EU policy documents in detail as part of my research for this study. They focus not only on language education policy but also on the teacher educator profession, given that MFL teacher educators are part of that occupational group of professionals. I discovered that the credibility of teacher educators as a profession was being challenged by the European Commission in its documentation particularly in relation to their commitment, their values and their professional standards. I then began

to ask myself whether there may be a link between the posture that EU policymakers were adopting insofar as the teacher educator profession is concerned and the difficulties facing primary MFL teacher educators in their everyday working lives. With this in mind, as I mentioned earlier, I study one European Commission (EC) report which specifically focuses on EU teacher educators, *Supporting Teacher Educators for better learning outcomes*, published in 2013, legislation based on the content of this report: *Council conclusions of 20 May 2014 on effective teacher education,* as well as a book published in 2017 by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), *Pedagogical Knowledge and the Changing Nature of the Teaching Profession.* Not only does the OECD book take up the key points raised in the 2013 European Commission report, but it also builds upon those points to make a more explicit case against EU teacher educators and their professionalism.

In this context, this thesis therefore aims to address the critical stance of EU policymakers towards the commitment of EU teacher educators by focusing on primary MFL teacher educators in an attempt to bring to light the impact of neoliberal ideology on this group of teaching professionals.

Comparative approach

I extend the scope of my research from a study of the situation concerning early foreign language learning in the French education system to the English and Scottish education systems in order to explore whether other EU primary MFL teacher educators were facing the same issues as their French colleagues and, if so, how they dealt with them. The comparative education research approach adopted is informed by my own personal status as an English native speaker and my professional background as a teacher within the two education systems of England and France. My educational background enables me to draw upon my academic grounding as a teacher of geography in England, where I taught secondary geography, then as a secondary teacher of English in the French system and, more recently, as a primary MFL teacher educator in the ESPE. I chose to include the Scottish education system because it is distinctly different to the English education system, despite the fact that Scotland is still part of the United Kingdom. Although the UK Parliament in Westminster is sovereign, under the system of devolution since 1998,

education in Scotland is overseen by the Scottish Government, and the Scotland Act 1998 gives the Scottish Parliament legislative control over all education matters. The Education (Scotland) Act 1980 is the principal legislation governing education in Scotland. In addition, it has its own qualification framework that is separate from the one set for England, Wales and Northern Ireland, although each one is recognised around the UK. England follows the National Curriculum whereas Scotland follows the Curriculum for Excellence (also known as the CfE) for nursery, primary and secondary schools. In addition to this, there are differences in the way England and Scotland approach research-informed teacher development in teacher education. In its final report, the BERA-RSA inquiry into *Research and teacher education* (2014) concludes that the UK "lacks a coherent plan for teacher research and development" as it is "fragmented, occasional and insufficiently informed by research", unlike Scotland where "it is now government policy to develop a systematic and coherent approach to [research-informed] career long professional learning" following the Donaldson review[1]:

> Recommendation 2
>
> Education policy should support the creation of a reinvigorated approach to 21st century teacher professionalism. Teacher education should, as an integral part of that endeavour, address the need to build the capacity of teachers, irrespective of career stage, to have high levels of pedagogical expertise, including deep knowledge of what they are teaching; to be self-evaluative; to be able to work in partnership with other professionals; and to engage directly with well-researched innovation. (Donaldson, 2010, p.84)

The general structure of each of the three education systems of England, France and Scotland is illustrated on the following page whilst details of the key features of each education system particularly concerning primary education and teacher education, are presented in appendix 10.

When undertaking a comparative study of education systems, it is important to compare countries which share sufficient characteristics to be comparable and yet present specific individual profiles to elucidate points of convergence and divergence. The choice of France, England and Scotland respects these criteria as the three countries share similar socio-economic and demographic characteristics, a common sociolinguistic and a shared

[1] https://www.bera.ac.uk/project/research-and-teacher-education

sociocultural heritage (Le Lièvre, 2008). Not only is the dominant foreign language studied in France English but French is the most taught language in England and Scotland. In addition, both French and English share the status as lingua francas; however, it is only in recent times that English has become the dominant global lingua franca as revealed by the following comments made by Jim Callaghan (former British Labour Prime Minister: April, 1976 – 4 May, 1979):

> As Shadow Foreign Secretary, Callaghan had delighted in playing to the largely anti-European audience of the 1972 Labour Party Conference, saying that they should defend 'the language of Chaucer and Shakespeare' against the threat of French becoming the first language of the EEC. (Davis, 2016, p.205)

Accordingly, I focus on the primary MFL teacher educators who specialise in French MFL in England and Scotland, and those who specialise in English MFL in France. In both cases, I focus on those teacher educators who teach their L2. I therefore exclude from my study those MFL teacher educators who, like myself teach their L1 (in my case – English) in the education system in which they work.

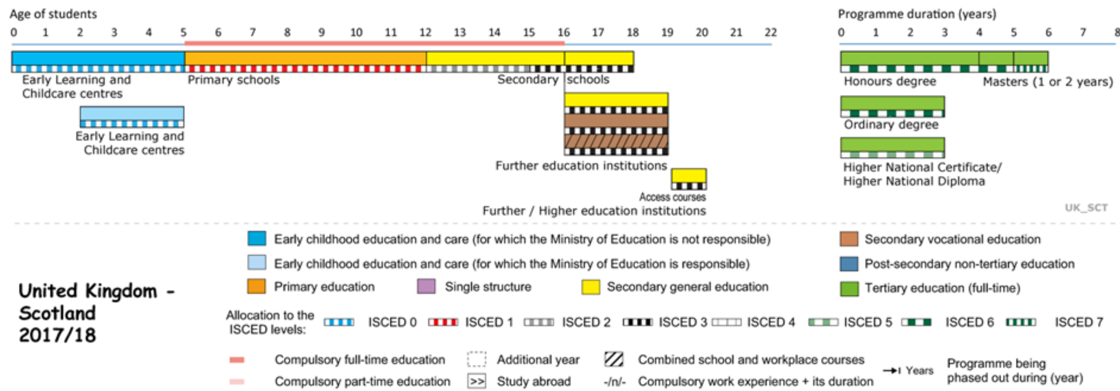

Figure 2 Education system of Scotland[1]

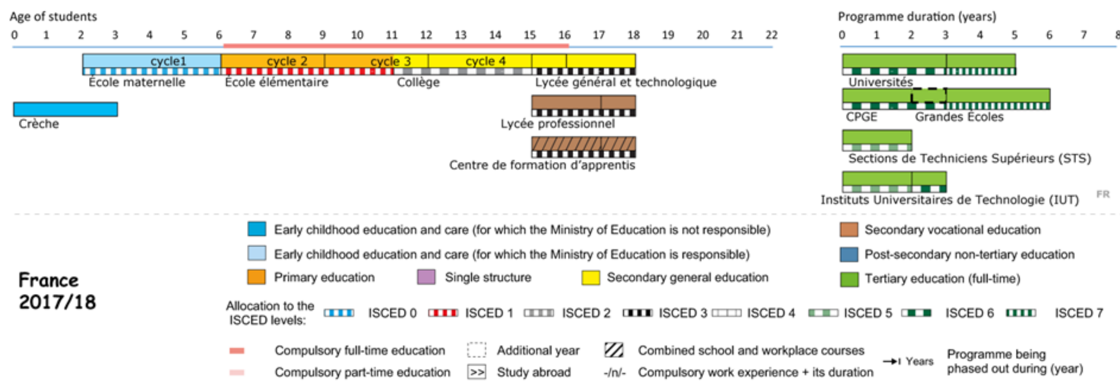

Figure 3 Education system of France[2]

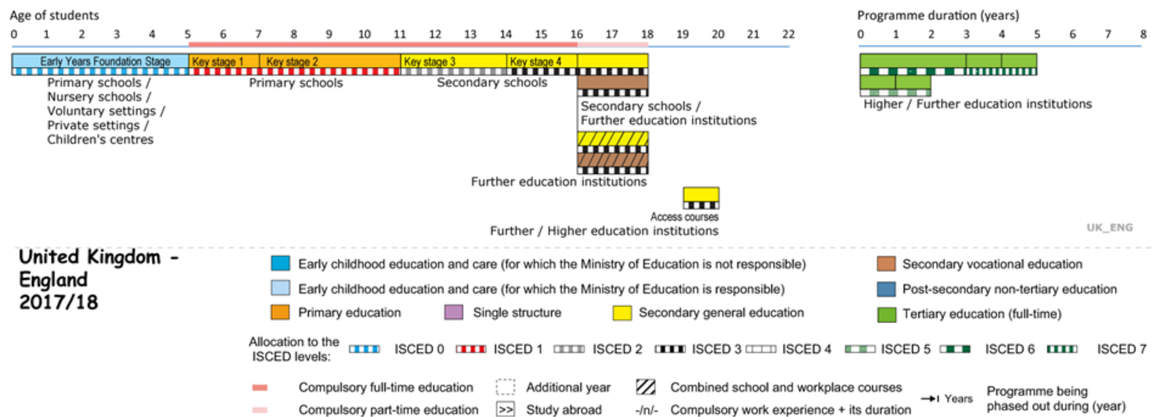

Figure 4 Education system of England[3]

[1]Source: Eurydice 2017-2018 https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/united-kingdom-scotland_en
[2] Source: Eurydice 2017-2018 https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/france_en
[3] Source:Eurydice 2017-2018 https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/united-kingdom-england_en

Research questions

The research question which guides this study is as follows:

How do Modern Foreign Language teacher educators demonstrate their commitment to primary foreign language teacher education in the education systems of England, France and Scotland despite the challenges they face in their work with primary MFL student teachers?

There are a set of sub-questions which emanate from this overarching research question:

1. *What personal contribution do they believe they make to primary MFL teacher education in terms of their professional standards, values and expertise?*
2. *What obstacles do they face in the course of their professional lives in achieving their goals?*
3. *What efforts do they make to achieve their goals and how successful do they believe they are on an individual level and collective level?*

These questions are examined against a theoretical framework of commitment as a unidimensional construct. Commitment is defined as a "volitional psychological bond reflecting dedication to and responsibility for a particular target" (Klein et al., 2012, p.137). The model suggests that committed individuals make cognitive and affective evaluations of a target which provide the necessary volition and embracement of a target for the formation of a commitment bond (ibid., p.140). In the context of this study, I therefore aim to identify the extent to which MFL teacher educators care about and take responsibility for the teaching and learning of primary MFL, and how they demonstrate that commitment to primary MFL teacher education, in terms of continuation, motivation and engagement as evidence of their commitment in the face of obstacles and challenges emanating from neoliberal policies. A more distal outcome of commitment is action; however, this is beyond the scope of this study.

I will now present the three hypotheses formulated:

Hypothesis 1

I expect to find parallels among the English, French and Scottish MFL teacher educators in their respective education systems in the way that they cognitively and affectively (beliefs and feelings) perceive primary foreign language teacher education in their local context and national context: they have made a conscious choice to care about, take responsibility for and dedicate themselves to primary foreign language teacher education in their respective education systems.

> AFFECTIVE PERCEPTIONS
>
> **Evidence of positive affect**: for example, love and passion for teaching generally and for their subject, MFL, value education and languages; care for children and their learning; empathy and sympathy for learners and student teachers; understanding, patience and tolerance.
>
> **Evidence of negative affect**: frustration, anger and sadness when things go wrong/not to plan or when individuals or what they value (such as children and their learning, MFL, teaching) are threatened.
>
> COGNITIVE PERCEPTIONS
>
> **Evidence of target salience**: a belief in the value of MFL for children and society e.g. cultural openness, humanistic values, cognitive awareness, self-assurance, etc, and a belief that they can achieve this through their expertise based on knowledge, research and experience to improve primary MFL at school in cooperation with their colleagues (self-efficacy, collective efficacy)
>
> **Evidence of taking responsibility and dedication for target**: teacher educators demonstrate second order teaching skills: content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge expertise through study and experience. Their commitment is reflected in the expertise they have built up over the years based on the choices they have made, their values, attitudes and professional standards.

Hypothesis 2

I expect to find that English, French and Scottish MFL teacher educators experience obstacles posed by neoliberal language policy measures that oppose, conflict or contradict the professional standards and values they hold and prevent them from doing what they believe and feel they need to do as primary MFL teacher educator professionals.

Hypothesis 3

I expect to find that English, French and Scottish MFL teacher educators demonstrate continuance (effort to continue and 'stick at it') and engagement (willing to expend time and energy) and motivation as outcomes of commitment. Evidence is found in interview data concerning career choice decisions, drive to do research, get qualified, and get relevant experience and their willingness to help and support colleagues and struggle to be recognised and to promote MFL. However, when they are challenged by obstacles posed by language policy measures that oppose, conflict or contradict the professional standards and values they hold and prevent them from doing what they believe and feel they need to do as primary MFL teacher educator professionals, they experience a reduced sense of self-efficacy and collective efficacy in their contribution towards primary MFL teacher educator provision.

Review of the Literature

The literature review aims to provide insight into what it means to be a teacher educator of MFL in terms of age-related pedagogy and SLA, the value of languages for cultural and intercultural awareness and its contribution to the development of positive social attitudes and the motivation to learn languages. It also explores the ideology of neoliberalism in order to identify the nature of the obstacles facing MFL teacher educators and comprehend why these professionals find it a challenge to deal with language policy measures that oppose, conflict or contradict those professional standards and values held by MFL teacher educators.

My study adopted two qualitative research methods in order to better understand the complex reality of MFL teacher education and the challenges facing MFL teacher educators. The first set of data was generated by discourse analysis of two documents. The first is a policy document published by European Commission. This document is an example of the paradoxical and incongruous discourse regarding (i) EU political ambitions to improve early language learning alongside (ii) its criticisms directed against EU teacher educators in terms of their commitment, professional values and standards. The second document analysed is published by the Scottish Council of Deans of

Education Languages Group (Scottish MFL teacher educators)[1] who have set up the *National Framework for Languages (NFfL)*[2] based on the principles of plurilingualism, diversity, policy and legislation, and transformative practices. The aim of the discourse analysis of the two documents was to identify evidence of ideology in the discourse of the EU document and evidence of commitment in the discourse of the Scottish MFL teacher educators' document.

The second set of data was obtained through in-depth semi-structured interviews with nine primary MFL teacher educators from England, France, Scotland and England, three from each country. There were two parts to the interview. The first part involved an exploration of the narrative life story of the participant in terms of their professional experiences, feelings and beliefs of the participants in their MFL teacher education working context, and the second part of the interview focused on three video clips of a French student teacher teaching MFL (English) to primary pupils in a rural primary school in France. The objective was to gather data relating to the perceptions and views of the participants towards this student teacher and identify through comments on his lesson and themes that ought to be addressed during debriefing in order to gain insight into their pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) as second order teachers.

Contribution to the field

Although there is a growing body of research into the impact of language education policy on Modern Foreign Language learning in a given society (Hilmarsson-Dunn, 2012; Scott, 2014), a great many studies in the field of MFL research have tended to concentrate more on MFL classroom experiences concerning MFL teaching and learning in the classroom itself (Courtney, 2014; Dahm, 2013; Kervran, 2008; Magnat, 2013; Nicolon-Monjo, 2010; Porter, 2014; Voise, 2007), on the professional identity of MFL teachers (Griffin, 2012), on language attitudes and classroom behaviour (Redinger, 2010), or on the construction of MFL teachers' beliefs and pedagogical content knowledge in the secondary classroom (Cooke, 2014) or on the move to develop practical classroom skills at the expense of theoretical underpinnings through research (Lawes, 2004). In this light, it would appear that the professionalism of MFL teacher educators in terms of their

[1] https://www.scde.ac.uk/networks/
[2] http://www.nffl.education.ed.ac.uk/national-framework-for-languages/

commitment and their professional values, and the contribution that this professional group make towards the provision of primary foreign language learning in a context dominated by the neoliberal agenda is an under-researched field and subsequently, the present study hopes to add to the knowledge and insights already provided by current research.

Structure and Content of the Thesis

To enhance readability this thesis is presented in six chapters and these are described below:

Chapter 2 describes the theoretical framework. The first part provides a review of the development of the construct of commitment employed in this study. The second part concerns the theoretical theory of self-efficacy and collective efficacy following Bandura (1993).

Chapter 3 provides a brief review of the literature. It opens up with a discussion of what defines a teacher educator and what distinguishes teacher educators from other teaching professionals. The various pathways to becoming a teacher educator in the three education systems under study are described. The next section considers what makes MFL teacher educators different to those teacher educators who teach other subjects. This part of the chapter will present the content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) that MFL teacher educators possess. The chapter finishes with an overview of the various challenges and obstacles that MFL teacher educators face as a consequence of the ideology of neoliberalism which is currently dominating language education policy.

Chapter 4 is focused on a presentation of the methodological approach adopted in the current study and includes an outline about how I position myself as an insider-researcher, the reasons for the case-study approach, the rationale for the design of the data collection tools used, how I proceeded in gaining access and collecting data, how I structured my analysis and arrived at my choice of themes and finally how I represent the data (for instance, SFL discourse analysis; the anonymising of interview transcripts, and the use of NVIVO to code data).

Chapter 5 reports on the results of the document analysis, the interviews on the participants professional life as a primary MFL teacher educator and on their observations and comments based on a video recording of a student teacher. There is first a description of the data and this is followed by a discussion in light of the literature discussed in previous chapters.

Chapter 6 presents a recapitulation of the purpose and findings in relation to each of the research sub-questions, limitations of this study, problems arising during the research and the chapter concludes with recommendations for future research.

Conclusion to chapter

In this chapter, I have presented the background to this research in terms of the macro-political context influenced by the neoliberal agenda and presented a brief insight into the challenges I faced in the classroom as a secondary MFL teacher, and then as a teacher educator. I have presented my research questions and my hypotheses and how I aim to conduct my research. This chapter closes with an overview of the content of each chapter in this thesis.

CHAPTER TWO: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

General introduction to chapter

In this thesis, my research question is concerned with how primary MFL teacher educators demonstrate their commitment to primary foreign language teacher education and therefore chapter 2 focuses on the construct of commitment as a unidimensional construct according to Klein et al., (2012). This chapter begins with an outline as to why this construct is considered to be unidimensional as opposed to multidimensional. It then presents the definition of commitment and the process model of commitment that can be applied to any workplace target which in the case of this thesis is 'primary MFL teacher education'. According to this model, there are four perceptual evaluations which are the most critical determinants of the formation of a commitment bond (positive affect, target salience, trust and perceived control) while the outcomes of commitment include continuation, motivation, engagement and action. The second part of this chapter explores Bandura's theory of self-efficacy given that self-efficacy is a key perceptual evaluation in the commitment model.

2.1 Commitment

For Huberman (1993)[1] the future success of schools and education depends on teacher commitment and the literature highlights the strong link between teacher commitment and teachers' personal passion for teaching (Day, 2004; Elliott & Crosswell, 2001; Fried, 1995). Indeed, Crosswell and Elliot (2004) highlight in their paper the extent to which commitment is "highly influential for not only a teacher's success during times of change but also for systems in seeking to bring about change" (ibid, p.2). In this light, it is clearer why EU policymakers focus on teacher educator commitment in their policy reports.

Commitment, as a construct, has been the focus of research for many decades. It has "a rich and long multidisciplinary history and has been examined from a variety of perspectives (for example, economic, behavioural, psychological) and conceptualized in a variety of ways" (Klein & Park, 2012, p.15). However, this has not always been the case. Beck remarked in 1960 that:

> there has been little formal analysis of the concept of commitment and little attempt to integrate it explicitly with current sociological theory. Instead, it has been treated as a primitive concept, introduced where the need is felt without explanation or examination of its character or credentials. As is often the case with unanalysed concepts used in an *ad hoc* fashion, the term has been made to cover a wide range of common-sense meanings, with predictable ambiguities. (Beck, 1960, p.32)

Paradoxically, despite the attention that commitment has attracted since then, there still remains a lack of consensus over its conceptualization as multidimensional or unidimensional. In terms of teacher commitment or teacher educator commitment as regards this study, it is important therefore to clarify the difference between these two conceptualisations of commitment given that EU policymakers consider commitment to be multidimensional whereas I choose to adopt commitment as a unidimensional construct on the arguments presented by Klein, Molloy, Brinsfield (2012). Commitment as a multidimensional construct dominates the literature and this is illustrated by Crosswell & Elliot (2004) when they state that the overarching assumption is that teacher commitment is not indeed one dimensional, but is made up of many layers and dimensions and that centers of commitment can be found in each teacher's professional

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[1] Huberman, M. (1993) The Lives of Teachers (J. Neufeld, Trans.). London : Cassell Villiers House

practice which are currently considered to be external to the teacher, such as the school or organisation, the career, professional knowledge base and the teaching profession itself. It can be concluded therefore that teacher commitment is multidimensional. These dimensions are thought to be external to the teacher but interconnected and have some influence on each other (Meyer and Allen, 1991). Understanding the orientation of an individual's commitment is crucial, *as a teacher may behave differently according to those aspects of the profession and organisation to which they are committed* (Crosswell & Elliott, 2004, pp.1-2) [my own emphasis]

In their paper, Crosswell and Elliott (2004) challenge the notion that teacher commitment is *exclusively* focused on external dimensions and argue that a teacher's "personal passion for teaching is central to their on-going commitment to, and engagement with the profession" (p.1). However, Klein, Molloy and Brinsfield (2012) go one step further to address this issue and set out the case for commitment to be reconceptualized as a unidimensional construct rather than a multidimensional one. They discuss the importance of avoiding the "predictable ambiguities" referred to by Becker (1960) as to why construct clarity and validity is so important when it comes to a concept such as commitment. Klein & Park (2016) explain that "whether a construct is uni-or multidimensional is a theoretical issue, because the dimensionality of a construct is based on theory and specified in the construct definition" (p.18). They go on to explain that the extent to which a construct is defined as coarse- or fine-grained is not the issue as one is not superior to the other; however, they point out that problems arise when:

> (1) ambiguity exists regarding the boundaries and structure of a construct (Molloy and Ployhart, 2012; (2) those boundaries partly or wholly incorporate other constructs thought to be antecedents and/or outcomes of the focal construct creating contamination and overestimating true relationships (Jaros, 2009); and/or (3) the construct is defined so broadly that the concept becomes 'stretched' beyond usefulness for scientific or practical purposes (Osigweh, 1989) (Klein & Park, 2016, p.18)

This is because a valid measure of an ambiguous construct is difficult to develop and is likely therefore to result in "contaminated and deficient measures" (Klein et al., 2012, p.131). As a consequence, it is difficult to have confidence in conclusions based on "observed patterns of substantive relationships with existing commitment measures" (ibid). Klein & Park (2016) argue the case that despite the current dominance of

multidimensional frameworks in the commitment literature, there is evidence that a unidimensional perspective to commitment existed early on in the commitment literature. As seen earlier, commitment dimensionality was not addressed explicitly in the 1960s; however, the construct of commitment was considered to be singular in the literature as it focused on “employee loyalty to employers” (p.15). Klein et Park (2016) refer, for instance, to Kanter’s (1968) work which although describes three types of commitment, it defines commitment “singularly” as “the willingness to social actors to give their energy and loyalty to social systems” (Kanter, 1968, p.499, cited in Klein & Park, 2016, p.15). They point out that the 1970s continued with the unidimensional perspective. It was at this time that the attitudinal view of commitment emerged and became prominent:

> Porter et al., (1974) defined commitment as identification with and involvement in a particular organization and further asserted that commitment is characterized by three factors: belief in and acceptance of goals and values; willingness to exert effort; and strong desire to maintain membership. Although described using multiple terms and indicators, this view presented commitment as unidimensional. (Klein et Park, 2016, p. 15)

Klein et al (2012) suggest that the emergence of commitment as a multidimensional construct resulted from researchers whose main objective was to understand why people stayed with organizations. Studying all targets through an organizational lens is a challenge because first of all presumptions about organizations may not hold for other targets and second such a lens implies that the organization is the primary target, which is no longer necessarily the case. The three-component model was revised by Meyer and Herscovitch (2001) to apply to other targets but the reformulated model was not a general model of commitment (Solinger et al., 2008).

An additional challenge is that over time the working environment for many people has changed substantially and it is therefore not as likely today as it was in the past for individuals to spend their whole career working in one organization. Subsequently, the organizational commitment literature focused “on the conditions in which commitment existed, factors leading to commitment, and indicators of commitment” (ibid, p.131). As a result, commitment was not only defined indirectly but in multiple ways (Etzioni, 1961; Kanter, 1968, Porter et al., 1974 cited in Klein et al, 2012, p.5). More recently, the three-component model (TCM) was subsequently developed using this inclusive approach

(Meyer & Allen, 1991; Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001). The TCM model holds that commitment is experienced as one or more of three commitment mindsets (affective, normative, and continuance), each resulting from different bases of commitment" (Klein et Park, 2016, p.16) and commitment is defined within this framework as "an internal force that binds an individual to a target (social or non-social) and/or to a course of action of relevance to that target" (Meyer, 2009, p.39). Klein et al., (2012) describe what the TCM model consists of:

> To account for the definitional disparity, the three-component model consists of several elements. First is the singular core essence of commitment defined most recently as "an internal force that binds an individual to a target (social or non-social) and/or to a course of action of relevance to that target" (Meyer, 2009, p.39). Second, that core essence is experienced as one or more multiple mindsets – affective ("want to" or desire), normative ("ought to" or obligation), and continuance ("have to" or cost). Third, each mindset emanates from a different set of underlying processes (e.g., investments/side bets and lack of alternatives for continuance). (Klein et al., 2012, pp. 131-132)

The inclusive approach meant that disparate conceptualizations of commitment were connected and that hence, "multidimensional frameworks have and continue to largely reflect *multiple bases for*, rather than *targets of*, commitment" (Klein & Park, 2016, p.16) [my own emphasis]. This is an issue because this has led to the concept being "stretched" (Osigweh, 1989) where the term 'commitment' represents "distinct psychological phenomena, indeterminate construct boundaries, and confounded definitions (Jaros, 2009, Solinger, van Olffen & Roe, 2008 cited in Klein et al., 2012, p.6). Conceptual stretching says Osigweh (1989) results in a quagmire as scholars attempt to address the issues raised by the imprecise concepts in the three-component model. Instead of splitting bond types, the commitment literature has essentially lumped them together under the label of commitment whilst those targets that should have been split have been lumped together (Klein et al., 2012).

Klein & Park (2016) present three conceptual arguments as to why commitment is a unidimensional construct rather than a multidimensional one. The first is based on the scientific law of parsimony which suggests that:

> a construct should be considered unidimensional unless there is compelling conceptual or empirical evidence to the contrary (…) In the case of TCM, an

> explicit nomological network has not been put forth explicating the expected relationships between the different mindsets (Bergman, 2006), or between the mindsets (or profiles of mindsets) and the singular cored essence of commitment. In addition, as pointed out by Gonzalez and Guillen (2008), there is no theoretical justification for there being three distinct mindsets as opposed to some other number. (Klein & Park, 2016, p.20)

A second conceptual issue is consistency. Indeed, Klein & Park (2016) point out that there is a lack of consistency because "the definitions of commitment have typically been unidimensional when developed *independently* of the organizational commitment literature" (p.20) [my own emphasis]. Studying *all* targets through an organizational lens is a challenge for the reason mentioned earlier that people are not as likely to spend their whole career working in one organization and consequently, the relevance of the construct is questioned: "commitment is no longer important, may not be desirable, and should not be expected" (Klein, 2012, p.132). However, the authors do not agree with the view that commitment should be considered irrelevant. This is because targets other than the organization such as commitment to a "project, team or goal may be, for example, more critical for temporary or contract workers or employees of joint ventures" (ibid). Klein et al., (2012) therefore propose that "a 'target free' conceptualization facilitates the examination of the multiple, simultaneously held commitments in a more directly comparable manner" (ibid, p.132).

The third conceptual issue is related to confounded elements in multidimensional frameworks. The various dimensions in multidimensional models almost all reflect "different targets, types of psychological bonds, antecedents of psychological bonds, or indicators of a psychological bond (Klein & Park, 2016, p.20); however, they illustrate how "the inclusion of related but distinct constructs, and the distinct types of psychological bonds, have contributed to commitment being unnecessarily viewed as multidimensional" (ibid). They point out that there are concepts that should be distinguished from commitment and which in their opinion are antecedents of commitment rather than commitment itself such as exchanges and/or investments, and goal and/or value congruence (Klein et al., 2009).

On the other hand, there are prior commitment conceptualizations that the authors believe should be instead considered as *consequences of commitment* and include motivation or

behavioural intentions as well as continuation with the target. Motivation is defined as a set of forces that initiate intentions, desires, obligations, or the need to act, or to a specific course of action and continuation with the target (Klein & Park, 2016, p.21).

The next area that the authors challenge is the notion that 'commitment' applies to *all* workplace bonds because although a multitude of psychological bonds are formed in the workplace, it is possible to differentiate between those bonds by both target and the type of attachment. They point out that this assumption is a throw-back to the inclusive approach which focused on the different types of psychological bonds that individuals form with organizations. Klein et al., (2012) therefore distinguish commitment from attachment or staying because if commitment is synonymous with 'staying' in an organization then all of the different bonds that hold people to a target can be taken into account; however, if "commitment is more than just staying, then not all bonds should be viewed as commitment" (ibid., p.8). They explain that "different bond types arise from differing circumstances and have different psychological and behavioural implications and should not be lumped together and called commitment" (Klein & Park, 2016, p.21). The authors therefore propose that commitment be redefined on the basis of three primary objectives:

> (1) conceptualizing commitment as a unique type of psychological attachment or bond to highlight the distinctiveness of the commitment construct; (2) doing so in a manner applicable to all commitment targets; and (3) drawing the construct boundaries narrowly to exclude perceived confounds in prior definitions. (Klein & Park, 2016, p.17)

In formulating their definition of commitment, Klein et al., (2012) also took into account definitional elements that accentuate the distinctiveness of commitment in terms of *dedication to the target*, *a vow or pledge that binds one to the target*, *felt responsibility toward the target* or *a willingness to give of oneself for the target* and, finally, *a sense of volition*.

Taking all the previous points into account, Klein, Molloy and Brinsfield (2012) formulate the following definition of commitment which I adopt in this thesis:

> **Definition.** Based on the above analysis, we concluded that commitment is a specific type of psychological bond between an individual and a target. This perceived bond is a socially constructed psychological state, differentiated from

> other bonds in that the individual does not psychologically merge with the target but does make a conscious choice to care about and dedicate him/herself to the target. More concisely, commitment is defined here as *a volitional psychological bond reflecting dedication to and responsibility for a particular target*. (Klein et al., 2012, p.137)

The authors explain that this definition presents construct clarity because it is precise enough to differentiate commitment from other types of bonds and constructs which are related; yet general enough to "capture the construct domain and to be applicable to any target or context" and it establishes that a "perceived volitional bond with a target characterized by responsibility and dedication" are the necessary but sufficient conditions for commitment (ibid). From their perspective, if an individual makes a "volitional choice to be dedicated to a target, then it is commitment, regardless of the presence or absence of internal (i.e., moral) or external pressures" (ibid., p.139).

Process Model of Commitment to Any Workplace Target

The process model of commitment to any workplace target (Klein et al., 2012) shown in figure 5 illustrates the expected relationships and processes that lead to the perception of a bond of commitment based on the conceptual definition of commitment above as proposed by Klein et al., (2012). This model shows those commitment antecedents or factors (*individual characteristics, target characteristics, interpersonal factors, organizational factors* and *societal factors*) that influence the *cognitive and affective perceptual evaluations* based on what is observed or sensed regarding the environment and "provide the necessary volition and embracement of a target for formation of a commitment bond" within an individual (p.140). The cognitive and affective perceptions determine whether a commitment bond is experienced with a target, and the degree of that bond. The model illustrates the proximal outcomes of the commitment bond experienced, continuation and motivation, and the more distal outcome, action, which is secondary. Klein & Park (2016) point out that basically, "committed individuals are less likely to withdraw from the target of that commitment (p.18).

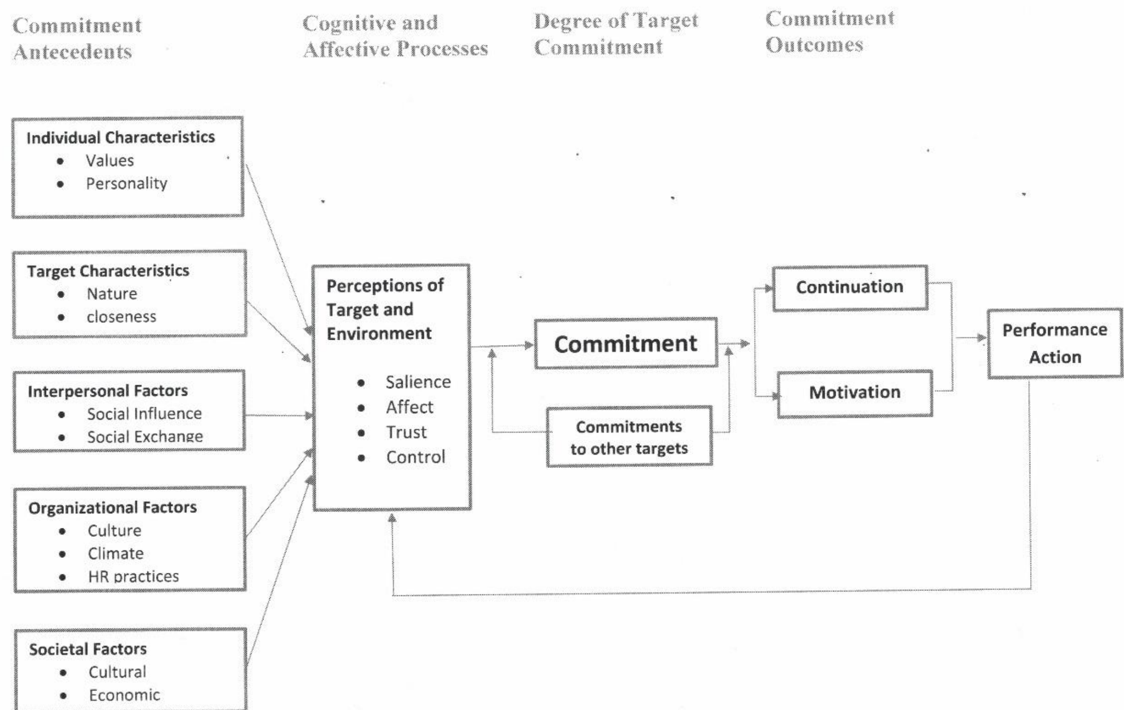

***Figure 5 Process model of commitment to any workplace target*[1]**

The model shows that a feedback loop exists between the outcomes of commitment and perceptions of target and environment. This loop cycles back to influence subsequent perceptions of target and environment and therefore determines future commitment. The authors distinguish four perceptual evaluations which they consider to be the most critical because they are the immediate determinants regarding the formation of a commitment bond: positive affect, target salience, trust and perceived control. I will now present a brief outline of the influence of the four proximal states on the formation of a commitment bond before moving on to an outline of the more distal commitment antecedents which influence the development of commitment *through* the four proximal

[1] Process model of commitment to any workplace target adapted from Klein et al., (2012, p. 140)

states: individual characteristics, target characteristics, interpersonal factors, organizational factors and societal factors (Klein & Park, 2016, p.18).

The four proximal states: perceptions of target and environment

Positive affect

Positive affect is held as the most important perceptual evaluation because research indicates that a person is more likely to dedicate themselves to and care about a positively evaluated target than to a negative evaluated one and are generally motivated to embrace situations which are pleasurable and satisfying rather than painful or menacing.

Target salience

Salience is based on field theory (Lewin, 1943). Following Lewin, Hobman & Walker (2015) explain that two facets of the field are assessed when characterizing the field:

> the objective features of the environment, i.e. nonpsychological factors, which serve as boundary conditions on how humans act in the field; and the subjective interpretation of the environment, i.e. psychological factors, which reflect how actors in the system perceive and interact with the immediate objective environment. But importantly, only those factors, which have demonstrable effects on the individual, group, or other entity under study, no matter how distal or unconscious, are considered to be part of the field (Hobman & Walker, 2015, p.2)

The salient features or those features in the immediate objective environment which have "demonstrable effects" are those which are more likely to be noticed by an individual because of psychological proximity and are therefore given more weight in people's sense making. Not only does this influence commitment bond strength but individuals are more like to "care about salient elements" which in turn facilitates the formation of a commitment bond (Klein et al., 2012, p.140).

Trust

Given that dedication and responsibility is central to their definition of commitment, Klein et al., (2012) consider 'trust' a critical perceptual evaluation. They "posit that a certain level of trust i.e., to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the intentions or behaviour or another (Rousseau et al., 1998) is needed before one will

reciprocate with dedication or responsibility for a target (Klein et al., 2012, p.140). Additionally, trusted targets are likely to be evaluated in a more positive light (Dirks & Ferrin, 2001) which in turn raises positive affect.

Perceived control

They finally turn to "perceived control as a key perceptual evaluation based on the theory of planned behaviour (Ajzen, 1991) and social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1997)" given that it is more likely for people to dedicate themselves to targets if they sense that they have some control over the situation and confidence in their ability (self-efficacy and expertise) to achieve desired outcomes (Klein et al., 2012, p.141). Ajzen (1991) describes what perceived behavioural control involves:

> The present view of perceived behavioural control, however, is most compatible with Bandura's (1977, 1982) concept of perceived self-efficacy which "is concerned with judgments of how well one can execute courses of action required to deal with prospective situations" (Bandura, 1982, p. 122). Much of our knowledge about the role of perceived behavioural control comes from the systematic research program of Bandura and his associates (…) These investigations have shown that people's behaviour is strongly influenced by their confidence in their ability to perform it (i.e., by perceived behavioural control). Self-efficacy beliefs can influence choice of activities, preparation for an activity, effort expended during performance, as well as thought patterns and emotional reactions (see Bandura, 1982, 1991). (Ajzen, 1991, p.184)

Distal commitment antecedents

The more distal commitment antecedents in the commitment model are included on the basis that (i) they are related to the perceptual evaluations, (ii) that they are applicable across targets and (iii) logically consistent with the construct definition (Klein et al., 2012, p.141). The organizing framework for presenting the included antecedents in this model is based on *level of analysis*. Consequently, antecedents are listed from micro level (individual) to macro level (societal) given that antecedents that are congruent in level with the commitment target are likely to be the most salient in accordance with field theory (Lewin, 1943) and multi-level theorizing (Klein & Kozlowski, 2000). The first to be considered are *individual characteristics.* Individual characteristics linked to the key perceptual evaluations include for instance, affect as a dispositional tendency (Watson & Clark, 1984), propensity to trust (Rotter, 1971) and perceptions of control (Rotter, 1966).

Then comes *target characteristics*, first, in terms of the nature of a target such as the target type or specificity (the more tangible the target the greater the commitment) and also in terms of psychological proximity or conceptual distance. The authors point out that spatial and temporal proximity influences psychological closeness. Characteristics of the target influence commitment for example, legitimacy or reputation are salient perceived evaluations of trust. Third, interpersonal factors such as social influence and social exchange facilitate a commitment bond forming because of their impact on identified perceptual evaluations as research indicates that group interactions influence group membership salience (Haslam, 2004) and that building social capital increases trust (Nooteboom, 2007). As far as *organizational factors* are concerned, research indicates that they influence identified perceptual evaluations in terms of perceptions of control (Leifer & Mills, 1996), a department's culture may influence an individual's commitment to the department and its goals, climate perceptions could influence commitment either positively or negatively depending on the focal climate.

Commitment to other Targets

The process model also takes into account commitment to other targets which is a *moderator* of commitment; however, the capacity for a person to form commitments to multiple workplace targets is considered possible as long as the commitments to the different targets are complementary, the climate is cooperative and have compatible demands as "synergies may accentuate relationships" (Klein et al., 2012, p.143).

Commitment Outcomes

Klein et al., (2012) examined many commitment outcomes but the two proximal outcomes which are distinguished across targets are *continuation* and *motivation*. They indicate that like commitment antecedents, the outcomes depend to a great extent upon the targets and can range from negative to positive or both (ibid, p.143).

Continuation

Continuation reflects both "intentions to continue with the target and behavioural 'sticking with' the target" while the expected duration of the association is not necessarily indefinite because of changing circumstances (e.g. a committed employee leaving an

organization to leave a transferred spouse) or the nature of the target (e.g. a goal or project team) which may result in the duration being brief (ibid).

Motivation

Commitment should result in the "allocated effort towards *pursuing* (e.g. goal, decision), *supporting* (e.g. person, organization), or *participating in* (e.g. union, program) that target" (Klein et al., 2012, p.143) [my own emphasis]. The nature of the level depends on both the commitment level and the context. The authors point out that commitment is one of several motivation determinants and therefore when determining motivation at a given point it is recommended that other factors such as 'needs' or 'incentives' are examined given that motivation and commitment are indeed distinct constructs (ibid). As a reminder, prior definitions "describe commitment as a force, include motivational terms or consider commitment as a facet of motivation (e.g., Meyer et al., (2004)" which sets this reconceptualized definition of commitment apart (Klein et al., 2012, p.143).

Engagement

The authors also consider *engagement* as an outcome of commitment as it is often defined in motivational terms. Engagement is understood in this thesis as a sense of duty or responsibility towards a target. Despite the many definitions of this notion which result in "differing degrees of conceptual overlap among motivation, engagement, and commitment", engagement does relate positively to commitment. Consequently, they consider that "assuming engagement reflects the willingness to expend personal energies on behalf of a target, or the harnessing of oneself to a role, engagement is an expected, motivational outcome of commitment, but is distinct from commitment itself" (ibid., pp. 143-144).

Action

Following Ajzen and Fishbein's (1980) theory of reasoned action, the authors consider action to be a more distal secondary outcome that does not necessarily result from commitment but from the proximal outcomes of continuation, motivation and engagement. They do not refer to *performance* in their model because performance follows action and is not a relevant outcome for all targets:

> Positive relationships between commitment and inrole performance are often demonstrated (e.g., Klein et al., 1999; Meyer et al., 2002), but the effects of commitment on performance are indirect, operating through the identified proximal outcomes and action. Indeed, our model helps explain inconsistent findings and small average effect sizes in meta-analyses regarding the commitment-performance relationship. Because of the numerous mediators and moderators between commitment and performance, there are ample opportunities for commitment to not translate into performance. (Klein et al., 2012, p.144)

Feedback

The Klein et al., (2012) process model includes a feedback loop between the commitment outcomes, both proximal and distal, and the cognitive and affective processes of perceptions of target and environment:

> Our model includes a feedback loop from proximal outcomes and actions back to perceptions of the target and environment. This feedback loop reflects the dynamic nature of commitment, accounts for perceptual factors such as affect resulting from as well as causing commitment, and reflects the reconciliation (Mowday et al., 1982) of the psychological and behavioral commitment perspectives (i.e., the feedback loop recognizes the reciprocal influence of one's actions and perceptions on workplace commitments over time).

Implications for this study

On the basis of the conceptual arguments laid out above I adopt this model in this thesis to examine how MFL teacher educators demonstrate their commitment to early MFL learning and teaching; however, the process model of commitment to any workplace target (Klein et al., (2012) that is presented in this section is indeed a *general* model as it is applicable to all workplace targets and contexts. Consequently, on adopting this model in this thesis I will adapt it to the specific target and contexts that I focus on in this research. Klein et al., (2012) point out themselves that variation across targets is expected in terms of "the relative importance of the identified causes and consequences" and "phenomenological differences between commitments to entities (groups or organizations), individuals (e.g., a specific co-worker or supervisor), and actions (e.g., ideas, decisions, or goals)" (p.144), suggesting a need for:

> a logically meaningful and parsimonious typology for categorizing commitment targets based on phenomenological differences … [and] further conceptual development regarding the interdependencies among simultaneously held

> workplace commitments and their detrimental or synergistic effects. (Klein et al., 2012, p.144)

In addition to taking these phenomenological differences into account, they consider it necessary to identify target or context specific differences. They propose the following questions that I will bear in mind in this thesis:

> For example, how might the relative importance of the antecedents and outcomes vary across targets? What are the specific influences and outcomes most relevant for particular targets and contexts? Under what conditions are commitment outcomes dysfunctional for the individual, target, and/or employer? (Klein et al., 20121, p.145)

They also suggest that because their reconceptualization of commitment is distinct from prior constructs of commitment as multidimensional (that overlap with other constructs such as identification, satisfaction and in-role performance) then any measure of commitment that is consistent with their construct definition will be less confounded with aspects and measures of these other constructs. However, bearing in mind that EU policymakers consider that the "varying levels of commitment" of teacher educators is "an issue of quality" for EU education systems, it is consequently necessary to present what is understood in the literature concerning this concept of 'performance' particularly because when conceptualizing performance, there are two aspects to performance, a *behavioural aspect or 'action'* and an *outcome aspect of performance* (Campbell, 1990). Sonnentag & Frese (2005) explain that an action refers to what a person does in the work situation and encompasses behaviours "such as assembling parts of a car engine, selling personal computers, teaching basic reading skills to elementary school children, or performing heart surgery" (p.5). However, they point out that only behaviour which is relevant for the organizational goals is incorporated into the definition: "Performance is what the organization hires one to do, and do well" (Campbell et al., 1993, p. 40 cited in Sonnentag & Frese, 2005, p.5). In this light, judgemental and evaluative processes define performance rather than the action itself. In addition, according to Campbell et al., (1993) the only actions that can be considered to constitute performance are those which can be scaled and therefore measured.

Sonnentag & Frese (2005) state that the "outcome aspect refers to the consequence or result of the individual's behaviour" (p.5). Using the behaviours described above as

examples, they explain that performance outcomes would refer to the overall number of car engines assembled, the reading proficiency of the pupils in a school, annual sales figures, or the number of successful heart operations in a given hospital (ibid). Although, it is likely that there is an empirical relationship between behavioural and outcome aspects this is not always the case because outcome aspects of performance also depend on factors other than an individual's behaviour. Sonnentag & Frese (2005) present an analogy of a teacher who teaches reading skills perfectly to the pupils in the class (behavioural aspect of performance), but because of intellectual deficits, several children present ongoing reading difficulties (outcome aspect of performance). In contrast, a sales employee in the telecommunication business who demonstrates a mediocre performance when interacting with potential customers (behavioural aspect of performance), yet sells a high number of mobile phones (outcome aspect of performance) because they are currently in demand (ibid, p.5).

Bearing this in mind, it is therefore extremely difficult to establish an empirical link between the action of an MFL teacher educator in the English teacher education system, for instance, when working in the teacher education classroom or when visiting student teachers in their primary classrooms (behavioural aspect of performance), and the results of surveys such as the European Survey on Language Competences in 2012 which found that English pupils at the end of compulsory schooling had not significantly improved their levels in their first MFL over a ten year period (outcome aspect of performance).

However, although the term 'performance' encompasses the term 'action', Klein et al. hold that the effects of commitment on performance are indirect as a consequence of "numerous mediators and moderators" (Klein et al., 2012, p.144) making performance an irrelevant outcome. This is a valid point as illustrated by the examples provided by Sonnentag & Frese (2005) above and in the case, I presented concerning the ESLC results in 2012 on pages 12-13 of this study. However, the behavioural aspect of performance (action) as well as the outcome aspect of performance (however distal, and prone to mediators and moderators) do feed back into the perceptions (particularly 'perceived control') of target (primary MFL teaching and learning) within the environment (both micro and macro) as proximal antecedents of primary MFL teacher educator

commitment. Given that these antecedents involve cognitive and affective perceptions they influence self-efficacy and collective efficacy beliefs.

Despite the fact that establishing a relationship between MFL teacher educator commitment and performance is beyond the parameters of this study, I consider that performance in its entirety should be mentioned in the research for construct clarity given that the performance concept encompasses both action and outcome. Successful performance, for instance, is likely to produce a positive feedback loop and may have an impact on self-efficacy or collective efficacy. Consequently, I replace the term 'action' with 'performance' in 'the process model of commitment to any workplace target' conceptualized by Klein et al., (2012), albeit, I do not intend to explore the relationship between performance and commitment in this thesis given that it is a distal outcome and there are too many mediating factors involved.

2.2 Self-efficacy as a determinant of commitment

In this section I discuss the concept of self-efficacy and how it relates to how a teacher develops their expertise as a teacher educator. This involves certain processes that teachers undergo when they move from being a novice status to expert status. This process underlines the connection between self perceptions of self-efficacy, collective efficacy and the target.

2.2.1 Teacher educator expertise

Teachers move through different stages as they gain experience. At the very beginning motivation is crucial to overcome the challenges of frequent errors and the need to acquire rules in order to function and continue. There are terms such as 'differentiation' or "higher-order" questions which remain elusive for the **novice** while all the other aspects of school life are being assimilated bit by bit. Berliner (1995) explains that this is the stage when the objective facts and features of situations are learnt and "real-world experiences" appears to the learner to be far more important than verbal information" (p.47). The novice, with time and experience, becomes an **advanced beginner** and experience is "melded with verbal knowledge, where episodic and case knowledge is

built up" (ibid). Connections become clearer and similarities across contexts are identified; however, understanding is limited because without meaningful past experiences explains Berliner, these teachers are unsure and do not know what to do: "strategic knowledge – when to ignore or break rules and when to follow them – is developed at this stage as context begins to guide behavior" (ibid). Then the teacher with further experience motivation to succeed become **competent** teachers when there is an acceptance of full personal responsibility for classroom instruction. Not all teachers reach this level as research indicates that some teachers remain fixed at a less than competent level (Borko, 1992). These teachers make conscious choices about what they are going to do, set priorities and plan ahead. Those that progress to the **proficient** stage, develop a more "intuitive" sense of the situation and they view situations holistically. They recognize patterns as similar and can therefore predict patterns more precisely. Berliner (1995) categorizes the expert teacher as arational because they have an intuitive understanding of the situation and are able to sense "in nonanalytic and nondeliberative ways the appropriate response to be made" (p.48). They appear effortless yet tasks carried out by experts generally work; however, when there is a problem or an anomaly: "deliberate analytic processes are brought to bear upon the situation. When things go smoothly, however, experts rarely appear to be reflective about their performance" (ibid., p.48).

In order to move from novice to expert there has to be motivation. However, there also has to be a belief that it is possible to progress. Being positive is not only an effective way of helping children succeed in the classroom but it has a positive effect on adults at this early stage in their professional development. Expert teacher educators are aware of that and understand that these 'novices' need to feel secure in their teaching role before they can move on to greater teacher proficiency. For this reason, during debriefing a teacher educator will focus on all those aspects that are positive so that the student teacher recognizes what they should reinforce in their practice in an encouraging manner before discussing those areas where the novice teacher needs specific advice and help. Positivity is incorporated into the debriefing process not only to create a 'nice atmosphere' but to set up an effective learning environment because they are aware that any teacher in the classroom is not just 'doing' tasks but is bringing his or her whole 'being' into that task.

Following Marx, Block and Gray (2015, p.4) explain that what differentiates human beings from animals is the reflection that humans give to their labour before, during and after it takes place and their affective investment in that labour. They refer to Marx's description of what constitutes the 'alienation of labour' that demonstrates the negative impact on workers when affective investment is absent:

> What constitutes the alienation of labor? First, the fact that labor is external to the worker, i.e. it does not belong to his essential being; that in his work, therefore, he does not affirm himself but denies himself, does not feel content but unhappy, does not develop freely his physical and mental energy but mortifies his body and ruins his mind. The worker therefore only feels himself outside his work, and in his work feels outside himself … his labor is … not voluntary but coerced; it is forced labor. It is therefore not the satisfaction of a need; it is merely a means to satisfy needs external to it. (Marx, 1844, p.259)[1]

In this way, it is possible to understand why teacher educators take into account not only what student teachers actually do but also their feelings regarding the choices they made in an attempt to raise confidence and a sense of self-efficacy. In the next section, I will present Bandura's theory on self-efficacy in order to understand why confidence and a sense of self-efficacy is so important for a teacher's progression from novice to expert.

2.2.2 Bandura on Self-efficacy

The research conducted by Bandura (1993) suggests that it is the teachers' beliefs in their personal efficacy to motivate and promote learning that affects the types of learning environments they create and the level of academic progress their students achieve. According to Bandura (1993) people's self-efficacy beliefs regarding their capabilities to exercise control over their own level of functioning and over events that affect their lives influence how people feel, think, motivate themselves and behave. Self-efficacy beliefs produce these various effects through four major processes. He lists them as cognitive, motivational, affective and selection processes. We will focus only on the first three aspects of these processes which directly influence learning and the learning environment.

[1] See also the pdf version retrieved from: https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/download/pdf/Economic-Philosophic-Manuscripts-1844.pdf (page 30)

2.2.2.1 Cognitive processes

As far as cognitive processes are concerned, Bandura (1991) found that the stronger the perceived self-efficacy and the higher the goal challenges people set for themselves, the firmer is their commitment to these goals. This is due to individuals creating anticipatory scenarios through which they rehearse the situation facing them. Those who visualise success scenarios generally have a high sense of efficacy and their anticipatory scenario provides a support for success. Those who visualise failure scenarios dwell on the many things that may go wrong. This self-doubt has a crippling effect. A study by Collins (1982) revealed that people who had self-doubt performed poorly because they lacked the sense of efficacy necessary to use their skills well.

Another aspect concerns individuals' ability to predict events and to develop ways to control those events that affect their lives and the lives of others. This requires effective cognitive processing of information that contains many ambiguities and uncertainties. Bandura highlights that it requires a strong sense of efficacy to remain task orientated in the face of pressing situational demands and failures that have social repercussions – a situation which many teachers may face.

He goes on to outline research which indicates that the way in which individuals construe ability affects cognitive functioning. Whereas some children regard ability as an acquirable skill that can be increased by gaining knowledge and competencies, others view ability as an inherent capacity where performance is diagnostic of their inherent intellectual capacities. These children prefer tasks that minimize errors and reveal their proficiency at the expense of expanding their knowledge and competencies. Added to that they view the successes of others as belittling their own perceived ability (Bandura & Dweck, 1988; Dweck & Leggett, 1988; NichoIls, 1984 as cited in Bandura, 1993). In this way, **the inherent capacity view** fosters a self-diagnostic focus aimed at protecting a positive evaluation of one's competence.

The acquirable skill view fosters a task-diagnostic focus aimed at expanding one's competence and mastering challenges. Many individuals assess their capabilities in relation to the attainment of others. Research by Marshall and Wienstein, (1984) and Rosenholtz & Simpson (1984) indicates that the unremitting comparative evaluations that

pupils are subjected to carry strong efficacy implications: seeing oneself surpassed by others undermines personal efficacy, resulting in an increase in erratic analytic thinking and this progressively impairs performance attainments. By contrast seeing oneself gain progressive mastery strengthens personal efficacy and so fosters efficient thinking and enhances performance attainments. This confirms that social comparison affects performance through its impact on self-regulatory mechanisms (Bandura and Jourdan, 1991).

The way in which **performance feedback** is given is important because performance feedback that focuses on achieved progress emphasises personal capabilities resulting in enhanced performance, whereas feedback that focuses on shortfalls highlights deficiencies with resulting deterioration of performance.

2.2.2.2 Motivational processes

Human motivation is cognitively generated as people motivate themselves and guide their actions anticipatorily by the exercise of forethought. Bandura (1993) explains that people 'form beliefs about what they can do and anticipate likely outcomes of prospective actions' and in particular 'they set goals for themselves and plan courses of action designed to realize valued futures' (Bandura, 1993, p.128). Forethought is translated into incentives and appropriate action through self-regulatory mechanisms. Bandura presents three different forms of cognitive motivators which include casual attributions, outcome expectancies and cognized goals. The corresponding theories are attribution theory, expectancy-value theory and goal theory.

Attribution theory is about how self-efficacy beliefs influence casual attributions. People who regard themselves as highly efficacious ascribe their failures to insufficient effort whereas those who regard themselves as inefficacious attribute their failures to low ability.

In **expectancy-value theory**, motivation is governed by the expectation that behaviour will produce certain outcomes and also by the perceived value of these outcomes. Bandura points out that as people act on their beliefs about what they can do as well as on their beliefs about the likely outcomes of performance, the motivating potential of

outcome expectancies is partly governed by self-beliefs of capability. Many people do not pursue attractive options because they judge that they lack the capabilities to achieve them.

The **goal theory** postulates that behaviour is motivated and guided by cognized goals operating in the present rather than pulled by an unrealized future state. Goals operate, says Bandura, largely through self-influence processes. By making self-satisfaction conditional on matching adopted goals, people give direction to their behaviour and create incentives to persist in their efforts until they fulfil their goals and are prompted to intensify their efforts by discontent with substandard performances. Those who have a strong belief in their capabilities exert greater effort when they fail to master the challenge.

2.2.2.3 Affective processes

People's beliefs in their capabilities affect how much stress and depression they experience in threatening or difficult situations as well as their level of motivation. Bandura's research indicates that people who believe they can exercise control over threats do not conjure up disturbing thought patterns. In contrast, those who experience high anxiety arousal and dwell on their coping deficiencies view their environment as fraught with danger. These individuals tend to magnify the severity of possible threats and worry about things that rarely happen. Perceived 'coping self-efficacy' regulates avoidance behaviour as well as anxiety arousal: the stronger the sense of 'coping self-efficacy', the bolder people are in taking on taxing and threatening activities (Bandura, 1988). This of course implies that a weak sense of 'coping self-efficacy' will result in people avoiding activities or situations they deem challenging.

2.2.2.4 Teachers' self-efficacy

Disruptive and low achieving pupils may leave teachers with a low sense of efficacy to fulfil academic demands and this may take a stressful toll. Bandura states that a low sense of efficacy to exercise control produces depression as well as anxiety. Chwalisz, Altmaier & Russell (1992) provide evidence that teachers with **high perceived coping efficacy** manage academic stressors by directing their efforts at resolving problems. Gibson and

Dembo (1984) found that teachers, who have a high sense of instructional efficacy, devote more classroom time to academic learning, provide students who have difficulty learning with the help they need to succeed, and praise them for their accomplishments. In contrast, teachers, who have **low perceived coping efficacy,** avoid dealing with academic problems and spend more time on non-academic pastimes. Woolfolk and Hoy (1990) found that they readily give up on students if they do not get quick results and criticize them for their failures and favour a custodial orientation that relies heavily on extrinsic inducements and negative sanctions to get students to study. In extreme cases, they risk occupational burnout as they turn their effort inward to relieve their emotional distress. Occupational burnout involves physical and emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation of the people with whom one is working and feelings of futility concerning personal accomplishments.

2.2.2.5 Collective school efficacy

Bandura (1993) describes research that shows that teachers operate collectively within an interactive social system rather than as isolates and that accordingly the belief system of teaching staff creates a school culture which can either have a vitalising or a demoralising effect on how well the school functions as a social system (Brookover, Beady, Flood, Schweitzer & Wisenbaker, 1979; Good and Brophy, 1986; Purkey and Smith, 1983; Rutter, Maughan, Mortimore, Ouston, & Smith, 1979 as cited in Bandura, 1993).

Bandura explains that in activities requiring low system interdependence, members of the group need to coordinate their efforts, but the system's level of attainment is the sum total of the outcomes produced independently. An example of an activity which corresponds to this description is that concerning the requirement for French Master's students to obtain level B2 CEFRL to validate their degree (presented in more detail in chapter 3 - section 3.4.2.1). It is a low system of interdependence as English teachers are expected, though not forced, to coordinate their efforts to ensure moderation. The system's level of attainment involves the total number of students who obtain the level B2 which is the sum of the number of students from each of the different classes of M2 who obtain this level. The level of academic progress (i.e. the number of students who achieve B2) achieved by an ESPE largely reflects the summed contributions of each of the HE MFL teacher

educators in their individual classrooms and this contributes to this groups' collective sense of efficacy. Consequently, in an ESPE in which the teacher educator staff collectively judge themselves as powerless to get students to achieve academic success in reaching level B2, a collective sense of academic futility may pervade. In contrast, teacher educators who collectively judge themselves capable of promoting academic success imbue their ESPE with a positive atmosphere for development. Such feelings of powerlessness may also be influenced by the type of leadership experienced. Bandura explains that those institutions that have leaders who encourage their staff to work together with a strong sense of purpose in the belief that they can surmount obstacles to educational attainment are likely to be more successful. In this context, ESPE MFL teacher educators may benefit from a leader who is concerned that the students genuinely work to level B2 and provide as much support as possible to enable the teacher educators to accomplish this in terms of extra teaching time, training courses, Information Technology equipment and resources. However, there may be other leaders whose primary concern is that the students validate a level B2 irrespective of their actual CEFR level in an attempt to ensure that the overall number of students who validate the Master's degree is as high as possible.

A feeling of powerlessness is also likely to develop when the complexities of academic demands increase and scholastic deficits become increasingly salient. This can lead to teacher educators viewing their institutions as declining in instructional efficacy. MFL teacher educators may feel overwhelmed by the challenge of teaching all their students to level B2 when they realise in September that there is a non-negligible proportion of pupils who have barely reached level A2/B1. This feeling is no doubt exacerbated if the teacher has the extra challenge of teaching other students who are at much higher levels because they have specialised in MFL as part of their undergraduate studies. At such a late stage of their education at university level, MFL teacher educators may consider that the challenge to move their A2/B1 students' language competence towards B2 is too great to overcome and that the gap between the specialist and non-specialist students in their classes is indeed too difficult to manage. Several demoralised teacher educators in the same establishment who share this low sense of efficacy are likely to generate an increased collective sense of futility. This has also been shown to influence the students'

sense of self-efficacy. Bandura (1993) stresses that students self-doubts become even more severe if their teachers harbour self-doubts about their capabilities to achieve academic attainment. The contrary is also true. Indeed, research indicates that:

> teaching staff who firmly believe that by their determined efforts, pupils can be motivated and are teachable whatever their background achieve at the highest percentile ranks based on national norms of language competencies. (Bandura, 1993)

Conclusion to chapter

To summarize, Bandura's research suggests that learning environments that construe ability as an acquirable skill, deemphasize competitive social comparison, and highlight self-comparison of progress and personal accomplishments are well suited for building a sense of efficacy that promotes academic achievement. His research also shows that teachers with a strong sense of self-efficacy are more likely to create this learning environment on an individual scale in the classroom and on a collective scale in the educational institution itself. Although teacher expertise is a distal outcome of teacher educator commitment (as it takes years to develop) it is very good evidence of **ongoing commitment**. The process model presented by Klein et al., (2012) illustrates that the four proximal perceptions influence the sense of self-efficacy and collective efficacy which in turn determines the level of commitment experienced.

When I analyse teacher educator participant interview data, I will consequently look for evidence of self-efficacy as well as a general disposition of positive affect towards teaching, MFL and teaching MFL to young children. Evidence of expertise as second-order teachers of MFL in itself is a strong indicator of long-term commitment to primary MFL teacher education. This is because it takes years of dedication and effort to develop and extend subject knowledge in MFL as well as pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) as MFL teacher educators to develop this expertise. I will also expect to find evidence of motivation, continuation and engagement as outcomes of commitment in the interview data of teacher educator participants in this study.

CHAPTER THREE: LITERATURE REVIEW

General introduction to chapter

In this chapter, I first attempt to define what distinguishes teacher educators from other members of the teaching profession. The professional identity of teacher educators is explored not only from the perspective of the teacher educators themselves but the identity which is imposed upon the profession from outside. In so doing, I take into account neoliberal discourse mechanisms involved in the process of deprofessionalization. The pathways to becoming a teacher educator are presented and an overview of what makes them unique in terms of their specific contribution to education.

3.1 Pathways to teacher education

Aiming high – accessing a university career[1]

Moving from school teaching to higher education teaching is, in general, considered a challenge because the qualifications required to teach at university not only differ significantly to the professional teacher training qualification required to teach at secondary level but they are more demanding given that universities generally recruit staff with high academic qualifications. On completion of an undergraduate degree, students pursuing an academic career in HE traditionally sit a master's degree and then a PhD. In contrast, students whose vocation lies in primary or secondary education usually go on to obtain a professional teacher training qualification. Consequently, secondary education teachers who wish to change direction and access a university career are required to take up doctoral studies. In the past, secondary teachers who wished to access a university career as a teacher educator were not systematically required to have a PhD. Indeed, the most important requirement was to be an experienced and skilled teaching professional with recognised pedagogical expertise; however, today there is an increased focus on research on initial teacher education courses and so this is becoming less common. Mass education has increased the number of students in higher education institutes in Europe whilst policies of internationalisation in higher education have made mobility and the teaching and learning of MFL a priority. In this context, secondary MFL teachers may be more encouraged to access a higher education career given their language competence and teaching skills in the knowledge that there may be a very real possibility of being recruited and so decide to take up doctoral studies either in their own time or on part-time study leave. For teachers in a full-time teaching post, this demands a high level of commitment and determination.

Becoming a Teacher in France, England and Scotland[2]

The purpose of *The European Qualifications Framework* (EQF) is to enable an easier comparison between national qualifications to avoid that people do not have to repeat

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[2]This section includes work from a chapter that I wrote for: Zeiter, A. C. (2018). Marie-Agnès DÉTOURBE (ed.), Inclusion through Access to Higher Education. Exploring the Dynamics between Access to Higher Education, Immigration and Languages, Rotterdam, Sense Publishers, 2018. Langage et société, (2), 183-186.

their learning if they move from one country to another in the EU. The EQF consists of eight reference levels which describe what a learner knows, understands and is able to do – learning outcomes. Levels of national qualifications are placed at one of the reference levels which ranging from basic (Level 1) to advanced (Level 8). In England, the qualification level required is level 7. Qualified teacher status (QTS) is required to be employed as a teacher and there are various routes to gaining QTS for primary and secondary school teachers. It is necessary to hold an undergraduate degree awarded by a UK higher education provider, or a recognised equivalent qualification. There are some undergraduate degree qualifications leading to QTS, such as the Bachelor of Education (B.Ed). Candidates are also required to have passed a set of professional skills tests to be done online. The professional skills tests (skills tests) for prospective teachers assess the core skills that teachers need to fulfil their professional role in schools, rather than the subject knowledge needed for teaching. This is to ensure all teachers are competent in numeracy and literacy, regardless of their specialism. All current and prospective trainee teachers must pass the skills tests in numeracy and literacy before they can be recommended for the award of qualified teacher status (QTS). Initial teacher training (ITT) providers are responsible for checking that all trainees meet the current ITT entry requirements for the skills tests, before they start the course. A one-year training programme, a PGCE and the Postgraduate Diploma of Education (PGDE) are run by colleges and universities throughout the UK. Students must complete a minimum of 120 days in school amongst blocks of study at their chosen provider. The PGCE and the PGDE do not provide access to higher education positions but are restricted to prospective primary and prospective secondary school teachers. For those who already possess a degree, it is also possible to enter a School Direct programme: this teacher training programme is school-led. The School Direct (non-salaried) route is run by a school or group of schools who work closely with a university or School-Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) consortium who certify successful trainees. It is considered a popular training programme for those students who are hoping to remain in the training school following their training. The next step for the newly qualified teachers (NQTs) is to send job applications directly to the schools they are interested in. In France, intending teachers must possess a level 7 qualification (Master's degree or equivalent) to be recruited and are not interviewed by schools. Instead they are recruited nationally

through a centralized entrance examination. There are two competitive civil service entry examinations (*concours*) for those who wish to teach in state sector secondary schools. The first is the CAPES and the second is the *Agrégation*, a more highly selective exam which was created in 1766[1]. Certain teaching positions (including HE teacher educators at the *Ecole supérieure du professorat et de l'éducation (ESPE):* university Institutes of Education) are open to teachers who hold a CAPES or an *Agrégation*. They are known as PRCE (*professeurs certifiés*) and PRAG (*professeurs agrégés*). These teachers are not required to conduct any research but teach twice as many hours as lecturers, senior lecturers or professors. Posts are advertised each year online through a national centralised portal between mid-September and the end of October. Candidates apply for the job openings and candidates are then invited for an interview which lasts around 20-30 minutes. There are usually up to 10 candidates per position. The candidates are then ranked and the one ranked first then decides whether or not to accept the job. Should this candidate refuse the job, the candidate in second position is then offered the post. Given the competitive nature of this recruitment process, candidates with the *Agrégation* as well as a PhD are clearly in a more favourable position particularly for teacher educator positions. However, although a PGCE is not systematically required to teach in England, it is highly recommended for those who want to move on to a master's degree later in their career and like France, as a general rule, this qualification is considered an asset for those who wish to apply for posts as HE teacher educators.

MFL teaching

Both university teacher educators and school-based tutors guide PGCE students through the complex learning process of professional development and practice. QTS is attained on successful completion of this teacher training programme which takes into account subject knowledge. In France, secondary teacher training students of MFL specialise in one language whereas in England, students are advised to specialise in two languages to maximize their curriculum vitae when applying for teaching posts. For the primary teacher educator, the situation is a little different. In England, students can select a major

[1] Il existe depuis 1766: il s'agissait alors de créer un corps d'enseignants susceptible de prendre la relève des jésuites qui venaient d'être bannis de France. Concours de haut niveau très sélectif, il permet d'être professeur avec un service dans les lycées, dans les classes préparatoires ou à l'université (PRAG). Source: https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Concours_d%27agr%C3%A9gation_en_France

subject specialism in English, Mathematics, and Modern Foreign Languages or Science primary maths or decide to be a generalist. Only those teachers who have passed a subject specialism in MFL teach the subject. For those who wish to qualify as a MFL Specialist, their linguistic and pedagogy skills come under the close scrutiny of both the university-based MFL teacher educator and school-based subject mentors when recommending QTS in this particular specialism. In contrast, French primary teachers are all expected to teach MFL to their pupils from the age of 6 upwards as a consequence of legislation which aimed to improve MFL proficiency: La loi du 8 juillet 2013 pour la refondation de l'École. The French government made it mandatory for all students sitting the Master's degree in Primary Education: Métiers de l'enseignement, de l'éducation et de la formation – 1er degré (Master MEEF 1er degré) to achieve a minimum B2 attainment according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment (CEFR) criteria. However, exam results indicate that only 34% of Master MEEF students reach the B2 level (CLES, 2013-14). This key difference between the two countries means that there are many more MFL teacher educators recruited in French universities than in English ones.

Teacher educators between two worlds

At the forefront of language education policy measures, teacher educators find themselves between two worlds: not only do they play a key role in the teaching and training of student teachers in the field of innovative pedagogical practice in the primary or secondary classroom but given the university context, their work also concerns research into teaching and learning theory. They juggle the two roles and assert their unique professional identity as teacher educators. In a similar fashion, teachers of MFL juggle between languages and cultures both within the classroom and outside when they organise school trips abroad, use foreign literature with their pupils, watch films in a foreign language at the local cinema, keep up with news from the BBC or the Guardian on their smart phones and go on holiday abroad to places where they can speak to the locals. Students and teachers of MFL enjoy learning languages and discovering other cultures; they find it natural to participate in mobility to consolidate and maintain MFL proficiency for academic, professional, recreational and cultural purposes. Transnational mobility is part of their world. It can be asserted therefore that teacher educators who

specialise in MFL have demonstrated that they are experienced skilled teaching professionals whilst it is also likely that they have experienced transnational mobility either in a professional or personal capacity.

3.2 Teacher educator: towards a definition

Lunenberg et al (2014, p. 5) explain that defining the teacher educator profession is a challenge in the literature. They explain that this is because they are such "a heterogeneous group" made up of professionals with varied backgrounds working in different contexts on a multitude of tasks because they come from very different backgrounds and different settings (Lunenberg, 2010) working in institutions for teacher education for primary education while others in teacher education for secondary education. In addition, teacher educators tend to have a variety of tasks: they teach a subject or pedagogy, and support students who do field work. Teacher educators are also increasingly expected to develop and carry out courses for experienced teachers and to do research (Koster, Dengerink, Lunenberg, & Korthagen, 2008 cited in Lunenberg et al., 2014, p.5).

The European Commission (EC) report referred to in chapter one: *Supporting Teacher Educators for better learning outcomes,* (EC, 2013)[1] which focuses on teacher education in the European Union raised concerns in its report about the lack of data and research literature available in the field of teacher education:

> Member States and the profession should have access to comprehensive, relevant information – for example, about what activities and practices seem to work in educating teachers, or what competences are needed in specific contexts. However, *little relevant research has been carried out* and *scant information* is available to policymakers and course designers. There is *little empirical evidence* directly concerned with '…the professional learning of this unique group', and *policy documents tend to overlook this issue* (Murray and Harrison, 2008). In particular, *the evidence base in relation to the specific domains of knowledge required by teacher educators is limited.* (European Commission, 2013, p.28) (my own emphasis)

This therefore suggests that it is inherently unlikely that studies or policy document reports such as the one produced by the European Commission mentioned above can

[1] European Commission (2013). Supporting Teacher Educators for better learning outcomes. Brussels: EC, http://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/education/policy/school/doc/support-teacher-educators_en.pdf

capture what John Loughran described earlier as "the purpose of teacher education, the sophisticated knowledge, skills and ability necessary to do that work well" (Loughran, p. vii, cited in Lunenberg et al., 2014). Lunenberg et al., (2014) finally define teacher educators to be:

> *all those who teach or coach (student) teachers with the aim of supporting their professional development.* Hence, we include all those who, in teacher education institutions and in schools, are responsible for teaching and coaching future, beginning and experienced teachers. (Lunenberg et al., 2014, p.5)

This definition is very broad and encompassing as it includes those teacher educators who also work in schools and are responsible for the induction of beginning teachers within the school setting itself.

Although both groups of professionals are involved in teacher education and both aim to contribute to the professional development of beginning teachers by helping them acquire the knowledge, competences, attitudes and values that are required to be effective teachers, there are differences between those who are school-based teacher educators and those who work in higher education (full-time or part-time) preparing students for a teaching career. This is because the different professional settings in which they work involve modes of functioning that, despite being complementary and essential to ITE, are distinct. This results in each group contributing their own specific professional expertise. Schoolteachers, responsible for the induction of beginning teachers into the profession are indeed involved in *second-order work* as they are inducting them "into the practices and discourses of both school teaching and teacher education (Murray and Male, 2005, p.2); however, "this work takes place within the *first-order settings* of their schools, drawing on their localised practitioner knowledge of those settings in order to induct student teachers" (ibid, p.5). They then go on to contrast the school-based practitioner, a first-order practitioner, with that of teacher educators who are second-order practitioners. Murray (2002) conceptualises teacher educators as having moved from being first-order practitioners as school teachers working in a first order setting to being second order-practitioners in the second-order setting of HE:

> For those working as initial teacher educators their academic 'discipline' is their knowledge of schooling, of the first-order context. They enter HE with their experiential knowledge and understanding of school teaching as a major

> strength. Since this knowledge base has been generated in large part through professional practice, it is often tacit rather than explicit, and is inevitably permeated by that practice and by individual ways of understanding the processes of teaching and learning. These ways of understanding in turn are saturated by personal values, beliefs and biographies. As *second-order practitioners* teacher educators induct their students into the practices and discourses of both school teaching and teacher education. (Murray and Male, 2005, p.2)

Murray and Male point out that for teacher educators based in HE, "teaching and learning are the essential focuses of work in both the first-and second-order settings" as teacher educators consider the "knowledge of the 'discipline' or 'subject' of education, and the pedagogical knowledge of how to teach that 'subject' in HE" as inseparable (ibid, p.3). Gimmestad and Hall (1995) refer to four domains of knowledge that are addressed in the preparation of teachers in HE teacher education: general education knowledge, content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge. They state that general education knowledge is "a body of knowledge and skills that all college graduates should possess as educated citizens whatever their academic major or professional aspirations" (Gimmestad and Hall, 1995, p.551) and they then go on to present a description of what characterises the three other areas of knowledge that are important for preparing teachers.

Content knowledge is the in-depth knowledge of a subject that a teacher is to teach. Hence, primary school teachers who are expected to teach a wide-array of subjects are not expected to have as great a depth of knowledge as secondary school teachers who teach subjects to a higher level and are expected to have an extensive knowledge of a subject matter in one area.

Pedagogical knowledge is critical for successful teaching as it provides the knowledge and skills about how to teach and includes "such areas as learning theories, strategies for assessing student learning, classroom management, use of technology in teaching, and multicultural issues in education" (Gimmestad and Hall, 1995, p.551).

The authors consider that *pedagogical content knowledge* (PCK) is the most important domain, and has become, according to Cochran (1991), an organizing force in how

teacher education is designed and structured. While it is an amalgam of general knowledge, content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge, it is also:

> a representation of additional knowledge and skills that expert teachers possess. Included in PCK is knowledge of typical misconceptions that students will have when learning a particular concept. PCK entails having knowledge of and the ability to draw upon powerful analogies, illustrations, examples, explanations, and demonstrations that will make sense to specific students. It also includes knowledge that learners bring to the classroom and the frames of reference they bring to the learning of specific subject-matter concepts and principles. (Gimmestad and Hall, 1995, p.551)

However, a crucial aspect of second-order teaching that is not referred to by Gimmestad and Hall concerning is the contribution that research informed teacher educators make to teacher education. For Loughran (2015), research informed teacher educators can model and promote professional experience as central to learning about teaching through an inquiry-stance. He goes on to describing the characteristics of such a stance as outlined by Cochran-Smith (2005). For her, the characteristics include knowing how to:

> read, evaluate, critique, and use … research in their own work [while being able to] interpret new research studies by locating them within a larger discourse that is informed by multiple historical, empirical, and epistemological perspectives [and demonstrating research expertise through] their own practices and programs … self-examination and interrogation of the biographical bases of behaviour and beliefs …[and, in particular, the ability to] conduct empirical research on practice in order to determine what the outcomes of teacher preparation courses and field experiences are for prospective teachers' own learning, for their professional performances in schools and classrooms, and for their pupils' learning. (Cochran-Smith, 2005, p.224 cited in Loughran, 2015, p11).

Murray and Male point out that for teacher educators based in HE, "teaching and learning are the essential focuses of work in both the first-and second-order settings" as teacher educators consider the "knowledge of the 'discipline' or 'subject' of education, and the pedagogical knowledge of how to teach that 'subject' in HE" as inseparable (Murray and Male, 2005, p.3). For these authors, the two sets of teaching professionals, the school-based practitioner (a first-order practitioner), and the HE teacher educator (a second-order practitioner) do not belong to the same occupational group because when school teachers become teacher educators, this "entails the learning of new social mores as a teacher educator and the creation of a new professional identity" (p.3). The literature indicates

that it is challenging for school-based teacher educators to build an identity as teacher educators because “they do not normally leave their context of primary or secondary education and they have the difficult task of being teacher educators in the first-order setting of primary or secondary schools" (Bullough, 2005; Murray and Male, 2005; Van Velzen and Volman, 2009, cited in Swennen, et al., 2010, p.133). In the same way, there is evidence that university academics in ITE who have never been school teachers and/or have no background in a secondary subject do not share the same professional identity as those who have made the transition from primary or secondary teaching to HE and therefore do not belong to the same occupational group either.

In addition, despite several studies that concentrate on “the more formal and academic setting of doctoral studies for teacher educators”, on the whole academic studies that concentrate on academics who become teacher educators are rather limited (Swennen et al., 2010, p.133). The difference perceived regarding the professional identity between the two groups is highlighted, for instance, by the hostility and resistance to one of the changes introduced in ITE following the aspiration of the Scottish government that teaching should be a master’s profession (Scottish Government, 2011). The “fiercely contested change was the use of tutors who had no background in a secondary discipline to assess the learning and progress of student teachers” (Dickson in Brock, 2015, p.171)

> Their complaint was that only staff with a secondary background in the relevant discipline could assess secondary students teaching in that discipline, and, as far as they were concerned, this was more important than the ability of university tutors to even out the issues of variability of support which had plagued the system for so long. This disagreement was identified in the first evaluation which acknowledged that there would have to be a cultural shift in order to modify the perceptions of the framing of the discipline. (Dickson in Brock, 2015, pp.171-172) (my own emphasis)

Indeed, it appears that the invaluable role that the research informed teacher educators make to teacher education as described earlier had not been fully perceived at this early stage of the Scottish reform programme and explain the need for a “cultural shift”. However, the context described in Scotland is not that remote from my experience of the ITE environment in France as I have come across tension or even friction over questions of ‘legitimacy’ and ‘credibility’ between colleagues who are teacher educators with

secondary teaching experience and those who are research informed teacher educator colleagues who have never taught pupils at school.

In this study, it is important to be aware of differences in professional identity and so distinguish between those teacher educators who are second-order/first-order experienced teacher educators and second-order/first-order non-experienced teacher educators when selecting the participants, I focus on. Although, in Scotland and in France, both groups of teacher educator can be found working full-time in an institute of Higher Education, it is rarely the case in England. According to Murray and Male (2005):

> teacher educators working on ITE courses are certified school teachers, typically with a significant career record of successful practice in primary schools (for pupils aged from 5 to 11 years) or secondary schools (for pupils aged from 11 to 18 years), who have joined an institute of Higher Education to work full-time with student teachers. (Murray and Male, 2005, p.2)

Given that this is a comparative study, it is important to compare 'like with like'. Consequently, my research will focus on second-order (first-order experienced) teacher educators working in the education systems of England, Scotland and France given that this group of teacher educators are the most representative of teacher educators working in HE in each of the three education systems.

In section 3.4 of this thesis, I examine the specific curriculum expertise and knowledge base of primary MFL teacher educators to determine MFL teacher educator second order expertise and knowledge not only in the light of the literature review discussed above in relation to their professional identity which I will now go on to explore, but also to examine claims that "the evidence base in relation to the specific domains of knowledge required by teacher educators is limited" (European Commission, 2013, p.28) and that "the quality of the preparation of teachers and induction into the profession is poor as a consequence of the absence of a common body of scientific knowledge underpinning professional expertise and transmitted via teacher educators during initial teacher education (OECD,2017, p.21). One explanation is provided by Loughran (2015) who says that the work of teacher educators:

> consistently attracts attention and not necessarily for the right reasons, as a consequence of the demands and expectations placed on it by the many

> interested stakeholders (e.g. policy makers, education bureaucrats, politicians, teachers, schools, principals, etc.). In so doing, many of the 'teaching associated stakeholders' find it easier to ascribe some of the challenges inherent in their sector to 'issues' with teacher education. In that way, the implicit expectation is that a reason for the issues they face requires a teacher education solution which would then resolve their current concern(s) or alternatively, shift responsibility for the situation to teacher education (e.g., quality of beginning teachers, teacher supply, *lack of specific curriculum expertise*, etc). (Loughran, 2015, p.5)

So, clearly, in this light, it is apparent that the European Commission and the OECD are not only failing to recognise the second-order work of EU teacher educators but are designating them as inherently 'responsible' for the quality of the preparation of teachers and induction into the profession as being 'poor'. Indeed, as pointed out in chapter one of this thesis, the European Commission (EC, 2013, p.8) considers that teacher educators lack a "collective sense of self" because they possess "multiple professional identities" and consequently, it argues, this signifies that "many of those who teach teachers might not consider themselves to be teacher educators at all". On the basis of this, the authors state that "[a]s a consequence, teacher educators can have varying levels of commitment to teacher education" and that this represents "an issue of quality" for EU education systems (ibid).

I will now examine the notion of professional identity on an individual and collective level and its relationship to the level of commitment that a professional is likely to demonstrate in order to determine the theoretical justification for the assertion that the European Commission makes in this report that teacher educators "adhere to different professional standards and values" (European Commission, 2013, p.12). In order to comprehend the concept of professional identity, the next section will provide an overview of research around professional identity and will begin with what the literature says about the theories concerning the concept of identity.

3.3 Professional identity

One way in which a person defines their identity is through their name and it is interesting that there is a longstanding and ongoing debate over which term is more appropriate: teacher educator or teacher trainer. Was this just a question of terminology or do these two terms represent differences in how these professionals perceive their professional identity? Although living and working in France has given me the opportunity to embrace

French culture, this absence from everyday life in the UK has also meant that I am often unaware of the numerous changes in the cultural backdrop that most of my English family, friends and former colleagues now take for granted. In the context of this research, the term 'teacher trainer' being replaced by that of 'teacher educator' is an example of one of those changes. I was very surprised by this new term because teacher educators in France continue to use the word 'formatrice' or 'formateur' which is the translation of the noun 'trainer'. At high school, I remember being taught by newly 'trained' teachers who had been to teacher 'training' colleges and had learnt how to teach as 'trainee' teachers on teaching practice. My immediate thought was that the change in terminology was down to political correctness as 'teacher educator' possibly represented a more generic description of the profession in the same way that the job title 'police officer' is often used instead of 'policewoman' or 'policeman'. However, the research literature informed me that this new term represented not so much a shift in the professional identity of teacher educators but more a rejection of a label which teacher educators believe does not fully define what represents their work as teacher educators and their professional identity:

> One of the key issues in any approach to initial teacher preparation is the balance to be struck between training and education. That said, the former term has fallen out of favour somewhat over the last few years – at least among teacher educators. For example, novice teachers on the British PGCE programme which confers qualified teacher status and allows graduates to work in the state-school system are more commonly referred to today as 'student teachers' than as 'trainees teachers''. At the same time, what used to be called 'teacher training' is more commonly referred to as 'initial teacher education'. This change in nomenclature seeks to avoid the negative associations 'trainee' and 'training' may be said to imply, with the connnotations of the transmission of a pre-determined set of behaviours to novices who are seen largely as blank slates. (Block and Gray, 2015, pp.5-6)

Widdowson (1990) defines training as:

> a process of preparation towards the achievement of a range of outcomes which are specified in advance. This involves the acquisition fo goal-orientated behaviour which is more or less formulaic in character and whose capacity for accommodation to novelty is, therefore, very limited. Training, in this view, is directed at providing solutions to a set of predictable problems and sets a premium on reflecting expertise. It is dependent on the stability of existing states of affairs since it assumes that future situations will be predictable replicas of those in the past. (Widdowson, 1990, p.62 cited in Block and Gray, 2015, p.6)

According to Widdowson, education, in contrast to training, prepares individuals for unpredictable situations for which ready made solutions do not exist. Such situations demand "a reformulation of ideas and the modification of established formulae" and consequently focuses "on the critical appraisal of the relationship between problem and solution as a matter of continuing enquiry and of adaptable practice" (Widdowson, 1990, p.62; cited in Block and Gray, 2015, p.6). However, Widdowson also points out that novices need to "feel secure in their own role, and establish their own identity, before indulging in experimentation which could undermine their authority before they have actually acquired it" and that this means that initiation to the profession as well as a degree of conformity is required to establish the "craft and culture of pedagogy" (ibid.). This suggests that an effective teacher education programme should concentrate on establishing this aspect during the initial teacher education stage. This does not suggest that a research-based approach giving access to theoretical grounding in terms of pedagogy, and teaching and learning theories is not part of this process. On the contrary, this approach is absolutely necessary for teachers to become a more professional and educated workforce (ibid., p.7). Consequently, Block and Gray (2015) propose that training should not be seen "in negative terms" as long as the "craft and culture of pedagogy are central"; however, they do insist on the "training/education dichotomy" being addressed when making "decisions about the preparation of teachers" as far as an "awareness of theoretical considerations" is concerned (p.6).

The challenge, however is that 'training' is not presented by neoliberals as a domain that is dealt with on university-based course nor should be in the hands of university-based teacher educators. Michael Gove, the then Secretary of State for Education (England) set out in 2010 to "reform teacher training [and] shift trainee teachers out of college and into the classroom" because "[t]eaching is a craft and it is best learnt as an apprentice observing a master craftsman or woman. Watching others, and being rigorously observed yourself as you develop, is the best route to acquiring mastery in the classroom" (Gove, 2010; cited in Block and Gray, 2015, p.7). Kirk (2011) argues that teaching is indeed a craft but not a craft in the way that Gove sees it. It is not just a question of observation and imitation or 'tips for teachers' but instead it is "one in which the personal knowledge associated with the learning of a craft has to be complemented by the broader knowledge

that comes from the review and study of existing academic evidence about the conduct of teaching" which Block and Gray point out is not available in either the classroom or the staffroom (Kirk, 2001; cited in Block and Gray, 2015, p.7).

Is it possible that neoliberals such as Michael Gove use the fact that teacher educators do not consider themselves to be teacher 'trainers' to justify making initial teacher education school-based rather than university-based? This would be a question of language because in reality university-based teacher education courses fully integrate both the practical 'on the ground' aspects with its theoretical underpinnings. However, neoliberals use language to promote their ideology and attack their opponents by seeking the moral high ground. Block and Gray (2015) point out that Gove's opponents are those who continued to argue for initial teacher education as necessarily entailing more than school-based experience and include "all academics who have helped run the university departments of education responsible for developing curricula and teacher training courses" (Gove, 2013; cited in Block and Gray, 2015, p.7).

What is the professional identity of teacher educators in recent times? At first glance, the task of determining the professional identity of teacher educators seems daunting. For Sachs (1999), teaching professionals clearly possess multiple professional identities and she makes this point when she breaks down the various categories of professional identity that some teachers are likely to possess:

> For a primary school teacher for example, these might include the general category of primary teacher. However, this can be broken down into further identities by year level, such as a junior, middle or upper school teacher; a subject or discipline specific teacher such as special education teacher, music teacher, physical education teacher and so on. These people may see themselves as belonging to the generic category of primary teacher but also identify with their area of specialisation and year level. A similar logic follows in secondary schools but with more categories for differentiation along subject/discipline, year level lines. (Sachs, 1999, p.4)

In addition, there is a very broad spectrum of research which focuses on professional identity and this has resulted in many different perspectives and understandings as a consequence of the different notions that emerge around the central concept of identity. Cardoso et al., (2014) carried out a review of the professional identity literature and conclude that the variability of the concepts associated with identity give the construct a

high complexity (Cardoso et al., 2014, p.83). However, they point out that currently, a vision of identity has emerged that holds that it can no longer be "understood as a fixed attribute of a particular person, neither be regarded as an element of a dynamic nature, relational, situational and object of inference" (ibid). It is also understood that each individual has multiple identities; however, the multiple identities that a person uses to 'perform' in society in a given context, do not represent the core identity of an individual that is currently viewed as stable, relatively uniform and connected to an "internal state" whatever the context:

> A person might be recognised as being a certain kind of radical feminist, homeless person, overly macho male, "yuppie", street gang member, community activist, academic, kindergarten teacher, "at risk" student, and so on and so forth, through countless possibilities. The "kind" of person one is recognised as "being", at a given time and place, can change from moment to moment in the interaction, can change from context to context, and of course, can be ambiguous or unstable. Being recognised as a certain "kind of person", in a given context, is what I mean here by "identity". In this sense of the term, all people have multiple identities connected not to their "internal states" but to their performances in society. This is not to deny that each of us has what we might call a "core identity" that holds more uniformly, for ourselves and others, across contexts. (Gee, 2000, p.99)[1]

There are two dimensions to the concept of identity: the *individual dimension* and the *collective dimension*. The individual dimension is comprised of two aspects. The first is the personal aspect that is related to the internalization of social positions and their meanings in relation to the structure of the self. The second is the social aspect which is related to an individual's sense of who they are based on their identification with a group. Brewer and Gardner (1996) make a distinction between the "individuated or personal self (those aspects of the self-concept that differentiate the self from all others) and a relational or social self (those aspects of the self-concept that reflect assimilation to others or significant social groups)" (Brewer & Gardner, 1996, p.1-2).

As I am concerned with analysing social reality in the teacher educator context and variability within as well as between teacher educators themselves, I will now focus on collective identity theory. According to this theory, changes in self-categorization reflect not only differences in views of the self but also different worldviews. Brewer and

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Gardner (1996) discuss the extent to which individuals define themselves in terms of their relationship to others and to social groups. The authors state that “the personal, relational and collective levels of self-definition represent distinct forms of self-representation with different origins, sources of self-worth, and social motivations” (p.1). These different levels of self-construal coexist within the same individual and are available for activation at different times or in different contexts. They go on to make a further distinction between two levels of social selves. The first involves those that derive from interpersonal relationships and interdependence with specific others where the social connections are made up of personalised bonds of attachment. Prototypic interpersonal identities involve intimate relationships such as parent-child, lovers and friendships but also identities derived from membership of small, face-to-face groups.

The second level of social selves are those that derive from membership of larger, more impersonal collectives or social categories where the social connections are impersonalised bonds derived from common identification with some symbolic group or social category. Collective social identities, unlike interpersonal identities, do not require personal relationships among group members. According to Prentice, Miller & Lightdale (1994) group identities can be based on common bonds (attachment to other group members) or on common identity (collective identities).

The distinction between interpersonal and collective identities is not simply a matter of the difference between attachments that are based on either affect or cognition. In fact, as both interpersonal and collective identities involve both affective and cognitive categorization processes. The difference between the two concerns the level of inclusiveness, as some social identities can be construed either as interpersonal relationships or as collective identities. They explain that many social roles and professions can be experienced in terms of specific role relationships which are of an interpersonal nature (such as parent-child, doctor-patient and teacher-pupil) or in terms of a social category (for example parents, the medical profession or teaching profession). They also highlight the difference between ‘public’ and ‘collective’ facets of the self:

> The public self represents those aspects of the self-concept most sensitive to the evaluation of significant others and consists of cognitions about the self that reflect interactions and relationships with those others. The collective self on the

> other hand reflects internalizations of the norms and characteristics of important reference groups and consists of cognitions about the self that are consistent with that group identification (Brewer & Gardner, 1996, p.2).

Figure 6 presents the differences among the three levels of self-construal that are represented in research literature on the social self. Brewer and Gardner (1996) explain that at the individual level, the personal self is the differentiated, individuated self-concept. At the interpersonal level, the relational self is the self-concept derived from connections and role relationships with significant others. At the group level is the collective self which corresponds to the concept of social identity as represented in social identity theory and self-categorisation theory (Abrams and Hoggs, 1998; Turner et al.; 1987).

Level of analysis	Self-concept	Basis of evaluation	Frame of reference	Basis social motivation
Individual	Personal	Traits	Interpersonal comparison	Self-interest
Interpersonal	Relational	Roles	Reflection	Other's benefit
Group	Collective	Group prototype	Intergroup comparison	Collective welfare

Figure 6 Levels of Representation of the Self based on Brewer & Gardner (1996)

Collective identities are activated when the most salient features of the self-concept become those that are shared with other members of the in-group (Brewer, 1991). This process involves the concept of the socially extended self which goes beyond perceived similarity and other relational connections between self and others. An extended self means that the boundaries of the self are redrawn to include those characteristics that make one a "good" representative of the group or of the relationship.

The interdependent or relational self-concept derives self-worth from appropriate role behaviour (Markus and Kitayama, 1991; Stryker, 1991 as cited in Brewster and Gardner, 1996 p. 2). This can be explained by the fact that a sense of self is achieved in this context by satisfaction from the other person in the relationship whereas the sense of self-worth in terms of collective self-concept is derived from the status of the in-group in intergroup comparisons (Turner et al; 1987).

Brewer and Gardner (1996) explain that the essence of social identity involve comparisons between characteristics shared by in-group members in comparison to relevant out-groups. The focus on intragroup differences versus intragroup similarities serves as a main indicator of people's relative emphasis on their personal or collective selves (McFarland and Buehler, 1995; Simon, Pantaleo & Mummendey, 1995). In the context of the present study, it is therefore interesting to analyse teacher educator discourse to identify whether the teacher educators in this study discuss their professional experiences from a personal perspective or a collective one where the collective self is the teacher educator group.

Another useful aspect of the notion of self-representations is the fundamental difference between social motives derived from personal self-interest and those derived from concern for the interests of others. Several theorists have stressed that interdependent relationships are characterized by mutual concern for the interests and outcomes of the other. They claim that this is the basis of altruistic motivation: a motivation to benefit the other which is not to be confused with self-sacrifice which concerns cost to self (Markus and Kitayama, 1991; Baumeister and Leary, 1995; Batson, 1994 in Brewer and Gardner, 1996).

With this in mind, when the teacher educators in this study speak from a collective perspective, I should find evidence of mutual concern for the interests and outcomes of the student teachers and primary pupils at school. However, a personal focus perspective will probably engender a discussion of those aspects of professional experience that result in a positive or negative impact on the teacher educator, personally. One example involves the range of feelings experienced by teacher educators when encountering primary Master MEEF students on their courses at the beginning of the school year who

lack confidence in their language skills and are stressed at the prospect of having to validate a B2 CEFR level. One teacher educator may focus on the negative impact this may have on class dynamics by recalling the feelings of stress and anxiety experienced on previous occasions. Another teacher may consider this situation as non-threatening because they consider it an opportunity to reassure the student by clarifying what is expected from them in realistic terms. In both cases, the teacher views the situation from their own individual perspective in terms of how having an anxious student in their class affects them personally in a given situation.

What are the consequences of these shifts in levels of identity? As a particular social identity is made salient, individuals are likely to think of themselves as having characteristics that are representative of that social category which leads to self-stereotyping. Experimental research carried out by Hogg and Turner (1987) involving gender identity demonstrated that participants in the social identity condition characterized themselves as more typical of their sex and attributed more masculine or feminine traits to themselves than those in the personal identity condition. Trafimow et al. (1991) speculated that this may be due to private and collective self-concepts being stored in separate locations in memory.

Comparisons between interpersonal and collective levels of self-categorisation and their associated behaviours reveal that positive evaluations and liking for other individuals can be induced simply by the knowledge that they share a common group identity. Research by Hogg and Turner (1985) shows that group favouritism can occur in the absence of interpersonal attraction. In-group members tend to be liked more than out-group members even when nothing is known about their personal characteristics and seems to be a consequence of group formation rather than its cause. Should a particular group member exemplify the characteristics that are distinctive or important to a group, that individual will be socially attractive to other in-group members, regardless of interpersonal similarity.

One example of where this furthers understanding is in the case of the Scottish teacher educators who displayed hostility to academic teacher educators during the Scottish reform programme (Dickson in Brock, 2015). Clearly, the academic teacher educators

were the ‘out-groupers’ and their lack of secondary teaching experience was a salient characteristic that made this group of teacher educators ‘unattractive’. After all, Brewer and Gardner (1996) stress that it is possible to display preference for an in-grouper we do not like very much and to discriminate against a member of an out-group even if we like that individual personally. It is necessary to focus on the use of “I”, “we”, “us” and “you” (when “you” is used instead of “we”) in discourse which would provide information about inclusiveness and, to a certain extent, exclusion through the use of “they” and “them”. This approach is based on the idea that the ‘social self’ as represented by the interpersonal and collective self-concepts is a more inclusive self-representation in which relations and similarities to others are central. The social self is symbolically represented by the shift from “I” to “we” as a term of self-reference (Perdue, Dovidio, Gurtman & Tyler, 1990). Experiments by these same researchers have demonstrated that the pronouns “we” and “us” carry positive emotional significance that is activated automatically and unconsciously, readily provoking similarity judgements. Cardosa et al., (2014) explain that:

> The understanding of this author [Mead, 1962] brings us to the relationship between the concept of identity and the concept of self, in which the ability of an individual to imagine himself/herself under the point of view of another to subdivide the self in two components: the ‘I’ and the ‘me’, is underlined. The ‘I’ (or individual) corresponds to the singular aspect, spontaneous and dynamic of the self (self as knower), being considered a more personnel component. The ‘me’ (or object) matches the learned prospects that a person incorporates in herself/himself (self as known) and the attitudes that the ‘I’ integrates, considered as a more social component. The self it is, therefore, a phenomenon of the human mind that arises from the reflexive action arising from interactions that an individual establishes with others. Its reflective character comes from the self, considered as an object that can be categorized, classified or named in a particular way in relation to other social categories or classifications. (Cardoso et al., 2014, p.84)

The authors then go on to state that this process of identity construction has different labels according to which theory is referred to. It is called ‘self-categorization’ in the theory of social identity while from the perspective derived from the theory of identity it is called ‘identification’. There is a difference, however between the two concepts. The theory of social identity allows insight into who a person ‘is’ while the theory of identity determines what a person ‘does’ and consequently:

> ‘Being’ and ‘doing’ become two central characteristics of the identity of the person. The result of the joinder ‘being’ and ‘doing’, between perceptions and behaviours, between reflection and agency, promotes self-development through the transactions that each one establishes with the social environment. The dynamics of these transactions is determined by life options, which are directly dependent on individual decisions, not only on the way to 'act', but also about 'whom to be'. Giddens (1997) reinforces the importance of individual decision-making: ‘what the individual becomes depends on the reconstructive efforts that he is engaged’ (p. 70). This is why it is so highly valued the individuals' active participation in the construction of his/her identity. (Cardoso et al., 2014, p.84)

Neary (2014, p.14) describes professional identity as a “concept which describes how we perceive ourselves within our occupational context and how we communicate this to others”. Ibarra (1999, pp.764-765) explains in more detail that it is made up of a “relatively stable and enduring constellation of attributes, beliefs, values, motives, and experiences in terms of which people define themselves in a professional role”. Sachs (2001, p.3) presents another perspective in which professional identity refers more to external attributes rather than internal ones:

> In terms of its orthodox uses, the idea of professional identity is rarely taken as problematic. It is used to refer to a set of externally ascribed attributes that are used to differentiate one group from another. Professional identity thus is a set of attributes that are imposed upon the teaching profession either by outsiders or members of the teaching fraternity itself. It provides a shared set of attributes, values and so on so that enable the differentiation of one group from another. From this perspective it is an exclusive rather than inclusive ideal and is conservative rather than radical in its intent. (Sachs, 1999, p.3)

Following Epstein, Sachs summarises identity is being essentially a concept of synthesis, integration and action and “represents the process by which the person seeks to integrate his various statuses and roles, as well as his diverse experiences, into a coherent image of self” (Epstein, 1978, p.101; cited in Sachs, 1999, p.3) The authors of the book, *The Professional Teacher Educator* state that they do not “draw conclusions about the level of professionalism of the community of teacher educators as a whole” (p.2). However, not only do the authors refuse to draw conclusions about teacher educator professionalism as a whole, they avoid defining what they understand by this concept despite the fact that their book was written in order to “arrive at a solid overview of what is known” (Lunenberg et al., 2014, p2) about the *profession* of teacher educators: “[t]his is a book about teacher educators and their profession. Until now, such a book has been rather

unique, as for a long time only limited attention was paid to the important work of teacher educators" (Lunenberg et al., 2014, p.1). The authors then cite Martinez (2008) to indicate the areas of research which have not been fully explored in the field of teacher education regarding the 'professional lives' of teacher educators:

> Little systematic research has been undertaken to inform us about *fundamental characteristics of the professional lives of this occupation group* – their qualifications, their recruitment, their career pathways into and through the academy, their teaching and research practices, the problems they encounter, or their professional development needs and practices. (Martinez, 2008, p. 35 cited in Lunenberg et al., 2014, p.1) [my own emphasis]

I find this omission particularly intriguing in regard to what they pinpointed as being their focus of interest. First, the authors acknowledge in the introduction to their review study that they focus on "the professional roles and behaviour of *individual* teacher educators" (p.2). By making it clear that by 'professional role', they understand: "a personal interpretation of a position based on expectations from the environment and on a systematically organised and transferable knowledge base" (p.6), they exclude from their study, on the one hand, an examination of the professional values and attitudes of teacher educators in terms of ethics and autonomy. On the other hand, by placing the onus on "a systematically organised and transferable knowledge base" they explicitly reject the contribution that intuition, creativity, innovation and spontaneity in professional practice make to the knowledge base of teacher educators particularly when it is disseminated through research. This is illustrated when they state that professional behaviour for teacher educators is explicit behaviour based on a knowledge base and that teacher educators should be able to make this behaviour explicit. They insist that "implicit knowledge and 'practical wisdom' (Lunenberg & Korthagen, 2009) are [not in their view] a sufficient foundation of professional behaviour" (Lunenberg et al., 2014, p.6). This position is clearly in opposition to what is traditionally held as professionalism. Furlong et al. (2000, p.5) describe the features of the traditional version of professionalism:

> The three concepts of knowledge, autonomy and responsibility central to a traditional notion of professionalism, are often seen as interrelated. It is because professionals face complex and unpredictable situations that they need a specialized body of knowledge, if they are to apply that knowledge, it is argued that they need the autonomy to make their own judgements. Given that they have autonomy, it is essential that they act with responsibility – collectively they

> need to develop appropriate professional values. (Furlong et al.,2000, p.5 cited in Sachs, 2001, p.150)

Hargreaves and Goodson (1996) explain that the reason why there is no universal agreement or understanding about what it means to be professional, to show professionalism or to pursue professionalization is because of “different often overlapping discourses which carry different connotations of what is means for teachers to be professionals” (ibid, p.4). Clarke and Newman (1997) explain that ‘professionalism’ is vulnerable to different discourses because:

> Professionalism operates as an occupational strategy, defining entry and negotiating the power and rewards due to expertise, and as an organizational strategy, shaping the patterns of power, place and relationships around which organizations are coordinated. (Clarke and Newman, 1997, p.7)

According to Sachs (2001), the traditional version of teacher professionalism, described by Furlong et al. (2000), has given way to a neoliberal discourse she describes as managerial professionalism which now dominates because it has a tangible “impact on the work of teachers through factors such as organizational change, imperatives for teachers in schools to be more accountability and for systems to be more efficient and economic in their activities” (Sachs, 2001, p.151).

Sachs (2001) points out that employing authorities reinforce neoliberal discourses of teacher professionalism through teacher development policies that emphasise accountability and effectiveness. This results in a “set of paradoxes about the nature of teaching as a profession and about the professional identity and professional identity of teachers” (idem, pp. 149-150). Despite the rhetoric which calls for the teaching profession to be ‘professional’, demonstrate ‘autonomy’ and integrate state of the art teaching approaches and new technology into their practice, there is evidence that, on the contrary, teachers are “being deskilled”, their workload is ever heavier and teaching conditions made more difficult because of limited resources and time and scarce opportunities for ongoing professional development:

> First, is that the call for teacher professionalism related to a revisioning of occupational identity, is occurring at a time when there is evidence that teachers are being deskilled and their work is intensified. Second, is that while it is acknowledged that rethinking classroom practice is exceptionally demanding, fewer resources are being allocated to teacher learning. Third, the teaching

> profession is being exhorted to be autonomous while at the same time it is under increasing pressure from politicians and the community to be more accountable and to maintain standards. As a consequence of the paradoxes underpinning the changes in education policy and practice the very idea of teacher professionalism and professional identity needs to be debated and resolved. (Sachs, 2001, p150)

Understandably in a context which places in opposition a traditional view of teacher professionalism with that of a managerial or neoliberal view of teacher professionalism competing views or discourses about the nature of teacher professionalism are inevitable:

> definitions of 'professionalism', what constitutes a profession and so on have been sites of academic and ideological struggle between union leaders, bureaucrats and academics that are currently being played out in a variety of settings. There is no singular version of what constitutes professionalism or teaching as a profession that is shared by these diverse groups. (Sachs, 2001, p.150)

Traditionally, the characteristics that define professionals include: "rigorous training requirements, positive working conditions, high prestige, substantial authority, relatively high compensation, and an active professional organization or association" (Hughes, 1965; Vollmer and Mills, 1966; Hall, 1968; Wallace, 1994; cited in Ingersoll *et al*., 1997, p.3). In addition to the above traditional characteristics, professionals are also distinguished from other types of workers by:

> […] the degree of expertise and complexity involved in the work itself. The assumption is that professional work involves [a?] highly complex set of skills, intellectual functioning, and knowledge that are not easily acquired and not widely held. For this reason, professions are often referred to as the "knowledge-based" occupations (e.g., Hughes, 1965; Hodson and Sullivan, 1995). (Ingersoll et al.,1997, pp.3-5).

Although, this thesis focuses on teacher educators, I will now focus on the teaching profession in general in order to outline the mechanisms involved in the process of deprofessionalization.

Traditionally, teachers claim to be *professionals* because "their training provides them with expert knowledge of subject, pedagogy and students and that their position as teacher accords a degree of autonomy" (Day, 1999, p.5); however, Day then points out that on closer examination the question as to whether or not they are professionals is indeed debatable:

> Traditionally, 'professionals' are distinguished from other groups of workers because they have: i) a specialized knowledge base – *technical culture*; ii) commitment to meeting client needs – *service ethic*; iii) strong collective identity – *professional commitment*; and iv) collegial as against bureaucratic control over practice and professional standards – *professional autonomy* (Larsson, 1977; Talbert and McLauglin, 1994). As teachers do not have control over professional standards (unlike, for example, doctors and lawyers), in this respect teaching has been regarded as a 'semi-profession' (Etsioni, 1969). However, historically the key area in which teachers are able to exercise autonomy has been the use of discretionary judgment in classroom decision-making. (Day, 1999, p.5)

Day points out that the impact of sweeping neoliberal reforms globally in the 90s decade made many teachers feel that their ability and motivation to behave as professionals had been negatively affected. Referring to research findings from a study conducted in England by Helsby et al., (1997), Day writes:

> There is a widespread perception of an erosion of autonomy. This is demonstrated by an intensification of their working lives, extended bureaucratic and contractual accountability, decreasing resources (including time and energy, the most precious resources of all) and increased managerialism. Alongside these, the bulk of formal professional development activities are designed, by and large, for short-term curriculum or problem-focused purposes. The wide adage of Laurence Stenhouse (1975) that there can be no curriculum development without teacher development seems to have been replaced in England and elsewhere by the adage that there can be no curriculum implementation without training. Whilst there are some signs of movement away from this narrowly focused view of teaching and training as simple acts of delivery towards a view of teaching as a 'moral practice which does not exclude the technical dimension but places it in a broader context of educational values' (Elliott, 1991, p.103), it still predominates in contexts where policies are formulated and resources allocated. (Day, 1999, pp. 6-7)

The neoliberal agenda has resulted in the emergence of a 'new professionalism' that imposes a model of professional development which goes beyond Hoyle's (1980) conception which proposes that teachers move from 'restricted' to 'extended' professionality by their own volition. The model that Hargreaves (1994) identifies as a 'post-technocratic' model of professional development and concords with this vision states that all teachers are held to have rights to professional development, and that opportunities must be distributed equitably (Hargreaves, 1994, p.430; cited in Day, 1999, p.9). It is made up of four interconnected premises:

- Teachers are understood to have life-long professional needs and these will be met only if treated as in the case of any learner, in terms of continuity and progression;
- For continuity and progression to be realised, teachers' developmental needs must be assessed on a regular basis;
- Schools devise a plan for development from which also flow needs for professional development if the school's development plan is to be implemented successfully;
- Professional needs arising from personal sources (e.g. appraisal) have to be reconciled with school needs from institutional sources (e.g. a development plan).

Day goes on to explain that Hargreaves puts two propositions 'at the heart of' the new professionalism. The first is that to improve schools, one must be prepared to invest in professional development and the second is that to improve teachers, their professional development must be set within the context of institutional development (Hargreaves, 1994, p.436; cited in Day 1999, p.9). Hargreaves' controversial claim is that:

> Structures which nourish the new professionalism thereby empower schools and teachers, not only by providing them with the commitment and energy to pursue improvements in teaching and learning, but also by increasing the school's capacity to undertake further development. (Hargreaves,1994, p. 435; cited in Day, 1999, p.9)

In response to this position, critics argue that rather than empowering teachers, such new managerial structures only serve to instead deprofessionalize them. Secondly, they point out that it is simply not possible for all teachers' professional development needs to be met within the institutional context or to arise from it (Stronach and Maclure, 1996).

As pointed out on page 4, despite the fact that neoliberalism dates back to the 1930s, only very recently has it been officially recognised by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) (2016) as a dominant global ideology influencing policies:

> There has been a strong and widespread global trend toward neoliberalism since the 1980s, according to a composite index that measures the extent to which countries introduced competition in various spheres of economic activity to foster economic growth (…) Chile's push started a decade or so earlier than 1982, with subsequent policy changes bringing it ever closer to the United States. Other countries have also steadily implemented neoliberal policies. (Ostry, Loungani & Furceri, 2016, p.1)

Europe is no exception to this trend as highlighted by the agreement reached by European leaders at the European Council meeting at Lisbon in 2000 to make Europe by 2010:

> […] the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion (Council, 2000).

In consequence, education systems in the EU are therefore explicitly tied into the global economic system given that "education systems all over the world have been impacted by the rise of neoliberal ideology and practices of government" (Connell, 2013, p. 1). UNESCO presented the contradictory demands placed on education systems as a consequence of this neoliberal trend as early as 1996:

On the one hand:

- a commitment to education for all;
- an extension of the period of initial schooling;
- recognition of the growing importance of life-long education;
- more emphasis or general education for children and young people which prepares them for life rather than providing vocational skills for specific jobs;
- increasing emphasis on teamwork and co-operation;
- a consensus that general education should include attention to environmental issues, tolerance and mutual understanding.

On the other hand:

- growing inequalities, deepening social differences and a break-down in social cohesion;
- an increase in alienation among youth and dropping out of school;
- high levels of youth unemployment and charges that young people are ill-equipped to enter the world of work;
- a resurgence of inter-ethnic tensions, xenophobia and racism as well as the growing influence of religious sects and problems of drugs and gangs, with associated violence;
- increasing emphasis on competition and material values. (UNESCO, 1996, p.2)

Parallel to these demands the total resources available for education have declined and this has inevitably led to a deterioration in conditions of teaching and learning and intensification of teachers' work (Day et al, 1996).

The teaching profession, as members of the "knowledge-based economy", are therefore exposed to greater external controls and accountability in a drive to promote "designer teachers" who "demonstrate compliance to policy imperatives" (Sachs, 2001, p.156). What does this mean for teachers in terms of professional development? Day (1999) presents an ominous picture:

> Various forms of external monitoring of standards and published test results at 'key stages' in pupils' school lives mean also that teachers as well as schools are increasingly being judged – whether formally or informally – on a narrow set of results in 'basic' areas of education, so that the temptation to teach only to the test in order to demonstrate basic competence will, for many teachers, become overwhelming. The maintenance of good teaching, however, demands that teachers revisit and review regularly the ways in which they are applying principles of differentiation, coherence progression and continuity and balance not only in the 'what' and the 'how' of their teaching but also in the 'why' in terms of their core 'moral' purposes. Visions of themselves as educationalists with broader purposes are likely to dim without continuing professional development. (Day, 1999, p.7)

In addition, at a macro-analytical level, research by Apple (1992) indicates that increased bureaucratic control is likely to result in the deskilling of teachers because "when individuals cease to plan and control a large proportion of their own work, the skills essential to doing these tasks self-reflectively and well, atrophy and are forgotten" (Apple, 1992, p.22). Elliott (1993) presents other features which characterize neoliberal reforms in education:

- educational goals are treated as product specifications or targets
- 'targets' or 'learning outcomes' must be prespecified and standardized
- educational processes are technologies designed to achieve required outcomes
- quality is defined by outcomes
- evidence of quality relates to effectiveness and efficiency
- parents, employers and students are consumers

- schools are units of production whose performance is regulated by consumer choice which itself relates to achievement scores (Elliott, 1993, p.54)

Majhanovich (2002) presents the implications for education systems globally and illustrates her point using Canada as an example:

> Common features of restructured education around the world include results-based curriculum focussing on what students are able to do at the end of a program; and standard discipline (subject) oriented curriculum based on measurable items. (Affective elements are discouraged or eliminated from course content.) Science, mathematics and technology are privileged subjects. An important feature includes externally-developed standardized tests to be administered at regular intervals throughout the program. Attention is paid to preparation for the workplace and career counselling. Ontario has followed the model. All curriculum for elementary and secondary programs has been rewritten with new curriculum documents created, based on a uniform template, regardless of the essential differences of various subject areas. (Majhanovich, 2002, p. 165)

Priestley and Drew (2016) point to Scotland's *Curriculum for Excellence* (CfE) as a good example of the 'new curriculum' which reflects a curricular shift since the turn of the millennium from the former *5-14 Curriculum,* a curriculum framed around content expressed as learning outcomes and which came to be associated with highly structured and prescriptive schemes of work in schools. This shift is part of a wider transnational discourse that 'teachers matter' (OECD, 2005) which promotes the key role that teachers play in shaping curricular practices and is "characterised by talk of lifelong professional learning, teaching as a Master's level profession, teacher autonomy and teachers as agents of change" (Priestley and Drew, 2016, p.2):

> In the past, national curriculum developlments have often been supported by central guidelines, cascade models of staff development and the provision of resources to support the implementation of guidance by teachers. Our approach to change is different. It aims to engage teachers in thinking from first principles about their educational aims and values and their classroom practice. The process is based upon evidence of how change can be brought about successfully – through a climate in which reflective practitioners share and develop ideas. (Scottish Executive, 2006, p. 4)

Priestley and Drew (2016, p.2) also point to "Scotland's broader policy landscape" manifested by the significant Donaldson report (2010) *Teaching Scotland's Future* (TSF) which positions the teaching profession as being made up of "reflective and enquiring teachers who are engaged in continuous improvement" (p.15) and who "have the capacity

to engage fully with the complexities of education and to be key actors in shaping and leading educational change" (p.19).

And yet, the authors argue that "currently such aspirations are not achievable for a number of reasons which continue to erode teacher agency" (Priestley and Drew, 2016, p.2) and illustrated by the "partial (at best) implementation for Curriculum for Excellence, as evidenced by research studies (Priestley & Minty, 2013) (…) and the recent OECD review of Scottish education (OECD, 2015)" (Priestley and Drew, 2016, p.3). Priestley and Drew set out the reasons for the erosion of teacher agency:

> First, the *pervasive output regulation of teachers' work* (Nieveen & Kuiper, 2012; Kuiper & Berkvens, 2013; Leat, Livingston & Priestley, 2013) or *outcomes steering* (Biesta 2004) arguably inhibits teacher agency more effectively that has been the case with input regulation. *Accountability, surveillance, performance indicators and target setting, and governance by data (including attainment data)* have been widely viewed as 'a shift from notions of partnership, collegiality, discretion and trust to increasing levels of managerialism, bureaucracy, standardization, assessment and performance review' (Evetts, 2011, p. 407). (Priestley and Drew, 2016, p.3) [my own emphasis]

The second set of reasons for teacher agency being eroded is because the "aspirational policy has not been accompanied by a cultural/discursive environment that might foster such aspirations" (ibid) where curriculum change is "often superficial, comprising little more than changing the terminology to re-label existing practices as being constitutive of new policy" (ibid). I suspect that the change in terminology between "teacher trainer" and "teacher educator" that I discussed earlier on page 97 of this study may be an example of this phenomenon. The authors take issue with the "ubiquitous use of 'uneducational' language to describe educational practices" characterised by "new managerial catchwords" that are now part of a "new global vocabulary" (Hood, 1995, p.105) such as the "language of delivery". Priestley and Drew (2016) indicate that the difficulty is not only that these catchwords remain unchallenged but the fact that "language frames the way we think about and enact practice" (p.3). They argue that the "continued conceptualising of education as delivery thus potentially inhibits the enactment of practices, by framing the development of the curriculum as simply the implementation of the curriculum as defined by someone else" (ibid). Their paper presents a project which aims to "break the mould of existing curriculum development

practices" (p.4) because it proposes a different conceptualisation of the implementation gap which is habitually viewed as a gap between policy and practice. The authors suggest that it is more useful to view the gap as one between "educational purposes/principles/values and educational practice" so that instead of "being an implementation issue or, as it so often becomes, an issue framed as changing teachers' practice, it becomes an issue of critical engagement with educational principles (including a critical engagement with policy) and a constructive enactment of practice that is fit-for-purpose" (ibid., p.3). Their project known as the *School-based Curriculum Development through Critical Collaborative Professional Enquiry* aimed to "break the mould of existing curriculum development practices" which "reduced to a process of ticking off of outcomes and the implementation of techniques, as teachers lose sight of the big ideas of the curriculum" (Drew, Priestley & Michael, 2016 cited in ibid., p.4). They conclude that this project served as a "powerful mechanism for engaging teachers with curriculum policy and breaking the mould of existing practices which have arguably inhibited innovation and muted the impact of an aspirational curriculum policy" (ibid., p.10) and is therefore an approach which is promising as it enhances teacher agency and therefore has the potential to lead to "more meaningful curriculum development in schools" (ibid). However, projects such as these depend upon teachers and teacher educators also being aware of this conceptualisation of the implementation gap. Such awareness would arise on teacher education courses or through reading the research literature. Given the neoliberal agenda to restrict teacher agency, it becomes clearer why teacher education in the EU draws the attention of neoliberal policymakers to ultimately prevent "meaningful curriculum development" in schools and expose the teaching profession to a process of deskilling.

In the following section, I aim to illustrate the extent to which MFL teacher educators are unlikely candidates for deskilling given their background in terms of their qualifications, experiences, attitudes, values and beliefs.

3.4 Primary MFL teacher educators- second order teachers

Earlier in this chapter, I discussed the four domains of knowledge that are addressed in the preparation in the preparation of teachers in HE teacher education: general education

knowledge, content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge (Gimmestad and Hall, 1995). The authors consider that pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) is the most important domain as it is an amalgam of general knowledge, content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge which represents the additional knowledge and skills that expert teachers possess. Research informed teacher educators both model and promote professional experience as central to learning about teaching through an inquiry-stance. Indeed, Monica Mincu draws on the international research literature in her contribution to the final report of the BERA-RSA inquiry (2014) into research and teacher education (2014) when she makes three key arguments about the contribution of research:

> First, teachers matter and schools mke the most difference for lower-achieving students, who disproportionately come from deprived backgrounds; second, teachers and school leaders are at the heart of school and system improvement, particularly when supported by specialist support from both inside and outside the school, and third, research has come centre stage as a pillar of school improvement. Practioner engagement in and with research has been shown to contribute to successful school improviement in a variety of ways; by involving practitioners in the testing of new ideas and in the design, delivery and monitoring of interventions. (BERA, 2014, p.7)

In this next section, I will present those areas of expertise that primary MFL teacher educators contribute towards primary MFL teacher education as second order teachers. With this in mind, I first explore the literature concerning early language learning in the classroom before moving on to an exploration of primary MFL language learning and teaching that primary MFL teacher educators bring to teacher education in an attempt to provide student teachers with the knowledge and skills they need in order to teach children MFL in the primary classroom successfully. Finally, I then present the contribution that primary MFL makes to a child's overall education in terms of cultural awareness and developing intercultural competence.

3.4.1 Second order teacher: early foreign language learning research

The literature informs us of various factors which influence foreign language learning and the one which usually comes to mind when considering early language learning at primary level is the age factor. The belief that 'younger means better' has been commonplace since Lenneberg (1967) put forward the Critical Period Hypothesis

suggesting that there is an 'optimum age' during which children are especially amenable to learn foreign languages. The 'younger means better' belief continues to have an impact not only in the public perception but also on language policy. For instance, the notion that early language learning alone is a key factor for successful language learning is clearly expressed in the following statement found in the annex of the French Education Reform Act of 8th July 2013: '*La précocité de l'exposition et de l'apprentissage en langue vivante, étrangère et régionale, est un facteur avéré de progrès en la matière'*.

However, a closer look at the literature reveals that the relationship concerning age and success in second language acquisition (SLA) is not that clear. Oller and Nagato (1974) observe that older learners make more rapid progress than younger learners whilst Johnstone (1994) indicates that older learners display "better general learning strategies; better grasp of grammatical patterns and rule in language; more practice in negotiating and sustaining conversations; more defined purpose in learning the language and greater knowledge of concepts, e.g. time, which can be transferred to the new language" (Johnstone, 1994 cited in Sharpe, 2001, p.33). Lightbown & Spada (1993) point to research revealing that older children do manage to catch up with those who have experienced early language learning as long as certain conditions are in place and stress the necessity for adequate time provision for language learning because "one or two hours a week will not produce advanced second language speakers, no matter how young they were when they began" (p.50). However, it is relevant at this point to note that the French primary school curriculum provides only one and a half hours of MFL per week.

In contrast, research by McLaughlin (1992) indicates that those learners who begin a foreign language before puberty experience more success at developing native-like mastery in terms of pronunciation, syntax and morphology than those who started after puberty. Nonetheless, Ellis, Brewster & Girard remind us that the "critical age for native-speaker-like pronunciation is six years provided good pronunciation models are available" (Ellis, Brewster & Girard, 2002, p.21). Based on their research project with pupils in Croatia, Djigunovich and Vilke (2000) identify the key conditions for successful language learning at school at this early age. Firstly, starting a second language as young as six is viable as long as the children experience 'intensive interaction in class' for at least "45 minutes per day for five days per week". Secondly, small class sizes of "10-15

for languages" are recommended and finally, teachers should demonstrate "a fluent command of the language and a good pronunciation and intonation". The last point is echoed by Deyrich (2007) when she states that language teaching cannot be improvised in an ad-hoc way because primary pupils require teachers who have a sound knowledge of the language, are able to use it effectively and are good linguistic role models:

> *Il est vrai qu'on ne peut s'improviser professeur de langue, dans la mesure où un niveau de compétence suffisant est requis pour que le modèle langagier de l'enseignant puisse servir de reference.* (Deyrich, 2007: vii)

Despite mixed research results, it would appear from the above that one of the principle arguments for promoting MFL from an early age is to develop good pronunciation and intonation. Although the objective of primary MFL is not necessarily to achieve native-speaker-like pronunciation, what are the consequences for six-year olds being taught English by teachers providing inaccurate language models? Gruson (2014) believes it crucial that primary teachers receive extensive training in pronunciation and intonation because younger children are so good at imitating oral language:

> *Pour autant, avec le démarrage de cet enseignement apprentissage dès le CP, et sachant que les jeunes élèves comme les CP s'appuient notamment surl'imitation orale, il est indispensable que les professeurs des écoles reçoivent une formation solide dans le domaine de la phonologie.* (Gruson, 2014, p.8). [1]

Ortega (2009) summarizes SLA research and states that:

> the five environmental ingredients that together contribute to (but do not guarantee) optimal L2 learning are: acculturated attitudes, comprehensible input, negotiated interaction, pushed output, and a capacity, natural or cultivated, to attend to the language code, not just the message. (Ortega, 2009, p.7)

In addition, Ortega points to research that indicates that grammatical competence holds a special status in SLA because:

> grammar (a) requires more interest, attention and hard work than other aspects of the language to be learned; (b) may even require more time to simmer and deploy than the learning of other aspects of an L2; and (c) can act as a gatekeeper to development in other areas of the L2 beyond formulaic repertoires, particularly sociolinguistic competence. (Ortega, 2009, p.80)

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[1] http://cache.media.education.gouv.fr/file/CSP/52/6/Gruson_Brigitte_-_MCF_-_CSP_Contribution_399526.pdf

Moreover, Ortega goes on to describe research which indicates that "negative feedback (or the implicit or explicit indication that some part of an utterance is ungrammatical) is better overall than entirely ignoring errors" (Ortega, 2009, p.79-80).

Given these principles, it would therefore seem likely that those primary education teachers who cannot identify or explain grammatical errors, because they lack sufficient knowledge and expertise in the MFL they are teaching, may impair language learning in their pupils. However, Deyrich (2007) reminds us that demonstrating a sufficient command of the language will serve no purpose if teachers have not got the skills to teach this language to the children in their classes. Receiving a sound theoretical background in pedagogy during primary teacher education and training is, therefore, just as essential as expertise in the language itself.

> *L'enseignement de la L2 se fond sur une maîtrise de cette L2 (quel que soit l'âge du public), mais cette maîtrise n'est pas suffisante en soi. L'enseignement doit, en effet, savoir adopter une distanciation critique sur la langue, son enseignement et son apprentissage. Par conséquent, les enseignants du primaire ont besoin d'une formation théorique et pratique solide et adaptée à ses besoins* (Deyrich, 2007, p.74).

3.4.2 Second order teacher: pedagogical content knowledge (PCK)

Despite notions in the media that teaching MFL to primary school children is easy, most novice student teachers realise quite quickly the difficulty of their task and the questions and concerns they express at the beginning of their teacher education courses reflect their awareness of the challenge they face. What are my aims? What activities will help me achieve those aims? How best to motivate my pupils? When should I speak English or French? What method should I use? How long should a lesson be? What resources should I use? What is the balance between speaking, listening, reading and writing? How can I get everyone to be active? How do I know that learning has taken place? There are of course many more potential questions that they may ask; however, most of the other questions gradually emerge later on during their course as they develop their knowledge and experience of MFL in the primary classroom and in the university teacher education classroom. This section does not intend to explore all aspects of primary MFL teaching and learning as this is beyond the parameters of this study; however, it does aim

to present an overview of some of the key aspects that primary MFL teacher educators consider on their teacher education courses.

Age-related pedagogy

One of the first tasks that a primary teacher educator faces is to help novice teachers understand their teaching role in the primary MFL classroom which is very different to that in the secondary MFL classroom. Young children are different to older learners not only in terms of their chronological age but in terms of their development. To begin with primary children, have emotional needs and very young learners operate in a very egocentric way finding it difficult to consider the needs of others or to cooperate as well as older children. They tend to become easily frustrated when their needs are not met. In addition, they are still developing motor skills such as "holding a pencil, skipping, balancing and the hand-eye coordination required to colour in drawings neatly, copy simple letters, and so on" (Brewster, Ellis and Girard (1992, p.28). They are also more physically restless than older children and activities need to be short and varied. They are emotionally unstable and tend to have sudden outbursts (ibid). In particular, they need to:

> develop a sense of confidence and self-esteem, to have other children to share and play with, to be involved in learning where they are physically active, have routines that provide a sense of security and a warm, encouraging classroom atmosphere, where they feel they have opportunities to succeed in their learning and receive praise. (Brewster, Ellis and Girard, 1992, p.28)

To create such an atmosphere effectively, novice teachers have to gain insight into the needs of young children and what that means in terms of their roles as teachers when teaching MFL because many student teachers have great difficulty making the leap from what they themselves experience during MFL lesson at secondary high school. In the study undertaken by Karavas-Dukas (1995), a multicultural group of experienced teachers from a wide variety of contexts worldwide and representing many different teaching approaches identified nine key roles that they associate with teaching. Figure 7 below is an indication of the many roles that exist and the potential problems that novice teachers may face when they do not select the correct role for the situation in class.

Source of Expertise (46%) - Denoting authoritarian stance ?	Source of Expertise (46%) - Denoting supportive stance ?
Instructor Presenter Actor Pedagogist	Informant Input provider Information provider Resource Source of knowledge
Management roles (35.7%) Manager Organizer Director Administrator Public relations officer Arranger	**Source of advice (53.5%)** Counsellor Advisor Personal tutor Psychologist Listener
Facilitator of learning (64.2%) Learning facilitator Helper Guide Catalyst to group discussion Prompter Mediator	**Sharing roles (17.8)** Negotiator Participant Student Cooperator
Caring roles (25%) Friend Sister/mother Caretaker Supporter	**Creator of classroom behaviour (14.2%)** Entertainer Motivator Source of inspiration
Evaluator (10.7%)	**Example of behaviour and hard work (3.5%)**

***Figure 7 Teacher roles*[1]**

In addition to physical and emotional differences, the work of Vygotsky (1978) and Bruner (1983) has contributed to our understanding of the conceptual, educational and linguistic differences between young children and older learners at secondary school. Bruner saw children as being active agents in their own learning in which they select, retain and transform information to construct knowledge "which is shaped by his or her unique way of seeing and interpreting the world. This, he called scaffolding" (Brewster et al., 1993, p.30). Vygotsky (1978) emphasised:

> the role of the adult and of language in children's learning. He saw the process of mental development as working on two levels, the present actual level and the future, potential level of development [where] adults/teachers work actively to improve children's level of development [and] allow young children to talk in order to develop their thinking. His model of learning, social-constructivist, sees children as constructing their understandings from the social interaction of their

[1] Adapted from Karavas-Dukas, 1995; in Hedge (2000, pp.28-29)

> learning contexts with all its possibilities and limitations. (Brewster et al., 1993, p.30)

These psychological theories about learning highlight that despite the fact that every child is a unique individual, “there are patterns in the development of learning across children’s responses and behaviours” (Anning, 1991, p.42). These patterns are related to learning styles that Berman (1998) identifies as auditory, visual or kinesthetic.

Teacher educators will seek to help novice teachers understand that there are similarities in the patterns in learners’ responses so that they can seek to identify these patterns in their pupils and so provide enough variety in the activities they incorporate into their lessons to tap into the potential of all the children in the classroom. According to Gardner (1993) there are multiple types of intelligence and figure 8 presents examples of the different types of activities that develop each of the eight intelligences that primary teachers could integrate very easily into their foreign languge lessons (Berman, 1998; Gardner, 1993; cited in Brewster et al., 2002, p.34-36). Having examined the specificity of primary aged children in terms of how they think and learn, I will now present the various types of language teaching approaches.

Audio-lingual

The audio-lingual approach became popular in the 1950s and was based on structuralism and behaviourism. It involved the repetition of new language structures. It is teacher-centred and out-dated because it places too much emphasis on memorisation and imitation of texts as well as exercise that demand mechanical, decontextualized repetition (Brewster et al., 2000, p.44). Despite the fact that children tend to get bored very quickly as there is not enough variety to hold the interest of primary-aged children and is therefore likely to foster a negative attitude to foreign language learning, this approach remains “popular with many teachers since that is how they were taught; it is very manageable” (ibid) particularly as it is not as demanding as organizing pair and group work; and given the fact that primary teachers are not necessarily specialist MFL teachers it is “especially useful for teachers with fairly low language levels themselves” (ibid). In addition, “it encourages children to listen carefully and memorize chunks of language which are important parts of language learning” (ibid).

Total Physical Response

Total Physical Response (TPR) is popular with younger learners because new language is introduced in a very visual and contextualised manner. It involves activity, movement and mimes. Michael Rosen's (1989) *Going on a bear hunt* is an example of a story which uses TPR. The teacher models the actions and while singing the song the teacher as well as the pupils march and do body movements that represent climbing, going through grass, going under things, over things or through things. Action songs, rhymes and stories are all forms of TPR and help learners to listen without pressure to speak.

The communicative approach

Communicative Langage Teaching (CLT) was developed in the mid-1970s through the Council of Europe. CLT is based on the social-interactionist theory which emphasises the social nature of language learning and interaction. It aims to make communicative competence the goal of language teaching. To do this, pupils need:

> knowledge of the linguistic forms, meanings and functions. They need to know that many different forms can be used to perform a function and also that a single form can often serve a variety of functions. They must be able to choose from among these the most appropriate form, given the social context and the roles of the interlocutors. They must be able to manage the process of negotiating meaning with their interluctors. Communication is a process; knowledge of the forms of language is insufficient. (Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2011, p.122)

This approach uses three types of activities: problem-solving activities; interactive activites and creative activites which all aim to develop learners' communicative competence while catering for children's needs and what they are naturally enthusiastic about. Brewster et al. (2000, p.45) explain that "the embedded thinking and language skills within the activities require the repetition of simple phrases or structures, essential to learning. However, this approach has been criticized by some for focusing on communication and fluency too much and overlooking grammatical accuracy".

Task-based learning

Task-based learning (TBL) was developed as a response to these criticisms. Skehan (1998) explains that TBL attempts to improve on the communicative approach by

balancing accuracy with fluency while encouraging more authentic output (speaking or writing) from learners by making pupils aware of the end point or product at the very start of the unit of work. In this way, the language that the teacher introduces and practices is seen to have a point and the final task is a clear goal. Brewster et al. (2000, p.45) explain that there are three phases to this approach.

Linguistic	**Musical**
Word games Reading games Writing games Storytelling Show and tell Role-play Using puppets Tongue twisters Crosswords/Anagrams	Songs Action rhymes Chants
Logical-mathematical	**Interpersonal**
Word puzzles Reading puzzles Writing puzzles Logical problem solving Computer games Number puzzles Classifying Ranking Sequencing/ordering	Pair work Group work Brainstorming Peer teaching Dialongues Interviews Surveys
Spatial	**Intrapersonal**
Shape puzzles Mind maps Drawing Visualizing Diagrams Constructing models Maps and coordinates Learning from computer apps and CDs	Learning diaries Reflection Creative writing Project work Personal goal-setting
Bodily-Kinesthetic	**Naturalist**
TPR (Total physical response) Craftwork Dancing Physical activities Action rhymes, songs and games	Patterns Classifying Sorting Nature projects

Figure 8 Language activities to develop the Eight Intelligences

The first is the pre-task preparation when the new language and procedures are introduced: there is a lot of teacher talk about the topic, use of pictures, demonstrations and songs to introduce the language. Then comes the task itself which is broken up into sets of short tasks where the there is a gradual increase in emphasis on planning and report culminating in the macro task in pairs or in a group and then there is the third phase, the language focus involving follow-up language work based on whatever problems and issues have emerged. Children are encouraged to find, identify and classify common words and phrases to develop language awareness or involve further language practice. The key idea is that pupils are more likely to remember the language they have decided they need rather than the language the teacher has decided they need.

Story-based methodology

Children adore stories so clearly learning foreign languages through storytelling is a very popular and successful approach. Stories provide the starting point for a wide variety of language learning activities. Brewser et al. ((2000) list many reasons why they should be used in the primary MFL classroom such as the fact that they are motivating, fun and help develop positive attitudes. They link fantasy and imagination with the real world. When read in class they form part of a social experience. Teachers have the opportunity to introduce or revise vocabulary and structures and listening to stories enables children to become aware of the rhythm, intonation and pronunciation of language (p.186-187).

Cross-curricular approach or content-based instruction

The cross-curricular approach links the development of the MFL with other areas of the curriculum such as Art, Physical Education, Geography for instance. Creating cross-currical links for language learning has the potential of creating a learning environment which provides the opportunity to use contextualised language in a more authentic environment than simply learning MFL for social purposes. However, this approach depends on the language level and confidence of the teacher in their knowledge of the subject being taught and the language needed to deliver it as well as the linguistic and conceptual level of the pupils and their motivation and familiarity with different styles of learning:

> Naturally, when students do study academic subjects in another language, they will need a great deal of assistance in understanding subject matter texts and in learning to use the" academic language associated with the subject. Therefore, teachers must have clear language objectives as well as content learning objhectives for their lessons (…) Teachers of CBI have to be concerned with language objectives that include vocabulary, structure, and discourse organization. (Larsen-Freeman and Anderson, 2011, p.134)

Sharpe (1999) argues for primary teachers embedding MFL into the life of the primary classroom and curriculum. He holds an optimistic vision of these teachers becoming "remarkable successful gardners whose pupils grow strong roots in MFL learning and may be better prepared to withstand the blast from the secondary curriculum" (p.179).

Stages of foreign language learning

There is not any one 'miracle' approach and most primary MFL teacher educators will encourage their student teachers to use a combination of these approaches. The challenge that faces most teachers is successfully enabling children to learn the language. There are two language learning models. The first is known as Presentation-Practice-Production (PPP) and the other is Meeting new language, Manipulating it and Making the language your own (MMM) developed by the University of Nottingham ITE team (Brewster et al., 2000, p.47). These approaches involve using suitable resources to present the language and put it into context. The teacher models the language and introduces meaning, form and pronunciation and checks the pupils' comprehension. This stage is characterized by teacher-centred transmission teaching where there is a high level of control. Then comes the second stage where the pupils are given opportunities to use the language but with support and guidance from the teacher involving a movement from controlled to more guided manipulation. It is likely that the pupils are divided into groups or pairs at this point. When it comes to the making the language your own stage, the pupils use the language in a much less controlled way as they try to get their meaning across and to understand what others mean. There is a level of risk taking and in order to not destroy confidence and demotivate the children, the teacher should avoid over-correcting. Any errors that the teacher identifies such as pronunciation and incorrect word order, are recycled the next time. What is important and is often neglected is a review of what has been done and learned by the children as well as given lots of opportunities to recyle language through a variety of activities (Brewster et al., 2000, p.49).

Motivation and a positive attitude

Sharpe (1999) considers that a major challenge of the delivery of primary MFL is the subject knowledge element of the primary 'non-specialist' teacher who may "have a sophisticated and informed understanding of effective primary teaching methods, but only a very rudimentary knowledge of the language to be taught" (p. 176 -177). In this case, he points out that the training aim should prioritise three main objectives:

> 1 equipping the student teacher with secure knowledge of basic structures and vocabulary which can underpin: (a) effective real use of the foreign language in the classroom; (b) some specific teaching of elements of the foreign language within a planned scheme which is part of a school MFL policy (possible within an LEA MFL policy, and eventually within the framework of a national policy);
>
> 2 developing in the student teacher a positive and enthusiastic attitude towards primary MFL;
>
> 3 enabling the student teacher to apply principles of effective primary teaching to the specific instance of MFL teaching.

Sharpe (1999) stresses the importance of a positive attitude and that "it is scarcely and exaggeration to say that motivation is everything" (p.177) particularly because there is a link between motivation and success in MFL: "it is absolutely crucial that the learner actually desires to communicate. A positive attitude is vital for real success" (ibid.). He refers to the "one really positive conclusion arising out of the other strikingly desultory NFER evaluation of the ill-fated Primary French Project" to illustrate his point:

> Where the pupils taught French in the primary school do appear to gain is not in 'mastery' but in attitude. When they have been successful in their efforts to learn French, they do appear to retain a more favourable attitude toward speaking the language than do those who were not introduced to French until the age of 11. (Burstall et al., 1974, p.244)

Having explored in this section how children think and learn, the different types of activities that appeal to and develop the multiple intelligences of children, the various approaches to foreign language learning, how to facilitate language learning in the classroom and finally the importance of motivation and a favourable attitude towards language learning, I will now move on to a consideration of the contribution primary MFL makes to developing cultural awareness and intercultural competence.

3.4.3 Second order teacher: intercultural competence

According to Jones (2000), MFL teachers are well-placed to help make learners become culturally aware and interculturally competent:

> The special and unique feature of Modern Language learning is the interplay between the learner's communicative competence, linguistic competence, cultural awareness, identity and personality, all operating simultaneously. This interaction requires the selection and combination of appropriate language in ways which follow syntactical, semantic and grammatical rules. Cultural features also need to be taken into consideration to avoid ambiguity or offence as must the personality of the speaker or writer. In addition, there is the realisation that communicating with someone from another country challenges perceptions of personal identity: are the practices of others strange; do our own practices appear strange to them? When speaking for the first time to a native speaker from another country, learners find themselves talking not just as themselves but as someone who is English. They are representatives of something bigger than themselves. Because Modern Languages' teachers have had experience of the complexity of such interaction, they can best explain it. They also understand how to offer appropriate learning opportunities, and how to encourage a critical, analytical approach to developing awareness of self and to encounters with others (Jones, 2000, pp.167-168).

So, with this in mind, to what extent do the teacher educator participants in this study consider that learning languages are important symbolic and material resources, 'cultural capital', to be acquired through language learning for children at school?

According to Bourdieu (1979) 'cultural capital' comes in three forms: embodied, objectified, and institutionalized. Embodied cultural capital is a disposition of the mind or body. A person's accent is an example of embodied cultural capital. Objectified cultural capital are cultural goods such as objects of fine art, luxury cars or rare library collections, whereas examples of the institutionalised form of cultural capital refer to educational or technical qualifications such as university degrees or titles that symbolize cultural competence and authority. Linguistic capital is a form of cultural capital defined at the level of the human individual. De Swaan (2001) highlights that although this rationale of linguistic capital normally only applies to the lectal variations within a given language; knowledge of different languages which are to various degrees central to the global economy can be capitalized by speakers of this language.

In this respect, a French person who masters English may benefit more than one who speaks Dutch fluently because of the status of English as a lingua franca as opposed to Dutch. However, the lingua franca status of a language cannot be said to be relevant in terms of cultural capital for HE teacher educators as it is the institutionalised form of cultural capital which is most important. The university qualification obtained in the taught language enables the individual on the one hand to be recruited whilst, on the other, it demonstrates the technical expertise of the professional in terms of MFL proficiency. After all, how else would a teacher educator maintain credibility and legitimacy when teaching student teachers how to create an optimal MFL language learning environment in the primary classroom? However, it could also be argued that the cultural capital of language teachers stretches beyond the classroom because this academic subject not only provides a unique contribution to the curriculum as a whole through “the teaching of culture, and cultural awareness, language awareness and grammar, and visits and exchanges abroad” (Lawes, 2000, p. 87) but also because it is a “a beacon of universal values in a post-modern world” (ibid). I will move on to reflecting upon what culture is and the challenges involved when aiming to teach cultural awareness to children.

Defining culture and cultural awareness

Although Jones (2000, p.158) asserts that “[m]any teachers of Modern Foreign Languages would agree that developing an awareness of the culture of the people whose language is being taught is integral to teaching a Modern Foreign Language”, he also points out that developing cultural awareness as an element of the curriculum is problematic. This is because, on the one hand, understanding cultural identity is “multifaceted, complex, and at times provisional” (ibid) whilst, on the other, “the process of defining the cultural identity of others involves an understanding of oneself and one’s identity” (ibid. pp.158-159). In addition, there are various interpretations of what culture is. One of the first definitions of culture was given by Tylor (1873) who defined culture as a complex entity which comprises a set of symbolic systems, including knowledge, norms, values, beliefs, language, art and customs, as well as habits and skills learned by individuals as members of a given society. Hall (1997) presents other definitions. He says that the more traditional definition of the term is an embodiment of what is

considered as the "best that has been thought and said" in a society. He makes a distinction between the 'high culture' of an age where culture is the sum of the great ideas as represented in the classic works of literature, painting, music and philosophy, and the "mass culture" or "popular culture" which refers to the widely distributed forms of popular music, publishing, art design and literature, or the activities of leisure-time and entertainment, which make up the everyday lives of the majority of ordinary people. He then presents the anthropological definition where the word culture is used to refer to whatever is distinctive about the way of life of a people, community, nation or social group. This approach at school aims to show the differences between people from different countries and cultures and focuses on traditions, customs, folklore and aspects of daily life. Finally, from a sociological perspective, the notion culture includes the 'shared values' of a group or of a society. Lawes (2000) believes that one of the difficulties in teaching cultural awareness in foreign languages lies in the various ways in which culture is understood. She considers that when culture is understood according to the traditional principles that developed during the eighteenth-century Age of Enlightenment then the widening of children's horizons and breaking down of potential barriers between people from different cultures and countries is the principle objective. It is perceived as a means of liberating "people from their narrow lives, to bring them together and to promulgate a universal concept of mankind" (Lawes, 2000, p.87). She considers that it is through the study of 'high' culture that this can be achieved, and laments the tendency to instead adopt the anthropological approach in which traditions, customs, folklore and aspects of daily life are considered more relevant to young people's lives.

Lawes asserts that although relevance is indeed important for learning, it should not be an either/or situation, and that all children should benefit from access to high culture because rather than fostering "positive attitudes of a more universal kind which emphasise common humanity" (ibid), the anthropological understanding of culture accentuates differences between peoples of different societies. Lawes explains that concentrating on superficial and mundane aspects of culture rather than on the cultural achievements of other societies that have spread across national boundaries is more likely to result in negative and stereotypical attitudes being reinforced:

> In practical terms, this means that learners are much more likely now to be familiar with a whole range of useful knowledge about how people from other countries live in their day-to-day lives, how they celebrate Christmas or other holy festivals, what they do on holiday or how many pets per head of the population there are, than to have any idea of the history of the country, know who its most famous artists or musicians are, or have read any of its literature. The emphasis now, therefore, is on possible practical use rather than personal enrichment. There is also a danger that such an interpretation of cultural awareness within modern foreign languages, far from encouraging young people to be more open to other cultures, the celebration of 'difference', reinforces barriers rather than breaks them down (ibid. p.89).

Culture: the 'giving and taking of meaning'

Hall (1997) indicates that over time the definition of culture has evolved in the social and human sciences to include the importance of 'meaning'. 'Culture, it is argued, is not so much a set of things, such as novels and paintings or TV programmes and comics, as a process, a set of practices. Culture is concerned with the production and the exchange of meanings – the 'giving and taking of meaning' – between the members of a society or group' (Hall, 1997). In other words, two people who belong to the same culture interpret the world in roughly the same ways and can express themselves, their thoughts and feelings about the world, in ways which will be understood by each other. Culture, he says, depends on its participants meaningfully interpreting what is happening around them and 'making sense' of the world in broadly similar ways. In this context Hall (1997) explains that:

> Culture is about feelings, attachments and emotions as well as concepts and ideas. The expression on my face says something about who I am (identity) and what I am feeling (emotions) and what group I feel I belong to (attachment), which can be read and understood by other people. Cultural meanings (…) organize and regulate social practices, influence our conduct and consequently have real, practical effects (Hall, 1997, p.2).

Hall goes on to highlight that it is by our use of things, what we say, think and feel about them – how we represent them – that we give these things a meaning. We represent things and give them meaning by the words we use about them, the tales we tell about them, the images we create of them, the emotions we associate with them, the manner in which we classify and conceptualize them and the values we place on them. Culture is involved in all those practices which carry meaning and value for us and which need to be meaningfully interpreted by others or depend on meaning for their effective operation.

"Meaning is produced and exchanged in every personal and social interaction in which we take part", (Hall, 1997, p. 3).

Ultimate goal of language teachers: foreign language use outside the classroom

With this in mind, how do language teachers set about helping their students to 'make sense' of the world around them particularly when that world involves a language community outside the classroom? Allwright (1996; in Coleman, 1996) makes the point that unlike other subjects in the curriculum like mathematics in which teachers are concerned 'with what we might call "subject-orientated" internal socialisation, with trying to help the learners form a learning community within the classroom', most MFL teachers aim for their students to integrate into the target language community outside the classroom:

> Language as a subject area does indeed raise subject-specific and highly complex possibilities for the analysis, to the extent that language pedagogy may be concerned precisely and explicitly, in its own stated aims, with preparing learners to cope with that part of the "world outside the classroom" where the language being taught is regularly used. Language teachers may therefore be importantly different from mathematics teachers, for example. Teachers of mathematics in secondary schools may have to concern themselves with what we might call "internal socialisation", with establishing socially acceptable behaviour patterns in the classroom, and may also concern themselves with what we might call "subject-orientated" internal socialisation, with trying to help the learners form a learning community within the classroom… For many language teachers around the world, however, preparation for the target language world outside the classroom constitutes a major, if not the major (and only ultimately worthwhile?), underlying purpose for the job. For such language teachers … the socialisation of their learners into the target language community is their prime and ultimate goal (Allwright, 1996, pp. 212-213).

So taking this objective into consideration, I will first present the literature which explains how culture and language are intertwined in order to comprehend the processes involved in the development of a child's cultural identity, an important step when teachers are aiming to creating the conditions for the "socialisation of their learners into the target language community" before focusing on the practical applications in the classroom and the question raised by Jones (2000, p.167) as to whether cultural awareness can be taught or whether the teacher's role is to "create experiences, provide evidence, challenge

beliefs, question assumptions, act as a facilitator in a subtle way rather than to impart specific knowledge"?

Culture and language in the socialisation process – two sides of the same coin

One of the 'medias' through which culture is produced and circulated is language; whilst Hamers and Blanc (2000) remind us that language, is in turn, a product of culture. It is transmitted from one generation to the next in the socialisation process and it also moulds culture as our cultural representations are shaped by language. Members of the same culture, Hall (1997) explains, must share sets of concepts, images and ideas which enable them to interpret the world in roughly similar ways. Thus, they must share the same cultural codes. He states that in this sense, thinking and feeling are themselves systems of representation, in which our concepts, images and emotions stand for or represent what we want to say, to express or communicate: a thought, concept, idea or feeling. In order to communicate these meanings to other people, the participants must share the same codes. They must speak the same language – language here is meant in a wider sense to include linguistic code as well as sounds, body language/gestures, and facial expressions. As Charaudeau (2005) highlights, it is not so much the structure of a language which conveys culture but the way in which a community uses its language:

> Aussi défendrons-nous l'idée que c'est le discours qui témoigne des spécificités culturelles. Pour le dire autrement, ce ne sont pas tant les mots dans leur morphologie ni les règles de syntaxe qui sont porteurs de culture, mais les manières de parler de chaque communauté, les façons d'employer les mots, les manières de raisonner, de raconter, d'argumenter, de blaguer qui le sont (Charaudeau, 2005, p.8).

Of fundamental importance is the understanding that language for communicative purposes is dependent on cultural awareness because it "is not only the mother tongue and the foreign language which are brought together but concepts and conceptual systems" (Jones, 2000, 164). It is only when learners realise that a word in their own language may "at times have similar and sometimes different cultural associations when used by speakers of another language" will communication "be achieved without ambiguity" (ibid). In addition, he states that if good human relationships are to be fostered then subtle social and cultural awareness is essential given that it is not enough to learn politeness forms as language but to understand how to use these forms appropriately.

These forms include non-linguistic cultural elements which are crucial to language because of their function in helping construct meaning and in transmitting it. They do not have clear meanings in themselves but are the vehicles which carry meaning and as such operate as symbols or signs. These symbols stand for or represent the meanings we wish to communicate. Let's compare how the French and the Greeks express the word 'no' in terms of their body language. The French will shake their head from side to side whereas the Greeks will raise their heads and/or eyes upwards sometimes in a very subtle manner. Charaudeau (2005) points out that when cultural differences are substantial there is a risk that the confrontation may provoke a cultural shock and a rejection of the other:

> car découvrir qu'il existe du diffèrent du soi, c'est se découvrir incomplète, imparfait, inachevé. Et qui peut supporter sans émoi cette incomplétude, cette imperfection, cet inachèvement ? (…) De rejet ensuite, car cette différence représente une menace pour le sujet. Cette différence ferait-elle que l'autre m'est supérieur ? Qu'il serait plus parfait ? Qu'il aurait davantage de raison d'être que moi ? C'est pourquoi la perception de la différence s'accompagne généralement d'un jugement négatif. Il y va de la survie du sujet. C'est comme s'il n'était pas supportable d'accepter que d'autres valeurs, d'autres normes, d'autres habitudes que les siennes propres soient meilleures, ou, tout simplement, existent (Charaudeau, 2005, p.3)

Although this '*choc culturel'* may initially incite negative behaviour or feelings resulting in prejudices and stereotypes, it would appear that this is an important stage in the process of acquiring "new ways of conceptualizing the reality they take for granted as natural" (Byram, 1997, p.10) because as Charaudeau points out: "*il n'y a que dans la confrontation avec la différence culturelle qu'on prend véritablement la mesure, parfois douloureusement, parfois à ses dépens"* (Charaudeau, 2005, p.10). So, this suggests that confrontation is a necessary process because unless learners identify what is 'foreign' and 'non-foreign' they cannot move on to developing attitudes which seek to value these differences rather than eliminate them. Once they develop the capacity to use different cultural codes to communicate effectively then the relationship between individuals from different cultures can only improve as one reaches out to the other:

> Si l'on dit qu'une langue est une façon de découper le monde ou, plus exactement, de construire une certain vision du monde, on peut alors à l'élève d'apprendre comment à travers la langue française (ou une autre langue) on se positionne dans l'espace et le temps, comme on peut modaliser les énoncés de façon à mieux persuader pour séduire son interlocuteur, de quelles opérations on

> dispose lorsque l'on veut defender une idée, dans quelles procédés descriptifs et narratifs on peut puiser pour décrire le monde ou raconter une histoire. A travers la prise de conscience que les catégories de forme n'ont leur utilité que pour exprimer des intentions, on découvre le sens des différences culturelles des langues (Charaudeau, 2005, p.10-11).

Charaudeau (2005) also raises a question: do we change culture when we change our language? This leads us to think about identity and how it is constructed. Hamers and Blanc (2000) define the concept of identity as a psychological process involved in the construction of the self with regard to group membership. Group membership is one aspect of the concept of self and comes into existence through the development of social identity.

By a process of 'social categorisation', a person constructs her/his social environment according to certain criteria by recognising that others share common characteristics among themselves and between them and her/himself. This individual can then identify the social groups with whom s/he shares characteristics and distinguish himself from other groups. In this way s/he creates her/his social identity. This process of social comparison enables her/him to identify with all or only some of the group's characteristics. However, it is also necessary that the group recognises her/him as a member. At the collective level a group must perceive itself and be perceived by other groups as a distinctive entity. There have to be salient differences between the groups. Charaudeau (2005) explains that this is because:

> La construction identitaire passe nécessairement par le regard de l'autre, car nous avons du mal à nous voir nous-même et avons besoin d'un regard extérieur. Dès-lors, cette construction est la résultante de son propre regard et du regard de l'autre, mus que nous sommes par le désir « d'être ce que n'est pas l'autre ». L'identité est une somme de différences, et la quête d'identité une quête de différenciation, une quête du non-autre. C'est à l'épreuve de la différence que l'on découvre son « quoi être ». (Charaudeau, 2005, p.5).

Identity is a process which takes place both in the individual and in the group of which the child is a member. Brewer and Gardner (1996) indicate that the motivational properties of collective identities are documented in Baumeister and Leary's (1995) comprehensive review of the evidence in support of a fundamental "need to belong" as an innate feature of human nature. Le Page (1968) states that:

> The individual behaves according to the behavioural patterns of groups he finds it desirable to identify with, to the extent that (i) he can identify the groups; (ii) he has adequate access to the groups and the ability to analyse their behavioural patterns; (iii) his motivation to join the groups is sufficiently powerful and is either reinforced or reversed by feedback from the groups; and (iv) he has the ability to modify his behaviour (Le Page, 1968, p.182).

Cultural identity is part of, but not the same as social identity as it comprises a diversity of features such as ancestry, territoriality, institutions, values, norms and language, all of which make one cultural group distinct from another. The integration of the complex configuration that is culture into the individual's personality constitutes his cultural identity (Hamers & Blanc, 2000 p.201). Definitions of cultural identity generally refer to self-perception, a sense of shared values and feelings of belonging. Certain groups can be identified in terms of ethnic, cultural or linguistic characteristics and should the individual perceive these features then they will be used by him for ethnic, cultural or linguistic characterisation.

Developing intercultural competence in the classroom

Jones (2000, p.163) explains that these principles can be applied in the classroom using an approach based on experiential learning which aims to help move language learners to socialise with the target language community. Implicit in this approach is the recognition that there are 'different skills and forms of knowledge involved in becoming culturally aware' (ibid. p.162). Four out of the five components of intercultural competence are defined by Byram as *savoir être, savoir apprendre, savoirs,* and *savoir faire* (Byram, 1997, in Jones, 2000, p.163):

> *Savoir être*: an ability to abandon ethnocentric attitudes towards and perceptions of other cultures, and to see and develop an understanding of the differences and relationships between one's own and a foreign culture; this involves affective and cognitive change in learners.
>
> *Savoir apprendre*: an ability to observe, collect data and analyse how people of another language and culture perceive and experience their world, what beliefs, values and meanings they share about it; this involves practical skills and a readiness to decentre and take a different perspective.
>
> *Savoirs*: the knowledge of aspects of a culture, a system of reference points familiar to natives of the culture, which helps the natives to share beliefs, values and meanings, and to communicate without making explicit those shared assumptions.

> *Savoir faire*: the ability to draw upon the other three *savoirs* and integrate them in real time and interaction with people of a specific language and culture.

The fifth component of intercultural competence is added to this list by Driscoll and Frost (1999): '*savoir s'engager'.* This '*savoir*' is considered to add an educational dimension to the learners' acquisition of cultural awareness because when learners contrast, compare and evaluate foreign behaviours, beliefs and meaning with their own, that they become 'conscious of the criteria that they are using in their evaluation, and are able to turn their critical evaluation on to their own culture as well as that of others. Foreign language teaching thus develops a "critical cultural awareness" in learners…' (ibid, p.143).

Jones (2000) illustrates how an intercultural project between two classes of English and Bulgarian 14-year olds enhanced the 'critical cultural awareness' of the teenagers involved in the project. The two groups of pupils exchanged shoeboxes containing items which each group believed represented their cultural identity, and photographs which they felt depicted life in their home towns. Discussion of the contents of the shoeboxes and the photographs in class enabled the pupils to come to an understanding that members of a group may define themselves in ways that do not necessarily match the cultural identity that other people in the country would agree with, that there may be a consensus in beliefs about the cultural identity of a certain group that may or may not be reflected in a wider sample of the population and that a group of individuals may present cultural images of themselves that are influenced by how they wish to be perceived and reflect an idealised representation of themselves rather than the more realistic one (Jones, 2000, p.159). Jones explains that this project therefore led to a growth of cultural awareness which took into account three interrelated processes which enable:

> us to define the culture of others. We (1) look at how others define their own cultural identity both individually and collectively (2) see how such definitions resonate with what we think of as the cultural identity of 'others' (3) define our own cultural identity and relate how we define ourselves to (1) and (2). We may start with (1) and continue with processes (2) and (3) or we may start with (3) and continue with (1) and (2). The three processes must be included if the definition is not to be deficient (idem).

In addition, Jones points out that an analysis of the contents of the exchanges between the teenagers revealed that their understanding of the complexity of cultural awareness was enhanced because they had become more aware of the elements that constitute cultural

identity and the extent to which they are interrelated: gender; generation; class; family; religion; schooling; the urban and the rural; the regional; national heritage; definitions of self which transcend national borders such as those referring to identification with well-known pop stars or TV programmes broadcast across the world (idem, pp.160-161).

3.5 MFL teacher educators navigating neoliberal waters

In this section I present the reasons why early foreign language learning is high on the neoliberal agenda. As we have seen in the previous section MFL learning has the potential to make a significant contribution to the development of intercultural awareness and it is this aspect of foreign language learning which neoliberalism promotes in particular at the expense of linguistic MFL knowledge and competence. One area which is high on the neoliberal agenda in this respect is early foreign language learning. In the following section, I will present contradiction and paradoxes that MFL teacher educators face as a profession and towards the end of the section I focus on research I carried out to highlight how these contradictions and paradoxes play out in my own MFL teacher educator classroom.

3.5.1 Early foreign language learning: an EU priority in a global economy

Neoliberalism, according to Connell (2013, p.104) "has a definite view of education as human capital formation. It is the business of forming the skills and attitudes needed by a productive workforce – productive in the precise sense of producing an ever-growing mass of profits for the world economy" (2013, p.104). Indeed, language skills play a key role in the context of globalization and the knowledge economy:

> Multilingualism is marketed as the new 'normal' in the professional world. Yet, English serves as the privileged and common-sense nexus of communication. In the European context in particular, individual and societal multilingualism have been recognised and promoted as cultural capital and economic assets. Further to the advancement of linguistic diversity, cultural diversity has become a cornerstone of the language education market in the twenty-first century. Indeed, language teaching and learning take place in an increasingly marketized climate that posits language as a vehicle for participating in the employment market and for accessing services. (Barakos (2018, p.2)

Block and Gray's (2015) paper highlights how courses such as the *Cambridge English Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults (CELTA)* are products of the neoliberal language education market:

> … our key point is that these programmes (and surely many others around the world today) both index and reinforce a model of English as purely instrumental and disembedded from the social contexts in which it both emerges as a mediator of communication, and a model of professional activity which is highly instrumental and indeed, emblematic of the kind of deskilling and discrediting which have occurred in many professional sectors in recent decades. (Block and Gray, 2015, p.2)

Block and Gray state that the model of English that neoliberalism promotes is one which is "instrumental" and "disembedded". To further understand these terms, it is useful to turn to Sharpe (2001) who explains the difference between two contrasting ideological cultures that present a vision of what education is for: the intrinsic or idealistic culture and the instrumental or utilitarian culture. The main features are laid out in table 1. Sharp then outlines the different ways these two cultures can influence the contribution that languages can make to a child's education. The first position promotes the idea that schools should help children to access 'high culture' through the study of the ancient classics or the modern European classics. Such an education is considered as a valuable uplifting experience in its own right and having "intrinsic value":

> …by acquiring knowledge and skill in a foreign language the learner gains access to the rich store of uplifting and edifying literature written in that language … One should study Latin to be able to read Homer, and one should study French to be able to read Molière or German to read Goethe. (Sharpe, 2001, p.19)

The second justification is based on utilitarian or instrumental criteria where speaking foreign languages serves to communicate with native speakers in order to set up "direct personal relationships" which is more likely to result in more success in "clinching deals" (Sharpe, 2001, p.22). An outline of the difference in perspective between those who hold an intrinsic cultural view of education and those that hold an instrumental view of education.

	Intrinsic (idealistic) culture	**Instrumental (utilitarian) culture**
The **Why** question: What is education for?	To preserve and transmit culture	To promote economic, social and individual benefit
The **Who** question: Who is education for?	Elite/selected groups	Mass population
The **When** question: What time period should education be oriented to?	The past	The future
The **What** question: What is education about?	That which is traditionally accepted as worthwhile, good, true, beautiful, etc.	That which is useful
The **How** question: How should education be delivered?	Through teacher-centred didactic teaching	Through learner-centred active learning

Figure 9 Main parameters of intrinsic and instrumental cultures [1]

Of course, figure 9 above presents two extreme positions and I suppose that most teachers would agree that a balance between the two visions is required; however, it appears that the utilitarian or instrumental reasons for learning a foreign language have overshadowed the intrinsic value of language learning in the neoliberal world. Sharpe highlights the fact that neoliberal discourse pushes young people to believe that they 'need' to compete in the global marketplace to benefit from career opportunities abroad. They therefore 'need' to learn foreign languages as part of their general education at school in preparation for adult life. Insofar as this 'need' is not being met, an underlying fear remains that "business is still being lost" (ibid, p.22-23). Policymakers ensure that this need is addressed and by doing so implement early language learning at primary school aims to satisfy this 'need':

> …education systems can be seen to be discharging their responsibilities in an appropriate manner for the prevailing historical circumstances. In this way the benefits to the collective – the nation, the EU, or 'society' – on the one hand, and the benefits to the individual on the other, are seen to coincide. The collective is more harmonious, more efficient and more successful, while the individual realizes her or his full potential, achieves employment and career success, and is presumably as a consequence more fulfilled and happier. (Sharpe, 2001, p22-23)

[1] Main parameters of intrinsic and instrumental cultures (adapted from Sharpe, 2001, p.21)

In addition to the benefits on an individual level, Sharpe then goes on to illustrate why the EU considers multilingualism as beneficial:

> The EU is a clear example not only of closer integration on economic grounds but also of integration driven by politicians concerned to eradicate old enmities and hostilities. The intention is that barriers to mobility of all kinds should be broken down. However, so long as any language barriers remain it cannot really be said that other barriers have been fully dismantled in actuality. Thus, the usefulness of MFL lies in its contribution to the achievement of cross-national fluidity and the full realization of the opportunities this new regime offers to individuals. (Sharpe, 2001, p.22)

Teachers are consequently expected to help develop in pupils "a solid empathy for the culture in which the language is embedded" (ibid, p.24) for the purposes of "closer integration on economic grounds". At a Council of Europe conference in Strasbourg in 1997, Domenico Lenarduzzi, European Commission Director of Education stressed the importance of language learning for the EU:

> This is not a mere wish but an absolute necessity. Without sufficient linguistic knowledge there will be no mobility, no dialogue and no understanding. The major challenge for Europe is to achieve this while respecting each other's diversity. Each citizen should be in a position to know two languages. If young people do not have languages, they will be confronted by discrimination […] Whether we like it or not, all our member states must make efforts to adapt their teaching. (Lenarduzzi cited in Sharpe, 2001, p.22)

In this context, it can be therefore understood why educational reform focusing on MFL learning at primary level has been an official European Union priority at the same time in 1997 (Kelly, 2010; Grin, 2005) when the Council Resolution on the early teaching of European Union languages was passed[1].

3.5.2 Multilingualism in Europe or English as lingua franca?

To what extent has EU policy of promoting transnational mobility opportunities and language learning had an impact on the professional development of MFL secondary teachers and consequently facilitated access to a career in higher education as a teacher educator? Is professional development and language learning the primary purpose of

[1] Official Journal C 1 of 03.01.1998

transnational mobility in the minds of EU policy-makers for MFL teachers and teacher educators so that they can be better linguistic models for their pupils and student teachers, and perfect their knowledge and expertise in their MFL? The first step towards answering these questions is to examine the reasons why languages hold such a central place in EU policy particularly in the face of global economic ambitions. The concept of the European Union (EU) was inspired by a vision of sustainable peace, justice and solidarity in the aftermath of two horrific World Wars. A process of co-operation between the countries of Europe was set in motion in 1950 to prevent future military conflict and ensure economic and social progress for all. The key to creating a society promoting ideals of "democracy, order and prospects for peace and well-being" (Jones, 1998) and a more integrated Europe was the endorsement of multilingualism and intercultural understanding. This endorsement is expressed in Article 22 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU approved by the European Parliament and the European Council and Commission in December 2000 which commits the EU to respect linguistic diversity and a little later in the Council of Europe's *Guide for the Development of Language Education Policies in Europe* (2003): "the capacity and opportunity to use one's full linguistic repertoire is crucial to participation in democratic and social processes and therefore to policies of social inclusion."

However, Androulla Vassilliou, European Commissioner, suggests in her talk at Harvard University in 2014 that the rich linguistic and cultural diversity that exists within Europe also represents a challenge to the 'European project' because it presents a potential barrier to creating unity and common purpose:

> Language serves as a useful measure of our diversity. Today, the European Union functions with 24 official languages, more than 60 regional and minority languages and more than 120 migrant languages. Since I am also the Commissioner responsible for multilingualism, allow me to say, with some pride, that the Tower of Babel still stands tall in 2014. But of course, all of this presents a challenge, and it lies in striking the right balance between the respect for cultural diversity and the construction of a shared European identity – an identity that does not replace the sense of national belonging, but adds a new layer to the multiple identities of our citizens. The search for this balance is part of what we call intercultural dialogue. It is an integral part of the European project, and it has been so right from the start.

Let us bear in mind that, on the one hand, the Council insists that multilingualism and diversity "should be encouraged in teaching and research throughout the higher education curriculum" (European Commission, 2013, paragraph 2.1), whereas on the other that in order to "attract talent which would otherwise not come to Europe" and "widen career prospects" for European Union students, "proficiency in English is de facto part of any internationalisation strategy for learners, teachers and institutions." It is apparent that the rationale for the EU promoting English as a lingua franca or a lingua academia is linked to the internationalisation of higher education and the global economy. This can be understood in the context of the Lisbon agreement to make Europe: "the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world" (Council, 2000) where it is not only considered desirable for young people to acquire proficiency in English but necessary for future employment. Despite the EU promoting multilingualism, English is being reinforced in the EHEA at the expense of other EU languages. It would appear therefore that in terms of language policy, conflicting forces are at play.

For Phillipson (2003) the EU multilingual policies relate to 'projects' or 'future goals' rather than something real that exists in Europe (p.95). He believes that multilingualism can only be achieved "if the experience of grassroots and elite multilingualism worldwide is related to the global economic, political, and cultural trends that determine whether languages thrive or perish" (Phillipson, 2003, p.64). He considers this difficult because there are structural and ideological factors in place which are responsible for the advance of English as a 'common' EU language:

> There is a now a common market, a common commercial policy, and a common defence and security policy. There is a common agricultural policy of long standing (…) Are we moving towards a common language policy? And if so, does this mean that a single language will be given a special status? (Phillipson, 2003, p.12-13)

The consequences of the development of a lingua franca in a society where the specific capabilities of humans are reframed as abstract 'human capital': "the individual worker is seen not merely as the seller of one's labour, but as a possessor of skills, competences, and aptitudes that have the potential for producing value" (Park, 2015, p.2).

The transmission of knowledge is no longer destined to train an elite capable of guiding the nation towards its emancipation, but to supply the system with players capable of acceptably fulfilling their roles at the pragmatic posts required by the institution (Lyotard, 1984, p.48).

English is the language of the market and a high level of English proficiency is highly valued as human capital. Students with excellent language skills acquired through a privileged background where parents have financed private language tuition are likely to have the competitive edge when aiming to get into the better schools and universities whereas those who do not have access to such learning opportunities tend to fail in climbing up the socio-economic ladder. Majhanovich (2014, p.169) points out that this situation bears consequences for the Global South in which 'millions of non-English speakers' are required to "acquire sufficient English proficiency in the language for participation in the globalized world." In this context, English is perceived as the key to securing a future which is economically promising as it ultimately helps people get better jobs globally. The consequences of global English are not restricted to the above examples. Underhal (2010, p.50) proposes, for instance, that in the case of the "supply of graduates exceeding the demand for expertise in the labour market" practical measures should be adopted when planning and organising university courses to increase 'employability' such as:

> more emphasis on 'Business English' (rather than, say, the English language in 19th century literature), case-work focusing on current problems or opportunities of a particular industry or community, or practical training in a particular type of activity (such as memo-writing for decision-makers). (Underhal, 2010, p.50)

The above example demonstrates how English skills for the purpose of business and market logic are considered more valuable than the knowledge acquired through studying English language in 19th century literature. The dichotomy between linguistic skills versus cultural content llustrates that from a neo-liberal perspective cultural knowledge is no longer understood as an end in itself but is instead legitimized in society only by its utility in the global economy (Lyotard, 1984, p.84):

> The transmission of knowledge is no longer destined to train an elite capable of guiding the nation towards its emancipation, but to supply the system with

> players capable of acceptably fulfilling their roles at the pragmatic posts required by the institution (Lyotard, 1984, p.48).

In a context where time is money, investment into more culturally charged language learning takes second place particularly when foreign languages are learnt primarily to promote corporate, military or political interests rather than to acquire a greater understanding of other cultures and societies (Kramsch, 2006). In addition, there is a long-standing belief that a language can be learnt rapidly. This is a throwback to American wartime language programmes, initiated between 1941 and 1943 when, according to Stern (1983), the approach to language teaching in the USA changed radically. Although research has shown the limits of the American 'Army Method', this method has continued to influenced post-war thinking about language learning in the USA and globally ever since:

> The Armed Forces' foreign language learning training programmes demonstrated that language training does not necessarily have to be done in the conventional school-type language course (…) made earlier approaches in school and university appear almost irrelevant and ineffectual (…), claimed to show that languages can be taught to much larger populations of ordinary learners, servicemen, and much more quickly than had previously been thought possible. And they demonstrated the possible advantages of intensive language training and of an oral emphasis. (Stern, 1983, p.102)

Stern (1983) insists on the necessity of language policy decisions being based on grounded research:

> Theorists and practitioners alike want to improve language learning, and they must decide for themselves what to do about it. The question is whether the decisions made individually or collectively are well thought out, informed, based on theoretical foundations, and are as effective as they can be expected to be, or whether they are patently naïve, uninformed, ill-founded, and inconsistent (Stern, 1983, p2).

As a reminder, MFL learning at primary level has been an official European Union priority since 1997 (Kelly, 2010; Grin, 2005) when the Council passed a Resolution on the early teaching of European Union languages. When the European Council met in Barcelona in March 2002, it renewed its commitment to languages and agreed on improving the mastery of basic language skills with special regard to the teaching of at least two foreign languages from a very early age. As outlined on pages 12-13 of this thesis, the publication in 2012 by the European Commission of the findings of the first

European Survey on Language Competences (ESLC) indicated that pupils at the end of compulsory schooling in England and France continued to demonstrate poor levels of proficiency in their first MFL (Jones, 2012). These results were problematic for policy-makers but held very little surprise for language researcher. Bearing in mind Stern's words above, it can be understood why the ESLC results were so disappointing given that most primary children have less than two hours a week of MFL learning in the classroom: "one or two hours a week will not produce advanced second language speakers, no matter how young they were when they began" (Lightbown & Spada, 2006, p.74). Unlike in France where pupils study one or more Modern Foreign Languages to the age of 18 for their *baccalauréat* exam, pupils in England have the option of dropping MFL at the age of 14 which over time has resulted in a considerable MFL primary **and** secondary teacher linguistic skills deficit on a national scale. The consequences of this deficit are outlined by CfBT Education Trust and the British Council in their report: 'The Language Trends Survey 2014/15':

> However, many differences remain in key aspects such as the amount of curriculum time dedicated each week to the learning of a language, the level of linguistic competence of class teachers, who are still the majority source of language teaching for Key Stage 2 pupils, and the degree to which primary teachers are able to achieve a consistency of provision and achievement in pupil learning to meet the needs of Key Stage 3 teachers receiving pupils into Year 7. Primary teachers report that their biggest challenges are finding sufficient curriculum time for languages and boosting staff confidence and linguistic proficiency to teach reading, writing and grammatical understanding (Long & Bolton, 2015, p.135).

There are four crucial issues identified in this report concerning the teaching and learning of MFL nationally (idem): Weak MFL linguistic and pedagogy skills; poor transition from primary to secondary; MFL learning becoming more elitist and finally difficulty in achieving a high grade in MFL A-level compared with other subjects such as maths and science subjects. In addition, the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Modern Languages (APPG on Modern Languages) who lobby for improving the linguistic skills base of the UK highlighted the problematic situation regarding English as a global language for English native speakers:

> the latest cutting-edge research shows that, in the 21st century, **speaking only English is as much of a disadvantage as speaking no English**. Knowledge of

> other languages - and of other cultures – is important for education and skills, the economy, international engagement, defence and security and community relations.

The study of MFL remains the preserve of the elite despite efforts to increase access through strategies such as the 'Languages for All: Languages for Life' (Department for Education and Skills, 2002) in England and '*Apprendre les langues - Apprendre le monde'* (Rapport du Comité stratégique des langues présidé par Suzy Halimi, 2012). This is revealed by recent studies such as the one published by the British Council which report that access to quality MFL learning is still directed towards those with more privileged backgrounds compared to the rest of the population (CfBT Education Trust, 2015, p.134):

> Opportunities to learn more than one language are in decline in the state sector. It is far more common for the independent sector to offer pupils the opportunity to study two languages than it is in the state sector. More than 90 per cent of independent schools offer all pupils the opportunity to learn more than one language at Key Stage 3, whereas only 35 per cent of state schools do so.

Consequently, despite MFL skills being perceived as providing increased opportunities in a global world, the best educational opportunities regarding MFL learning are to a large extent, restricted to those pupils who belong to the elite of society who attend independent schools or whose families can afford private tuition, linguistic summer schools and gap year experiences. In addition, French and English students who display good levels of MFL skills are more likely than ever to be attracted towards higher status professions involving mobility and successful career prospects, and be snapped up by employers who demand these skills. Why do policy-makers ignore research into language learning and teaching?

3.5.3 Transnational Mobility: improving education or the economy?

EU ambitions

As part of its strategy to make the European Union a "world-leading knowledge economy," and so achieve "sustainable economic prosperity and employability" for its citizens, the Council of Europe stated its intention to invest in 'human capital' and to ensure the "provision of excellent and attractive education, training and research

opportunities" according to the principle of "lifelong learning." By providing greater opportunities for transnational mobility to learners, teachers and teacher trainers, it hopes to enhance "employability and adaptability" for Europeans because school education is improved:

> Strengthening the intensity and scale of the mobility of school staff is necessary to improve the quality of school education in the Union, as stated in the new Erasmus+ Programme, the EU programme for education, training, youth and sport (2014-2020).

The Council of the European Union considers that mobility opportunities for teachers improve the quality of school education in the EU overall, maintain the attractiveness of the teaching profession and also contribute towards continuing professional development (CPD):

> the experience represents first-hand contact with a different education system in which approaches to teaching, as well as its methodologies and organisation, may differ. It is a unique opportunity for teachers to reflect on their own ways of teaching and exchange views about their experience with colleagues abroad. Transnational mobility may also help them overcome scepticism regarding other teaching methods, by providing them with an opportunity to observe their use directly and their impact on students. This experience may in turn motivate them to gain fresh skills for more innovative approaches of their own. Conversely it may be an opportunity too, for them to discuss their own approaches with teachers at their host institution, thereby developing a greater sense of empowerment and professional recognition. Finally, working visits by teachers to a country whose main language is not their mother tongue is likely to help them develop their language skills, an asset of special importance to those whose subject is modern foreign languages. (European Commisson, 2015b, p.85)

As part of its strategy to improving the quality and efficiency of education and training, the Council also recommends that work be pursued on language learning. It can be seen therefore that mobility and the learning of foreign languages appears to be a priority for the European Union (EU). In order that citizens are able to communicate in two languages in addition to their mother tongue, it promotes language teaching in VET (Vocational education and training) and for adult learners, and that migrants be provided with opportunities to learn the language of the host country.

Mobility is also perceived positively in a neo-liberal world in which workers are expected to take up new jobs and relocate to new places according to the fluctuating demands of

the workplace. Jones (1998) explains that “[w]hat made the globalisation agendas feasible were, of course, the communications and information revolutions, combined with an increased mobility of persons, services and goods” (p.241). Park (2015, p.4) suggests that neoliberalism encourages workers to consider mobility as a ‘new, exciting opportunity’ to “reinvent oneself by learning new skills, taking up new jobs, and relocating to new places” when faced with “corporate downsizing,” “irregular employment” and “dwindling pay.” This new economy demands that work be organized in terms of “flexible teams that form and disband depending on needs of production” which involves “communication with other workers inside and outside one’s team, often across hierarchical and professional boundaries” (Iedema and Scheeres, 2003; Park, 2015, p.4).

Communication in a European context across national frontiers requires language skills and this is the crux of the problem in relation to the EU’s neo-liberal project. Although “a lack of funding” and a “lack of information and encouragement” (p.245) pose obstacles to mobility, ‘linguistic barriers represent the greatest obstacle to mobility’ in the EU. A close reading of the Bologna Process Implementation Report reveals multiple references to the language difficulties experienced by the non-MFL secondary teachers who experienced transnational EU mobility schemes: “*language–related barriers*”; “[*l]anguage obstacles* concerning ingoing mobility”; “need to extend the overall duration of studies due to recognition, curriculum and *language problems”*; “[t]he most relevant obstacles to degree mobility appear to be lack of funding and *languages”*; “due to recognition, curriculum and *language problem”’* (p.245-245). It is therefore proposed by the European Commission that “language considerations should be a focus of attention at both national and institutional levels (through a comprehensive language policy, for example)”.

Given the inherent value of mobility for language learning and the difficulties faced by non-MFL secondary teachers, it would be reasonable to expect the EU to encourage mobility among Modern Foreign Language teachers especially as transnational mobility represents a professional need for teachers of MFL “more than those of other subjects.”

Modern Foreign Language teachers obviously need to train and practice the language they teach. They also need to experience close contact with one of the countries whose national language corresponds to the language they teach, in order to gain a deeper cultural insight to transmit to their students. Although, the Eurydice report (European Commission, 2015) carried out by the European Commission points to the fact that among all teachers: "modern foreign language teachers are the most transnationally mobile" the same report indicates that up to 40% of MFL teachers surveyed had not experienced any transnational mobility. The European Commission implied that this non-negligible percentage of MFL teachers lacking mobility opportunities might bear down on the standard of MFL taught in the classrooms of Europe: "a finding possibly relevant to the quality teaching of foreign languages" (p.89).

So, in the long-term, improving mobility opportunities for MFL students and teachers may indeed be the first step to improving the quality of Modern Foreign Languages in Europe. Yet, it may also be legitimate to question why the EU has not targeted MFL secondary teachers at an earlier stage and whether the priority of the EU has been instead to promote a utilitarian approach to the teaching and learning of English as a lingua franca devoid of cultural content in its ambition to be "the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world" (Council, 2000)?

Perhaps this can be explained by the "shift from the cultural to the economic agenda" as a consequence of the EU's role in European Higher Education through the Bologna' (Tomusk, 2011, paragraph 25). From this perspective, mobility and language learning are not intended to serve the future generations of children from all walks of life but rather a group of international students, a global elite who can combine:

> studies and pleasure, travel in Europe and collect study credits from various universities in different countries. The credit transfer system and the unquestionable recognition of the credits throughout the EHEA would allow the student checking out and collecting the degree at the final university on the travel list. Such would have been the proverbial *cafeteria university of Europe* (ibid, paragraph 53).

Ballatore (2006, p.2) highlights that the Erasmus programme serves to accentuate inequalities rather than eradicate them:

> Looking at the skills and the migratory capital already acquired by students and at the selection practices in the departments or faculties, it is obvious that this program tends to consecrate young people whose educational trajectories are, if not brilliant, at least fast and/or atypical. Moreover, the European commission's data show that reciprocity of exchanges is rarely achieved. Hence, this program seems to reinforce the pre-existing supremacy (of languages and of some institutions in particular) and the growing diversification of students' trajectories.

Economic reasons are therefore dictating educational convergence on an EU scale and reveals that the education systems of England, France and Scotland are more susceptible than they have ever been to the market forces at play within the context of globalisation despite both countries having very different academic, institutional and ideological traditions in educational provision (Broadfoot, 1985: 56; Malet, 2009).

3.5.4 Teacher educator professionalism challenged by EU policymakers

In order to understand more about the challenges facing MFL teacher educators in England, France and Scotland, I set about examining EU policy documents in detail which focus not only on language education policy but also on the teacher educator profession given that MFL teacher educators are part of that occupational group of professionals. I discovered that the credibility of teacher educators as a profession was being challenged by the European Commission in their documentation particularly in terms of their commitment, their values and their professional standards. I then began to ask myself whether there may be a link between the posture that EU policymakers were adopting insofar as the teacher educator profession is concerned and the difficulties facing primary MFL teacher educators in their everyday working lives so I examined the discourse in the European Commission (EC) report, *Supporting Teacher Educators for better learning outcomes,* that was published in 2013[1], the legislation that was based on the content of this report: *Council conclusions of 20 May 2014 on effective teacher education* as well as the discourse of the book published by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), *Pedagogical Knowledge and the*

[1] http://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/education/policy/school/doc/support-teacher-educators_en.pdf

Changing Nature of the Teaching Profession in 2017. Not only did the OECD book take up the key points raised in the 2013 European Commission report but it built on them to make a more explicit case against the teacher educator profession. Discourse analysis demonstrates that the European Commission report of 2013 and the OECD book of 2017 are indeed linked in terms of policy and ideology. The following section provides an overview of the points raised in this OECD book and EC report about teacher educators which demonstrates the ideological stance of EU policymakers that is aligned to the neoliberal agenda.

Indeed, the European Commission (EC) report I refer to above, *Supporting Teacher Educators for better learning outcomes,* (EC, 2013) calls into question the professional standards and values that teacher educators hold as well as their commitment to teacher education:

> In any profession, the issue of professional identity is important. The collective sense of self helps the group to shape the common aims, values and philosophy. Professional identity is also linked to the issue of quality, for it is the professional group as a whole that determines what standards should apply to its members. Research suggests that teacher educators, unlike members of other professions, have multiple professional identities: they may think of themselves primarily as school teachers, as teachers in higher education, as researchers, or as teachers of teachers (Swennen et al. 2010) – or they may identify with several of these roles simultaneously. Many of those who teach teachers might not consider themselves to be teacher educators at all. As a consequence, *teacher educators can have varying levels of commitment to teacher education*. (EC, 2013, p.8) [my own emphasis]

The authors of the report state that teacher educators lack a "collective sense of self" because they possess "multiple professional identities". And this, they argue, results in a teacher education profession in which "many of those who teach teachers might not consider themselves to be teacher educators at all". On the basis of this, the authors go on to make the supposition that "[a]s a consequence, teacher educators can have varying levels of commitment to teacher education" and that this represents "an issue of quality" for EU education systems (EC, 2013, p.8). Yet, the article by Swennen et al. (2010) does not make a link between 'multiple professional identities' and the 'commitment' of teacher educators. The word 'commitment' is used only once in the study by Swennen et

al. (2010) and is related to what the authors consider to be the challenge to bear in mind when undertaking workplace induction within a micro community:

> the induction of teacher educators is often informal and can be characterised as workplace learning that, when well planned and organised, is a strong way of inducting professionals. However, where workplace induction is less well planned, '… the resulting individual learning may become ad hoc and reactive' (Murray, 2008, p. 129). The induction of teacher educators takes place in the 'micro communities' (Kosnik & Beck, 2008; Murray, 2008) within teacher education departments, often with the help of senior staff members who act as mentors. Although the support of a mentor may be of help for teacher educators to learn about their daily work as teachers in higher education, learning strictly within a local community also poses problems such as '… "insularity", and fragmented and fractured provision. Such fragmentation may mean that sight is lost of *teacher educators' commitments* to communal discourses, practices and values held within the wider, national and international teacher education communities' (Murray, 2008, p. 131). (Swennen, et al., 2010, p. 139) (my own emphasis)

In addition, the lack of confidence in teacher education commitment expressed in the European Commission report is disquieting because the Council of the European Union, which is an essential EU decision-maker that coordinates member states' policies in education (among other fields), legislates on the basis of proposals submitted by the European Commission. The report goes on to insist on how crucial it is to advise teacher educators to "be *conscious* of the importance of their role, and to work together *effectively* at all stages of the continuum of professional development" (ibid) [my emphasis] because there is a need for "effective cooperation", "common values for the profession" and a "shared responsibility" (ibid) as well as a "*clear, shared understanding* of their roles and of the many aspects of quality in teaching" [my own emphasis].

The report then states that "within the same teacher education institution, teacher educators may adhere to *different professional standards and values*" (European Commission, 2013, p.12) [my own emphasis] and that the profession fails to attract and recruit the best teacher educators because "the *perceived low status* of university teacher educators tends to drive many promising teacher educators away from the profession" (ibid., p13)" [my own emphasis].

This document is a concern because not only does it presents a rhetoric that describes a very different experience to my own as a teacher educator but it does not include any data

about teacher educators who work in England, France and Scotland. This raises questions about its validity concerning these three education systems. Moreover, the authors of this report state that "little relevant research has been carried out and scant information is available to policymakers and course designers" (EC, 2013, p.28) regarding EU teacher educators which again raises questions about the validity of its conclusions.

In the following excerpt from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) book, *Pedagogical Knowledge and the Changing Nature of the Teaching Profession* (2017) it states explicitly that teaching is "a semi-profession" because it lacks "professional expertise" (idem., p.21). It then goes on to conclude that "initial teacher education is poor" because teacher educators cannot transmit "a common body of scientific knowledge" to their student teachers because such a body does not exist. Indeed, the OECD authors state that the teaching profession lacks a "common body of knowledge, practices and skills" and that the "practice of teaching" is "not founded upon validated principles and theories". The OECD do not question this research nor do they balance it with more recent examples of research into teaching or teacher education:

> Howsam et al. (1985) classify teaching as a semi-profession because it lacks one of the main identifying characteristics of a full profession: professional expertise. They argue that teaching lacks a common body of knowledge, practices and skills that constitute the basis for professional expertise and decision-making. This is a consequence of the *practice of teaching not being founded upon validated principles and theories* (…) Importantly*, the quality of the preparation of teachers and induction into the profession is poor* as a consequence of the *absence of a common body of scientific knowledge* underpinning professional expertise and transmitted via teacher educators during initial teacher education. (OECD,2017, p.21) [my own emphasis]

Yet another concern is that the main findings of the 2013 European Commission report presented earlier are used as a grounding for this OECD (2017) book. The following excerpt (0ECD, 2017) summarises the key points raised in the 2013 European Commission report and so demonstrates that the two documents are connected by the same policy and ideology:

> Another, generally overlooked, factor related to variation in opportunities to learn in initial teacher education is teacher educators. *According to a report published by the European Commission (2013)*, teacher educators are key players in improving education quality, but the roles and responsibilities of

> teacher educators are not well understood. For example, variation exists in the level of qualifications required of teacher educators (e.g. Bachelor, Master or PhD), area of expertise (e.g. pedagogical or subject-matter experts) or professional profile (university lectures, researchers or school teachers). *This variation in the "profession" of teacher educator also affects opportunities to learn, not only in initial teacher education institutions, but also in the provision of professional development.* Teacher educators are key to teaching students how to link theory to practice (European Commission, 2013), which, as argued above, is how professional judgements are made. Teacher education is the mechanism through which teachers are trained and inducted into the profession (Berliner, 2004), and it is through these formal learning opportunities that profession-specific knowledge is learned (Kunter et al., 2013). However, as some have argued (e.g. Révai and Guerriero, this volume), *it is not clear whether the profession's knowledge base is up-to-date* due to the complexity of the knowledge dynamics in the teaching profession. (OECD, p.114) [my own emphasis]

This text again introduces doubt and ambiguities but in a more explicit manner than the previous EC 2013 report; however, the data and research findings to justify its discourse are just as vague and limited. On what basis is it justified to assert that the "opportunities to learn" from teacher educators are likely to be affected because teacher educators have varied backgrounds and qualifications? Why is it suggested that teacher educators are either "pedagogical **or** subject-matter experts" [my own emphasis] rather than experts of both areas? When it is stated that "the roles and responsibilities are not well understood", is this from the perspective of the teacher educators themselves, the education community or from their perspective as policymakers? There is a lack of clarification in the text which easily exposes it to misinterpretation.

Furthermore, by putting the word 'profession' between speech marks confirms that, as seen earlier, the OECD authors question the status of teacher educators as professionals. What criteria have been used to make this assertion? Finally, it is stated that there is a possibility that teacher educator knowledge base is out-of-date: "it is not clear whether the profession's knowledge base is up-to-date due to the complexity of the knowledge dynamics in the teaching profession" which implies that teacher educators are not keeping up to date with research whilst suggesting that they are not able to do so because "the knowledge dynamics in the teaching profession" are so complex. What does this imply then about their professional judgements and their expertise? Again, where is the evidence to support the assumptions that are presented? It is disturbing for myself as a

teacher educator to not recognise any of the main findings found within such high-profile policy documents.

On closer examination of the *Council conclusions of 20 May 2014 on effective teacher education*, it becomes clear that this legislation outlines how teacher education is to be restructured in the EU. The Council conclusions therefore have far reaching implications for **all** EU teacher educators across Europe yet as pointed out earlier those conclusions are based on "evidence" contained in the European Commission 2013 report that I discussed earlier which does not include any data drawn from EU education systems such as England, France and Scotland. Sachs (2001) explains that neoliberal reforms are characterised by "paradoxes". She points out that employing authorities reinforce neoliberal discourses of teacher professionalism through teacher development policies which emphasise accountability and effectiveness and results in a "set of paradoxes about the nature of teaching as a profession and about the professional identity and professional identity of teachers":

> Recent reforms particularly concerning devolution and marketization have given rise to a set of paradoxes about the nature of teaching as a profession and about the professional identity and professional development of teachers. First, is that the call for teacher professionalism related to a revisioning of occupational identity, is occurring at a time when there is evidence that teachers are being deskilled and their work is intensified. Second, is that while it is acknowledged that rethinking classroom practice is exceptionally demanding, fewer resources are being allocated to teacher learning. Third, the teaching profession is being exhorted to be autonomous while at the same time it is under increasing pressure from politicians and the community to be more accountable and to maintain standards. (Sachs, 2001, p.150)

Indeed, it is possible to identify several of the "paradoxes" that Sachs (2001) refers to in the Council Conclusions when the Council asserts the importance of the teacher educator profession. It states: "Teacher educators have a crucial role to play in maintaining – and improving – the quality of the teaching workforce" yet it challenges the status of teacher educators as experts and therefore as professionals when it proposes that teacher educators be monitored through "quality assurance arrangements and regular reviews" to identify potential deficiencies such as (i) the underachievement of prospective teachers in "achieving the required learning outcomes", (ii) the provision of inadequate teaching practice experience, "quality and adequate duration of practical experience", and (iii) the

poor teaching skills of teacher educators who are not able to ensure "the relevance of what is taught":

> THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,
> AGREES,
> Initial teacher education could benefit from *quality assurance arrangements and regular reviews*, with emphasis being placed on achieving the required learning outcomes, on the *quality and adequate duration of practical experience* and on *ensuring the relevance* of what is taught. (The Council of the European Union, 2014, p.2, para. 3) [my own emphasis]

Another example is when the Council projects negative images of perceived failings in teacher educator professionalism to then justify a reduction in teacher educator authority and autonomy. Indeed, it proposes that Member States should advocate that some or all of the responsibility for the design and content of teacher education programmes be handed over to outside bodies vetted by the European Commission that have the "*experience* and *know-how*" to design "*effective* teacher education programmes" |my own emphasis]:

> THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,
> INVITES THE MEMBER STATES, WITH REGARD FOR SUBSIDIARITY, AND INSTITUTIONAL AUTONOMY, AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH NATIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES, TO:
> Further explore the potential of enhanced cooperation, partnerships and networking with a broad range of stakeholders in the design of teacher education programmes. (The Council of the European Union, 2014, p2, para 4)
>
> INVITES THE COMMISSION TO:
> Support cooperation with partners, networks and organisations which can *offer experience and know-how on designing effective teacher education programmes, in particular initial education programmes*" (The Council of the European Union, 2014, p.3, para.2)

Very recently, the French government published a directive[1] in the *Bulletin Officiel* which clearly illustrates the impact of the 2014 Council Conclusions described above on EU national education systems in its call for Member States to involve "a broad range of stakeholders in the design of teacher education programmes" (ibid). Accordingly, the national framework of the French Master degree, which includes the Master MEEF, has been redefined as part of the restructuring of French initial teacher education and the

[1] http://cache.media.education.gouv.fr//file/31/22/1/BO_MEN_31_993221.pdf

Bulletin Officiel (BO) n°31 du 30 août 2018 states that representatives from the socio-professional world are to be involved in the design of its teacher education programmes:

> Art. 3.- L'offre de formation de l'établissement se construit autour d'un projet de formation cohérent et global porté par une équipe pédagogique composée notamment d'enseignants-chercheurs, d'enseignants, de chercheurs, de personnels d'information et d'orientation et de personnels d'appui à la formation *et de représentants du monde socioprofessionnel.* (Bulletin Officiel, n°31 du 30 août 2018, p.9) [my own emphasis]

The challenge to education systems of the inclusion of "représentants du monde socioprofessionnel" in teacher education is illustrated by the European Commission's promotion of an alternative model for education systems which is called the Open Education Challenge (OEC)[1]. The European Commission explains on the Europa webpage that this model "gives voice to educational entrepreneurs, and fosters a synergistic ecosystem, where private investors, established enterprises and entrepreneurs play a critical role alongside governments and educational institutions". Indeed the OEC was created in 2014 and the authors of the document outlining its agenda explain that its aim is to "boost education entrepreneurship in Europe" and that it was "designed by a private entity expert in education and an investment company in full partnership with the European Commission and its directorate general for education and culture" and they go on to point out that "European policymakers at the highest level were part of the initiative from day one" (Yuan and Powell, 2015, p.5):

> Beyond the figures, the OEC has demonstrated its capacity to engage stakeholders at the highest level in the education entrepreneurship programme: the director general for Education and Culture at the European Commission, an education expert of the House of Lords, the Higher Education adviser to the French President, heads of education in capital cities, current and former ministers for education, research presidents of some of the most important European Universities, European teachers and headmasters from public schools, university professors and researchers, the main European textbook publishers, the general commissioner for investment of the French government, the former world president of the Chartered Public Accountant, head of banks, investment funds in London, Geneva, Luxembourg and Paris, investment bankers, head of leading IT and Telco companies, HR managers of leading European companies.

Further examination of the model that is proposed highlights the radical shift from the traditional model of education that has existed up until recent times:

[1] https://ec.europa.eu/epale/is/node/25038

> The notion of "education entrepreneur" challenges our understanding of an education system, ruled by core curriculum standards and a cohort of dedicated civil servants that decide on behalf of the teachers, students and families what is good to be taught in the classroom and how learners should learn. These "education entrepreneurs" are part of a larger movement, opening up schools – and more broadly, education – to new influences, new ideas and new interests. This broad transformation can only succeed if all actors – teachers, students, parents, entrepreneurs, policymakers, headmasters and University deans, HR managers, investors – are involved in redesigning education. (Yuan and Powell, 2015, p. 4)[1]

Clearly, the 'new influences, new ideas and new interests' referred to in this document are not that new to neoliberals given the following objectives of this model:

> Education and training of teachers is key to innovation in education. It is thought very important to offer them tools to be autonomous and empower them to create learning activities that embrace students' characteristics and their context. But also, it is very important for teachers to be able to review and redesign the learning activities as a way to innovate and to adapt them to the constant change of times. Moreover, the learning design approach brings in the necessary methods and process to include ICT in education in a meaningful way. It shifts the focus from the learning materials and content to the educational challenge to be solved given a specific context and set of students. (Yuan and Powell, 2015, p.53)

We also learn in this text that "it is important" that teachers "review and redesign the learning activities and to adapt them to the constant change of times". This reminds us of the point raised by Sharpe (2001), on page 116 of this study, concerning the predominance of a utilitarian view of education and the implicit use of the notion of "need to" in neoliberal discourse which in this text is conveyed by the repeated use of "it is important to…". What gives these authors the legitimacy to suggest that teachers should follow this directive? What grounds do these authors have to suggest that shifting the focus away from "learning materials and content to the educational challenge to be solved" will in any way equip students with the knowledge and skills they need for a successful future?

Given this background, it is clearer to understand why teacher educators are now under the scrutiny of EU policymakers given that they form an obstacle to this shift away from

[1] eLearning Papers www.openeducationeuropa.eu/en/elearning_papers n.º 41 • May 2015
https://www.e-quipu.pe/dinamic/publicacion/adjunto/1456130445faEpb2Y8Mk.pdf

the traditional conception of education. As can be seen from the document mentioned above the European Commission is not the only group of EU policymakers who aim to restructure education systems to make them more accessible to the market economy. Indeed, until recent times, it is reported that teacher educators have escaped the surveillance of policymakers:

> Only recently has policymaking begun to focus on teacher educators, perhaps indicating that the so called 'hidden profession' (Snoek et al, 2011; Murray and Male, 2005) is finally becoming increasing visible (European Commission, 2013, p.6).

Nevertheless, it is clear that the tide has now turned in this respect and they appear to be more vulnerable to the same bureaucratic control and accountability that other school teachers have been exposed to over the last few decades.

> Since the 1990s, *the crucial role* of teacher educators in the *educational chain* has gradually received more attention in research, practice, and educational policy (see, e.g. Koster, Brekelmans, Korthagen, & Wubbels, 2005). Nowadays, there seems to be a quite general consensus that, to a large degree, teacher educators determine the *quality* of teachers and that these teachers are a crucial factor in the quality of primary and secondary education (Liston, Borko, & Whitcomb, 2008). (Lunenberg et al., 2014, p.1)

Lunenberg et al. (2014) refer to the pivotal role played by teacher educators in the "educational chain" and it is perhaps for this reason that they have attracted more attention from policymakers particularly because as agents they are understood as important to the system whether that be the education system or the neoliberal system. Evetts (2014) points to the policy context in which a new agenda of professionalism has emerged to fit in with neoliberal imperatives:

> Professionalism has undergone change and these changes have been seen as part of a governmental project to promote commercialized (Hanlon, 1998) and organizational (Evetts, 2006, 2009) forms of professionalism. Within this context Brint (1994) has discussed an epochal shift from the rhetoric of trusteeship to the rhetoric of expertise. Organizational principles, strategies and methods are deeply affecting most professional occupations and expert groups, transforming their identities, structures and practices. (Evetts, 2014, p.43)

The role that teacher education potentially plays in changing teacher professionalisation is also highlighted by Sachs (2001) when she refers to the work of Furlong et al. (2000) who

argue that there is currently a significant attempt to change teacher professionalism by influencing the nature of the knowledge, skills and values of new teachers:

> [t]he assumption behind policy within this area has been that changes in the form and content of initial teacher education will, in the long run, serve to construct a new generation of teachers with different forms of knowledge, different skills and different professional values" (Furlong et al., 2000, p.6, cited in Sachs, 2001, p.151).

Sachs (2001) explains in her paper that "dominant discourses in teacher professionalism assert particular realities and priorities" (p.150) and accordingly, as can be seen not only through the discourse contained in policy documents such as the European Commission's report (2013) towards teacher educator professionalism but also in subsequent legislation, an attempt to change the nature of teacher educator professionalism to one in accordance with neoliberal principles is indeed a reality and clearly a priority for EU policymakers. The difficulty I had in understanding the mismatch between the image projected of teacher educator professionalism in EU policy documents and legislation, and what I was experiencing on the ground was therefore a consequence of competing views about the nature of teacher educator professionalism. There is the traditional view of what it means to be a professional which I had integrated on a personal level as the norm, and then there is a new professionalism akin to the spirit of entrepreneurialism which has emerged as a consequence of the ideology of neoliberalism:

> Furthermore, we believe there is ample opportunity to improve the quality of entrepreneurship in education by mobilizing key stakeholders. Education needs disruptive innovations, i.e. those able to disrupt existing education practices with new products, tools and services. For the first time, changes in education are considered as both desirable and viable and no longer reserved to a selected group of policy makers and experts. Most structured education is delivered by centralised institutions (public school systems), which are too large and slow to embrace change. "Entrepreneurship in Education" is a vital force for introducing innovation into the system. (Yuan and Powell, 2015, p.4)

In the next section, I present the implications of neoliberal policies regarding early language learning and how it affects the primary MFL teacher educator classroom using research I carried out with my own students and then published in an online article.[1]

3.5.1 Primary MFL teacher education classroom in France

The majority of the Master MEEF students attending English classes at the *ESPE d'Aquitaine* where I teach generally demonstrate A2/B1 CEFR level English according to the diagnostic assessment carried out at the beginning of the course of study and the results of the CLES2[2] (*Certificat de compétences en langues de l'enseignement supérieur)* which indicate that only 34% of Master MEEF students demonstrate the required minimum B2 CEFRL level in their first foreign language. Dahm et al. (2016) raise questions regarding the impact of these statistics on the teacher education classroom in terms of managing the teaching of language skills alongside teaching theory and pedagogical skills to Master MEEF students and the repercussions for MFL learning and teaching in both the primary and the secondary MFL classroom:

> *Selon les chiffres du CLES2 (Bilan national de 2013-2014), seulement 34% des étudiants MEEF non spécialistes ont un niveau B2. Quel est l'impact de ce faible niveau linguistique des étudiants MEEF 1er degré sur la formation dispensée dans les ESPE ? Quel est le poids de la formation linguistique par rapport à celui de la formation didactique dans les Master MEEF et quelles sont les répercussions sur l'enseignement des langues à l'école et au collège ?* (Dahm et al., 2016)[3]

3.5.2 Improving Master MEEF CEFR level English

An additional challenge is that the time allotted for foreign language learning and MFL teaching pedagogical theory and practice on Master MEEF courses of study is hardly sufficient to enable a student who has A2/B1 CEFR level English to progress to B2.

[1] Leroy, N. (2018). Recent policy in modern foreign language teacher training provision in primary education in France: linguistic opportunity or linguistic inequality? HETEROGLOSSIA. Quaderni di Linguaggi e Interdisciplinarità., (16).
http://riviste.unimc.it/index.php/heteroglossia/issue/view/93/showToc

[2] https://www.certification-cles.fr/medias/fichier/bilan-national-de-la-passation-du-cles-2013-2014_1432199026151-pdf

[3] https://www.aplv-languesmodernes.org/spip.php?article6263

There is a consensus that no two learners develop their language skills in the same way or at the same pace and consequently the following factors have an impact on how long it takes for an individual to achieve the desired level of foreign language skills: the background in language learning, the MFL course structure and content itself, personal motivation and investment during lessons and outside of lessons, age as well as exposure to the foreign language outside of lessons. Despite the fact that this makes it difficult to pin down the exact amount of time needed to progress from one CEFR level to the next, Cambridge University indicates in its *Introductory Guide to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) for English Language Teachers*[1] (Cambridge, 2013, p.4) that 'typically', it takes approximately 200 hours of 'guided learning hours' (lesson time) for a language learner to progress from B1 CEFR level to B2. However, the number of MFL guided learning hours generally on offer on various Master MEEF primary education courses in France can vary from as little as 12 to up to 72 which according to the above recommendations is hardly sufficient to allow students to move from one level to the next. In addition, the number of hours given over to MFL teaching pedagogical theory and practice is just as disparate. So, it would seem that the success of a language course of study is not only dependent on internal factors related to the psychological make-up of an individual but also on external factors such as the course structure, content and the number of MFL guided learning hours made available to students.

Research indicates the necessity of primary teachers reaching a minimum B2 CEFR level in order to teach MFL effectively in the primary MFL classroom; however, statistics indicate that only 34% of Master MEEF students demonstrate the required minimum B2 CEFR level.

Despite a sense of satisfaction that recent legislation had identified modern foreign languages as a national priority, my French colleagues expressed apprehension and concern at the idea of having to assess and so certify the linguistic proficiency of the Master MEEF primary education students. I will now present an overview of the key reasons why there was so much apprehension.

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[1] http://www.englishprofile.org/images/pdf/GuideToCEFR.pdf

High stakes testing: Master MEEF B2 CEFR level

To begin with, the requirement to achieve a minimum B2 CEFR level to obtain the Master MEEF is, in effect, a form of 'high stakes' testing (West & Pennell, 2005) because Master MEEF students who demonstrate insufficient linguistic competence are prevented from entering the teaching profession. As explained earlier in this study, a student who does not obtain the Master MEEF degree because they do not reach the B2 requirement would fail to be recruited as a French civil servant even if they managed to pass the CRPE, the competitive primary education recruitment exam. The stakes are also high for the education system because this situation could potentially result in a shortage of primary teachers. Hence, it is easy to understand why there is pressure placed on MFL teacher educators by students and administrators to validate the level B2 irrespective of whether students have this level or not.

High-stakes testing has implications for the student-teacher relationship which is different to the pupil-teacher relationship experienced at school. The student-teacher relationships at university are formed between adults, whereas in the school context, relationships are formed between an adult and a child or an adolescent. Given the very strong motivation of Master MEEF students to qualify as primary teachers, the B2 requirement is a source of tension especially when students start the Master MEEF with weak linguistic skills. Such students do not have time to work on their English language skills because they also need to study all the other subjects they have to teach as future primary school teachers and so, in such a context, it is impossible for them to do the 200 hours of classroom English that I discussed earlier on page 12 that are necessary for these students to progress from one level to the next. In addition, unlike an external exam where the examiner is anonymous, MFL teacher educators may even be exposed to hostility by students who hold them accountable for having not certified the minimum CEFRL level required in the case of continual assessment or end of semester exams. This may result in strained relationships particularly in those primary MFL teacher education classes where a majority of students do not demonstrate the B2 minimum level but do hold a strong aspiration to become primary teachers irrespective of their A2/B1 CEFR level.

Furthermore, as well as concentrating on the job of moving Master MEEF students towards developing MFL pedagogy skills in the context of early language teaching and learning at primary, MFL teacher educators also have to incorporate the assessment of linguistic competence into their teaching programme making the planning and preparation of courses more complex. There is also the added challenge of assessing MFL skills according to CEFR criteria in these conditions, adequately and fairly.

As a consequence of anxiety at the prospect of insufficient linguistic competence barring them from entering the teaching profession, students put pressure on their MFL teacher educators to use the very small amount of teaching time allocated to MFL teaching as a whole on the Master MEEF degree towards developing linguistic knowledge and skills to 'pass the test'. Students therefore shift their focus away from developing the pedagogical knowledge and skills necessary to teach MFL to children in the classroom effectively towards developing their own MFL competence to pass the high stakes tests instead. This of course has an impact on the classroom environment should there be a mismatch between the priorities of MFL teacher educators and those of the student teachers regarding course content and assessment. This is also a source of potential friction between those students who have A2/B1 CEFR level and those who have C1/C2 CEFR level. The latter are only too aware of the gap between themselves and the others in terms of linguistic proficiency and are frustrated that not only is the course content influenced by those students who do not meet the B2 CEFR requirement but also because these students do not provide a satisfactory phonological model of English for their future primary pupils. I will now outline research[1] I carried out which investigates the extent to which SLA research findings are salient in the minds of the two groups of A2/B1 and C1/C2 CEFR level Master MEEF primary students because it provides an insight into the specific difficulties facing MFL teacher educators in managing the primary teacher education classroom and also because of the insight it provides of the consequences of language education policy implemented in the French Schools of Education that does not

[1]Leroy, N. (2018). Recent policy in modern foreign language teacher training provision in primary education in France: linguistic opportunity or linguistic inequality? HETEROGLOSSIA. Quaderni di Linguaggi e Interdisciplinarità., (16). http://riviste.unimc.it/index.php/heteroglossia/issue/view/93/showToc

take into account SLA research nor the reality of the linguistic profile of Master MEEF students..

Primary teacher students and MFL proficiency

The study I carried out focused on the beliefs of four Master MEEF primary education students regarding this language policy. This qualitative research was conducted with Master MEEF (primary) students from two MFL ability groups: two at A2/B1 CEFR level and two at C1/C2 CEFR level. At the time of writing, the students had 36 hours of English during the first year of the Master MEEF (M1) and 24 hours during the second year (M2). Given that both English CEFR B2 and English teaching theory and pedagogy were taught in those hours, this meant that the number of hours for teaching B2 English was, at the very most, 30.[1] The two students who demonstrated C1/C2 CEFR level of proficiency in English in this study both had a degree in English, had lived in an English-speaking country for at least a year and one had grown up in a bilingual environment. My research questions were: (i) To what extent do students believe that the Master MEEF course provides a realistic linguistic opportunity for A2/B1 CEFR level students to reach the mandatory B2 CEFR level? (ii) Do the two groups of students demonstrate any marked differences in beliefs concerning how good primary teachers should be in English before they teach it to young children? (iii) And to what extent are students anxious to validate the B2 CEFR level because of the latter concern? (iv) And finally, what does this reveal about the importance of primary MFL teaching and learning in the minds of future primary education teachers? To shed more light on these questions, I first considered research which identified the factors recognised as influencing success in early foreign language learning. Then drawing on the work of Bandura (1993) which I outlined in chapter 2 of this thesis, I focused on self-efficacy beliefs in order to gain insight into the attitudes held by the students in this study in relation to the linguistic progress Master MEEF (primary) students were expected to make over the two year course of study and their commitment to early foreign language learning and teaching at primary school. I also examined the literature concerning the psychological importance that people attach to being part of a group.

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[1] The current Master MEEF in place proposes 18 hours of English lessons and 18 hours of English teaching theory and pedagogy in M1, and 28 hours of English teaching theory and pedagogy in M2.

As a reminder, the research conducted by Bandura (1993) suggests that people's thoughts, feelings, levels of motivation and behaviour towards challenges are influenced by self-efficacy beliefs: beliefs that an individual hold about how able they are to accomplish a specific task or not. Indeed, various psychological and affective processes explain the way in which self-efficacy beliefs can affect how people function and react when faced with certain challenges. He found that when certain individuals visualised the outcome of a specific scenario some people anticipate success whereas others anticipate failure and that there was a correlation between perceived self-efficacy, the nature of the challenge people set up for themselves and the overall performance. Adults are more prone to anxiety in MFL language learning situations possibly because of previous negative learning experiences to the extent that it often takes more time than with children to build confidence. Ely (1986, in Deyrich, 2007, p.25) refers to this as "language class discomfort". However primary teachers need to feel confident about their own MFL knowledge and skills as well as their pedagogic skills "to operate effectively" (Sharpe, 2001, p.155) in the MFL primary classroom. What impact may the additional source of pressure that the minimum B2 CEFR requirement generates have on Master MEEF students in this already challenging context of MFL primary education teacher education in terms of their efforts to improve their linguistic skills? In the knowledge that at least 200 guided learning hours are necessary for B1 level students to progress to B2 level, how do students cope with as little as 30 guided learning hours particularly those A2/B1 CEFR level students who need to improve their linguistic level considerably over the two-year course of study for when they have to teach English at primary school? Will they strive to overcome the obstacles before them in order to achieve their ambition of becoming a primary education teacher or are they more likely to dwell on a failure scenario in the face of so few hours available? An individual's ability to anticipate events and develop relevant strategies to control the situations they find themselves in requires effective cognitive processing of information particularly in the face of situations that present ambiguities and uncertainties. Bandura highlights that it requires a strong sense of efficacy to remain task orientated in the face of pressing situational demands and failures that have social repercussions – a situation which the A2/B1 level students face in terms of both the Master MEEF and its B2 requirement, and the competitive primary education

recruitment exam, the CRPE. Do they believe they can do this? What strategies do they adopt to improve their MFL skills?

What also has to be considered is the psychological importance that people attach to being part of a group. Turner (1991) states that a sense of 'belonging' to a group makes us conform to its social norms: individuals, who identify with a group, define themselves as having group membership or *category membership* and go on to adopting the values of the group and behave according to these norms. This process is known as *referential informational influence*. We are most likely to be influenced by those who are perceived to be like us (the *in-group*) and less so by the *out-group* (those who are perceived as different to us). In this context, the fear of being negatively judged by an out-grouper is reduced and may indeed not have any impact on performance depending on the level of response to social influence or *conformity*. Kelman (1958) describes three levels of conformity. The first is *compliance* where an individual conforms to the behaviour of the group but maintains his or her own views privately. This is followed by *identification* where the views and/or behaviour are adopted but only maintained in the presence of the group and the final level is *internalization* where a true change of private views to match those of the group takes place and the new attitudes and behaviours become part of the individual's own value system. Bearing in mind, that there were indeed two groups of Master MEEF students in my classes, English experts (C1/C2) and non-English experts (A2/B1), this theory helps in understanding differences in attitudes between the two groups concerning the importance for a primary education teacher to master English.

Returning to the research referred to earlier which highlighted how crucial it is that primary MFL teachers demonstrate 'a fluent command of the language and a good pronunciation and intonation,' how salient was this in the minds of the Master MEEF students in this study? To what extent did the two groups consider the B2 CEFR Master MEEF requirement as a linguistic opportunity for primary pupils to gain access to well-qualified teachers and/or to improve their own MFL skills? How far did they believe that the B2 CEFR requirement was a source of linguistic inequality given that those students who failed to demonstrate this CEFR level were likely to be barred from becoming primary education teachers? How dedicated were the four Master MEEF students to

developing the MFL skills deemed necessary for effective English teaching in the classroom?

The results of this study indicated that students who displayed C1/C2 CEFR skills were not convinced that a primary teacher can teach effectively without the appropriate speaking skills and an expert knowledge of the English language. The view of the two students appears to be in line with the body of research described by Ortega (2009) that was referred to earlier in this thesis concerning the role of grammatical competence in successful language learning. The C1/C2 students considered early language learning and teaching to be advantageous for primary children as long as key conditions are in place. Accordingly, they held that the impact of bad pronunciation or incorrect grammatical structures being taught to young children should not be minimized because it is likely to result in children imitating and retaining such models. Moreover, they echoed the point that Ortega makes when she says: "What matters in the linguistic environment is not simply 'what's out there' physically or even socially surrounding learners, but rather what learners make of it, how they process (or not) the linguistic data and how they live and experience that environment" (Ortega, 2009, p.80). However, it would seem that this concern was not very salient in the minds of the A2/B1 students in this study. Aware of their A2/B1 CEFR level, these students did not at any point refer to the negative consequences this may have on the pupils in their classes unlike the C1/C2 CEFR level students. Instead, the A2/B1 students argued that the B2 mandatory requirement was unfair and irrelevant because knowledge of teaching methods and resources can compensate for weak English in the classroom: "*ça demande de la préparation mais je pense que oui – je peux y arriver* (…) *il est possible d'enseigner un niveau A1 même si l'on ne possède pas le niveau B2".* Having been taught how to set up pair work activities on the Master's degree course was believed to be sufficient for one A2/B1 student as it gave her confidence to teach English especially because she felt that the language content (vocabulary, songs, the weather and the date..) was not too demanding: "*justement, ce que nous avons appris cette année en didactique nous permet de mettre les pairworks et tout ça en place* and added: '*après tout – il s'agit du vocabulaire et quelques chansons – la date et la météo ... ce n'est pas trop compliqué*". It would appear, therefore, that although the students were aware of the importance of good language pedagogy in the classroom,

they did not appear to be as up-to-date with SLA research as their C1/C2 counterparts relating to the relationship between a primary teacher's language proficiency and their pupils' progress in the MFL. This 'burying one's head in the sand' attitude may seem surprising given the necessity to reach the minimum B2 CEFR level to qualify as a teacher and to be a good primary teacher of MFL. However, Bandura's research findings indicate that such strategies of avoidance are, on the contrary, to be expected in such circumstances. Indeed, an overwhelming failure scenario seemed to have built up in the minds of these students as a result of the anxiety provoked by the B2 CEFR requirement given their awareness that they were only at level A2/B1 which in turn reduced their motivation to teach English, for instance: "*je ne me sens pas à l'aise pour enseigner l'anglais et je n'ai pas non plus envie de le faire*". In addition, this student was not only aware that she had a poor English accent but also considered any effort to improve it as futile - she stated that many in her class failed to speak with a good accent and considered that though this was unfortunate there was nothing to be done about it: "*beaucoup de personnes dans la classe n'ont pas l'accent et ça malheureusement il n'y a rien à faire*". This low sense of efficacy insofar as the possibility of improving her accent and that of the other students in the group is not entirely ungrounded as it is consistent with McLaughlin's (1992) work which indicates that pronunciation is indeed a greater challenge for older learners.

There was little evidence that can be drawn from the interview data to suggest that students who lack the required B2 linguistic skills are indeed ready and/or able to acquire these skills in the face of other demands being made on them. Firstly, the students in this study who entered the Master MEEF course at A2/B1 CEFR level found it difficult to improve their English during the two-year course mainly because the gap between their CEFR level and that required was so great given the other academic and institutional pressures they were under and the lack of guided learning hours in English available. Secondly, from a psychological perspective, given that these students made up the majority group (in-groupers), they argued that not having B2 CEFR level English was the social norm and that they could not therefore be held personally accountable for this shortfall. Although this belief seemed to help the students cope with the stress and anxiety generated by this situation on a day-to-day basis; avoiding any personal

responsibility to improve their CEFR level also resulted in certain students not fully addressing their MFL needs over the two-year Master MEEF degree.

Another aspect to consider is that although this study was based on a very small number of participants and cannot be said to be representative of the student population sitting the Master MEEF in primary education, interview discourse indicated that the two A2/B1 students did indeed consider themselves as in-groupers and as such, representative of other ESPE students who also demonstrated A2/B1 English skills.

In the light of the findings, it would appear that students would benefit from research findings related to successful early language teaching and learning being made available to them in order to increase awareness of the necessity for B2 CEFR level English skills in the primary English classroom and that this would increase motivation for learning English. Whilst bearing in mind the MFL needs of French primary children, French policymakers (and policymakers of other EU education systems) would do well to provide the teachers of these primary aged children with full institutional support in foreign language learning if that is indeed the objective of early language learning at primary school. Not only should an adequate number of guided learning hours in English and/or opportunities to study abroad be made available to students on the Master MEEF (primary) degree course to improve/maintain language expertise, but the findings from this study also suggest that it is imperative that undergraduate students who wish to teach at primary level should be given every opportunity to develop a sufficient command of the language not only during the Master MEEF (primary) degree but during the Bachelor's degree in Scotland and England or during the *licence* in France. Accordingly, this should provide **all primary education students** with a realistic opportunity to teach primary English effectively. Consequently, Master MEEF (primary) teacher educators would be less likely to face the stressful situation of having so many anxious students in the teacher educator classroom who are not able to improve their linguistic level and primary pupils would be more likely to have teachers who are able to provide them with the prospect of learning a foreign language in the right conditions paving the way for future success in language learning.

So, in summary, French MFL teacher educators have to deal with the MFL 'non-expertise' of future primary teachers alongside the imperative of improving the MFL learning experience for primary schoolchildren in this very challenging context. I found this dilemma a concern not only because of the potential negative impact on the primary MFL experience for pupils at primary school and then in secondary school, but also because of the contradiction between the political discourse promoting the primary MFL education policy and how that policy was being implemented. The crucial question is why there is reticence to invest in foreign language learning despite the rhetoric? As can be seen from the literature, it would appear that the rhetoric appears to be influenced by the neoliberal agenda and that this agenda does not share the same conception of education and MFL learning as MFL teacher educators because despite all the challenges they face, early foreign language learning and teaching is indeed a priority for my teacher educator colleagues. They take it extremely seriously as reflected by the constant effort and determination to promote MFL teaching and learning in the ESPE in which I work. For instance, not only do they negotiate almost ferociously with administrators for extra hours to be added to the Master MEEF courses but they work on innovative ways to make the most of the few hours available on courses so that students have access to key practical teaching skills and knowledge of pedagogy and teaching theory.

3.5.3 Research ethos and the search for truth

European Commission neoliberal discourse alludes to a teacher educator workplace I do not recognise and have not experienced. This raised questions in my mind regarding the 'truth' contained in such discourse regarding teacher educator professionalism bearing in mind that the extent to which discourses are successful or not in (re)defining the professionalism of teacher educators can only be ascertained by how people experience and practice their professionalism on an individual level and collectively. This would require a deep insight into the complexity of teacher education on the one hand and a detailed exploration into what MFL teacher educators actually experience as a result of the impact of changes to their professionalism as teacher educators and as specialists of MFL. This is not to be underestimated because as John Loughran explains in the foreword to the book, *The Professional Teacher Educator* (Lunenberg et al., 2014), the work of teacher educators is more complex and difficult to understand than supposed:

> In recent times there has been an increasing focus in the academic literature on the nature of teacher education, in part as a response to the ways in which education bureaucracies around the world have sought to position the field and its work. However, *what has often been overlooked has been the role of teacher educators in the teacher education enterprise* (Murray, 2011) as program structure, organisation, expectations and purpose have tended to dominate. It is almost as though, like teaching, that *the work of teacher educators has been superficially perceived as relatively straight forward and easy to understand.* As a consequence, the purpose of teacher education, the *sophisticated knowledge, skills and ability necessary to do that work well*, are either overlooked or, sadly, ignored. (Loughran, in Lunenberg et al., 2014, p. vii) [my own emphasis]

Research that aims to provide an overview' of "the fundamental characteristics of the professional lives" of EU teacher educators requires a qualitative research approach which would provide the data necessary to enable a deeper insight into the professional lives of teacher educators. Studies that have "superficially perceived" teacher educator work "as relatively straight forward and easy to understand" (ibid) such as the EC (2013) report I discussed earlier that either generalise in order to create a picture of the 'typical teacher educator' on a European level but fail to include distinct representative data are clearly unsatisfactory because it is almost impossible for individual teacher educators to identify with the image of the profession that is projected by such discourse.

Conclusion to chapter

In this chapter, I have attempted to present those features that distinguish primary MFL teacher educators from other members of the teaching profession in terms of their expertise as second-order teachers. The professional identity of teacher educators is explored not only from the perspective of the teacher educators themselves but also through an exploration of the identity which is imposed upon the profession from outside and which emanates from neoliberal discourse mechanisms that attempt to set up a process of deprofessionalization. An overview of the pathways to becoming a teacher educator are outlined as well as those features that make primary MFL teacher educators unique in terms of their specific contribution to education regarding research, pedagogy and culture. In the next chapter I will present the methodological approach adopted in view of responding to the research questions that guide this study.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

General introduction to chapter

The methodological approach adopted is qualitative as it seeks to explore phenomenon, describe variation, describe and explain relationships, individual experiences and group experiences, as opposed to a quantitative approach which aims to confirm hypotheses by quantifying variations, predicting causal relationships and describing the characteristics of a population. In addition, the study design is iterative as data collection and research questions have been adjusted according to what I have learnt as my research has progressed as opposed to a quantitative approach where the study design is set from the start of the project and is subject to statistical assumptions and conditions. The implication of a qualitative approach is that a sample or subset of the population is selected for this study because it is not necessary to collect data from all members of the MFL teacher educator community to get valid findings on the basis of theoretical saturation which is the point at which new data no longer bring further insights to the research questions. In section 4.3 of this chapter, I will outline the purposive sampling procedure I followed in the selection of participants.

Why adopt a qualitative approach? Qualitative research enables an examination of complex relationships that look "beyond the superficial and apparent order of the universe" to reveal "dimensions that contain an underlying order and structure that is unobservable when reduced to its parts" (Briggs and Peat, 1989 cited in Houston, 2000, p.316). It provides a framework for exploring the "lived experience and work", and language serves as a tool for explaining and interpreting the nature of the 'relationships' which "give rise to the collective behaviours of the system". In this respect, the study of written documentation is an important source of data. Bartlett (2014) explains that language serves as a tool because a speaker's status is their cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1977) and that "in the right context, this endows their words with a symbolic capital beyond the value of their content alone" (Bartlett, 2014, p.11). Horn (2008, p.137) considers that the both "behaviour coordination and shared meaning" serve as 'evidence' that the expression of this information has indeed been effectively communicated throughout the system. He points to the importance of context for the extrapolation of

meaningful data because the study of human systems such as the education system is "best done where it is happening" (Horn, 2008, p.137). For this reason, my position as an insider-researcher (as described in section 4.2.3 of this chapter) enables me to access not only the context but also shared meaning during the interview process since teacher educators speak the 'same language' or 'code' given that a "speaker has control over the right type of language (referred to as the code) for taking up the desired position in the current context" (Bartlett, 2014, p.11).

The overall aim of the methodology adopted was to generate a rich variety of qualitative data to build as complete a picture as possible of the context being researched to be able to answer the following research question and its three sub-questions:

How do Modern Foreign Language teacher educators demonstrate their commitment to primary foreign language teacher education in the education systems of England, France and Scotland despite the challenges they face in their work with primary MFL student teachers?

The sub-questions which emanate from this overarching research question:

1. *What personal contribution do they believe they make to primary MFL teacher education in terms of their professional standards, values and expertise?*
2. *What obstacles do they face in the course of their professional lives in achieving their goals?*
3. *What efforts do they make to achieve their goals and how successful do they believe they are on an individual level and collective level?*

In this chapter, I will present an outline about how I position myself as an insider-researcher. I will then describe the rationale for the documents selected and their analysis and the methodology concerning the interviews: the protocol, pilot study, how I proceeded in gaining access and collecting interview data which explored the professional life and experiences of the informants and was also based on video recordings of a student teacher teaching English in a French primary class. The chapter concludes with a description and a rationale for the data collection instruments designed and used, how I structured my analysis and arrived at my choice of themes and finally how I represented

the data (e.g. using SFL discourse analysis of the two reports studied, the anonymising of interview transcripts, the plan of the classroom, transcription of lesson, and how I used NVIVO).

4.1 Epistemological position as an insider-researcher

I adopt the position of insider-researcher for several reasons. Firstly, as a teacher educator myself I consider that I make a specific contribution to the research. I understand the issues that teacher educators face having had first-hand experience of these issues in my everyday working life such as those described in chapter one of this thesis and theoretical background knowledge which adds depth to the study.

Following Vygotsky's (1962) concept of 'social situatedness', Lave and Wenger (1991) explain that social and cultural influences require the development of individual intelligences whilst context provides the multiple perspectives needed for understanding the interplay of all these elements. Work-based researchers have the advantage therefore of being able to draw upon the shared understandings and confidence of their immediate and more distant colleagues and are also in a unique position to gaining access to these people to enhance knowledge and comprehension. One of the rationales for insider-researcher is to make a difference in a work-based situation but to have this impact at various levels, it is necessary to have evidence. This type of research can therefore contribute to providing this evidence and therefore make a difference in terms of policy and decision making, and individual practice. In this respect, I am a political insider-researcher following Ginsberg and Kamat (1995). They explain that what members of the teaching profession do, inside or outside the workplace, is dialectically related to the symbolic distribution of:

> (a) the material and symbolic resources; and (b) the structural and ideological power used to control the means of producing, reproducing, consuming, and accumulating material and symbolic resources. (Ginsberg and Kamat, 1995, p.67; in Anderson (1995)

Teachers, according to Carlson (1987), can and should be considered as political actors because at its core, politics consists of power relations as it "concerns the procedures by which scarce resources are allocated and distributed […] between groups who uphold and

those who challenge the status quo" (Dove, 1986, p. 30). Clearly the scarce resources in education come down to money and time. Ginsberg and Kamat go on to describe the areas in which teachers are political actors:

> Teachers are engaged in political action in their pedagogical, curricular, and evaluative work with students in classrooms and corridors; in their interaction with parents, colleagues, and administrators in educational institutions; in their occupational group dealings with education system authorities and state elites; and in their role as citizens in local, national, and global communities. (Ginsberg and Kamat, 1995, p.67)

They also explain that regardless of whether teachers are "active or passive; autonomous or heteronomous vis-à-vis other political forces/groups; conservative or orientated toward change; seeking individual, occupational group or larger collectivities' goals" (ibid) they are all political actors. This also means that as a political insider-researcher, not only should the consideration of the ethical issues be paramount especially regarding the requirement to secure consent for the research to be undertaken and the promise of anonymity and confidentiality but there should be sensitivity to various risks that may make the interview data not as rich as it could potentially be. Mercer (2007, pp.9-13) describes the aspects that should be taken into consideration: (i) not to take things for granted and therefore not to ask the 'obvious' question (ii) to anticipate feelings of awkwardness when asking for 'sensitive' data (iii) not identifying assumptions and challenging them and (iv) being aware that some participants may not divulge certain information for fear of being judged or of recriminations. This approach therefore requires heightened sensitivity towards these aspects.

4.2 Description of research procedure

4.2.1 The methodological approach adopted in the study: mixed method

In order to generate rich, detailed and context-specific data on a macro level (national context) to examine national language policy and on a micro level to explore the participants beliefs, values and experiences in their local work context, it was considered necessary to adopt a mixed method approach which involved, for the macro level data, a discourse analysis of policy documents, whilst content analysis of interviews held with

MFL teacher educator participants was adopted as a method to find evidence on a micro level given the fact that "education and educational workers are part of a broader set of social relations [and therefore] life in schools constitutes and is constituted by power relations on a micro as well as on a macro level" (Ginsburg and Kamat, 1995, p.68).

Consequently, the mixed method approach gives me the opportunity to "see how the rhetoric plays out" on a micro level (Hargreaves and Goodson,1996, p.22) in the everyday lives of teacher educators through the interview process and on a macro level in terms of the political rhetoric that accompanies policies and their implementation on a macro level.

4.2.2 Macro-level - discourse analysis of policy documents

For the first part of the analysis, data were collected for the purposes of understanding more about the ideology influencing EU teacher education policy. I selected the *European Commission Report, Supporting Teacher Educators for better learning outcomes* (European Commission, 2013) because it focuses on EU teacher educators and also because it was used to inform EU legislation: *Council Conclusions of 20 May 2014 on effective teacher education*, as well as the more recent book published in 2017 by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), *Pedagogical Knowledge and the Changing Nature of the Teaching Profession* (OECD, 2017) which refers to the European Commission report as one of its sources and is even more explicit in its critical stance against EU teacher educators.

The second part of the analysis involved an additional document published by the Scottish Council of Deans of Education Languages Group (SCDE) Language Group in 2017, *Teacher National Framework for languages: plurilingualism and pluriliteracies*. The Scottish education system was not included in the data compiled for the European Commission report, *Supporting Teacher Educators for better learning outcomes* (European Commission, 2013) and this omission therefore justifies inclusion of Scottish data in this study in order to counterbalance a lack of representativity of teacher educators from education systems such as Scotland in the European Commission document, given that the SCDE Languages Group are made up of MFL teacher educators.

To gather evidence of MFL teacher educator commitment and evidence of neoliberal policies and their implementation, I incorporated the study of this document produced by MFL Scottish Educators to explore data concerning their contribution to the teaching and learning of MFL in the Scottish education system and whether this attested to their commitment.

Data from the SCDE Languages Group was then compared with data from the European Commission report (2013) and the OECD book (2017) extracts in an attempt to identify whether the specific charges directed against teacher educators in the European Commission document mentioned above are justified.

Documents studied:

- Pedagogical Knowledge and the Changing Nature of the Teaching Profession, (the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2017)
- Supporting Teacher Educators for better learning outcomes (European Commission, 2013)
- Teacher National Framework for languages: plurilingualism and pluriliteracies (Scottish Council of Deans of Education Languages Group, 2017).

The aim of analysing discourse in terms of this study is to identify the position of EU policymakers in order to throw light on the difficulties and obstacles the primary MFL teacher educators in this study experience. Neoliberalism lends itself to discourse analysis as it promotes its ideology through language using very powerful literary techniques and devices based on *ethos, pathos* and *logos* which I will briefly outline before examining specific extracts. I also refer to the theory of grammar, known as Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), which was developed by Michael Halliday and which Bartlett (2014) explains serves "as a means of describing language as a system for making social meanings, a social semiotic, so that linguistic, or textual, description based on it should be able to open texts up to discourse analysis" (Bartlett, 2014, p.3). Following Fairclough (2001), Bartlett explains that SFL is a means of moving from "an objective description of the language of texts, through an interpretation of its meaning as utterances in context, and on to possible explanations of why the text was produced when it was and what its effect might have been (Bartlett, 2014, p.4). He goes on to say that this method meets the need to describe words and sentences in an objective manner while it "provides a

platform on which to build our interpretations and explanations on the other" (ibid). In studying the policy documents, I followed the discourse analysis principles laid out by Bartlett (2014); but which also apply when analysing interview discourse. These involve first identifying how speakers construe a field of discourse which "refers to the ways in which our choices in language work together to interconnect a range of people, things and events as a coherent and recognisable whole within the activity or topic" (ibid, p.16); and how speakers establish and develop a field of discourse which are generally of two types of field: immediate environment or displaced. Bartlett explains that the immediate environment is when "two people and events being talked about are within the speakers' immediate environment and have a direct role in the activity they are currently engaged in" (ibid. p.17). I would expect to encounter this type of discourse during the interviews. The linguistic devices that I would expect to identify in a text also include reference and motifs that are used to hold a text together: "[a] continuity of reference occurs when the same people and things are constantly referred to; whereas motifs involve maintaining and expanding certain themes or topics and can range from types of people, participants or activities to ways of evaluating people and what they do" (ibid., p.32) through the expansion of semantic domains, for instance, where the words of the text share some feature of meaning (synonymy) or are the opposite of each other (antonymy). Bartlett considers it crucial to examine the relationships that are construed between referents because:

> construal refers to the way that speakers use the resources of the language to make particular aspects of a field salient, so that the particular way they construe events tells you as much if not more about the speaker than the people and the events they are talking about. (Bartlett, 2014, p.44)

This it would seem is of particular importance when analysing the political documents that have been selected for this study. What does the way in which the European Commission authors describe teacher educators tell us about their ideological stance regarding these professionals and regarding education in general?

What follows is an adapted version of the framework that Bartlett (2014) proposes concerning the key questions that should be asked when analysing a text and which I apply to this study.

<u>Discourse analysis framework</u> (adapted from Bartlett, 2014, pp31-43)

<u>Language features</u>:

1. Identify those stretches of the text that are (a) primarily constitutive of the field; (b) primarily ancillary to non-linguistic features of the interview as an event
2. Identify the different subfields within the constituted fields.
3. Is there an overarching field that unites these subfields?
4. What themes are developed in the text, and do they relate to specific subfields?
5. List the linguistic features that led to answers in 1 and 2.
6. Discuss how the constitutive features also play an ancillary role within the event.
7. Discuss the use of personal pronouns.

<u>Social features</u>:

1. Background knowledge of the key areas.
2. Identify the storyline and the different roles construed by the participants (interviewee and interviewer).
3. Identify how the different roles contribute to the participant's overall "position" within the interview.
4. In what way do the participants' histories as teacher educators or language teachers affect their status?
5. In what ways is the participants' speech designed for a specific audience?
6. Take into consideration their different roles and cultural capitals.

<u>Reference</u>

1. Identify features that signal that participants expect the identity of a referent to be recovered in some way.
2. What techniques are used to enable the hearer to identify the referents?
   For example: anaphoric reference – cataphoric reference – exophoric reference – homophoric reference
3. What extra effect is created by the use of reference to suggest shared knowledge?

<u>Motifs</u>

1. What ideas (not specific referents) are taken up and expanded upon as the text develops?
2. Starting with the first reference to an idea, track any concepts later in the text that is connected through any of the sense relations (synonomy, repetition and contrast, meronymy, hyponymy and superordination, cohyponymy, comeronymy). After the first mention, the token identified is labelled according to its relation to the immediately previous token in the chain and in this way, we can see how concepts are broken up and grouped together, how speakers develop one angle at the expense of another, and how different concepts are brought together.
3. Many of the relationships established in a text are locally contingent: that is the relationships between them are specific to the field being construed and even to the individual text.
4. Consider how the different motifs flow in and out of salience and whether this is effective.

4.2.3 Micro-level: the interview

4.2.3.1 Purposive sampling procedure

According to the principles of purposive sampling, the participants were selected according to preselected criteria. I selected teacher educators who were working in higher education who taught primary MFL and were not native speakers of that MFL. As a native speaker of English, I do not consider myself to be typical of the teacher educators I work with. Given the very small amount of teacher educators interviewed in each country, I therefore wished to have participants who are as representative as possible of other MFL teacher educators in their education system.

I also selected teacher educators who had experience of working in primary or secondary education as classroom teachers. The reason that the latter criteria was included was because teacher educators in England and Scotland have to have prior primary or secondary teaching experience to be employed as teacher educators. This is not the case in France and, therefore because this is a comparative study and it is important to compare 'like with like', teacher educators who have never taught in the primary or secondary school system are excluded from this study. However, I have included a teacher educator in this study who does have this profile for triangulation purposes. She is not included in the study because she does not represent a typical MFL teacher educator for two reasons. Firstly, because she is a British native English speaker who has not studied French beyond high school and whose professional experience before arriving at the ESPE involved teaching English. In addition, the participant has never taught at primary or secondary level and it is this lack of secondary teaching experience which is of interest at this point in order to identify any differences between her beliefs and those of her French colleagues.

The MFL teacher educator participants in England and Scotland work in the same geographical region in their education system under very similar conditions; however, they do not work together in the same School of Education. In the case of France, the participants all work in the same ESPE but on different sites. The sample size is set at three for each education system. Initially I did intend to interview more informants but as

the interviews were very rich and detailed, I realised that three interviews were sufficient to reach saturation level:

> Au fur et à mesure que les interviews s'accumulent et révèlent leurs enseignements, l'apport de chaque interview supplémentaire sera de moins en moins original. Bien que le chercheur ait veillé à diversifier les profils, le continu des réponses arrivera un moment à saturation et les dernières interviews n'apporteront pratiquement plus rien qui n'ait déjà été exprimé par un répondant precedent. C'est à ce moment de saturation que le chercheur pourra mettre légitimement un terme à ses interviews et qu'il pourra estimer que son échantillon de répondants, bien que non strictement représentatif, est néanmoins valide. (Campenhoudt et Quivy, 2011, p. 149)

4.2.3.2 Ethics and informed consent

Pseudonyms were given to the participants to protect confidentiality for ethical reasons. I have also given pseudonyms to the other participants in this study for the same reasons. Other participants include the Canadian teacher educator that I interviewed as part of the pilot study to test the interview protocol as well as two other individuals who contributed to this study for triangulation purposes. As presented above, one is a primary MFL teacher educator who works in the French system but is English and is therefore not characteristic of a 'typical' teacher educator in the French system. The other participant is a French lecturer of English at a French university who has no experience of teacher education at all. Part of the interview involved watching a primary student teaching English to his pupils during his probationary year. Each time a participant enters the discussion I put the education system of origin in brackets next to the initials. Below are their pseudonyms, the abbreviation of this name to the first two letters used in the transcriptions followed by the highest qualification they have obtained:

MFL teacher educators:

England (Eng)	Philippa (PH) – PhD
	Rebecca (RE) – PhD
	Kate (KA) - Master
France (Fr)	Anne (AN) – Agrégation
	Marie-Louise (MA) – PhD
	Sarah (SA) – CAPES

Scotland (Scot) Chris (CH) – PhD
Jackie (JA) – Master (doctoral student)
Lottie (LO) – PhD

<u>Pilot study</u>
(MFL teacher educator)
Canada Abbie (AB) – PhD

<u>Primary student teacher</u>
France Kevin (Ke) – Master MEEF

<u>Triangulation</u>
Primary MFL teacher educator (English) working in France: Alison (AL)
English lecturer working in a French university: Rachel (RA)

4.2.4 Lesson observation

The first stage of my research involved filming a primary lesson delivered by a probationary student teacher, Kevin to a class of CE2/CM1 (8-9 years). Kevin had not benefited from any teacher education courses in pedagogy. This was because he had a degree in English and he mistakenly believed he was exempt from attending lessons because he had reached C1 CEFR level. At the time there was great confusion over this issue because reforms were taking place and two systems were overlapping with each other. He also lived very far from the ESPE and he told me when I went to film him that because his English was so much better than that of the other students, he did not believe that it was necessary to attend lessons.

A decision had been made to place a student teacher who had experienced a lot of problems in Kevin's school so that he could help her out. She would observe Kevin and teach the children at certain moments in the day. This was also because Kevin shared the class with a Professeur des écoles Maître Formateur (PEMF; a school-based teacher educator) who could guide this student in difficulty. However, I was informed that Kevin had been singled out by the inspectors as a potentially good teacher who was reliable and sensitive enough to help out his colleague. When I went to the school to visit the student teacher and watch her teach a lesson in Kevin's class, Kevin suggested that I film him. He was enthusiastic about his English lessons and wanted me to use this video recording

to show the other students in the ESPE what he did in English. I told him about my research project and he was happy to be involved. I used my smart phone to record him as this was an ad-hoc opportunity. Given that the class had a PEMF as a teacher for half the week, I did not have to ask for specific authorization to film the children in the classroom as the parents had already given this authorization at the beginning of the year. However, I did ask the PEMF teacher to confirm this by email and a copy can be found in appendix 3.

The video is in three parts. There is a transcription for each of the video clips. The transcription of video clip 1 is appendix 5, of video clip 2 can be found in appendix 6 and the transcription of video clip 3 is in appendix 8. The seating plan for video clip 1 is in appendix and 3 to be found in appendix 4. The first video clip is the beginning of the lesson and it lasts about 15 minutes. The second clip is the part of the lesson which shows the role play activity which lasts 3 minutes and the third clip is the end of the lesson when Kevin reads a story to the children: *The Story of the very Hungry Caterpillar* and this also lasts around 15 minutes.

4.2.5 Purpose of filming an English lesson in a French primary school

I recorded Kevin because he had not benefitted from a theoretical input from the ESPE but had a good level of English and so I was curious to see how he was managing. The second reason was because I wanted to use these videoclips during the interviews with participant MFL teacher educators because the literature suggests that expert teachers pay attention to difficulties arising in lessons, and use this evidence to make decisions on instructional strategies they would subsequently use (Borko and Livingston (1989). In addition, while novice teachers tend to follow lesson plans to the letter, expert teachers are more flexible as they know their subject and can respond to student difficulties during the lesson and make on the spot decisions to help them (Berliner, 2001). Therefore, my objective was to ask all the participants from the three different education system to watch the video clips, make comments on what they thought of the lesson and what advice they would give to Kevin to improve upon his teaching given that all the participants understand both English and French. My objective was to explore the common features of MFL teacher educator expertise in relation to 2nd order teaching

skills among the participants and to identify differences. I also felt that it would be a good springboard for discussion given the contrast Kevin's classroom teaching is likely to present with the different teacher education contexts they are used to coming across as teacher educators and also provide a means of drawing them into thinking about their expectations in the primary MFL classroom in order to distinguish more easily similarities and differences between the English, French and Scottish primary MFL teacher educator participants in this study.

4.2.6 Teacher educator interviews

4.2.6.1 Pilot study

The pilot study took place in June 2016. I was presented with a one-off opportunity to interview a researcher at a conference I was attending in Glasgow for my pilot study. The video film was on my computer and on talking to this colleague about my research, she kindly offered to be a participant. It was perfect as she was Canadian and this would give me insight into a non-European based vision of Kevin's pedagogy. The participant whose pseudonym is Abigail taught as a primary and secondary MFL teacher (French and German) and is now a teacher educator at university. It was important for me to view this research with a different vision to the one I was used to in France so that I would be more prepared for the variety of responses I was likely to get in Scotland and England. I was interested to identify her perspective and views concerning what Kevin did or did not do and what she would have liked to have seen to identify if we shared the same views about Kevin and pedagogical content knowledge. I found this encounter enriching and it also helped me to take a step back during the interview and not ask too many questions. I realised that I tended to cut in too often. This interview lasts 26 minutes and was audio recorded. At the beginning of the interview the participant was assured that her response would remain anonymous and that only the researcher would listen to the audio recording. I realised that it would be very useful to present an interview schedule with the main points that I would like the participant to cover before watching the video so that they would be looking for these aspects actively. I constructed an interview guide which can be found in appendix 2.

It was also important to give details about the lesson, the profile of Kevin, his background and the children in the class. It was important to inform the participants of these details because misunderstandings can in fact change the content of the interview. This can be seen by the table I constructed to keep a record of the various elements that each participant in the study referred to. Although, I did take the precaution of giving this information before the interview and stating key information in the interview guide, misunderstandings do arise. For instance, Sarah, one of the French participants, did not immediately register the fact that Kevin was a student teacher. As a result, there are elements of her responses to Kevin's lesson which are in stark contrast with her colleagues' comments simply because of this misunderstanding. She had assumed that he had been teaching for a while and this changed her perspective once she realised that he was indeed a novice teacher.

4.2.6.2 MFL Teacher educators

I first set out to find participants in England. I sent an email to around five MFL teacher educators teaching at various universities. I presented myself and my doctoral project and asked if they would be willing to participate. I was very fortunate because I managed to get three positive responses MFL teacher educators. Each interview lasted around an hour. I showed the video and after discussing Kevin's lesson we would move on to second part of the interview which was semi-directed. The interview schedule is in appendix. On the whole, I found these interviews very difficult because the participants were in distress. They were clearly upset about what was happening in teacher education generally. One participant, pseudonym Kate, actually cried at the end of the interview because she felt so vulnerable and uncertain about what was going to happen in the near future. Philippa was on the point of retiring and she was clearly very disillusioned with what was happening. Rebecca was stoic and did not get as emotional as Kate but I could sense her sadness, frustration and dissatisfaction under the surface. As an insider-researcher I was distressed by what I witnessed; yet I felt very privileged that Rebecca, Philippa and Kate were ready to open their door to me and help me with my research despite the difficult situation they were going through.

The interviews with the French participants were conducted in the same manner. I did not have to send messages over the internet as I have a network of colleagues in France who I knew and agreed to participate. There were two problems I faced. The first I have already presented earlier regarding Sarah and the second problem involves Anne. Unfortunately, she was not able to watch the video recording of Kevin because there was no time available – she had to leave the interview because she had a personal problem. As a consequence, there is more input from Marie-Louise to compensate for the lack of data coming from Anne.

The Scottish interviews were conducted over Skype. Technically, it went very well. I sent the video clips to the participants through internet and they viewed them before the interview. There was a slight difference in the interview process. The participants gave summaries of what they thought of Kevin and I did not really get their immediate reaction to what he had done. They had the opportunity to reflect and think about his lesson and despite the fact that what the Scottish participants say is possibly not as detailed as the others, it is to the point and represents what they believe are the most important aspects of his lesson.

The interviews either started with the video clips of Kevin's lesson or with the questions about the professional life of the participant. Sometimes, the conversation went between the two aspects at different times.

The interviews for triangulation purposes followed the same procedure except for Rachel's. As she is not a teacher educator, the second part of the interview was not relevant for this study. However, I was interested in her perspective as far as Kevin's lesson was concerned in order to identify whether she would have had the same reaction and opinions as the teacher educator participants in the study.

CHAPTER FIVE: RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

5.1 Discourse analysis of EU policy documents and Scottish NFLfL

5.1.1 Introduction

The first set of documents studied for the purposes of understanding more about the ideology influencing EU teacher education policy are taken from two policy documents: the European Commission Report, S*upporting Teacher Educators for better learning outcomes* (European Commission, 2013) which was used to inform EU legislation: Council Conclusions of 20 May 2014 on effective teacher education, and the more recent book published in 2017 by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), *Pedagogical Knowledge and the Changing Nature of the Teaching Profession* (OECD, 2017) which refers to the European Commission report as one of its sources and is even more explicit in its critical stance against EU teacher educators. Although the OECD (French: *Organisation de coopération et de développement économiques, OCDE*) is an intergovernmental economic organisation with 36-member countries founded in 1961 to stimulate economic progress and world trade, it originated as the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC) led by Robert Marjolin of France, to help administer the Marshall Plan. Today, it is a forum of countries describing themselves as committed to democracy and the market economy[1]. Given its support for the market economy, it is clearly therefore a platform for neoliberal ideology. The fact that it refers to the European Commission report (2013) is in itself an indicator of the neoliberal stance of EU policymakers and also points to the place the EU holds in terms of its influence on the global trend of neoliberalism, although the latter is beyond the parameters of this study.

The aim of analysing discourse in terms of this study is to identify the position of EU policymakers in order to throw light on the difficulties and obstacles the primary MFL teacher educators in this study experience. Neoliberalism lends itself to discourse analysis as it promotes its ideology through language using very powerful literary techniques and devices which I briefly outline before examining specific extracts. There are specific

[1] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/OECD

rhetorical devices used by Finlayson (2012), Toye (2013) and Atkins (2011) that I will use in the analysis of the European Commission report based on Aristotelian origins: *ethos, pathos* and *logos.*

Ethos is related to the character and credibility of the person communicating. A speaker who convinces an audience that they share their values, beliefs and experiences is influential because the audience is more likely to identify with them and this gives the communicator more credibility and authority as someone who is "just like us" (Finlayson, 2007, 558).[1]

Pathos is a rhetorical device that plays on the emotions and imagination of the audience in an attempt to move them into the right frame of mind or 'disposition' through the use of binary opposites: good/bad, right/wrong.

The third rhetorical device is *logos* which appeals to the rationality and reason of the audience. Arguments are put forward that aim to present the speaker's perspective as "common sense". A speaker will select the most appropriate device to convince the audience of the arguments presented.

I also refer to the theory of grammar, known as Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), which was developed by Michael Halliday and which Bartlett (2014) explains serves "as a means of describing language as a system for making social meanings, a social semiotic, so that linguistic, or textual, description based on it should be able to open texts up to discourse analysis" (Bartlett, 2014, p.3).

5.1.2 EU policy and neoliberal ideology

In order to identify whether discourse in European policy documents reflects neoliberal ideology, a discourse analysis of the report produced by the European Commission report *Supporting Teacher Educators for better learning outcomes* (2013) is presented in the first part of this chapter. As the first step to understanding whether the authors of this text are influenced by neoliberal ideology, it is necessary to look to Apple (2001, p.306) who

[1] Finlayson, A. (2007). From beliefs to arguments: Interpretive methodology and rhetorical political analysis. The British Journal of Politics and International Relations, 9(4), 545-563.

points out that neoliberalism is characterised by an "odd combination of marketized individualism and control through constant and comparative public assessment" (p.307). Apple explains that it is crucial to comprehend the key differences between classical liberalism and neoliberalism in order to fully comprehend the politics of education and the transformations that education is currently undergoing, particularly regarding the role played by regulation and control. Apple goes on to present the work of Mark Olssen (1996, p.340) in order to explain the key differences between neoliberalism and classical liberalism. The latter represents a negative conception of state power: the individual is perceived as an object that needs to be set free from the interventions of the state. Classical liberalism promotes the notion that an individual is autonomous and enjoys freedom and so the role of the state is to limit and minimize intervention according to theoretical principles such as universal egoism (the self-interested person) and the invisible hand theory. This theory ruled that the "interests of the individual were also the interests of the society as a whole" (ibid), so respecting the "laissez-faire' maxim. In contrast, neoliberalism regards the state positively as it creates the "appropriate market by providing the conditions, laws, and institutions necessary for its operation", and promotes the idea that it is the duty of the state to incite an individual to be enterprising and competitive (ibid). Olssen then goes on to highlight an extra feature that emerged in this shift from classical liberalism to neoliberalism:

> In the shift from classical liberalism to neo-liberalism, then, there is a further element added, for such a shift involves a change in subject from 'homo economicus', who naturally behaves out of self-interest and is relatively detached from the state, to **'manipulatable man'**, who is created by the state and who is continually encouraged to be 'perpetually responsive'. It is not that the conception of the self-interested subject is replaced or done away with by the new ideals of 'neo-liberalism', but that in an age of universal welfare, **the perceived possibilities of slothful indolence** create **necessities** for new forms of vigilance, surveillance, 'performance appraisal' and of **forms of controls generally**. In this model the state has taken it upon itself to keep us all up to the mark. The state will see to it that each one makes a 'continual enterprise for ourselves' … in what seems to be a process of '**governing without governing'**. (Olssen, 1996, p.340) [my own emphasis]

Returning to the European Commission report *Supporting Teacher Educators for better learning outcomes* (2013), it does, on closer examination, point to examples of "slothful indolence" among many teacher educators. In the following extract, hypothetical

examples are given of teacher educators who are presented as poor role models for future teachers:

> 1 By contrast, professors of chemistry in the same institution may spend only 10% of their working time with future teachers, and **may not** think of themselves as teacher educators, despite (perhaps unwittingly) exercising an influential role over beginning teachers by the example they set. An important concern here is that lecturers who do not think of themselves as teacher educators **may** inadvertently model poor teaching behaviours to their students. Indeed, student teachers' learning **seems to be** influenced by form as much as by content – by how they are taught, as much as by what they are taught (Loughran and Berry, 2005). Teacher educators, in modelling what they advocate for the classroom, in fact give future teachers a genuine learning experience, with first-hand insights into teaching and learning that **might not** be fully appreciated or understood, were they to be discussed or conveyed in other ways.
>
> 2 Because of their strong influence on the competence and lifelong learning of teachers, **it is important for** teacher educators to be conscious of the importance of their role, and to work together effectively at all stages of the continuum of professional development. Effective cooperation **requires** common values for the profession and a shared responsibility for high quality teacher education. Therefore, teacher educators – no matter what role they play in teacher education or how they identify themselves – **should** have a clear, shared understanding of their roles and of the many aspects of quality in teaching. (European Commission, 2013, p.9) [my own emphasis]

It is implied in paragraph 1 in the text above that "teachers of chemistry" have difficulty recognising that they are no longer in chemistry lessons when they are teaching future teachers and that they continue to teach chemistry irrespective of the needs of these students. The text also raises doubts about the integrity "perhaps" or the intelligence "unwittingly" of these hypothetical teachers (idem). This text aims to exploit and/or promote negative stereotypical images of "bad teachers" who are out of touch with their students and do not really care about what they teach. There is an assessment of teacher educators yet the source is unnamed. The authors refer to "professors of chemistry", to "teacher educators" or to "lecturers" but no information is given regarding their identity or the study from which the data is drawn.

Furthermore, although there is absolutely no data whatsoever to support such assumptions, the authors attempt to persuade the reader that this is a serious issue and that it is anchored in reality. They do this through the inclusion of the word "here" in

conjunction with the use of the present simple tense "do not think": "[a]n important concern here is that lecturers who do not think of themselves as teacher educators may inadvertently model poor teaching behaviours to their students" (ibid). It is also careful never to make a direct accusation given the lack of empirical evidence and maintain the moral high ground. Hence, the use of "may", "might" or "seem" dominates the first part of the text. However, there is a change of tone in the second paragraph of this extract in which the authors present their views regarding what needs to be done to address this issue. The language moves from epistemic usuality or probability, to deontic obligation with the use of verbs/expressions such as: "should", "require" and "it is important for". The tone of obligation represents what Olssen explains is the state keeping us "all up to the mark" (Olssen, 1996, p.340).

The authors insist on how crucial it is to advise teacher educators to "be *conscious* of the importance of their role, and to work together *effectively* at all stages of the continuum of professional development" (ibid) [my emphasis] because there is a need for "effective cooperation", "common values for the profession" and a "shared responsibility" (ibid) as well as a "*clear, shared* understanding of their roles and of the many aspects of *quality in teaching*" [my emphasis].

The report then goes on to state that "within the same teacher education institution, teacher educators may adhere to *different professional standards and values*" (European Commission, 2013, p.12) [my own emphasis]. In addition, it warns that the profession fails to attract and recruit the best teacher educators because "the perceived low status of university teacher educators tends to drive many promising teacher educators away from the profession" (ibid., p13).

So, it appears evident that the European Commission has a long list of examples of the "slothful indolence" of teacher educators. The authors of the report state that many teacher educators do not identify themselves as teacher educators at all and therefore lack commitment to the teacher education profession because they fail to work together in a coordinated and effective manner, do not share the same professional standards and values, do not have a clear and shared understanding of what is meant by 'quality' in

teaching, are not examples of the best talent available and, to add fuel to the fire, are not even aware of these shortcomings.

Now that teacher educators appear to be 'failing', the next step in terms of a neoliberal approach is to address the 'need' to sort out this "slothful indolence" (Olssen, 1996, p.440). This is done when "national authorities and employers" set up "new forms of vigilance, surveillance, 'performance appraisal' and of forms of controls generally" in order to keep the teacher educator "up to the mark" (ibid., p.340). In keeping with Olssen, the following text by the European Commission illustrates how national authorities and employers should address the "slothful indolence" of teacher educators:

> National authorities and employers can support, as appropriate, the development of professional communities and bodies of teacher educators, to strengthen their professional agency. These can support and nurture the development of a culture of quality, empowerment, accountability and continuing improvement. Once the profession has endeavoured to build up this quality culture, government policies could decide to hand over more and more trust and responsibilities to the profession, recognising its necessary contribution to the high-quality education of teachers. (European Commission, 2013, p.36) [my emphasis]

Effectively, teacher educators are presented here as members of a profession in crisis, needing "support" from national authorities and employers in order to help them build up a "quality culture" (p.36). The authors of this report clearly advocate that autonomy be restricted when they propose that "government policies *could* decide to hand over more trust and responsibilities" only "once" teacher educators have built up "this quality culture" (ibid). The use of 'could' indicates that the government is the decider who knows best about what the profession can or cannot do, and should or should not do. In addition, the use of the word 'endeavour' suggests that the task at hand, to move the profession forward into something the European Commission considers to be more desirable (which is suggested by the use of the verb 'build'), is so extremely difficult and arduous because teacher educators are at such a low point that it is almost improbable that they will manage it.

Clearly then, the discourse in this text corresponds with Olssen's perspective and so adds weight to the argument that this European Commission report is indeed influenced by neoliberal ideology.

In the light of research, it is paradoxical and even counter-productive to take away "trust and responsibilities" from the profession when, on the contrary, teachers who experience empowerment are the most committed (NCES, 1997, p.25; Ingersoll, 1995). There are obvious questions that come to mind, such as, surely if there are government officials who are more qualified and demonstrate greater expertise than teacher educators then why are they not already involved in teacher education? Furthermore, it is generally the case that to be recruited as a teacher educator in the first place, an individual will have already demonstrated to their peers and/or the inspectorate a record of high professional standards, commitment and dedication to teaching. What credentials do those representatives of national authorities and employers hold that suggest they are more knowledgeable, committed and capable than teacher educators themselves and can therefore decide in their place?

Moreover, when taking into consideration the definition of professionalism proposed by the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) as: "the attitudinal attributes and ideology of *those who are considered to be, or aspire to be considered as professionals* [which] include a belief in the value of expertise, rigorous standards, and a public-service orientation" (NCES, 1997, p.3) [my own emphasis]; is it not counterintuitive and simplistic to suggest that the most potentially committed teacher educators have been driven away from the profession because of the "perceived low status of university teacher educators" (European Commission, 2013, p.36) ibid., p13)? It is worth noting that the Commission used the word "perceived", which suggests that, in their opinion, the teacher education profession is suffering more from an image problem than a status problem. This also suggests, therefore, that the Commission is unlikely to present the case for upgrading the status of teacher educators, a process known as 'professionalization'? The professional model is a series of organizational characteristics that are associated with professions and professionals, and are used to distinguish professional and professionals from other occupations and workers (Hughes, 1965; Vollmer and Mills, 1966; Hall, 1968; Wallace, 1994). The characteristics they identified include:

> rigorous training requirements, positive working conditions, high prestige, substantial authority, relatively high compensation, and an active professional organization or association. From this viewpoint, occupations can be assessed

> according to the degree to which they do or do not exhibit the characteristics of the *professional model*. The "established professions" – law and medicine, in particular – are usually regarded as the strongest examples of the professional model. The process whereby occupations seek to upgrade their professional status by adopting the attributes of the professional model is known as *professionalization*. (Ingersoll et al., 1997, p.3)

On this basis, it would appear, therefore, that rather than moving teacher education closer towards a stronger version of the professional model, EU policymakers are doing the contrary, particularly in terms of "substantial authority" (ibid). The EC (2013) report functions as a policy document as it clearly states that its aim is to "inspire and inform policymakers" (ibid, p.1). Indeed, its influence on policy decisions at a macro level in the European Union is evident, given that it was published in the time frame preceding the *Council Conclusions of 20 May 2014 on effective teacher education* and the key ideas it presents are reflected in the Council conclusions. The *Council conclusions of 20 May 2014 on effective teacher education* does not make any reference to improving the professional status of teacher educators in terms of the characteristics mentioned above, but, instead, once again like the European Commission report (2013), it fosters doubts about their professionalism and it challenges the status of teacher educators as experts. For instance, it proposes that teacher educators be monitored through "quality assurance arrangements and regular reviews" to identify potential deficiencies such as the underachievement of prospective teachers, the provision of inadequate teaching practice experience and the poor teaching skills of teacher educators who are not able to teach the relevant content:

> THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,
>
> AGREES,
>
> Initial teacher education could benefit from quality assurance arrangements and regular reviews, with emphasis being placed on achieving the required learning outcomes, on the quality and adequate duration of practical experience and on ensuring the relevance of what is taught. (p.2, para. 3)

Rather than proposing measures to improve the "substantial authority" of teacher educators, the Council projects negative images of perceived failings in teacher educator professionalism to justify a reduction in teacher educator authority and autonomy. Consequently, it proposes that Member States should advocate that the exclusive responsibility for the design and content of teacher education programmes be removed

from teacher educators themselves and that some or all of the responsibility be given to outside bodies vetted by the European Commission that have the "*experience* and *know-how*" to design "*effective* teacher education programmes" |my own emphasis]:

> THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,
>
> INVITES THE MEMBER STATES, WITH REGARD FOR SUBSIDIARITY, AND INSTITUTIONAL AUTONOMY, AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH NATIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES, TO:
>
> Further explore the potential of enhanced cooperation, partnerships and networking with a broad range of stakeholders in the design of teacher education programmes. (Council Conclusions 2014, p2, para 4)
>
> INVITES THE COMMISSION TO:
>
> Support cooperation with partners, networks and organisations which can offer experience and know-how on designing effective teacher education programmes, in particular initial education programmes" (Council Conclusions, 2014, p.3, para.2)

Apple (2001) also reminds us of other features that are characteristic of neoliberal-based reforms:

> …these reforms have not been notable for their grounding in research findings. Indeed, when research has been used, it has often either served as a rhetoric of justification for preconceived beliefs about the supposed efficacy of markets or regimes of tight accountability or they have been based – as in the case of Chubb and Moe's much publicised work on marketisation – on quite flawed research (Chubb & Moe, 1990; Whitty, 1997). Yet, no matter how radical some of these proposed 'reforms' are and no matter how weak the empirical basis of their support, they have now redefined the terrain of debate of all things educational. (Apple, 2001, p304)

A lack of "grounding in research findings" can certainly be identified in the European Commission report. Despite the fact that the authors state that the report is "underpinned by evidence from academic research" (European Commission, 2013, p.1), no theoretical argumentation or references are advanced to justify making a link between professional identity and commitment, for instance. Even the authors of this report raise concerns about the lack of data and research literature available in the field of teacher education:

> Member States and the profession should have access to comprehensive, relevant information – for example, about what activities and practices seem to work in educating teachers, or what competences are needed in specific contexts. However, *little relevant research has been carried out* and *scant information* is

> available to policymakers and course designers. There is *little empirical evidence* directly concerned with '…the professional learning of this unique group', and *policy documents tend to overlook this issue* (Murray and Harrison, 2008). In particular, *the evidence base in relation to the specific domains of knowledge required by teacher educators is limited.* (European Commission, 2013, p.28) (my own emphasis)

In fact, the coverage of the teacher educator profession in the literature is so limited generally that the book, *The Professional Teacher Educator* (Lunenberg et al., 2014), was written in order to "arrive at a solid overview of what is known" (p2) about "the important work of teacher educators" (p.1). Martinez (2008) also makes this point when he states:

> Little systematic research has been undertaken to inform us about fundamental characteristics of the professional lives of this occupation group – their qualifications, their recruitment, their career pathways into and through the academy, their teaching and research practices, the problems they encounter, or their professional development needs and practices. (Martinez, 2008, p. 35 cited in Lunenberg et al., 2014, p.1)

Undoubtedly, it is disconcerting when research findings that lack grounding are used to describe the teacher educator profession by European policymakers in reports such as this, particularly because "the Council legislates on the basis of proposals submitted by the European Commission."[1] Furthermore, in its book, *Pedagogical Knowledge and the Changing Nature of the Teaching Profession* (2017), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) refers to the points made by the European Commission in its 2013 report to remind readers of the issues focused on, regarding the teacher education profession. (p.114):

> 1 Another, generally overlooked, factor related to variation in opportunities to learn in initial teacher education is teacher educators. According to a report published by the European Commission (2013), teacher educators are key players in improving education quality, but the roles and responsibilities of teacher educators are not well understood. For example, **variation exists in the level of qualifications required of teacher educators** (e.g. Bachelor, Master or PhD), **area of expertise** (e.g. pedagogical or subject-matter experts) or **professional profile** (university lectures, researchers or school teachers). This variation in the "profession" of teacher educator also affects opportunities to learn, not only in initial

[1] http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/council-eu/ page 1 consulted 24/08/2018

teacher education institutions, but also in the provision of professional development.

2 Teacher educators are key to teaching students how to link theory to practice (European Commission, 2013), which, as argued above, is how professional judgements are made. Teacher education is the mechanism through which teachers are trained and inducted into the profession (Berliner, 2004), and it is through these formal learning opportunities that profession-specific knowledge is learned (Kunter et al., 2013). **However**, as **some have argued** (e.g. Révai and Guerriero, this volume), **it is not clear whether the profession's knowledge base is up-to-date** due to the complexity of the knowledge dynamics in the teaching profession. (OECD, p.114)

Again, in paragraph 1, the OECD raises doubts about the professionalism of teacher educators in terms of "variations" in qualifications, area of expertise and professional profile. Although it states that teacher educators are "key" to education in paragraph 2, the authors then use the word "however" to again instil doubt and uncertainty regarding their credentials to have this important role on the basis of the views of "some" scholars. Using the same style of neoliberal discourse as the European Commission, the OECD goes one step further. Not only does it state that the teacher profession lacks professional expertise generally in terms of a "common body of knowledge, practices and skills", and that the "practice of teaching" is "not founded upon validated principles and theories", but it puts forward the view that this explains why initial teacher education is "poor". The authors do not provide any contextualized research findings to illustrate their stance:

> Howsam et al. (1985) classify teaching as a semi-profession because it lacks one of the main identifying characteristics of a full profession: professional expertise. They argue that teaching lacks a common body of knowledge, practices and skills that constitute the basis for professional expertise and decision-making. This is a consequence of the practice of teaching not being founded upon validated principles and theories (…) Importantly, the quality of the preparation of teachers and induction into the profession is poor as a consequence of the absence of a common body of scientific knowledge underpinning professional expertise and transmitted via teacher educators during initial teacher education. (OECD, p.21)

Another strategy used by neoliberalists is "to present itself as a panacea for a fissureless society" (Laclau, 2005, p.78 cited in Clarke, 2012, p.302). It does this by focusing on false dichotomies instead of on "systemic inequalities and structural disadvantages" as "keys to social justice" (Clarke, 2012, p.302). Clarke highlights a speech made by an

education minister, Julia Gillard, which makes this explicit. In a discussion about how to improve the school system in Australia, Gillard rejects the proposition that:

> the only way to debate differential need in our school system is through the prism of the public/private divide … I specifically reject the proposition that every difference in educational attainment in this country is explained by differences in socio-economic status …it should be a rich new debate …of how to measure the needs of the children in each school and each community across this country" (Gillard, 2008, in Clarke, 2012, p.302).

According to Clarke, Gillard's line of argument sets up a false dichotomy because Gillard deliberately focuses on all education issues through the lens of public versus private, disadvantaged versus advantaged, and then presents the argument that everyone should instead focus only on "the needs of the children in each school" which results in the important issues that are recognised as systemic social disadvantages being brushed aside and not even debated. It is very difficult for anyone to argue against "the needs of the children" because of the moral high ground associated with the word 'need', and this creates a consensus that results in depoliticisation:

> Gillard's strategy, evidenced here, of rejecting an antagonistic divide by promoting a consensus around the need to focus on individuals, is a prime example of the depoliticisation that Wendy Brown identifies as endemic to contemporary liberal democracies; such depoliticisation 'involves construing inequality, subordination, marginalization, and social conflict, which all require political analysis and political solutions, as personal and individual, on the one hand, or as natural, religious, or cultural on the other' (2006, p.15). Gillard's consensual position, in urging a focus on 'the needs of the children in each school', resists any acknowledgement of the role of systemic or structural factors, such as social inequality, and hence to disavow the political. (Clarke, 2012, p.302)

In the same way, this report side-steps the debate on possible "systemic or structural factors" (ibid) that affect teacher education and focuses instead upon a false dichotomy to justify the introduction of "legal, regulatory frameworks and quality monitoring on a national level" (European Commission, 2013, p.19). The false dichotomy can be seen in the following extract from the Commission report when it discusses the impact of teacher educator qualifications on the teacher educator recruitment process:

> 1 This situation has given freedom of decision to those in charge of recruiting teacher educators; recruiters **might** thus prioritize **either professional experience or academic qualifications.** In fact, the debate

> on teacher educator competences often focuses on the supposed pre-eminence either of academic and research skills, or of teaching qualifications and experience.
>
> 2 The recognition and validation of a wide range of professional experiences and assets, also linked with informal and non-formal settings, could be extremely important for reinforcing the professional quality and status of different profiles of teacher educators. This **would require** setting up legal, regulatory frameworks and quality monitoring on a national level. It **could** also highlight a prominent role for professional associations, which **could** promote the importance of self-regulation and self-assessment for teacher educators as professionals (Koster and Dengerink, 2008). (European Commission, 2013, pp. 18-19) |my own emphasis]

It is stated that "recruiters might prioritize *either* professional experience *or* academic qualifications" when recruiting teacher educators. In my experience, recruiters examine *both* professional experience *and* academic qualifications when recruiting a teacher educator.

The use of "could" in para.2 signals hypothetical possibility that expresses that there is a conceivable possibility but that it is unlikely whereas the "would require" expresses a high degree of certainty. In other words, there is no doubt that the recognition of professional experience is dependent upon control measures put in place whereas the possibility for self-regulation and self-assessment (autonomy) is highly unlikely for the teacher education profession.

The text refers to a "debate", yet it makes no academic references to the context of such a debate. In addition, the "debate" referred to in the text above is an example of what Gillborn (1997) describes as a discursive strategy which involves the "reconstruction of common-sense". This strategy is characterised by 'plain speaking' and speaking in a language that 'everyone can understand'. According to Gillborn:

> This is a powerful technique. First, it assumes that there are no genuine arguments against the chosen position; any opposing views are thereby positioned as false, insincere or self-serving. Second, the technique presents the speaker as someone brave or honest enough to speak the (previously) unspeakable. Hence, the moral high ground is assumed and opponents are further denigrated. (Gillborn, 1997, p.353 cited in Apple, 2001, p.303)

By remaining quite general and not making any specific academic references to add weight to their position in this "debate" suggests that their stance can be openly

understood as 'fact' and 'common-sense' and therefore needs no justification. In addition, there is no discursive space opened up to consider the arguments in this "debate", which in effect closes the debate. Consequently, the EC is able to present the uncomfortable 'truth' of 'what is *really* going on' in "this situation" in which "minimum qualifications may be lacking or under debate" in most of the countries surveyed (European Commission, 2013, p.19). From this, the EC then arrives at a categoric conclusion, signalled by "thus" (p.19), that denounces recruiters as systematically prioritizing "either professional experience or academic qualifications" (p.19). Once again, the justification for such a conclusion is not supported by any factual evidence or data and is a false dichotomy because anybody who has ever been involved in recruiting teacher educators is well aware that the selection of a candidate is never based on such 'either/or' criteria.

The discursive move to start the next sentence with "in fact" is intended to promote the EC as a credible figure of authority and so removes the need for the EC to legitimize its argumentation with theoretical data or grounding. These elements being brought together in one text has the effect of convincing the reader that the teacher education process is inherently inadequate, and that the European Commission is in essence a truth-bearer as it has established the 'moral high ground' in speaking the "unspeakable" (Apple, 2001, p.303). This image is reinforced by the strong contrast with teacher educator recruiters who are represented as incapable and misled given that they focus on "the supposed pre-eminence either of academic and research skills, or of teaching qualifications and experience" (European Commission, 2013, p.19) instead of what they should be focusing on: "teacher educator competences" (p.19). The European Commission is indeed using the "powerful technique" highlighted earlier by Gillborn (1997, p.353) because not only do they manage to present teacher educator recruiters as influenced by ill-founded arguments through the creation of this 'either…or' false dichotomy, but this technique enables them to imply that teacher educators are not able to make the 'right choice' when recruiting and are therefore incompetent. The European Commission sets itself up as legitimate in suggesting that the 'only' way forward out of this predicament is to create "legal, regulatory frameworks and quality monitoring on a national level" (ibid.) which ultimately takes the "freedom of decision" out of the hands of local teacher educator

recruiters. Pointing the finger at individuals for failings in an education system is a neoliberal discourse mechanism that Apple (1996) explains is used to shift "the blame for the very evident inequalities in access and outcome it has promised to reduce, from itself on to individual schools, parents, and children" (Apple, 1996, p.310).

It would seem therefore that this is the same mechanism that EU policymakers appear to be adopting in the discourse of the European Commission report (European Commission, 2013), when teacher educators, or, in the example above, those who recruit them, are being held responsible for 'supposed' issues of quality of teacher educators in the EU. Focusing on individuals or isolated groups is also an example of discourse which "works to disavow the political" (Clarke, 2012, p.302) and leaves the teacher educator profession in a very vulnerable position with little or no voice. This is of concern especially as "it is important that teacher educators are able to function at a high professional level" (Lunenberg, 2014, p.1) given their importance in the education system. Without a voice, there is no influence.

Until recent times, teacher educators have, it seems, escaped the scrutiny of policymakers, which means that they have managed to sidestep the worst excesses of neoliberalism unlike other teaching professionals, as illustrated by Sachs (2001), who explains that recent reforms involving devolution and marketization have resulted in paradoxes about teaching as a profession and the professional identity and professional development of teachers. Although Sachs is not specifically referring to teacher educators, it can be assumed that given that teacher educators are part of the teaching profession and are now being targeted by neoliberal policies, this group of teaching professionals is equally likely to face the same paradoxes that their classroom colleagues have experienced:

> First, is that the call for teacher professionalism related to a revisioning of occupational identity is occurring at a time when there is evidence that teachers are being deskilled and their work is intensified. Second, is that while it is acknowledged that rethinking classroom practice is exceptionally demanding, fewer resources are being allocated to teacher learning. Third, the teaching profession is being exhorted to be autonomous while at the same time it is under increasing pressure from politicians and the community to be more accountable and to maintain standards. (Sachs, 2001, p.150)

As a teacher educator myself, I did not recognize the image painted of the teacher education profession by EU policymakers in their documentation or in their policy decisions, particularly regarding the professional standards, values or commitment of teacher educators. On closer examination of the text, it is disturbing that the restructuring of teacher education proposed by the *Council conclusions of 20 May 2014 on effective teacher education* has far-reaching implications for all EU teacher educators across Europe, yet those conclusions, as mentioned earlier, are based on "evidence" that does not include any data drawn from EU education systems such as England, France and Scotland.

This is made all the more difficult when such reports lack the theoretical grounding and data to justify the assumptions and conclusions that are drawn. The mismatch between the image that the European Commission projects of teacher educator professionalism in the EU through their discourse and the reality on the ground is a consequence of competing views about the nature of teacher educator professionalism.

5.1.3 Scottish National Framework for languages

The discourse analysis in the section above demonstrates that the EU policy is aligned to the neoliberal agenda. A study of both EU policy documents and EU legislation highlights the paradoxical and incongruous discourse regarding (i) EU political ambitions to improve early language learning alongside (ii) its criticisms directed against EU teacher educators in terms of their commitment, professional values and standards.

The Scottish education system was not included in the data compiled for the European Commission report, *Supporting Teacher Educators for better learning outcomes* (European Commission, 2013) and this omission therefore justifies inclusion of Scottish data in this study in order to offset a lack of representativity of teacher educators from education systems such as Scotland in the European Commission document. The documents are analysed in opposition. The aim is to identify whether the specific charges made against teacher educators in the European Commission document mentioned above stand up or not to critical scrutiny.

Documents studied:

- *Pedagogical Knowledge and the Changing Nature of the Teaching Profession, (*the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2017)
- *Supporting Teacher Educators for better learning outcomes* (European Commission, 2013)
- *Teacher National Framework for languages: plurilingualism and pluriliteracies* (Scottish Council of Deans of Education Languages Group, 2017).

Analysis 1

1 Because of their strong influence on the competence and lifelong learning of teachers, it is important for teacher educators to be conscious of the importance of their role, and to work together effectively at all stages of the continuum of professional development. (European Commission, 2013, p.9)

2 The SCDE Languages Group initiative began in 2015. Its remit was to support the Scottish Government 1 + 2 Languages Policy by promoting the crucial role and contribution of teacher education in creating the conditions in which every child in Scotland **will** learn two languages in addition to their mother tongue (SCDE Languages Group, 2017, p.3)

Commentary

The European Commission insists in text 1 on EU teacher educators being conscious of the importance of their role. However, it is clear that the SCDE Languages group are fully aware of how important they are because they qualify their role as “crucial”. In addition, they take full responsibility for education because they indicate that they intend to create the conditions necessary so that **all** children benefit from the 1+2 Languages Policy, “every child in Scotland”. Most importantly, they use the high epistemic probability linked with the word “will” to express certainty about the outcome. This statement illustrates the commitment of Scottish MFL teacher educators collectively as they express a ‘conscious choice’ to care about and dedicate themselves to the children of Scotland’s language learning, which corresponds with the definition of commitment (Klein et al., 2012).

Analysis 2

3 Effective cooperation requires common values for the profession and a shared responsibility for high quality teacher education. (European Commission, 2013, p.9)

4 The SCDE Languages Group focuses on the role of educators and represents Schools of Education across Scottish Universities for all language learning, including (but not limited to) modern languages, EAL, heritage languages, Gaelic, Gàidhlig, BSL and other signed languages. (SCDE Languages Group, 2017, p.3)

Commentary

Bearing in mind the fact that the SCDE Languages Group represents Schools of Education **across** Scottish Universities, it promotes **all** languages. The fact that the initiative has the financial backing of seven local authorities is an important point because funding does lend initiatives such as this much more probability for long-term success. In addition, the fact that the teacher educators represent Schools of Education across Scotland clearly demonstrates great cooperation between the Scottish educators, their shared responsibility and also their values of "mutual trust and respect" (SCDE Languages Group, 2017, p.7).

Analysis 3

5 The recognition and validation of a wide range of professional experiences and assets, also linked with informal and non-formal settings, could be extremely important for reinforcing the professional quality and status of different profiles of teacher educators. This would require setting up legal, regulatory frameworks and quality monitoring on a national level. It could also highlight a prominent role for professional associations, which could promote the importance of self-regulation and self-assessment for teacher educators as professionals (Koster and Dengerink, 2008). (European Commission, 2013, pp. 18-19) [my own emphasis]

6 The second part of LEAP consists of a series of reflective questions. These reflective questions aim to complement the statements in the NFfL and are organised according to the same three strands: Professional Values and Commitment, Professional Knowledge and Understanding, and Professional Skills and Abilities. The reflective questions are intended to guide educational professionals in considering their own practices and

could be used in conjunction with individual priorities for CLPD[1] and the GTC(S) Professional update[2]. (SCDE Languages Group, 2017, p.10

Commentary

As discussed earlier on analysis of text 5, the use of "could" (hypothetical possibility) in the European Commission document signals that self-regulation and self-assessment (autonomy) is highly unlikely for the teacher education profession; yet, it can be seen that the SCDE Languages Group have anticipated this need and integrated CLPD and the GTC Professional update into their framework. This not only indicates their forethought, but this also illustrates that they value the principle of CLPD and encourage reflective questions related to practice.

Analysis 4

9 Importantly, the **quality of the preparation of teachers** and **induction into the profession is poor** as a consequence of the **absence of a common body of scientific knowledge** underpinning professional **expertise** and transmitted via teacher educators during initial teacher education. (OECD, 2017, p.21)

10 Professional Knowledge and Understanding Curriculum – building an awareness and understanding of the curriculum and planning for transformative practices

Understand how languages are learned in different contexts; Understand the role of languages and literacies for learning; Foster positive attitudes towards all languages and cultures; Plan for teaching and learning which supports change and development within the curriculum; Know how language and language learning can be integrated within and across the curriculum; Know how to include a variety of resources, including digital and online tools, to promote language and language related skills and understanding

[1] Career Long Professional Development (CLPD) is the ongoing learning and development of teachers throughout their careers. All teachers in Scotland have a contractual commitment to undertake 35 hours of CPD per year.
http://www.gtcs.org.uk/professional-standards/standard-for-career-long-professional-learning.aspx

[2] Professional Update was launched by GTC Scotland in August 2014 for all fully registered teachers. Teachers in Scotland are required to engage in professional learning, self-evaluate this learning using the GTC Scotland Professional Standards, and maintain a record of this learning using their online profile on MyGTCS (or another system agreed by their local authority). The Professional Review and Development (PRD) discussion is also an integral part of the process. Every five years confirmation of this engagement is required by the teacher and their line manager in order to maintain full registration.
http://www.gtcs.org.uk/professional-update/professional-update.aspx

> Education systems and professional responsibilities – understanding the education systems and professional responsibilities within the wider learning community
>
> Develop teaching practices which support intercultural awareness across the curriculum; Understand and apply underlying theories to guide transformative practices and promote plurilingualism and pluriliteracies; Draw on linguistic resources which further learning within the wider community;
>
> Pedagogical theories and practice – developing and extending a knowledge base of educational principles and theories to develop transformative practices
>
> Consider the social, cultural and linguistic backgrounds of pupils in planning for transformative classroom practices; Engage (critically) with educational research to further guide, develop and sustain transformative teaching practices; Link transformative practices to current educational priorities; Understand how language learning and using supports individual needs (cognitive, emotional, social and physical). (SCDE Languages Group, 2017, p.3)

Commentary

Text 10 is rather long; however, I believe that the whole text should be included in this analysis because of the magnitude of the criticism against EU teacher educators: 'poor' quality of preparation and induction of teachers into the profession, 'absence of a common body of scientific knowledge underpinning professional expertise' which suggests that teacher educators do not in fact possess expertise. As can be seen in text 10, the SCDE Languages Group make explicit that the teacher education profession does indeed have "a common body of scientific knowledge underpinning professional expertise" not only in terms of professional knowledge but also as far as subject content knowledge, pedagogy and pedagogical content knowledge is concerned.

5.1.4 Conclusion to this section

The objective of analysing the National Framework for languages: plurilingualism and pluriliteracies published by the Scottish Council of Deans of Education Languages Group was, on the one hand, to identify whether the position of the European Commission was justified in its critical stance towards EU teacher educators and identify discourse that illustrates the qualities that EU policymakers state are lacking in these professionals, but I

also aimed to identify whether, on a macro scale, it could be argued that Scottish teacher educators demonstrate commitment to MFL. The NFfL does not specifically mention early language learning but, given that it aims to promote the crucial role and contribution of teacher educators in creating the conditions in which **every** child will learn two languages, primary children are implicitly concerned by this framework. The Scottish MFL teacher educators, through the setting up of this framework, demonstrate an extremely high level of commitment to language learning in Scotland, particularly as this was done in their own free time and of their own volition.

5.2 Interviews

5.2.1 Introduction

As a reminder of what was outlined in chapter 4, the interviews with the English and French participants took place either at the Schools of Education or, in one French participant's case (Anne), at her home. Although I would have preferred to have conducted the interviews with the Scottish participants in identical conditions, it was unfortunately not possible because of the geographical distance involved and time constraints. However, despite this, after having carried out the interviews in different contexts I do not believe that this had a great impact on interview content. I found that I had the undivided attention of all the participants irrespective of the context. I believe that this was because I had the position of insider-researcher. Firstly, owing to the fact that I was recognised by the participants as a primary MFL teacher educator who had an advanced level of knowledge of the issues affecting primary MFL teacher educators generally, I was accepted with confidence despite the fact that I did not know most of the participants prior to this study. Secondly, each of the participants was aware that my research was for a doctoral study and, consequently, the participants expressed their beliefs, feelings, knowledge, expertise and concerns about primary MFL in the knowledge that their discourse would be voiced in this thesis and hopefully listened to by a wider public. This particular situation also meant that the "halo effect" (Mackey and Gass, 2005, p.174) was avoided, where participants say what they believe the researcher wants to hear. However, I was also aware that by informing the participants that I was investigating the theme of MFL teacher educator commitment, then I might possibly run the risk of the participants 'selling' themselves in an effort to create a positive impression of the profession. So, instead, I remained as vague as I could about my research question. It is for this reason that I recognise language content as discourse, because discourse is generated when you put "language and context together" (Bartlett, 2014, p.3). It is very likely that it was this particular context as an insider-researcher more than the actual physical conditions under which the interview was conducted that played a greater role in the type of interview data generated, because, as Bartlett goes on to explain:

> all language is performative (Baumann and Briggs, 1990) and that the effect of the performance does not reside in the language used alone but is the result of a range of social and cultural factors with which the language used makes connections. In other words, it is perhaps better to think of power as being realized through language rather than as residing in language. This means that we need to look at more than language itself in order to discuss its powerful effects, to consider what it is that is being performed and whether the performance is successful (powerful) or not. (Bartlett, 2014, p.2)

The interviews took place between 17th June 2016 and 26th June 2017. According to the principles of a case study approach, the participants in England and Scotland work in the same geographical region in their education system under very similar conditions; however, they do not work together in the same School of Education. In the case of France, the participants all work in the same ESPE but on different sites. Because of the small number of MFL teacher educators in each education system, I have given them pseudonyms to protect confidentiality for ethical reasons and the full transcripts in the appendices will not be available on line. I have also given pseudonyms to the other participants in this study for the same reasons. I interviewed a teacher educator as a pilot study to test the interview protocol as well as two other individuals who contribute to this study for triangulation purposes. One is a primary MFL teacher educator who works in the French system but is English and is therefore not characteristic of a 'typical' teacher educator in the French system. The other participant is a French lecturer of English at a French university who has no experience of teacher education at all. Part of the interview involved watching a primary student teaching English to his pupils during his probationary year. Each time a participant enters the discussion I put the education system of origin in brackets next to the initials. Below are their pseudonyms, the abbreviation of this name to the first two letters used in the transcriptions followed by the highest qualification they have obtained:

<u>MFL teacher educator participants</u>

England (Eng)

Philippa (PH) – PhD

Rebecca (RE) – PhD

Kate (KA) – Master

Scotland (Scot)

Chris (CH) – PhD

France (FR)

Anne (AN) – Agrégation

Marie-Louise (MA) – PhD

Sarah (SA) – CAPES

Jackie (JA) – Master (PhD student)

Lottie (LO) – PhD

Pilot study

MFL teacher educator: Abbie (AB) – PhD

Primary student teacher

Kevin

Triangulation

Primary MFL teacher educator (English) working in France: Alison (AL)

IHE English lecturer working in France: Rachel (RA)

5.2.2 Presentation of results – structure and hypotheses

As a reminder, the research question which guides this study is as follows:

How do Modern Foreign Language teacher educators demonstrate their commitment to primary foreign language teacher education in the education systems of England, France and Scotland despite the challenges they face in their work with primary MFL student teachers?

And the sub-questions which emanate from this overarching research question are:

1. *What personal contribution do they believe they make to primary MFL teacher education in terms of their professional standards, values and expertise?*
2. *What obstacles do they face in the course of their professional lives in achieving their goals?*
3. *What efforts do they make to achieve their goals and how successful do they believe they are on an individual level and collective level?*

In response to the three research sub-questions, I propose the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1

I expect to find parallels among the English, French and Scottish MFL teacher educators in their respective education systems in the way that they cognitively and affectively (beliefs and feelings) perceive primary foreign language teacher

> education in their local context and national context: they have made a conscious choice to care about, take responsibility for and dedicate themselves to primary foreign language teacher education in their respective education systems.

Hypothesis 2

> I expect to find that English, French and Scottish MFL teacher educators experience obstacles posed by neoliberal language policy measures that oppose, conflict or contradict the professional standards and values they hold and prevent them from doing what they believe and feel they need to do as primary MFL teacher educator professionals.
>
> However, when they are challenged by obstacles posed by language policy measures that oppose, conflict or contradict the professional standards and values they hold and prevent them from doing what they believe and feel they need to do as primary MFL teacher educator professionals, they experience a reduced sense of self-efficacy and collective efficacy in their contribution towards primary MFL teacher educator provision.

Hypothesis 3

> I expect to find that English, French and Scottish MFL teacher educators demonstrate continuance (effort to continue and 'stick at it') and engagement (sense of responsibility and duty – willingness to expend time and energy) and motivation (self-efficacy and collective efficacy) as outcomes of commitment.

This part of the chapter, which deals with the results of the interviews, is divided into three sections. Each section corresponds to the three hypotheses formulated above. Each section discusses evidence (see appendice 1: Hypotheses – dimensions and constructs) which, following the process model of commitment (Figure 5), demonstrates the various aspects of commitment as experienced and expressed by the participants: immediate determinants of the formation of a commitment bond, commitment outcomes such as continuation, motivation and engagement. A distal outcome of commitment is performance; however, this outcome is beyond the parameters of this research. The second section does not focus on the process model of commitment as it is concerned with the obstacles that the participants face as a consequence of neoliberal policies.

5.2.3 Contribution - professional standards, values and expertise

The immediate determinants of the formation of a commitment bond involve affective and cognitive perceptual evaluations. An individual will have great difficulty committing

themselves to a target if they do not care about it or believe that they can contribute anything to it (affect, target salience, trust and perceived control).

Commitment to teaching is stronger when teachers experience care for children's learning, their own learning and their subject, MFL. Indications that education and languages are valued and that there is empathy and sympathy for learners and student teachers as they develop their teaching skills, as well as qualities such as understanding, patience and tolerance, are all examples of positive affect. So, I will therefore look for evidence of a general disposition of positive affect towards teaching, MFL and teaching MFL to young children in the first part of this section; however, I will also expect to find evidence of negative affect which also demonstrates commitment: frustration, anger and sadness when things go wrong/not to plan or when individuals or what they value (such as children and their learning, MFL, teaching) are threatened. In terms of cognitive perception, I expect to find evidence of a belief in the value of MFL for children and society, e.g. cultural openness, humanistic values, cognitive awareness, self-assurance, etc, and a belief that the participants believe that they can contribute to achieving these goals thanks to their expertise based on knowledge, research and experience to improve primary MFL at school.

Then, in the second part of this first section, I specifically present evidence of participants' expertise as second-order teachers of MFL when they comment on Kevin's teaching in the primary classroom. This expertise reflects an on-going long-term commitment to primary MFL and is a culmination of years of dedication and effort undertaken by the participants to develop and extend their subject knowledge in MFL as well as their pedagogical content knowledge expertise (PCK) as MFL teacher educators through study and experience.

5.2.3.1 Love for teaching, children's learning and MFL

Vocation to teach

Marie-Louise explains that her main motivation for entering the teaching profession was based on the fact that, first and foremost, she wanted to teach. She does not believe that

individuals who are good at languages will more interested in pursuing careers at university, in translation or in the business world rather than teaching MFL at school:

> **MA83 (France)** Yes, but I don't think it's because you are good at languages that you decide to teach at this or that level. It's because you are motivated for teaching because I could have, I think, I don't think so but I could have become any sort of teacher. When I was in *terminale* or in *première* and I had to decide what sort of studies I wanted to do. My father and I discussed about teaching a discipline and really I varied between history and geography, French or English and later on because I learnt a little bit of Spanish I thought oh I should become a Spanish teacher because what interests me is teaching – I love language teaching obviously but it's teaching. I wanted to teach and I happened to be good at languages.

She explains that she could have just as easily taught a subject such as history or geography rather than English, and was, at one point, tempted to choose Spanish instead of English. She believes that people enter the profession because they have a vocation for teaching. She thinks that wanting to teach is far more influential than being good at a subject. She does not even think that salary is a primary concern as she states a little later on that: "they don't come into teaching for money. No, no – it's a vocation" (MA85). This contradicts the assertion in the European Commission report (2013). Research carried out by Dr Francesca Caena 2012) (who also happens to be the European Commission's consultant for this report) found that:

> The perceived low status of university teacher educators tends to drive many promising teacher educators away from the profession, towards subject specific academic research – this seems to be the case in one third of countries in the cited survey (Caena, 2012). (European Commission, 2013, p.13)

It is also unlikely, however, that Marie-Louise would have chosen to teach English had she not demonstrated talent in that language because had she not "happened to be good at languages" her choice of teaching subject would have been compromised. It is interesting that Marie-Louise hesitates when she evokes the sort of teacher she could have potentially become: "I could have, I think, *I don't think so but* I could have become any sort of teacher". This hesitation, I believe, reveals her understanding that she had in theory many options but that in retrospect the final decision to become an English teacher was anchored in her passion to study this language over any other language or subject. What distinguishes languages from other subjects?

Rebecca explains what she considers differentiates languages from other subjects at school:

> **RE39 (England)** Yes, that's it and I think languages are a bit different and sit outside the rest of the curriculum and I think children sense that as well – that it's not like geography or it's not like history or PE – it's totally different because it's so closely bound up with your identity and your being, you know. And I think that teachers instinctively understood that, you know, Kevin understood that it was about expressing yourself, it's about communicating with the shopkeeper, it's about artistic connections with storytelling. He understood the human dimensions of language and wanted that in his lesson, which I thought was really great to see because I think when it goes wrong it is when you just do grammar because it's in the exam, the human dimension is taken away and it becomes completely meaningless.

Not only does Rebecca identify the intrinsic value of languages to education, as discussed earlier on page (?), and how this contributes to a child's literary culture through "storytelling", but she also points to the "human dimension" of languages that is absent in other subjects such as history because through languages we touch upon our "identity" and our very own "being". She praises Kevin because he tried to introduce the "human dimension" into his English lesson through the shop role play he set up and the story he told, unlike other teachers who resort to teaching "grammar because it's in the exam". Grammar teaching at primary school is an issue for Rebecca because such an approach is "disembedded from the social context" (Block and Gray, 2015, p.2) and lacks the human dimension that is so important for a child if you wish that child to learn the language. Kramsch (1998) explains that "languages symbolize cultural reality" (p.3). She states that the sociocultural context of language study involves two layers of culture combined: "the social (synchronic) and the historical (diachronic)"; however, she goes on to say that there is a third "essential layer to culture, namely, the imagination" (Kramsch, 1998, p.8). She explains that not only do "facts and artifacts" characterize discourse communities, but they are also characterised by "common dreams, fulfilled and unfilled imaginings. These imaginings are mediated through language (…) Thus the city of London is inseparable, in the cultural imagination of its citizens, from Shakespeare and Dickens" (ibid). Language, says Kramsch, is linked therefore "not only to the culture that is and the culture that was, but also to the culture of the imagination that governs people's decisions and actions far

more than we may think" (ibid). In addition, people define themselves as part of a culture and in so doing they establish a social identity as an insider. The difficulty resides in the fact that primary children have not yet built up an awareness or extensive knowledge of their own culture and for this reason it is very difficult for them to "imagine" another world, or culture. It was thanks to her doctoral studies that Marie-Louise understood why this was the case. She first explains that she had wanted to understand why young people in higher education were having so many problems learning English and appeared to have been "traumatised" by the whole experience despite having learnt English at primary school:

> **MA45 (France)** So, I decided to go back to the beginning and this is why I did my thesis on primary teaching. So, when I started doing this, I was absolutely convinced that learning the language at an early stage was an advantage because first you are open – I'm not talking about all the phonological aspects but as far as the psychology is concerned. I thought children had no ... *ils n'avaient pas de peur du ridicule, de peur de ne pas comprendre, de peur de ne pas être compris*. If you put two 5-year-old children on the same beach and they don't speak the same language, they will communicate and they are not afraid to talk or to communicate with someone who does not speak their language.
>
> **NL45** Okay!
>
> **MA46** I thought this psychological aspect was an advantage and a great asset in learning a language at an early stage. What was the other? Yes, I talked about the phonological aspect… later on, as I continued researching about language learning in the primary school, I came across very good teachers, primary teachers who were, I would say, specialists in language teaching and were very successful at that. And then the Ministry decided to teach the language in CE1 and then CP. The same teachers who had been very successful with CM1-CM2, were at a loss with the results. I went to see them and I knew lots of them. At Christmas time, for example, they would say: "they haven't learnt anything! I have done lots of things and it used to work with CM1-CM2 but it doesn't work with them, and I don't know why."

Marie-Louise was confronted with a challenge. In theory, there was no reason why the younger children in CP and CE1 were experiencing greater difficulty than the CM1 and CM2 at English because research suggested that provided the children had good teachers (which was the case) then they would have the psychological and phonological advantage over the older children at the top end of primary school. She was very perplexed by this and began to read the literature concerning culture and identity:

MA47 This is why I started studying that these stages – which were very early – to understand why it wasn't successful for these teachers by starting from the point of view of the teacher. So, I started reading about the development of the child from a psychological point of view. I read Piaget, I read Vygotsky, I read Bruner and I realised that this problem of identity that I was talking about earlier was real – *c'était vraiment une pierre d'achoppement pour l'apprentissage de la langue étrangère* – because their identity is not fixed. It's in the making, and it's still a question because I have no answer to it. But my question is: how can they manage to build their identity in the French environment – in our case – as well as building a fake identity into the foreign language that is being taught to them?

Marie-Louise admits that she does not have the solution but clearly the "problem of identity" is a concern which goes to the very heart of language learning at primary school. It is important that the teachers bear this aspect in mind and, consequently, the shop activity carried out in video clip 2 which corresponds to the 'social' layer of culture, and the story of the Hungry Caterpillar which relates to the layer of 'cultural imagination', are welcomed by the teacher educators in this study as an attempt by Kevin to address the "ideas and systems of thought" in language learning rather than just teaching the words or grammar which result in it all going "wrong". As Marie-Louise points out in MA51 such teachers are "missing the point":

MA51 (Fr) (…) But it shows that the language has to exist within a social or a cultural environment, otherwise it doesn't exist. This is why when I see these teachers who are really language-based they are missing the point, because language is not only words – it's ideas and systems of thought.

Value of theory: From pedagogical flair to expertise

In many ways, it was the love of teaching and a deep-seated desire to understand how best to help children learn a language which inspired Marie-Louise to become a teacher, but ironically it was through the process by which she became a teacher educator that she managed to understand why she loved teaching, why she was good at it and the conditions necessary for effective learning. This in itself was a discovery:

NL61 What do you think is the difference between you as a teacher educator and you as a teacher in a high school?

MA62 It's completely different! You don't look at learning in the same way. I mean, I must be honest… I discovered that I sometimes – not all the time *tout ce que j'ai ... tout ce que j'ai supposé ... tout ce que j'ai fait de manière instinctive* – was justified when I became a teacher educator. When I read about what

> learning is about – I was glad because most of the time I had made the right choices because I thought deeply about what … about how to teach, about how to make them learn but I had no theoretical background so I discovered it all late in life. So, I wouldn't have discovered it if I hadn't become a teacher educator because I had never been trained. When I started being a teacher we just were put into classes and we had to teach and that's all. I mean we had very good tutors … erm … sometimes good and sometimes not so good but they were okay and they gave us recipes but they never told us why these recipes worked and this is what I discovered, I must say at around the age of 45.

As a classroom teacher, Marie-Louise clearly aimed to improve her classroom practice through reflective thinking but she recognises with hindsight that what hindered her progress was a lack of theoretical background. She also recognises that it was the theoretical knowledge she acquired through research that helped her understand why she could trust her intuition: *"tout ce que j'ai ... tout ce que j'ai supposé ... tout ce que j'ai fait de manière instinctive* – was justified".

Although Marie-Louise was already conscious that she was an effective classroom teacher thanks to her "intuition", her active involvement in research as a teacher educator enabled her to understand why she had been so successful and hence comprehend "why the recipes worked", information which had previous eluded her. Marie-Louise refers to her experience of being thrown in the deep end as a teacher at the start of her career: "we just were put into classes and we had to teach and that's all". Although, she has had a career stretching over 40 years, the situation has not changed very much today as those people who pass the competitive teaching exam still find themselves in front of a class of primary or secondary pupils in September without having had any training whatsoever.

On asking Marie-Louise whether it was research or her colleagues that had made the greatest contribution to helping her understand why the recipes worked, she considers that it was thanks to theory:

> **MA64** Yes, because I had a huge experience. I had taught already for about 30 years or perhaps a bit less when I decided to do this thesis so what I lacked was really a theoretical background which I didn't have at all. I did my DEA on a different subject – it wasn't at all about learning. And when I did my thesis I had a huge theoretical part in the thesis and somebody in the jury reproached me with having put things that were not really useful for the thesis and I said yes, it is true … probably true but I didn't realise it at the time but it was probably true but I had so many things to learn that you know I really went to the basics. A

> PhD is valued by the university but having a PhD is not necessary to teach at the ESPE, you know; however, the thesis was part of that process of learning.
>
> **NL64** It was a process to you then?
>
> **MA65** It was a process – it was a process. And the president of my jury who was X – a marvellous man said "it was so interesting what you said that you had to learn". But it was true – I learnt! I learnt a lot! And my father who was retired at the time when I did my thesis came to see me in the classes where I was experimenting and when he left, he said I have – "*j'ai raté ma vie d'enseignant*," he said. He was an excellent teacher and my mother too, she was an English teacher, but my father was an excellent teacher and he said, "*j'ai raté ma vie parce que ce que tu m'a montré – je l'aurais jamais fait – je n'y aurais jamais pensé*".

Marie-Louise's father was indeed an "excellent teacher" yet he understood from watching his daughter that there was something missing in his development as a teacher. Berliner (1995, p.47-48) refers to the five stages that are experienced when individuals move from novice to expert: novice level, advanced beginner level, competent level, proficient level and expert level (pp.47-48). It is likely that before Marie-Louise embarked on the process of accumulating knowledge and understanding of language learning and teaching theory, she and her father were at stage 4 – the proficient level – given the "huge experience" they had both accumulated as teachers in the classroom. It appears that they were at the stage where:

> (…) intuition or know-how becomes prominent. To use an analogy, at some point in learning a dance step, individuals no longer think about the kinds of adjustments needed; they stop counting their steps to keep time to the music, and develop a more "intuitive" sense of the situation. Furthermore, out of the wealth of experience that the proficient individuals have accumulated comes a holistic way of viewing the situations they encounter. They recognize similarities among events that the novice fails to see. For example, the proficient teacher may notice, without conscious effort, that today's mathematics lesson is faltering for the same reason that last week's spelling lesson failed. At some higher level of pattern categorization, the similarities between disparate events are understood. This holistic recognition of patterns as similar allows the proficient individual to predict events more precisely, since they see more things as alike and as having been experienced before. (Berliner, 1995, p.48)

This shift from novice to expert involved a desire to evolve and take responsibility for her own development but also a concerted effort to do a PhD in her own time. It is this step that Marie-Louise's father failed to take and which he regrets on witnessing the expert level of his daughter 'in action'. Marie-Louise is not alone in this respect as most of the

teacher educators in this study have sought to excel in their domain either through academic studies (PhD or Master) or through reading academic articles as in the case of Anne:

> **AN5 (France)** *On était sur tout. On allait avec lui dans les lycées et les collèges pour porter la bonne parole ... telle ou telle réforme ... telle ou telle pratique et tout, tout, tout. Et ce n'est pas l'université ... ce n'est pas l'université qui m'avait appris quoi que ce soit en termes de didactique. J'ai tout appris par ce praticien qui était inspecteur. Je me souviens que la première chose qu'il m'a dite ... il faut à tout prix que vous vous abonniez à l'APLV et vous allez lire, vous allez lire et vous allez lire. C'était quelqu'un de très pratique. Voilà donc en quoi j'ai été formée à être formateur. (...)*

Anne insists that she acquired her knowledge from what she had read in the *Langues Modernes*[1], a journal published by the APLV[2] (Association des Professeurs de Langues Vivantes). Although, she did not sit an academic qualification like Marie-Louise, Rebecca, Philippa, Jackie, Chris, Lottie and Kate, she also experienced the same intuition that Marie-Louise describes in AN10 which indicates that a teacher has progressed to a level of proficiency: "*[e]t au début, j'étais super bon prof mais pourquoi ? Je ne sais pas ... c'était intuitif. Je n'étais pas formée mais j'y suis arrivée sans problème ... c'était intuitif*". However, the inspector who himself was committed to his team of teacher educators understood this and therefore insisted on them acquiring the "theoretical underpinnings" through reading the academic journal, *Les Langues Modernes*, a journal which publishes articles by the whole teaching community. Although Anne insists that her own experience as a classroom teacher and as a school-based teacher educator "*tutrice*", she believes that a good teacher educator is a person who can step back from their own teaching practice and apply theory when evaluating a pedagogical situation. On asking Anne what she considers what makes a good teacher educator, this is what she said:

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[1] *Les Langues Modernes* is the journal of the APLV. It publishes articles on language teaching in general, applied linguistics in the domain of language teaching, language didactics, language policies and so on. Website: https://www.aplv-languesmodernes.org/spip.php?rubrique4

2 The APLV is an association for teachers of MFL set up over a century ago. Its general aims include: the promotion of a balance between communicational, cultural and educational objectives in language teaching; better theoretical and practical training, initial and continuous, of all language teachers; higher status and recognition of examinations and qualifications in MFL and better teaching conditions for MFL teachers. Website: https://www.aplv-languesmodernes.org/

AN10 (France) Les *qualités ? C'est … la prise de distance face à la pratique, c'est-à-dire, que je connais d'excellents professeurs mais qui ne peuvent pas être formateurs qui n'ont jamais ou ne peuvent pas ou veulent pas se distancier par rapport à cet objet qui est leur pratique. Moi, j'ai appris ça avec cet inspecteur, j'ai appris ça par mes lectures et j'ai appris ça aussi et de façon égale par le fait que dès que j'ai été professeur, j'étais tutrice. Et j'y étais confrontée, quelquefois j'avais deux ou trois stagiaires dans l'année et, les stagiaires, ils sont toujours dans le « pourquoi ? Mais pourquoi ? Mais pourquoi ? » Et au début, j'étais super bon prof mais pourquoi ? Je ne sais pas … c'était intuitif. Je n'étais pas formée mais j'y suis arrivée sans problème … c'était intuitif. Et c'est ce « pourquoi » qui m'a fait avancer. Donc, voilà, s'il n'y a pas le pourquoi, s'il n'y a pas cette fameuse pratique réflexive, il n'y a pas donc de bon formateur*.

For Anne, the most important question a teacher should ask is 'why' because it is this which enables a teacher to develop and progress: *"[e]t c'est ce « pourquoi » qui m'a fait avancer*".

Cooperation and collaboration

Marie-Louise does not negate the importance of her colleagues in terms of her development of professional expertise; on the contrary, she believes her colleagues make all the difference to her working life particularly when she faces a challenge. She knows that she can rely on her colleagues for answers whenever she is faced with an issue or a dilemma that she cannot resolve. They are a source of knowledge and expertise that she can rely on not just for emotional support or in terms of the day-to-day administrative organisation for work but because they "educated". I asked Marie-Louise what she does when she faces a problem or an issue and her first reaction was to say that she asks her colleagues. I was curious to know whether that was sufficient and whether she manages to deal with the problem by simply turning to her colleagues and she said that it does:

MA70 (France) It does – it does! Generally, I ask my colleagues in the teacher training centre. They know what they are talking about too. So, in general … no, it's not in general …it's every time. I find answers through – sometimes not directly – because they give me the answer most of the time through discussions and having an outside point of view.

NL70 So, you would say this is very important for you – if suddenly you didn't have that?

MA71 Oh, I would miss it very much! It's very important for me. I've always tried to share with other teachers. I'm not … I'm not – I say as a joke: 'I'm an individual who likes working in groups' (laughs). I'm an individualist who likes

> working in groups – and it is true – it is true. I like human contact and I think we can learn so much from other people especially from people who are … who are educated.

Indeed, according to Eaude (2012), Marie-Louise's belief that she can rely on her colleagues for help and advice when she needs it, highlights that she recognises her teacher educator colleagues as 'experts': "[t]hey know what they are talking about too". In addition, the expertise of her colleagues (not necessarily MFL teacher educators but teacher educators of other subjects) is illustrated by the manner in which solutions to problems are discovered, "I find answers through – sometimes *not directly* – because they give me the answer most of the time through discussions and having an outside point of view". During these "discussions" aimed at finding solutions, her colleagues are demonstrating the features that characterize expert behaviour. Eaude (2012) points out that an expert no long depends on external rules and guidelines but instead displays a reliance on:

> (…) on tacit knowledge, accumulating case knowledge to decide on what matters most (…) this involves an increasing level of flexibility and fluidity, based on prediction of likely responses and intuition, but with the ability to be more analytic when necessary (…) it calls for moving from acting deliberately and consciously towards relying more on intuition. (Eaude, 2012, pp.5-6 cited in Door, 2014, p.63)

Clearly, Marie-Louise acknowledges herself to be part of a community of professionals who share "a collective self" which helps her and her colleagues to "shape the common aims, values and philosophy" of teacher educators in their everyday working lives; those very professional characteristics that the European Commission state are missing in the teacher educator profession (European Commission, 2013, p.8). By seeking the advice and expertise of her colleagues, Marie-Louise is demonstrating her trust and confidence in her fellow professionals and accordingly commitment to her profession. In the same way, Anne consulted her colleagues regularly during the meetings held every Wednesday with the inspector which she believes contributed to her ongoing professional development. She even likens these meetings to a form of private tuition. However, the regularity and length of time she invested into these meetings in her free time and her enthusiasm and reverence for what she learnt from this man in terms of pedagogy is also an indication of her commitment to MFL teacher education:

> **AN54 (France)** Oui ! Voilà, voilà ! Moi, j'ai bénéficié, j'estime, avec cet inspecteur de cours particuliers, enfin de dix ans, de quinze ans de cours particuliers tous les mercredis, tous les mercredis ! Voilà ! Et on était scotché à sa parole et voilà !

Teaching journals and research: connecting with the wider teaching community

Although Anne had discussed pedagogy with her MFL teacher educator colleagues of English (school-based teacher educators) at these meetings, she also gained access to the knowledge and expertise of colleagues based in France and abroad who were specialists of other languages such as German through the journal of the APLV, *les Langues Modernes* at a time when the internet did not exist. In addition, this journal opened her mind to other possibilities which she considers inspired her to enrichen her practice as a teacher educator, for instance, action research and the plurilingual approach to teaching. I asked her why reading journals published by the APLV were of value:

> **AN11** Oui l'APLV, ça … comment on pourrait appeler ça, de …, on nous a appelé ça de la recherche … pratique … ce n'est pas ce terme … ?
>
> **NL12** Action research ?
>
> **AN12** Oui - voilà, je ne sais pas comment dire en français. Donc, ça donne envie … ça donne envie de lire, oui, ça m'a beaucoup intéressée aussi parce que c'est plurilingue et que ça me permettait de voir où en était l'anglais par rapport aux autres langues, etc., de m'inspirer beaucoup de ce que d'autres collègues germanistes écrivaient. Et voilà, donc.

Collaborative practice: expertise and good will of MFL teacher educators

In England, Philippa describes the fact that the teacher educators in the area in which she works, whether academics and school-based, used links built up over a 16-year period between university and schools to maintain cooperation between the two in spite of the government moves to take teacher education out of HE (PH13). Philippa presents her thoughts on how they managed to do this:

> **PH15 (England)** Well I think the people on the ground in this one area of England were both academics and ex-teachers and had a lot of contacts – they knew their area – they had a massive amount of expertise – they had very good relationships with the schools. They were very good administrators and the university that validated them was a very sympathetic university and trusted them.

> **NL16** Yes, so there's the trust element – the professionals who know what they're doing?

> **PH16** Yes, yes and can say, ok these assignments, yes, they are appropriate and through the role of the external examiner, for example, I can go in - look at both sides of the argument and then report back to both sides and say 'students are saying this' and 'wonder about that' and then they have to respond to those things but in a non-punitive way like it is with an OFSTED[1].

Meanwhile, Chris explains that Scottish MFL teacher educators have been dedicating themselves to helping out schools that are experiencing difficulties with primary MFL "out of free will". He describes the relationship he shares with his teacher educator colleagues that he has built up over a 25-year period and that this takes place on a regular basis. This group of language teacher educators clearly share a common professional culture as Chris points out that they "speak the same language" when it comes to pedagogy:

> **CH3 (Scot)** […] So, all of us here in teacher education for languages, all the modern languages teacher educators in Scotland, we meet regularly and we've been doing that for 25 years. I've been doing it myself for 22 years. We all kind of speak the same language in terms of pedagogy.

More recently they have set up "in [their] free time" the National Framework for Languages (NFfL)[2]. The aim of the NFfL (Initial Teacher Education) is to set out guidance for the integration of languages into initial teacher education programmes and the school curriculum. It was created by the Languages Group of the SCDE (Scottish Council of Deans of Education) and funded by a group of Scottish local authorities and is linked to the GTC(S) Standards for Registration and CLPL (Career Long Professional Learning). There are three parts; the NFfL framework, and two resources LENS (Language Learning & Development) and LEAP (Personal/Professional Languages Biography). It aims to give the essential MFL support to primary schools because several government agencies have difficulty coping with the demand because of "a lot of panic" coming out of the primary schools given that these agencies lack the expertise and experience that the Scottish MFL teacher educators have to offer:

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[1] Ofsted is the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills in the UK. They inspect and regulate services that care for children and young people, and services providing education and skills for learners of all ages. Ofsted is a non-ministerial department. https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

[2] https://www.nffl.education.ed.ac.uk/

CH33 (Scotland) I think that part of it is that a couple of agencies are running off in Scotland and one of them is Education Scotland which is a kind of like a national education agency however there are not many teacher educators in it. Mainly people who have been seconded from different schools and a lot of them are very good but **I don't think that they quite have the theoretical knowledge and overview that we have**. Another thing is that governments – they want a quick fix within the period of their power and so if they can do something in theory, skip it out to schools, hoping the schools notice a difference – it's a vote winner, you know! But what has actually taken place is **a lot of panic** and there's a lot of teachers who think: "okay we have to do this but you know we're not equipped for that yet" so, it's this sort of political approach of short-term aims, you know. Of course, they also have a national language agency CILT or we call it Scottish KILT [we laugh]. Again, **they do not have the capacity that we, as a body of languages lecturers, we have**. You know we've been working on cases for 25 years and we've been doing that, you know, **out of free will.** The last 18 months that we've been working on this review, it's been **in our free time**, you know?

Clearly, the Scottish MFL teacher educators have not only demonstrated a commitment to local schools to help them deal with primary MFL over a substantial period of time but they have invested time, energy and good will into setting up a viable long-term solution through cooperation and coordination.

Vision of EU policymakers on Teacher Educator collaboration and cooperation

Given these examples of various forms of collaboration and cooperation among teacher educators in the three education systems, it is surprising therefore to learn that the European Commission (2013) are critical of the level of coordination between teacher educators in higher education institutions, on the one hand, and local government departments and schools on the other:

> […] tends to be limited or infrequent. For example, teacher educators in schools are likely to have little contact with those in teacher education institutions; even within the same university, teachers in subject departments may rarely interact with colleagues in education faculties. **This lack of coordination** can prevent the **sharing of knowledge and good practice between different settings** (Caena, 2012). For example, it can lead to inconsistency in the recruitment and selection of teacher educators, if institutions can each define the qualities, competences and skills required in different ways, following internal institutional needs rather than a shared understanding of professional roles and competence frameworks. (European Commission, 2013, pp. 11-12)

The European Commission authors suggest that this "lack of coordination" prevents a "sharing of knowledge and good practice". Interview data from this study illustrates evidence to the contrary: that English, French and Scottish teacher educators in this study not only welcome the sharing of knowledge and good practice whenever the opportunity arises but they actually go out of their way in their free time to do so and manage to cooperate very effectively as the document analysis in the first part of this chapter highlights.

Pedagogy counts!

The teacher educators in this study are not only encouraged and inspired by their colleagues, but also by the personal qualities and attributes they identify in student teachers. Rebecca, for instance, expresses that she is "heartened" by teachers like Kevin. Indeed, she is clearly moved by this potential in beginning teachers to become successful teachers. Perhaps she remembers her own experience when she set out as a teacher and therefore identifies with him. She uses the word "recognize" which on one level relates to what she observes as a teacher but on another, the use of this word possibly corresponds to the fact that teachers like Kevin bring up her own memories and experiences as a novice at the start of her career, particularly because she almost makes this statement into a confession by saying "I must admit":

> **RE34 (England)** Yes but what makes a good teacher is more than just subject knowledge per se and in the UK we have bankers who think they can make good maths teachers and it's so ludicrous, you know, just because you have excellent language skills doesn't mean that you can teach but I do think that that young teacher, you know, the one we saw he had a lot of personal attributes and qualities as well. I must admit I'm always heartened by the teachers themselves I work with. I recognize that in … sorry, is it Kevin his name?

The use of "heartened" also illustrates the vocational nature of being a teacher educator. The job goes beyond a teacher educator simply investing their intellect into it as the word demonstrates affect. The use of "always" highlights the permanent ongoing nature of this attitude towards teachers like Kevin who reveal their potential to become "a good teacher". The commitment to helping primary MFL teachers to become successful teachers, not only for their own benefit but also for their pupils' benefit, is reflected in her understanding that subject knowledge alone does not suffice whether that concerns

language teaching or teaching in any other subject for that matter. She finds that "it's so ludicrous" to imagine that just because someone is a banker that they can be a maths teacher. Not only does this indicate her awareness of the importance of a knowledge of pedagogy and its application in the classroom but it also illustrates her belief that teaching demands complex skills that cannot be improvised by someone who is a non-expert who has not been trained such as a "banker". Clearly, what distinguishes a 'banker' from a 'teacher' is indeed:

> [...] the degree of expertise and complexity involved in the work itself. The assumption is that professional work involves highly complex set of skills, intellectual functioning, and knowledge that are not easily acquired and not widely held. For this reason, professions are often referred to as the "knowledge-based" occupations (e.g., Hughes, 1965; Hodson and Sullivan, 1995). (NCES, 1997, pp. 3-5)

This does not mean that Rebecca believes that excellent language skills are to be dismissed. She simply believes that there has to be a balance between subject knowledge and pedagogy as they both complement each other:

> **RE7 (England)** Both! Yes, yes, I think both are equally important. You know – it's nice to see somebody teaching in primary school with excellent language skills um but it has to be matched really by the pedagogical knowledge. The children benefit from his excellent language skills but they weren't doing as much as they could have done because of his pedagogy.

Rachel who is not a teacher educator and has never taught at primary or secondary school but is a lecturer of English at a French university watched Kevin's lesson. She found it very "impressive" but when things started to go wrong, she was not sure about what to suggest. Although she is an experienced teacher of English and used to using communicative methods with her students, she was having difficulty identifying the problem with his lesson. First of all, she uses the word impressed a great deal and is extremely positive about his performance and then suddenly, she realises that things are not going as well as she had anticipated and is not sure what to suggest. This example demonstrates that Rachel has not got the pedagogical content knowledge of the teacher educator participants according to the definition expert by Berliner (1995). It is to be expected given that she has had no experience of primary or secondary teaching or teacher education, and has no theoretical background in pedagogy. After all, it took many

years for the teacher educators in this study to become 'experts' which runs counter to EU policymakers who suggest that people can be put in a classroom and learn to teach. Even though Rachel has many years of teaching experience it would be unreasonable to expect her to fill the role of teacher educator especially as she lacks PCK. It also suggests that when this PCK is absent, it is likely that someone like Rachel with little experience or knowledge of pedagogy with young children cannot identify the mistakes Kevin is making and therefore is unable to anticipate the children's reactions and therefore advise Kevin on what he should change to improve his practice:

> **RA1** I'm not familiar at all with English classes at primary school level so I would say, my overall impression is that I was **impressed.** I was really **impressed** by how comfortable the teacher was with the kids. I was **impressed** with how little French he managed to use. I really **enjoyed** how he uses images, visual supports, all the rituals as well and how he gets the kids to repeat again and again. The use of body language as well like when he says, "okay, I'm speaking now and now it's your turn". So, I thought that overall, it was very **impressive.** I think he made **a good effort** as well to include all the children to have them speak in turns and they were **very active** in putting their hands up so that was great. I felt it was **impressive** in the first video when he tried to create interaction between the pupils: "so what do you like?" – "I like ..." (…) I found that the first sequence in video 1, it was too long for the kids because after 7-8 minutes their concentration went down and it was difficult for him to keep going with the activities so I was wondering whether he should maybe change activities more often or have them speaking in pairs and then I saw the second sequence.

Marie-Louise also identifies Kevin's innate qualities that distinguish him as a potentially good teacher and his flaws in terms of pedagogical knowledge when she states:

> **MA3 (France)** Yes, which is good. He's got what I would call a pedagogical flair, so it's quite efficient. What's missing is a clear-cut aim. So, this is why it is not very clear for the kids to know what they are expected to say or to do.

However, despite Kevin's "pedagogical flair", he is still a novice teacher and consequently, Marie-Louise as an 'expert' immediately identifies where his lesson is failing. One of the first things she identifies is the lack of a "clear-cut aim". Indeed, all the teacher educators in the study identify this very same problem with Kevin's teaching as well as other shortfalls. As can be seen from figure 10, an extract of appendix 9, there is a consensus that Kevin has a very good command of English and is a good model for the children in his class; however, the teacher educator participants also consider his

pedagogical approach to be strongly influenced by the audio-lingual method and that it is very teacher-centred. There are points raised by some of the teacher educator participants that are not necessarily raised by others. This does not indicate differences in opinion or beliefs but given the time constraints a reflection of the various choices each of the participants made regarding what they judged were the most important or critical aspects of Kevin's teaching to be taken into account. For instance, Philippa, Rebecca, Chris and Lottie did not make an explicit statement that the language Kevin was using in the classroom lacked authenticity; however, did not say that it was authentic. What is not said is just as relevant as what is actually expressed. There are also overlaps between the various comments making additional references to particular issues superfluous or redundant. With this in mind, figure 10 is an attempt to try to present an overall image of the general direction of comments that are likely to be expressed during a debriefing with a student teacher like Kevin but is not in any way definitive or claim to represent all the knowledge or expertise of these participants. For instance, Philippa does not specifically refer to the 'need to build context'; however, she does point out that Kevin does not use repetition effectively which implicitly suggests that context is missing. As a fellow teacher educator, she did not feel the need to express the issue of context during the interview because she clearly believed there to be shared understanding between us:

> **PH1** (…) I don't know what theory he's using – his own personal teaching theory I would imagine from watching him is that 'if I say this often enough, they will understand' and that if they can somehow repeat things … that through repeating things they are going to learn things.

It is to be noted that despite the fact that the three sets of MFL teacher educators teach in three different EU education systems, they all identify the same issues regarding Kevin's teaching and share the same vision as to how Kevin should address those issues. This is in accordance with findings from research by Carter et al. (1988) that found differences in the interpretive competency of experts and novices. The study involved a group of novice, advanced beginner and expert teachers who had to watch a series of slides depicting high school teaching situations in science or mathematics. The experts found the same slides worth commenting on and made the same kinds of comments in contrast to the teachers in the other groups.

Content Knowledge – target language	MA	SA	PH	RE	KA	JA	CH	LO	AB
Good pronunciation	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Fluent - natural	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Good that aims to use target language whenever he can	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Makes a few pronunciation errors but not considered a problem but need to be addressed	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Realistic language - authentic									
Unrealistic language – lack of authenticity	■	■			■	■			■
Pedagogical approach	**MA**	**SA**	**PH**	**RE**	**KA**	**JA**	**CH**	**LO**	**AB**
Audio-lingual/ teacher centred approach									
Grammatical structures and not meaning	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Teacher centred	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Using a method experienced as a child	■		■						
Good pupils understand him but not others	■			■	■	■	■		■
Silent kids who did not participate	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Children are remembering expressions	■			■	■	■	■		
Surprise at what children can do	■		■	■	■	■	■		
Overloaded - too much (vocab) and too many structures ("a lot of repetition now")	■	■	■	■	■		■		■
Too abstract (KA gives ex of M. Dupont)	■	■		■	■				
Needs to build context	■	■		■	■	■	■	■	■
Works on memorisation through repetition	■		■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Formulaic language a problem (e.g. what are you feeling?)		■					■	■	■
Formulaic language not a problem (e.g. what are you feeling?)	■			■	■	■			
Forced to shift from English to French	■	■	■	■	■	■			
Need varied activities - pupil boredom	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
No links between phases of lesson -vocab and new structures (I like/don't like)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		■
Shop activity: communicative approach/task-based learning									
Good activity: communicative and action-based – positive overall	■		■	■	■	■		■	
Realistic activity – not artificial	■					■			
Unrealistic activity – too artificial		■							
Unrealistic language – too scripted	■	■			■				
Poorly structured activity – little learning		■							■
Poor management of activity		■						■	■

Figure 10 Sample of points raised by teacher educator participants on Kevin's lesson

Berliner (1995) explains that it is “this reduction in variance by the experts” that is particularly noteworthy (p.50):

> It means that they have learned to pay attention to some of the same things and to interpret visual stimuli in the same way. This similarity in what is attended to and how it is interpreted is what people hope for when they visit an expert ophthalmologist or automobile mechanic. Novices or advanced beginners – anyone in the early stages of skill acquisition – will not have acquired enough experience for that. (Berliner, 1995, pp.50-51)

Rebecca expresses how tragic it is that teachers like Kevin, who have all the qualities to “stay in teaching”, face obstacles that make it difficult for them to succeed. The various obstacles facing primary MFL are raised and discussed in the second part of this section; however, many of these challenges such as neoliberal policies, emanate from external sources. In the following extract, the specific obstacle that Rebecca refers to is linked to student teacher attitudes to theory:

> **RE35 (England)** Well I recognize that in Kevin, you know, he seems typical of the kind of student we have here, the language teachers, you know, they love languages and they want children to learn, they believe deeply in their subject and that when they get into school they find that it’s so hard to make …
>
> **NL36** Because of the conditions?
>
> **RE36** Yes, it’s such … in an ideal world, everything would be fantastic but unfortunately there are...obstacles.
>
> **NL37** Obstacles?
>
> **RE37** Yes, there are ... but there is the teacher in me who can help them make small changes and I’m of the view that if they want to stay in teaching you have to enjoy, well you know working with children, the enjoyable thing, um, so you know the thing in the lesson that I saw, it had those elements. He wanted them to enjoy, he wanted them to hear a story in English, you know, he was willing to have a go and do something different, you know, and have a go at role play and that sort of thing. **How much easier it would be to do lessons with a theoretical underpinning,** you know, I think it’s so important, you know, trained teachers don’t always see that at the start and, you know, often you never see it. They don’t value it and how much harder it is for them when they can’t. In the lesson planning, they don’t see why you should put things in a different order, you know, for example, with the story he wanted them to know words by the end of the story whereas if they’d have known them at the start, they might have got the point of the story a bit more. So, it’s the small things but I think the theory, it helps so much with how you order and structure your lesson. Yes, I do think trained teachers with theory on board are so much more secure starting off

> – a professional knowing – how you do things and when things don't work you can figure out why they don't work**.**

Firstly, Kevin resembles the "typical" student teacher that Rebecca encounters at her own HE school of education and lists the features that she recognises Kevin shares with her own students and that she values in a student teacher. In this respect, it is clear that she identifies Kevin as an 'insider' or 'in-grouper' despite the fact that Kevin is French and Rebecca's students are English indicating that the newly trained language teachers in both systems share common salient attributes. Rebecca's concern is that student teachers like Kevin fail to take into account the impact of taking research into account in their teaching because they "don't value it". Not only does she want their teaching to improve thanks to the input of "theoretical underpinnings" but also because she does not want them to struggle, "[h]ow much *easier* it would be to do lessons with a theoretical underpinning" so that they have a more fulfilling teaching experience which is beneficial for them as well as their pupils: "[i]n the lesson planning, *they don't see why you should put things in a different order*, you know, for example, with the story he wanted them to know words by the end of the story whereas if they'd have known them at the start they might have *got the point of the story a bit more*". She is not critical of Kevin because she understands that he is undergoing a natural process of teacher development that all teachers experience. She is fully aware that this process is not homogeneous given that there are some who never quite integrate the positive contribution a theoretical underpinning can make: "trained teachers *don't always see that at the start* and, you know, often *you never see it*". Despite this, she strives to do her best to ensure that she guides her student teachers towards this objective: "but there is the teacher in me who can help them make small changes (…) So, it's the small things but I think the theory, it helps so much with how you order and structure your lesson". She is aware of her "small" contribution to the process of teacher development in her student teachers but is also aware that it is "so important" because this contribution may make all the difference between a teacher enjoying the experience of "working with children" **because** the teaching is successful or in fact abandoning teaching because it is not: "if they want to <u>stay in teaching</u> you have to enjoy, well, you know, working with children, <u>the enjoyable thing</u>". This is a clear expression of Rebecca's commitment to professional standards

being maintained with the objective of student teachers and their pupils experiencing a positive teaching and learning environment.

It is clear that the teacher educators participating in this study are up-to-date and aware of research. Chris tells us for example that he encourages a variety of approaches. This of course demands a lot of effort on behalf of teacher educators to maintain this background but also highlights their expertise in their capacity to identify and coach student teachers into selecting the appropriate teaching method according to their aims. Chris points out that there is an unfortunate tendency for teachers to slip into bad habits and revert back to grammar translation as an easy option. He then provides more detail about how he would like them to plan their progression so that they cover vocabulary and structures in a coherent unified manner and “not to isolate things that are disjointed”. The challenge facing primary student teachers is that as non-specialists of MFL they are unable to use grammar translation which explains why Chris then makes the comment: “Again, you have to make sure you train all the teachers, first of all” in order for them to understand the value of various methods before they start teaching which echoes Rebecca’s (Eng) in comment above in RE37:

> **CH30 (Scotland)** We encourage our students to look at a variety of approaches but yes, the task-based learning we do with them and it is quite useful but we get them to think about what are the long-term, medium-term, short term aims of what they are trying to do and obviously through the communicative approach we like them to cherry pick the best of all methods really. We steer them away from grammar translation. Unfortunately, a lot of them end up drifting back into that and then there’s a whole stack of research into teacher cognition as to why they do that. Yeah, but in task-based we encourage them to think about a useful task, get them to think about the planning and what is appropriate to be taught at this part of the year, in this class and how to develop so that not to isolate things that are disjointed so that if you go through this then you should be able to see a progression in terms of vocabulary in the structures in the complexity of structures and so on and **that’s what we like to see in the primary school as well. Again, you have to make sure you train all the teachers, first of all.**

Lottie is encouraged by the fact that he does give the children time to answer. It is a common error to be impatient and move on too quickly should a child hesitate. He did not do that and that was picked up by Lottie. She admits that drilling is not popular but like Chris, most of the teacher educators are convinced that it is an important part of the

learning process as long as it is not in excess – what is important is that they “cherry pick the best of all methods”:

> LO7 I did like the fact that he gave them a chance to answer, like “do you like this? Do you like that?” But, I think, personally, I would have done a little bit of drilling first, I know it’s not very fashionable to say that but I think there needs to be a little back and forth until it becomes a little bit more automatic and they can apply it on their own…

MFL subject knowledge counts!

However, although pedagogy is essential, the MFL teacher educators in the study also consider that it is essential that a primary teacher delivering languages has good subject knowledge. Philippa gives an example of why it is important:

> **NL6** How important is the balance between linguistic and pedagogical skills in this sort of classroom?
>
> **PH6** Real hard question, obviously … because I would say in the end pedagogy wins because your pedagogy – if you’re a language teacher and you don’t have ... you know a part of your pedagogy is to be aware that you don’t know the language very well – that you have issues with it therefore you prepare! So, part of your pedagogy is preparing whatever it is. Choosing something that you can model and present and model correctly because what’s the use of learning loads of stuff but wrong? You know we have persistent things in our system in secondary where kids who are very attached to their primary peripatetic French teacher and will pronounce certain words wrong for five years the whole of their secondary curriculum because their French teachers said lundi [ˈlʊndi] – it isn’t lundi [ˈlʊndi] and it doesn’t matter how many times you say it isn’t lundi [ˈlʊndi] but lundi [lɛ̃di] they’re not going to get it. So, I would say the linguistic pedagogical question can be answered by saying pedagogy first and the pedagogy is about the subject. It’s content pedagogy – you gotta have content pedagogical knowledge and part of that knowledge is your awareness of your own limitations.

Philippa points to the fact that children are attached to their primary peripatetic French teacher and should this teacher pronounce a French word incorrectly the children then would have great difficulty in changing this pronunciation. Children are loyal to the people they are fond of and it is likely that they identify the language with the teacher. A rejection of what their teacher taught them might for some make them feel as though they were also rejecting their teacher - accepting that the teacher they love and admire is ‘wrong’ is hard for a child. There is also the difficulty of Philippa is fully aware of the

problem of erroneous structures being taught to children and it is clearly a dilemma for her which is acknowledged by the lowering of her tone of voice when she says: "[r]eal hard question, obviously". An aspect that she does not refer to is that research shows that children from an early age not only have difficulty identifying sounds but also reproducing them:

> On dispose maintenant de données empiriques qui montrent que la "surdité" aux sons étrangers commence à se manifester très tôt, dès la fin de la première année de vie, et que le conditionnement lié aux caractéristiques du système phonologique de la L1 s'installe progressivement Durant les premières années de vie. L'oreille du nouveau-né est très rapidement "habituée" aux caractéristiques spécifiques de la langue de son entourage, et les sons des autres langues, qui n'entrent pas alors dans la structure phonologique de la L1, deviennent progressivement inaudibles pour l'enfant. (Roussel et Gaonac'h, 2017, p.11)

Her conviction that a primary teacher who has good MFL pedagogy is strong enough, however, to persuade her that as long as the pedagogy is there, it is possible for a teacher with a weaker subject knowledge of MFL to deliver the language adequately. This context contrast with France and Scotland because in England only primary MFL specialist teachers teach MFL and have at least an A' level in a language. It is for this reason that Philippa brought up the challenge of "the primary peripatetic French teacher" as opposed to the children's normal primary teacher as it is more likely that it is this type of teacher who teaches MFL at primary when there is no specialist teacher available.

Feeling responsible

The challenge is greater in France where primary schools do not benefit from primary peripatetic teachers as the primary class teacher is expected to teach MFL to their primary pupils. Although student teachers are required to have a level B2 to obtain their Master's, this is generally not the case. Sarah explains the difficulty facing her in her teacher education classroom when I ask her if she considers the linguistic level of her students as problem:

> **SA18 (France)** Well, it is a problem (laughs) – that's for sure! It's a problem, first of all in understanding the programmes because most of them just don't understand, they just don't. *Ils ne prennent pas la mesure de ce qu'ils ont à enseigner* – so that's the **first problem for me** now in a class when I'm teaching, well it depends - are you talking about M2s or M1s or...?

NL19 Yes, anybody who will find themselves in a classroom teaching English to children.

SA19 Well M1s will eventually find themselves in a class but it's not yet. The **main difficulty is to have them understand what B2 level is**. They think it's okay, like, they think, "oh yeah, you know I got 12 in the Bac, so when I go to England, I can order drinks you know – I can go to the pub". So that's a problem for them to have them understand what B2 level is. Now the problem for M2s is first of all that **they don't understand, then, it's also the teaching**. A word like "cow" is just nothing, you know, but teaching a word like "cow" and pronouncing it /kəʊ/ is a problem. So, the trouble is that you know you're teaching students who are going to teach *des formes erronées qu'ils vont faire apprendre. Tu vois, on peut les faire apprendre comment on présente les flashcards, quel jeu on peut faire avec les flashcards, etc., leur faire faire etc., mais quand ils font leur sélection et ils font "/kəʊ/, /kəʊ/, repeat, /kəʊ//kəʊ/" quand ils font ça - mais c'est ... c'est déconcertant ! Tu dis mon Dieu ! Mais bon ! Alors, d'accord, on ne va pas être obsédé par la phonologie - on est d'accord que ce n'est pas que ça mais il y a quand même un minimum à avoir. Tu ne peux pas enseigner /kəʊ/ à des gamins. Si tu enseigne /kəʊ/ alors que c'est fini. Pareil pour le th- alors pour prendre conscience de la nécessité de, au moins, commencer si ce n'est pas th- de faire 'f' tu vois pour atténuer ce 'ze' quoi – "th- th-".*

The responsibility of having to teach student teachers who do not have the level B2 weighs heavily on her shoulders. Like Philippa, she understands that pedagogy is important and can compensate for pronunciation difficulties: "*on ne va pas être obsédé par la phonologie - on est d'accord que ce n'est pas que ça",* however, she is clearly not satisfied with this situation for several reasons. The students do not appear to understand (i) what they are required to teach in terms of content; (ii) what the B2 level of English represents in terms of expertise, and (iii) how to teach English correctly because they do not master the most basic words such as 'cow'. Unlike Philippa, she is not convinced that pedagogy can compensate for English being taught incorrectly because she is aware that the children will learn the wrong form or the incorrect pronunciation and for her that's the beginning of the end for English*: "[t]u ne peux pas enseigner /kəʊ/ à des gamins. Si tu enseigne /kəʊ/ alors que c'est fini*". The difficulty for Sarah, it would seem, is that it is very difficult for anyone to teach student how to teach vocabulary and structures to primary children when they do not know these words at all. Clearly, Sarah is worried about what primary children will learn from those students who lack proficiency and this distresses her: "*mais c'est ... c'est déconcertant ! Tu dis mon Dieu!"* Sarah takes the responsibility of this situation seriously as she comes back to this issue of the

pronunciation of cow during the interview at least three times – she does not seem to be able to get over it. The problem is that primary student teachers have to study other subjects other than MFL and consequently they do not have adequate time to invest in language learning and therefore she believes that the only viable solution is for the students to study languages before they start the Master's:

> **NL22** Qu'est-ce que tu aimerais faire ? Tu proposerais quoi pour améliorer les langues ?
>
> **SA22** A l'école ?
>
> **NL23** Oui, à l'école – la formation.
>
> **SA23** C'est-à-dire que ce niveau B2, je comprends l'utilité, mais ce que je ne comprends pas c'est que ça arrive quand les gens arrivent en master. C'est-à-dire que pour le niveau B2, il faudrait qu'il soit atteint avant la formation des enseignants alors qu'en France on commence en master. (…) Quand tu fais une formation pour être enseignant, tu ne peux pas faire grande chose d'autre à côté et donc c'est gênant. Mais en tout cas, je ne sais pas, il faudrait, quand même, qu'il y ait une formation linguistique commune, si tu veux, entre le bac et le master et qu'elle soit suivie et qu'elle soit de qualité, quoi.

As a former secondary school teacher and English teacher who prided herself on practically being bilingual, "*quand je suis sortie de mes études, moi j'étais presque bilingue quoi, je pouvais dire ce que je voulais quand je voulais*" (SA16), this situation is a difficult challenge for Sarah. Apart from insisting upon pedagogy and appropriate resources: « *[t]u vois, on peut les faire apprendre comment on présente les flashcards, quel jeu on peut faire avec les flashcards, etc., leur faire faire etc. »,* there is very little else she can do given that the students have very little time available to work on their language skills : « Quand tu fais une formation pour être enseignant, tu ne peux pas faire grande chose d'autre à côté et donc c'est gênant. »

> **NL48** Is it common in your opinion to come across students who lack proficiency? You said before about the B1.
>
> **AL49** (English native teacher in France) Yeah, yeah definitely! What you would like is that the English teacher doesn't make any mistakes in English … and on that level, **proficiency is rare to find.** I think that on a more basic level, I mean what this guy manages to do for me which is good for me, is that it doesn't bother him to speak English (…) So basically, even if your level is terrible - you can communicate that attitude to them. Okay, **you're also communicating a lot of dodgy sentences** but maybe that's **something that can be repaired later** but

> the whole idea is that horrible experiences are much more difficult to repair later on.

Alison, as a reminder, was interviewed for this research for triangulation purposes. She is not included in the study because she does not represent a typical MFL teacher educator for two reasons. Firstly, because she is English and did not study French at university as a degree subject and instead teaches English, her first language. Secondly, she has never taught in the primary or secondary school system in England or in France. It is this lack of secondary teaching experience which is of interest at this point in order to identify any differences between her views and those of her French colleagues. Alison's discourse indicates that a lack of proficiency among her students is widespread; however, rather than focus on the students' language proficiency, she believes that it is more important to work on the student teachers' attitude towards language learning because they transmit this attitude to the children. In her opinion, a negative attitude towards English conveyed by a primary teacher in the classroom is more harmful than the errors they teach young children in terms of "a lot of dodgy sentences" but she believes that can be "repaired later on". Sarah, who is astounded by the pronunciation of the word "cow", might not agree with her colleague concerning pronunciation errors but does believe in the importance of the students having the right attitude towards the language. It is for this reason that she is so frustrated by Kevin not showing any "conviction" at the beginning of his lesson. Alison recognises that most students do not reach the level B2 but believes that they can communicate a good attitude to language learning despite that. Although Alison is aiming to be positive, she is in fact being very pragmatic because she is adapting to the situation that she has to deal with in the classroom. Compared with her colleagues who have extensive classroom experience at high school and primary school, Alison does not express the same anger, frustration or distress at the prospect of such students teaching English as Marie-Louise or Sarah. For instance, when I ask Alison why it is not possible to help the students with linguistic or pronunciation problems, she does not complain about the need for more time and training, unlike Sarah (SA23) who says: "Mais en tout cas, je ne sais pas, il faudrait, quand même, qu'il y ait une formation linguistique commune". There is a lot more distance and reserve in Alison's reaction to the situation compared to her colleagues. This is possibly because she is English and accepts the institutional context that she works in with probably less attachment and emotional

investment than her colleagues, who identify more with the situation as they are French and have been language learners of English too. However, what is interesting is that Alison is very realistic about the possibilities available and adapts to the situation as well as she can. This situation illustrates the immense challenge facing teacher educators, including myself, who are not able to do anything about the linguistic proficiency of their students and cannot even teach them how to teach language to their pupils in the primary classroom because there is not enough time:

> **NL41** For example, he was a bit stuck because of the "do" and the "can" – I mean that's something that I don't have time to deal with in class with my students. I don't know about you…?
>
> **AL42 (Fr)** (…) **we are not into that at all**. It's just that we use as examples linguistic things, because for me, it makes it easy to show.

Alison explains that she believes that the main issue that she feels she has to address as a teacher educator is the attitude of the students towards teaching languages. She is concerned because they lack confidence and are afraid of making mistakes when they speak:

> **AL36 (Fr)** What I think it can do for them and in some teaching situations for some teachers it does do that for them is that given … the experience that they are likely to have in **college or high school when learning languages … which can be kind of strict, there can be a lot of rules, which can be a lot of memorization and can be kind of be very decontextualized** and it's at the age when people become very self-aware and they don't want to make mistakes and be foolish and so it's much easier not to say anything than say something.
>
> Primary aged kids don't give a toss, you know, so you **can move them into a real confidence in using a language and "we'll have a go" approach**. It's like "okay, I only have a few words but I can surely try to communicate" - if it goes wrong, it's kind of funny. You know, if that can be instilled, it's a brilliant learning attitude for learning languages more seriously, if you like, than with a specialized language teacher like in a high school. So, I think that that can be instilled and **that is probably what is invaluable** because what I see here with my own students - the **main obstacle is the attitude in terms of learning a language**. You know, okay the level but you can work on the level if you're prepared to have a go but you can't work on the level if you're not prepared to open your mouth. It's a practical skill in the end.

Compared to secondary MFL teachers who she perceives as promoting a "decontextualized" experience which is "strict", with "a lot of rules" and "a lot of

memorization", she believes that her students are more likely to create the right atmosphere for language learning in the primary classroom as long as they gain enough confidence to speak and communicate and adopt a "we'll have a go" approach: "[y]ou know, if that can be instilled, it's a brilliant learning attitude for learning languages more seriously, if you like, than with a specialized language teacher like in a high school." However, as a reminder, Alison has never taught in a secondary high school in France or in England and consequently her views concerning MFL secondary teaching are based on her own representations of what happens in high school language lessons.

5.2.3.2 MFL teacher educator expertise: a second order teacher

In this second part I specifically focus on presenting evidence of participants' expertise as second-order teachers of MFL when they comment on Kevin's teaching in the primary classroom. This expertise reflects an on-going long-term commitment to primary MFL and is a culmination of years of dedication and effort undertaken by the participants to develop and extend their subject knowledge in MFL as well as their pedagogical content knowledge expertise (PCK) as MFL teacher educators through study and experience. PCK is knowledge of typical misconceptions that students will have learning a particular concept, knowledge of and the ability to use powerful analogies, demonstrations, examples, explanations and illustrations that make sense to students and enable them to understand better; it also involves background knowledge of learners' cultures and experiences and have good theoretical grounding (Gimmestad and Hall, 1995, p.551). In this section, evidence that reflects this expertise is presented:

> **RE2 (England)** Right! So, yeah, I thought – just to go through your questions here – that his subject knowledge is very good although a few pronunciation errors *but that's not a big issue*. I'm sure he's got a good level of English and he seems very enthusiastic about his subject so he comes across as somebody who loves the language and cares deeply about the children's learning. He seems very motivated as a teacher and has lots of qualities as a teacher – his personality for example he is patient …encouraging. So, I think he definitely has all the … erm I would say somebody who has all the potential to be a teacher.

Rebecca is very positive about Kevin's "potential to be a teacher". She identifies in Kevin those qualities which she considers a teacher needs from the outset. First of all, a love of the subject he is teaching. Kevin demonstrates his enthusiasm for English by his

“knowledge” of the language, his level of English and his desire for the children in his class to learn English. It is interesting that she refers to the mispronunciation of certain words as pronunciation “*errors*” rather than mistakes such as when he mispronounces caterpillar with [kəˈtəpɪlə] instead of [ˈkætəpɪlə] or when he makes pasta plural by adding an ‘s’ and may explain why she does not consider these errors as a “big issue”. Given that she knows that Kevin is bilingual and possesses a degree in English, it is likely that she understands that these errors reflect his stage on the interlanguage continuum and are therefore a consequence of the potential negative transfer from his native tongue and a possible overgeneralization of rules concerning English, the target language (Wittich, 1979)[1]. She also focuses on Kevin’s personality. She is positive about Kevin’s personal qualities as a teacher in terms of him being “patient” and “encouraging” and caring “deeply about the children’s learning”. However, given that she has never met him and is basing her evidence on a video clip of one of his lesson, she makes it clear that she cannot have full certitude about his personal characteristics. Consequently, she uses the verb “seems” to highlight this lack of certainty: “He *seems* very motivated as a teacher”; however, a little later on in the interview, she re-evaluates Kevin as far as his input is concerned given the extra information she has acquired in terms of “some really good ideas” and the progress the children were making as a consequence of his input, “those children were definitely benefiting”. The use of “really” and “definitely”, signifying certitude, highlights the extent to which she considers that Kevin’s ambitions for the pupils in his class are authentic and important for his pupils’ progress:

> **RE19** […] Yes, he had some really good ideas and yes overall those children were definitely benefiting …. He really wanted them to do well – yeah so, I think…

Rebecca formulates an evaluation of Kevin’s potential to be a good teacher. She bases this evaluation on his attitude towards the children in his class, his attitude towards the learning that is taking place in terms of both the activity of the children, his pedagogy and the content knowledge that Kevin demonstrates. Her knowledge and experience as a teacher educator enable her to identify his qualities not only by observing what he does but by observing the children’s attitude towards him as well as their behaviour. This does

[1] Wittich, U. (1979). Texttypologie unter funktionalstilistischer Sicht. STUF-Language Typology and Universals, 32(1-6), 764-770.

not prevent her from identifying those areas where he needed support and guidance in his pedagogy: "he didn't seem to have any strategies to support target language use and it was evident that pupils were not always following what he was saying" (RE2). Rebecca visualizes a success scenario for Kevin and is an example of a teacher educator with a high sense of self-efficacy and therefore demonstrates her commitment to primary MFL Teacher education because she is aware that student teachers need to feel valued and appreciated whilst also being aware of their other needs in terms of a theoretical underpinning and pedagogy. On the other hand, Sarah is not at all impressed by Kevin's attitude nor the impact this has on the children:

> **SA70 (France)** He doesn't believe in what he's doing … he's just doing it because he's got to do it, eh? The first thing I noticed was the relationship he has with his children. He doesn't smile, you know. He goes like this (raises voice) - it's like "we're going to do something serious now … it's English time! This is English time!"

She focuses on other aspects of Kevin – the fact that he does not smile and because the children are also very serious. For Sarah, this is an issue because the children are young and this demonstrates that she cares about their well-being and is concerned about the experience they are having in this lesson. Sarah also envisages a success scenario because she holds an acquirable skill view (Bandura, 1993). Indeed, she considers that the difficulties that Kevin had as far as his pedagogy is concerned were down to him simply not preparing his lesson well enough:

> **SA80 (France)** La séance qu'on vient de regarder toute à l'heure en 15 minutes là, c'était censé être la préparation à la tâche finale, c'est ça ? Mais, ça ne portait pas sur les mêmes objectifs, enfin, sur les mêmes points ? Donc, le mec n'a rien préparé, quoi ? Oh, c'est affolant.

One of the limitations of this study is that the teacher educator participants evaluated Kevin on the basis of a video. Watching a student teaching on a video is not exactly the same as being in the classroom itself because you cannot see everything that is going on and a lot of sensory information is lost. It is also impossible to discuss with the student the areas that need addressing. Some people dislike watching videos and for many people appraising someone on the basis of a video is so far removed from their own professional practice that it is a challenge to be as authentic in their response as they would like to be. Indeed, in the extract of the transcription of video 1 (see appendix 5), it is of interest to

examine a teaching situation which may illustrate why Rebecca was not as taken aback by Kevin's seriousness as Sarah, firstly, because she is English and not French and there is probably a cultural or even personal difference in attitude between the two educators concerning student teachers who fail to 'prepare their lesson':

		Transcription of video 1: start of lesson Duration: 15:05 T: teacher ; Ps: pupils in the class P1: specific pupil at a given place (see plan of class: appendix 4)	Teacher and/or pupil activity
192	T	P12 – ask P4 please. What do you like?	
193	P12	What do you like?	T looking at P4
194		Anything you like	P4 not sure and hesitates. Signals to T that she needs help with her hand movements (cannot find the word)
195	T	Alors, what is it you like? How do you say..?	T moves towards her desk to speak close up because he cannot hear her and because she is very timid
196	P4	"How do you say?" "Pizza"	P4 repeats what T says. T is distracted by another pupil and looks away for a second. P4 gives her answer.
197	T	"Pizza?"	
198	T	I like … I like pizzas	T moves back to front of class while keeping his eyes on her (almost falls over a bag on the floor while doing so)
199	P4	(I like pizzas in a low voice)	
200	T	Speak up please	
201	P4	I like pizzas	
202	T	Excellent. What do you like? Ask P8.	
203	P4	What do you like?	(very softly)
204	P8	I like cheese	
205	T	You like cheese? *Alors qui je n'ai pas demandé?*	P11 puts up hand

Figure 11 Extract from transcription of video 1(appendix 5)

To begin with, Kevin displays his "care" for the children's learning as well as his patience in the sense that he insists on P4 expressing what she likes using the expression "I like + food" without moving on to another pupil who is more likely to reply more quickly and clearly. This pupil is reserved and lacks confidence and on close observation, she is sending signals that she needs his help by stretching out her arms towards him. He responds instantaneously to this implicit demand by moving into her 'space' saying

"*alors*" (l.195) to let her know first of all, that he is first and foremost her 'French primary' teacher and does not have to be stressed, secondly to indicate that she has his full attention and that he is concentrating on her. However, she is slightly uncomfortable with this proximity signalled by two events. First, as he moves closer to her, she moves her hands inwards away from him and secondly, she repeats what he says to her "how do you say" (l.195). Given that Kevin uses a lot of repetition in his lesson, the pupils feel secure in repeating what he says particularly as he does not at any point reprimand them for not saying what he expects them to say. In this case, P4 is unsure of what to say and perhaps because Kevin is concentrating so intently on her and she is a little stressed, she resorts to the reflex of repeating what he has just said; however, at the precise moment when Kevin's attention is diverted for a split second (as he glances towards another pupil in the class), she says "pizza". This situation illustrates that despite Kevin's good intentions which Rebecca reiterates a little later in the interview when she says: "He really wanted them to do well" (RE19), performance stress is likely to have a negative impact on some children's production. This highlights the importance of teachers, such as Kevin, recognising the role teacher-pupil interaction plays in language learning in the classroom. It is ironic that it was at the moment when pupils were "shifting about" as described by Chris, one of the Scottish teacher educators, that P4 managed to express herself. Indeed, Chris points out the key problem – although, there does appear to be some "understanding", because the approach is teacher led and involves one to one questions and answers there were too many children who had nothing to do:

> **CH3 (Scotland)** […] they were used to being asked questions so they would give answers or repeat what he said so they weren't understanding a lot of the time you know **although I'll give him his due at some point, they were understanding** erm one thing I did like – he **used praise a lot**. That was good to make the pupils… erm but what I was thinking … because it was teacher led and it was very much a presentation activity, what do the other pupils do when he's talking to or asking a question to one pupil? So, the others are shifting about. (…)

Although Kevin rarely smiles, he does ensure that the children in his class are aware that he is pleased with their output either verbally, "very good", "excellent", "perfect" or through his body language, e.g. by nodding his head. In the extract above, P4 is made aware of her teacher's satisfaction with her output by the fact that he says "excellent" and

also because he goes on to ask her to pose the same question to another pupil in the class thus demonstrating his confidence in her ability to do this effectively.

In the next extract, Kate also perceives Kevin's qualities as a teacher in terms of his positive approach but also regarding his tenacity in maintaining the target language in the classroom:

> **KA3 (England)** So, the first thing **I would like** is the nice calm start to the class: a very positive manner with the children really **positive tone and engaging manner**; quite **confident**; 100% target language, which **I love**; **wondrous** 'how is she feeling?'; the change in the grammar pattern: comparison and conjugating; keeping in target language, asking again for other pupils to help and not just providing an answer. **I like the fact** that he doesn't translate because a lot of my trainees do straightaway, but he sticks with it which I think is to be applauded. **I'd have said** that he didn't need to go into French at all at that point because he was doing very well, but he just did. **It's lovely that** he's correcting pronunciation without saying "you're wrong!" **The choral is great**, with everyone joining in. That's lovely. **The thing I would say here** is that it would be even better if he had pictures, so that they're reinforcing the meaning as opposed to just the pronunciation of, for example, cereals and pastas. **At this point it would be even better if** he considered different strategies for repetition techniques, for example using silly voices or rap or patterns, as opposed to just 'repeat'. There's a nice recap of prior learning.
>
> **KA4** (…) He uses questioning and he does aim to promote learning which is good at the beginning. He seems to have a good relationship with his pupils and he seems to have clear expectations of what they should be doing: promoting interest, motivation and curiosity.

Kate, just like Rebecca, was delighted by what Kevin bring to the classroom in terms of his English language skills, his relationship with the pupils and his approach to promoting learning, Kevin's personal qualities and the absence of negative feedback. Kate appreciates the fact that he makes a concerted effort to use the target language in the lesson and recognises that this is not to be taken lightly because the easiest solution for a trainee teacher when faced with a child who does not understand a word or expression in the target language is to resort to translation. Although he does end up translating at various points in the lesson, she states that he manages to resist this temptation far longer than her own trainees do in England through the use of various strategies.

An analysis of Kate's discourse shows her position as a teacher educator and how she construes her role as an expert. The use of "would" establishes not only her expectations

in terms of the atmosphere in a classroom at the start of a lesson when she visits a student teacher: “the first thing I *would* like is the nice calm start to the class”; but also asserts the central but habitual[1] nature of her role of giving pedagogical advice to trainee students: “[t]he thing I *would* say here is that it would be even better if he had pictures” and “I*’d* have said that he didn’t need to go into French at all at that point”. Kate identifies weaknesses in Kevin’s teaching and is able to propose alternative approaches and strategies to enable him to progress. Lunenberg et al., (2014) state that teacher educators as role models to teachers should make exemplary behaviour explicit and be able to underpin their behaviour theoretically. They explain that not only should they be able to reflect on their own feelings but that they should make these feelings explicit to support student teacher affective development (p.64). They go on to say that: “Such explicit modelling seems difficult to teacher educators and they do it only to a small degree” (ibid). Kate’s discourse does not reflect these findings. The use of “would” in Kate’s discourse illustrates how she ‘usually’ deals with student teachers such as Kevin when handling their possible anxiety and stress about having made wrong pedagogical choices. The structure “it would be even better if” allows the student teacher to understand that the teacher educator has recognised the positive elements in his or her teaching but that more has to be done. Just as Kate expects Kevin to provide the children in his class with positive constructive feedback, so does she, in turn, provide him feedback and guidance that will help him improve his teaching skills with confidence.

In the following statement, Kate makes it clear that she is aware of the new national curriculum requirement regarding ‘oral translation’ and explains that Kevin’s pedagogy is coherent with this requirement. In this respect, she indicates her alignment with the education system in which she works as a teacher educator who abides by official guidelines such as the national curriculum. However, in her capacity as a primary MFL teacher educator who wants to help her student teachers adopt pedagogical approaches which promote children’s MFL learning at primary school, she expresses her explicit disapproval of this requirement and demonstrates it by the set of pedagogical strategies she would advise a student teacher like Kevin to adopt to avoid oral translation. In this

[1] Would: emploi dit “fréquentatif”

respect, she asserts her expertise articulating both experiential knowledge and theoretical knowledge:

> **KA5 (England)**(…) At the moment, with the new national curriculum, **even though I don't like it**, oral translation is part of the new national curriculum here. He's saying "bonbon" and they're saying "sweets". **So, he is demonstrating that**.

Kate believes that Kevin manages relatively well despite the inadequate visuals because the English of the pupils in Kevin's class is good and that his way of teaching would not work in an English classroom. This is an interesting point because the children only started learning English with Kevin the previous September and, evidently, they are showing signs of progress which surprises both Kate and Rebecca. Rebecca is perplexed because she was not expecting the children to retain the structures given the teaching they had received:

> **KA5 [**…] I would definitely say make his visuals much more vivid: large and clear. You see, **because their English is good, they're getting what he's saying.** But if it was in this country, they wouldn't have a clue. If you said "j'adore les oranges" or "j'aime les oranges" **and they hadn't heard that before, they would have no idea what you're doing** (…)
>
> **RE5** So, they were actually managing okay with "can I have?"; "Do you like?" Yeah, they seem to be … although I couldn't hear a great deal of what the children were saying because it was quite noisy. Yeah **given what preceded it**, I was **pleasantly surprised by what the children were able to do** – there were two or three of them who could say the **phrases from memory which is surprising** but I did wonder whether all of the children could do that given the support they'd had.
>
> **PH3 (Eng)** […] Yes, while – what basis is he going into French? He set up the story very quickly and then went into English which is not too bad. **Teachers in England would not be able to sustain the target language for such a long time** actually so while I'm saying a lot of negative things the fact that he did keep the lesson – the lesson did come over as English – it wasn't a French person going on and on in French and then putting a few English nouns up … so **in that sense the pedagogy was quite good**, I would say, so I would want to … but I'll come back to that (…)

Like her English colleagues, Philippa praises him for his steadfastness in sustaining the target language and again considers that he managed much better than a typical English primary teacher in this respect. However, she is also aware that the lesson could have been more successful and was limited because it was not set up adequately.

> KA5 […] So, I would advise him to be a lot more visual and maybe have pictures of hearts to demonstrate those things, because he seems to be up there and down there. The pupils here would be thinking are they big oranges or little oranges? Overall, I think they're following him. They're having a go, and he's making them work at it, which is good. He is encouraging them to try and work it out themselves from their prior knowledge. We tend to do this very unrealistic dialogue which he is not doing. He's doing a very authentic dialogue: "do you like oranges? – yes I do", but if I was expressing that in French I would be saying "J'AIME les oranges…J'ADORE les oranges" - I wouldn't be making it real - so this is really interesting. You know, it's funny because it's such a cultural difference: if he was doing that in a year 7 class down the road, they wouldn't be with him and they would be bored. They would be looking out the window! Do you know what I mean? Whereas they all seem to be with him and really do want to speak it. So, you know if I was watching someone teach French like this, I would be much more critical. He would need to be much more game-orientated, challenging and motivating to get them on board rather than getting them to learn accidentally. This is definitely what I would consider to be a more old-fashioned teaching, but it's good teaching with these children in this context.

Kate agrees with Philippa that despite the lack of visuals, which would result in a boring lesson in England, or dialogues that are difficult to make sense of because they are too authentic, the children are nevertheless involved in the lesson and on the whole keen to speak English. There is a consensus among the three English teacher educators that his methods are working to a certain extent despite being teacher led.

The French teacher educators are also positive about Kevin's level of English particularly insofar as his pronunciation. Across the board, the participants are not that concerned about the various errors that Kevin makes during his lesson. Sarah's main concern, for instance, is that the pronunciation does not impede the pupils' progress in English and so she is, on the whole, satisfied with his "proficiency":

> **SA75(Fr)** Ce que j'ai remarqué c'est que lui sa prononciation pour revenir à sa proficiency à lui – en tous cas sur les mots qu'il propose, il a **la bonne prononciation**. Et ça, c'est quand même un point positif. Il maîtrise … même s'il a fait une bêtise avec "are you feeling" sur le reste, il a quand même dans l'ensemble **un anglais qui est correct en tous cas qui ne pose pas de problème pour les élèves.**

Marie-Louise understands why he may be more successful at teaching than one would normally expect given his "old-fashioned" methods. This class is also taught for two days a week by a PEMF, a school-based teacher educator. In addition, there are only

twelve pupils in the class. Not only does this mean that the children are used to being taught by a teacher who is recognised for her excellent teaching skills but it also means that that there is a far greater opportunity for pupils to participate during the English lesson than would normally be the case because it is such a small group. Nevertheless, just like Rebecca, who considers Kevin to have all the potential to be a teacher, Marie-Louise believes that Kevin has a "pedagogical flair":

> **MA1** (…) It's not bad - I mean - globally speaking, if every primary teacher could teach English that way or with such a good accent, we would be very happy as teacher trainers. But there's probably a lack of taking into account the age of the kids, because what I found is it seems to be a small group. It doesn't seem to be a big class so he's lucky. It's quite easy because he can control the whole group, and also because they are very quiet and they are very nice. Is it a country school?
>
> **NL1** Yes, it is a country school and normally the class is taught by a PEMF.
>
> **MA2** Ah okay! Yes, I see. So, they are extremely well-disciplined and they know what is expected of them, although it's not very clear whether they have to repeat or whether they have to answer. Globally speaking, he has a nice group and it's quite easy for him to teach. So, it's a little… it's a pity but I don't want to criticise him because I think he's good – especially since you said that he hasn't had any teacher training? Right?
>
> **NL2** It's based on his own experience.
>
> **MA3** Yes, which is good. He's got what I would call a pedagogical flair, so it's quite efficient.

Although, she does not go into detail in this particular extract, Marie-Louise refers to his qualities at various points during the interview and her views are in line with her English teacher educator colleagues, for instance: "he's at ease in the pedagogical relationship – he has good body language" (MA11) and "he's full of good intentions" (MA25). She also draws the same conclusion as the English teacher educators regarding the main concern facing this student teacher. He fails to adopt an age-related pedagogy. Instead, he focuses on grammatical structures and correction. It is possible that Kevin found it a challenge to adopt an age appropriate pedagogy simply because he learnt to speak English as a bilingual child and that this has subsequently influenced his approach to language learning. Although he is conscious that the learning processes he experienced at home with his English mother as an infant cannot be reproduced in the classroom with monolingual children, he does appear to be determined to focus on language structures

and error correction with his pupils. Indeed, Philippa, one of the English teacher educators, Philippa appreciates the fact that Kevin promotes a communicative approach but also picks up on this tendency of Kevin to focus on grammar structures. She posits that it is possible that he is unaware of what he was doing or why he was doing it. She bases her conclusion on the fact that the pupils in the classroom had not been prepared or "set up" for learning English in this way:

> **PH3 (England)**[…] So, **he started off using TL communicatively but it strayed into grammar because 'how is he?' 'how is she?' and it's great** – he's drawing attention and he's maybe unconsciously using Peter Robinson's noticing theory[1] and Schmidt's[2] attention on form by emphasizing when he says that word – but **I didn't get the impression that the kids were set up** so that they would understand what he was saying. So, it's the lack of set up in terms of methods – theories and so on.

At first glance, this approach may appear counter-productive given that primary children are likely to be unreceptive to such methods; however, research does indicate that grammar correction is not to be dismissed and this may explain why the English of the pupils in Kevin's class was generally considered to be good by the teacher educators who participated in this study despite his "old-fashioned" methods. Indeed, research indicates that correcting grammar errors actually works because it results in better content expression (Fathman and Whalley, 1990). Studies show that language learners want their **oral** errors to be corrected (Cathcart and Olsen, 1976). This runs contrary to Krashen's (1982) affective filter hypothesis (1982) that holds that correction may raise learners' levels of anxiety and that this impedes learning. James (1998) presents an alternative hypothesis that he considers just as plausible as Krashen's theory. He posits that an optimal level of affect, in the form of 'arousal', is necessary for learning to take place. He describes consciousness, awareness or any form of noticing of language to be a sign of taking note or 'arousal' and these he states, are considered to be beneficial (James, 1998, pp.246-247). It should also be noted that this research involved adults and not primary children. It is possible that because Kevin has benefited from certain teaching conditions (small class with well-behaved pupils), he has been able to develop this optimal level of affect with his primary pupils as a bilingual English teacher. In any case, it is clear that

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[1] Peter Robinson (1995)
[2] Schmidt (1990) ;

the success he has had with his pupils' language learning which may or may not be due to "accidental language learning" has indeed raised many questions in the minds of the teacher educators in this study. This issue is beyond the parameters of this study but it is an area of research that Rebecca believes Kevin needs to focus on as he would benefit from greater knowledge in this domain:

> **RE2 (Eng)** […] I think with a little bit more specific guidance and some theory about language learning theory - 2nd language acquisition theory for example – I think would really help him a lot (…).

Lottie is more explicit and seems quite frustrated that Kevin did not rephrase his sentences to enable greater understanding, use body language to convey meaning or cues. What is interesting is that Lottie focuses on the language Kevin uses (vocal and body) as tools first and foremost. The fact that she says that she was smiling to herself is a signal that Kevin was making a classic error for a novice and that the solution was within grasp "all you need to do…". Kevin is not the first student teacher she has seen to have this posture in the classroom and as an expert teacher educator, she recognises it immediately:

> **LO3** One of the things I would have said to him if I was debriefing him was "think of rephrasing". At the beginning he was going: "how is she feeling?" And the more often he said it the more the child didn't understand, so rather than say "she's feeling fine? She's feeling happy? She's feeling sad?" and giving the child cues, he didn't seem able to do that. He kept repeating "what is it? What is it?" When he could have phrased it as a sentence "it's a washing machine? It's a tomato?" So that the children would have been able to have the model again and they would have been able to answer a lot more easily. He didn't have to use French to tell them to raise their hand. And that's one other thing he didn't do – **I was smiling to myself** – he didn't use body language which **could have helped so much, you know, all you need to do is raise your hand** and say: "put your hand up to answer".

5.2.4 Neoliberal obstacles

Hypothesis 2

> I expect to find that English, French and Scottish MFL teacher educators experience obstacles posed by neoliberal language policy measures that oppose, conflict or contradict the professional standards and values they hold and prevent them from doing what they believe and feel they need to do as primary MFL teacher educator professionals.

When they are challenged by obstacles posed by language policy measures that oppose, conflict or contradict the professional standards and values they hold and prevent them from doing what they believe and feel they need to do as primary MFL teacher educator professionals, they experience a reduced sense of self-efficacy and collective efficacy in their contribution towards primary MFL teacher educator provision.

In this section, I will present evidence found in interview data that neoliberal obstacles are responsible for making primary MFL teaching and learning a challenge.

In PH30 below, Philippa expresses a high level of engagement in terms of her own activities. Not only does she throw herself into research but she incites and motivates her students to do so too. However, it is clear that she has lost some of her drive because she uses the present perfect 'I've always been driven to inspire my students' instead of the present 'I'm always driven' which suggests that she is no longer as engaged as she was. This is accentuated when she says 'I'm still working with some teachers' which implies that before long there will be no teachers particularly as funding has gone. She then goes on to explain that this funding has gone because "it isn't considered to be important". The use of the passive tense illustrates the fact that it is the omnipresent policymakers who have taken away the money because research is not on their agenda. The explicit reference to neoliberalism is made clear by the term 'quality' teachers. Towards the end of **P32** Philippa expresses her relief to be retiring given the current climate where research and education is no longer funded. In this sense, she expresses low collective because she does not express any hope for the future.

NL30 And, would you say that the research itself was a sort of training on the job?

PH30 (England) Absolutely – that made the big difference. I was always in the classroom. The classroom was my laboratory in an ethical sort of way because I wasn't using kids as guinea pigs in test tubes but yes it was. I **was always doing** action research before I knew what it was and that is what **I've always driven to inspire my students to do** and **I'm still working with** some teachers in school on action research but they don't get any credits for it because it's just an internal school thing. Fewer and fewer teachers are doing MAs and further stuff because there is no funding. A few years ago, there was funding for teachers or there was a free government Masters (…)

PH32 Yes, the funding thing has moved – well yes, I suppose it is that the money isn't being put into it because it isn't considered to be important but if you **want quality teachers** you have to have teachers who are interested and

> researching in some way. So, **that would be what I want to see**. How can we take that forward? I'm kind of glad that I'm at the end of my bit of my career now because I've been quite lucky enough to kind of surf through on a load of 'being in the right place at the right funding opportunity time'.

This situation contradicts what European Commission (2013) state in their report when they say: "[t]the perceived low status of university teacher educators tends to drive many promising teacher educators away from the profession towards subject specific academic research" (p.13). Not only is it difficult for people to carry out subject specific academic research because there is very little funding but such measures make it impossible to raise the status of teacher educators because without research, the 'academic' is absent from teacher education resulting in a loss of status and as we learn from Philippa a lack of candidates to enter the teacher education profession. In addition, despite demonstrating great commitment throughout their teaching career, it is clear that without the research input that the teacher educators in this study experienced at key moments, then it would have been all the more difficult, if not beyond them, to move from being a proficient teacher to an expert one.

Philippa chooses to use the word 'quality' given that it is a word which is now part of the neoliberal discourse vocabulary; however, she applies its original meaning: "degree or standard of excellence, esp a high standard" (Collins English Dictionary, sixth edition 2003). She throws the ball back into the neoliberal court because she addresses them directly with "if you want…" as they are the ones setting the rules. However, she is also aware that this ideology does not make sense and that not all those with the power and money fully understand the consequences of this ideology on education. Indeed, as I have attempted to demonstrate, neoliberal discourse is a very powerful technique and it is very persuasive:

> **PH26** Well I suppose it's **a lack of joined up thinking**. People with the power and the money are not thinking "oh what do we need to do to bring quality?" They're looking at outcomes and the idea of teaching as a mechanistic activity that if you go through a certain set of motions then the learners will learn and then they will get what their parents are paying for or what the state is paying for.

Given that the system is dominated by neoliberal values, it is hardly likely therefore that the extra funding that the IMF is advocating will lead to a better educational experience at school. This is because "quality" means different things to different people:

> **PH41 (…)** You're doing your best for them and the only pressure you're under is the times when the external pressures or the school or whatever it is – the university – are demanding things that conflict with what you know or think you know to be the best way or the best conditions for your learners – that's the stress – that's the conflict.
>
> **NL42** Coming from outside?
>
> **PH42** Yeah! When two models collide but you can't … I wouldn't say you enhance a teaching model or a model of pedagogy by more money

Indeed, she points out that it is "when two models collide" that conflict is created for teachers because they find themselves struggling against the neoliberal values that are imposed upon them. In my discussion with Anne (France) I mentioned a joke made by Laurent Ruquier, a well-known TV presenter, when he was interviewing his host, the new French Education Minister, Jean-Michel Blanquer. This joke implied that English teachers are in 'bogus' jobs because the French are so poor at speaking English:

> **NL27** C'est comme samedi soir, tu as vu Laurent Ruquier ? Il a fait une blague avec le nouveau ministre en disant que les professeurs d'anglais occupaient des emplois fictifs !
>
> **AN27** Ah bon ?
>
> **NL28** Ah le ministre a dit, « oui, je connais les profs d'anglais qui sont sympas ».
>
> **AN28** Qu'est-ce que ça a à voir avec... ?
>
> **NL29** Le lendemain, sur le site de Néoprof, c'était, « we are not amused ! » En fait, c'est parce qu'ils pensent que le niveau de langue n'est pas super et donc que les professeurs ne font pas leur travail. Est-ce que pour toi, ça représente la réalité pour toi ? Est-ce qu'il y a des raisons pour lesquelles les français, paraît-il, ne maitrisent pas la LVE ?
>
> **AN29** Oui bien sûr, bien sûr, bien sûr – c'est la même chose que pour les anglais ou les anglophones. Les français, comme les anglais … imaginent, enfin les anglais, ils ont raison, pour eux l'histoire leur a donné raison… mais les français s'imaginent que le français dans le monde, c'est encore comme du temps des colonies et qu'il n'y a pas besoin de … enfin … d'être français, ça suffit. On n'a pas besoin de parler les langues étrangères … ça perdure encore. Le français est très ethnocentrique.

Anne states that part of the difficulty for the French is that the ambition to impose French as a global lingua franca in order to dominate world markets, as was the case during colonial times, is still alive and well. Consequently, they do not need to know any other language but French. What makes this situation even more difficult, according to Anne, is that the battle has been lost to the English language making it an even more unpopular language to learn at school because of the perceived competition. This is an example of the paradoxical nature of language learning in a market economy which drives people to make learning English a priority at primary schools in France because of its market value as a global language; yet, because the dominance of English creates a sense of rivality and unfairness, learning English generates animosity to the extent that French television personalities poke fun at English teachers. In Scotland, people's motivation to learn a language is related to the global economy rather than to a desire to interact with people from other cultures; however, Jackie makes that point that when a languge is not anchored in culture then the language cannot be learnt and ultimately there is no progession:

> **JA62** Oh yes, absolutely. There is a huge influence – e.g. the language we choose to learn is based on financial reasons. In the business world, you get opinions from people e.g. "we have to learn Chinese because China is a very big power at the moment and we need to be competitive" but I ask them how they are going to progress. One of the big problems is the progression from the primary to secondary: how are the kids going to continue learning the languages? If they learn 10 words in Chinese, does that make them competitive? So yes, there is **a big influence from the neoliberal economy**. The other interesting thing is that we always promote and push languages that are linked to this kind of neoliberal interest, rather than languages that we've got in the community. For example, we don't have schools that teach Polish.
>
> **NL63** No?
>
> **JA63** Here in Scotland, according to the last census, Poles are the third biggest group of citizens in Scotland. First is Scotland; second is England; third is Poland.
>
> **NL64** Poland? Yeah?
>
> **JA64** Yeah! And if you want to learn Polish or if you want to have an accreditation for Polish knowledge, there is **nowhere to get that** here in Scotland (lowers voice).

Jackie also points out that the situation is made more difficult by the fact that English is a global lingua franca which provides little incentive to learn a foreign language and the Brexit situation has made it even worse because of xenophobic attitudes and fears for their employment. Neoliberalism plays on division to create an insecure workforce and uses mass media to transmit messages that make people feel worried and stressed about their employment:

> **JA83** I think the Brexit situation makes the whole thing more difficult if you look at languages at different levels because I mean you have to see languages, well, in their socio-political context because otherwise you cannot… The political context is very difficult with Brexit. It makes people more and more aware and **more concerned with immigration** and stuff like that so that they are **afraid for their jobs**. They are afraid of people coming here so of course that makes them be **more reluctant to learn languages and to be open to new cultures.**
>
> **NL84** Yeah hmm do you think that there will be demand to learn more Chinese than French – will there be a move away from Europe to other countries do you think because of Brexit? Or do you think people are just not thinking that way?
>
> **JA84** I don't think so – it can work like that but even if they say learn Chinese or stuff like that, at the end of the day, very few people learn Chinese. **Most of the people have the statement in their heads "oh everyone speaks English" (with Scottish accent).**

I asked Rebecca whether the university had changed since she first arrived. She said that she came to the university fourteen years ago and that it had changed a lot:

> **RE2(Eng)** Eh yeah … I think it has actually! Yes, it has changed quite a lot. Although essentially my role is still observation and so on. I think it's too pressured – there's just too much pressure. You know the expectations from students are … and from the schools – and the academic assignments as well. They are quite useful but they don't have enough time to do them properly …and they get frustrated by that as well. Yeah, they **don't have a lot of time** really.

Rebecca feels under a lot of pressure and this pressure comes from all directions: from her students, from the schools and the academic assignments. These pressures are symptomatic of a consumer society which promotes competition and the market economy. She is not satisfied by this not only because it is not pleasant nor healthy to work in such an environment but she is also concerned because the students have no time to do their assignments. A lack of time is a recurrent feature of neoliberal society as it

puts people under pressure and makes them feel inadequate and guilty for not doing the tasks that are asked of them. In this case, the students feel 'frustrated' because they are being deprived of the opportunity to do what they really want to do – learn about teaching, research and deepen their content knowledge.

As described in chapter 3, French Master MEEF students are required to reach level B2 to obtain their Master's degree and this results in pressure for the students but also for the teacher educators. In the SA65, Sarah explains that it was so difficult for Alison that they had to exchange groups because of this issue. They then wrote a letter to the students to ask them to have a better attitude.

> **SA66** Yes, it was at the time of the B2 and **we are more vulnerable because of the B2** because English is not in the concours. I mean, if it was in the concours, we would have no problem at all. It would not be our responsibility. The problem here is created by the fact that it is not in the concours. C'est ça qui nous f*la m*. Si on était dans le concours, personne ne viendrait nous dire quoi que ce soit. Il nous dirait, "oui, oui, vous avez raison" "j'ai 3, oooh" – ou alors "j'ai 10 - merci madame", tu vois ?

This testing is clearly detrimental because of the stress and anxiety generated and pointless because the vast majority of these students do not have this level and cannot achieve level B2 in such a short time period.

Cambridge University indicates in its *Introductory Guide to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) for English Language Teachers* (Cambridge, 2013, p.4) that 'typically', it takes approximately 200 hours of 'guided learning hours' (lesson time) for a language learner to progress from B1 CEFR level to B2. However, the number of MFL guided learning hours generally on offer on various Master MEEF primary education courses in France can vary from as little as 12 to up to 72 which according to the above recommendations is hardly sufficient to allow students to move from one level to the next. This means that in practice most students obtain their Master's degree anyway. If all students failed, there would be no teachers recruited each September. In addition, the students are distracted from studying their MFL as a result of the determination to pass the concours CRPE to obtain a post as a primary school teacher. The problem is that French policymakers know that the students do not value subjects which are not in the *concours* and in addition, MFL is the only subject among all the

subjects taught at primary school which is not included in the primary teacher's competitive exam, the *CRPE* which sends a strong signal out to all future primary teachers about its status. Sarah, Alison and the other teacher educator colleagues did not accept this situation. They lobbied for the continual assessment exams to be transformed into an end of semester exam and were successful. The fact that since their efforts, the exams are now anonymous which means that the pressure during lessons has slackened a little which means that the teacher educators can concentrate on teaching MFL pedagogy rather than face the constant anxiety or even aggression of students. The fact that the students are assessed through an end of semester exam also raises the status of the evaluation and by association, the status of the subject. Sarah, Alison and their colleagues showed collective efficacy in the face of this challenge. They dealt with this issue from a collective perspective where the collective self is the teacher educator group reveals not only their professional unity and cohesion but also a mutual concern for the interests and outcomes of others, i.e. the students themselves, their future pupils and their colleagues. Insecure teachers may not have discussed the challenges they faced in the classroom with other colleagues for fear of being judged or considered a failing teacher.

As a reminder, as highlighted on page 13 of this study, Barakos (2018) points to how neoliberals use this fear of being judged to create "insecure work conditions" (p.3). These teacher educators, as second-order teachers, went beyond these fears and were ready to confront this issue together in an attempt to resolve the challenge that 'high-stakes testing' brings to the teacher educator classroom. As outlined by Brewer and Gardner (1996) on pages 78-83 of this thesis, this motivation to benefit the 'other' is the basis of altruistic motivation and not to be confused with self-sacrifice which concerns cost to self. It can be concluded that this situation is evidence of altruistic motivation and therefore reveals the commitment of these teacher educators given that motivation is an outcome of commitment.

There is a similar situation in Scotland according to Chris because there is a lack of teachers able to teach languages. However, the Scottish teacher educators have addressed this issue through the setting up of the National Framework for Languages (NFfL). Chris points out below that the system is at tipping point and that it is urgent to train the teachers in both the language and the pedagogy. For Scottish educators the most effective

way is to take responsibility for the students before they start their teacher education programme. My role as an insider-researcher is well-established as can be seen when Chris said 'part of **my job** just now and I think part of **your job** is we need to train the teachers in the language and in the pedagogy'. It is also an example of collective efficacy. This is not only expressed through the setting up of the FFfL as described in the first part of this chapter but also through the use of "we". He does not view Scottish educators as a distinct group but clearly as part of the teacher educator profession as a whole. The direct call that Chris made to French teacher educators to get involved in the common struggle to improve language teaching is indeed a strong sign of commitment as it expresses engagement:

> **CH17 (Scotland)** the main challenge just now I think – hopefully in Scotland we're addressing it, I don't think it's the same in other parts of the UK – it's how to prepare teachers, basically primary school teachers, to deliver the languages and our 1+2 policy which wasn't thought out very well in terms of the logistics and **it's chicken and egg**, you know. It would help now if people leaving school were very good at languages but **as we don't have the capacity with a profession skilled enough, we don't have the teachers**. We've got to address this by **training the children** and at the same time **part of my job just now and I think part of your job** is we need to train the teachers in the language and in the pedagogy. I would say the missing ingredient as said before with MLPS is that they don't want it in pre-service, you know?

Given the situation in French ESPEs concerning the number of students who fail to achieve level B2 CEFR, it is not surprising that language teaching at primary is perceived as failing. In this extract, Marie-Louise is of the same opinion as Sarah as she believes that the situation is getting more difficult:

> **NL86** And do you think – what's happening now in the primary schools – would you say that most primary teachers haven't got the linguistic skills or do you think that things are improving with education in general?
>
> **MA87 (France)** No, I don't think it's improving. No, I don't think it's improving because these primary … I mean these students who want to become primary teachers come from different *licences* and most of the time these degrees have very little English and if they have - it's written English with no oral – no we haven't improved.
>
> **NL87** Right!
>
> **MA88** No, we haven't!

NL88 So, do you think somebody, for example, the student that we saw earlier with the proper training, that there should be a group of these primary teachers teaching English … if they've got the right training?

MA89 Yes, yes!

NL89 Rather than it be everybody who has to do it?

MA90 Oh yes – I think it would be more efficient if we were more specialized. I know from a trade union point of view … they defend *la polyvalence des enseignants du primaire* but really as far as language is concerned – for the reasons we mentioned earlier I think we should be more specialized in languages.

Marie-Louise is not convinced that the situation is improving at primary school and states categorically that only teachers who are specialized in languages should teach them. In fact, she is proposing that France adopts a similar system to that in England in which a student teacher like Kevin, for instance, with the right pedagogical training, would take responsibility for the teaching of English in his primary school. This would, she says, avoid the challenges that the "poor primary teachers" have to go through to teach English effectively in terms of language learning and pedagogy. Marie-Louise has sympathy for these students because it must be a daunting task for a student who lacks confidence and knowledge in English to be expected to teach it to young children unlike those who have a degree in languages and who obviously love the language:

MA93 No, no, I don't think so. All cases are different but still they know more about the subject. It would – **ça permettrait d'éviter tous les problèmes de langue** so that they could concentrate on the teaching but now these poor primary teachers sometimes have problems with the language and problems with the pedagogy too.

Marie-Louise is less sympathetic with the secondary MFL teachers who do not take into account the primary children's language learning when they start teaching these children in *6ème*. She empathizes with those primary pupils who have to start all over again on entering *6ème* and is very concerned over the consequences for these children's motivation for future language learning:

NL93 And then how do the secondary teachers cope? What impact does this have on them?

MA94 (Fr) Well most of them think that primary school language at primary school is not efficient and they act as if nothing has happened before.

> **NL94** Yeah … yeah!
>
> **MA95** Which is awful. We were just talking about interest in the language and they arrive in 6ème and do or redo what they've done for the last five years … can you imagine? What's your name? How are you feeling today? I mean, poor kids!
>
> **NL95** Yeah oh yeah – so that just kills any…
>
> **MA96** Oh yes! Oh yes! And it's even worse than before because at least they started the language in *6ème*. No, no – there's a big problem! There's a problem for training primary teachers and there's a problem for the link between 6ème and CM2 which they're trying to solve with the cycle 4.

Chris in Scotland is very critical of those secondary school MFL teachers who do not want to recognize the work that has been done by their primary colleagues when the children move up to high school:

> **NL51** Exactly! How do the secondary teachers react to the difficulties of the primary pupils who have had little French or little of other languages?
>
> **CH52 (Scotland)** Right, well, I would say that there's some of them are quite sympathetic and quite practical. In my wife's school, they've been helping the teachers in the primary school and helping to train the primary school teachers. But I must admit that there are a large number of secondary school teachers who say "what on earth can they possibly teach them in the primary school" and they then ignore what happens.

Although Chris and Marie-Louise agree that the link between primary and secondary is a problem, there is a slight difference between the two individuals. Chris is of the view that what has been done in primary should be appreciated and valued by the secondary teacher which explains his angry tone. He holds certain secondary teachers as responsible for the situation by ignoring what happens at primary whilst Marie-Louise is frustrated and feels sorry for the children because they are not challenged. She considers that the problem lies in the training of the teachers and the "link between *6ème* and *CM2*". As former secondary MFL teachers they have experience of what happens when the pupils arrive at their new high school and it is this experience which provides them with the insight to understand what the primary pupils are experiencing. In fact, those who are responsible for this situation are not the secondary teachers or the primary teachers struggling to teach MFL with limited language skills but policymakers who have not only decided that MFL is no longer a specialist subject and that anyone can learn languages but they have not

provided the resources to help people learn them. They are expecting children to learn something which is extremely complicated and complex without adequate resources, funding or time. Jackie in Scotland is aware of the danger of division and the need for the teaching profession to pull together in such a climate:

> **JA91 (Scotland)** Oh absolutely, yeah absolutely – it's very important because the message that needs to come out from us about languages needs to be the same: that languages are important. And being and working as a team together.

Working together is something that the neoliberal agenda does not encourage. Neoliberalism encourages competition as a rule of thumb and competition is inherently divisive. Evidence that this is the case is presented in the interviews with all three English participants. They all express sadness that their MFL teacher educator network which enabled them to meet up with other MFL teacher educators from across the country is no longer funded and has practically been disbanded. I ask Rebecca about this situation:

> **RE40 (England)** Yes, well that's an interesting question. Up until two years ago we had a very, very strong network and we used to meet up regularly at the centre for research in languages and teaching which hosted a conference for ITE tutors in modern languages every year. Since the fragmentation of teacher education, that network has pretty much disappeared – yeah – but we are kind of hanging on to it! There is a half-day conference in London which I try to go to but I do feel that that strong bond has broken really and yeah …
>
> **NL41**Oh, that's really sad!
>
> **RE41**Yes, it is sad and colleagues that I've known for many years … and I think what's sad about it, is that now I'm one of the older ones. I could be mentoring somebody new in the way that I was mentored by colleagues from other universities when I first came into teacher education.
>
> **NL42**How did that take place?
>
> **RE42**Well just through meetings and regular meeting that we had – like a two-day conference when we would all present our work at the conference. We'd meet at – there was always two or three events a year and everyone would go. I think there is only about 60 teachers – modern language educators in the country anyway – there's not like a lot of us - so we all knew each other very very well. It was very supportive but there has been quite a lot of changes you know since – over the last couple of years and I really do think that school direct has had a big impact on that and some university departments have closed um or some have shrunk to almost nothing.

We learn from Rebecca that this network which was not only very important for sharing ideas and collaborating for research has been closed down by the government. Clearly, coordination and collaboration are not welcomed by policymakers influenced by neoliberalism. It is paradoxical that just as this network in England has petered away, the Scottish teacher educators have set up their own network. It seems that the Scottish government is more receptive to the Scottish educators but this was has not been without a struggle and demonstrates a very strong commitment on the behalf of the educators. For many years, the Scottish government bypassed them in favour of agencies. However, as Chris explains it is the teacher educators who have the knowledge and experience to recommend and make effective changes. It is refreshing that the expertise of the teacher educators has been recognised by the Government of Scotland:

> **CH32 (Scotland)** Yes! Essentially it sounds a bit arrogant but they should have called up the teacher educators from the start! **We're supposed to be the experts** and you know they should have said, okay here are the targets with the 1+2 policy which we hope to achieve but will all ability do it or certainly after four years once we've got teachers coming through who've been trained.
>
> **NL32**Why do you think they missed the teacher educators out of the equation?
>
> **CH3** I think that part of it is that a couple of agencies are running off in Scotland and one of them is Education Scotland which is a kind of like a national education agency; however, **there are not many teacher educators in it.** Mainly people who have been seconded from different schools and a lot of them are very good but I don't think that they quite have the **theoretical knowledge and overview** that we have. Another thing is that **governments – they want a quick fix within the period of their power** and so if they can do something in theory, skip it out to schools, hoping the schools notice a difference – it's a vote winner, you know! But what has actually taken place is a lot of panic and there's a lot of teachers who think: "okay we have to do this but you know we're not equipped for that yet" so, it's this sort of political approach of short-term aims, you know. Of course, they also have a national language agency CILT or we call it Scottish KILT (we laugh). Again, they do not have the capacity that we, as a body of languages lecturers, we have. You know we've been working on cases for 25 years and we've been doing that, you know**, out of free will**. The last 18 months that we've been working on this review, it's been in **our free time,** you know?

When Rebecca points out that ironically the independent sector is important for languages as 'they are keeping the languages going at universities', it is also tragic because this suggests that the situation in England is at the point of no return. Once universities stop teaching languages then what happens next? Kate finds it difficult to accept that there is

such a gap and states: "Yeah, Yeah! It's funny because whichever government it is, they always say that languages are very important and so on, but then there is no kind of money or policy to back that up" (KA30). This is the advantage that the private sector has over the public – not only do they recognize the value of languages and the need to go abroad to 'experience the foreign cultures' and 'use the language in its context' but they have the finance. Given that language learning is successful in the private sector, suggests that policymakers could look to private schools as a model for the state sector in order to improve the learning and teaching of languages at primary school. Not only are there plenty of studies and reports on the best conditions for learning languages at school, there are clearly examples in the private system as to how it should be done:

> **RE47 (England)**We obviously have some partnership schools which are independent schools but they are probably freer to do what they want to do and they have smaller classes which is great for languages and they have the trips. Well the private schools are **keeping the languages going at universities** and I suspect that a lot of that is to do with the fact that they do have a lot of opportunities to go on a lot of trips and **experience the foreign cultures more than a lot of state school children do.**
>
> **NL48**So, would you say there is a gap between …
>
> **RE48**Yeah – one of the first things I ask my trainee teachers when they arrive in September is who went on a school exchange or how old were you when you first went to the target language country and nearly always they've been at high school, you know. They've had an experience of being able to hear and use the language in its context. They've got that – **it's hard to get the point if you've never visited the country** or a country where the language is spoken.

Part of the problem concerning the number of university places in England is also because there are fewer pupils than ever choosing to study MFL at GCSE. This phenomenon is a concern because most of the pupils choosing to not study a foreign language for their GCSE have experienced primary MFL. This suggests that primary teaching has had an adverse effect and has resulted in a foreign language being rejected instead of being embraced. Alison (Fr) raised the point earlier that it was very important that primary teachers teach MFL with the right attitude but how can you get someone to like a language? Foreign languages are inherently difficult and as Marie-Louise (Fr) pointed out there is a connection between language and identity which makes language learning complex in the primary classroom. Another difficulty is due to the fact that languages are perceived as 'fun' whereas they are in fact 'hard':

> **KA25 (England)** Well it's a funny one because one part of the government says languages are really important, but on the other side of things they're not. You know, we've still not got a statutory key stage 4 with language, so, you know, when the government declared that it was optional, they suddenly saw schools around the country just drop languages and a drop in take up at GCSE. Because in comparison to other subjects, **it's a hard academic discipline**. It's not just a communicative, fun thing, you know, let's get on and speak some French – it's not just about that! **It's a proper study and only the really good, clever high ability ones opt for it because they know it's a lot of hard work**. So, when the government realised that they'd dropped the languages, they then set these schools these targets for getting pupils in for GCSE, and of course again that was shutting the door after the horse had bolted. You can't say, "Oh well, it's optional" and then suddenly try and get pupils to do it. Is it important or isn't it? You know, mixed messages!

There are various strategies employed by neoliberal policymakers to ensure that future generations of children are not educated in the same way that their parents or grand-parents were. There is evidence of a general trend to 'dumb everything down'. The curriculums are vague and lack detail. I always advise my own students to refer to previous national curriculums because they contain more advice and information about language content knowledge than the more recent versions. Rebecca, for instance, explains that "there is more a general sort of pedagogy so it might be good for assessment across all subjects for example and that is being applicated in <u>school direct</u>" (RA44). Rebecca is making reference to the move away from universities to school-based training which is consistent with the attack made on teacher educators in the European Commission Report (2013) *Supporting Teacher Educators for better learning outcomes*, whilst Kate expresses her surprise and concern that there is not more detail written into the curriculum:

> **KA24** Very vague, and it just says 'substantial progress' from key stage 2, but it doesn't give any prescriptive …you know, "you shalt do this or that!" regarding content or amount of time. As a result, it gets pushed out most often and a lot of them don't make the 'substantial progress' anyway. They try to get rid of that problem of streamlining (because they all started in year 3 with French), and if you look at the curriculum, they're meant to be doing grammar, so it is supposed to be happening in theory … if you take it as it's written … doing conjugating and correct adjectival endings, you know but they don't do that at all. No…

I asked Kate if she felt that the profession itself was being threatened or under attack. Kate acknowledges that this is the case:

> **NL31**Do you consider yourself as a profession under attack?
>
> **KA31**Well I do feel that with the **white paper it's obvious that the government does not want us to be involved**. They've openly said that the head-teachers now are in the best place to train and be responsible for teachers.

Again, consistent with the European Commission report (2013) steps have been taken in England to dismantle teacher education as an overt policy. The Government is clearly on the offensive and it uses neoliberal discourse that sounds legitimate and makes sense to an 'untrained ear'. It is only when someone like Kate stands back and really listens to what is actually being said that the discourse is understood as 'that same kind of rhetoric that just says nothing':

> **NL111** Maybe the politicians in Scotland actually listen to the educators? I don't know? (both laugh)
>
> **KA111** Dear me! Yeah! I don't know. I don't think we're going to have that much of a miracle! I think at government level, if you read some of the things that Nikki Morgan comes out with…I don't know how she had the gall to stand there at the last NUT conference … how she didn't get pelted with rotten tomatoes! And I just think – why are you coming out with that? It's just ridiculous: **it's that same kind of rhetoric that just says nothing**. It's sounds great but masks all these people who don't know what's going on. **You think that up until this point that she's talking sense. Yeah, it sounds like she's talking sense but has anybody asked her why we're in this position to start off with?** (laughs) She seems to stand there surprised, saying "Well, it's a disgrace that teachers just don't have the professional standing and the respect…" And I'm thinking...what? (laughs). Hey ho!

Kate is almost shocked by just how reasonable and logical this politician appears in the face of the policies she promotes to the extent that she even says that 'it sounds great'. This clearly demonstrates the power of neoliberal discourse.

For Anne, in France, the most important thing that she as a teacher educator does is help the students to understand that they have to be independent thinkers, reflect on their teaching and search for solutions. As Philippa stated earlier in the previous section, it is precisely this attitude to knowledge and learning that neoliberal policymakers do not want to inculcate in future teachers. She explains that it is a difficult job because the students do not want to think and reflect – they want immediate answers. In today's consumer society, people have grown accustomed to getting quick fixes because they have not got time or because it makes them feel safer and more secure; however, Anne stresses that

this is not possible in teaching because problem surge up all the time and there are no magic solutions. It is this capacity to reflect and search for solutions which novices find difficult and a great challenge but so necessary if they want to become experts.

> **AN21 (France)** D'accord ? Ah, oui, oui. Dans ce sens-là effectivement, c'est plus de l'éducation que du training – oui, oui ! Mais on ne forme pas un professeur en six mois. C'est faux. Tout le monde le sait – c'est faux ! J'avais mon prédécesseur, X, qui disait **un an pour poser toutes les questions en formation et une carrière entière pour tenter de trouver les réponses** et c'est exactement ça, c'est exactement ça ! Mais si j'ai donné à mes stagiaires l'habitude de réfléchir au « pourquoi » et pas que « comment », pourquoi, je pense que je les ai outillés de l'outil le plus utile dans une carrière, c'est justement, le « pourquoi » … tout le temps, le « pourquoi », qui permet de s'adapter à toutes les réformes, à toutes les fads du ministère ou des didacticiens, n'importe quoi, c'est le « pourquoi » ? Et justement, il y a cette … comment dire ? Les stagiaires, souvent certains stagiaires …ils en resteront toujours là certains, ils freinent, ils freinent … ils ne veulent pas être dans le « pourquoi ». Ils veulent être dans la recette, ils veulent être dans « oui, il faut », « on doit », « ça doit toujours être comme ça » … non, non, non, on est dans ça !
>
> **NL22**Est-ce que c'est parce que la société … on veut les réponses carrées ?
>
> **AN22** Oui, puis non, surtout parce que c'est la sécurité : si je leur ai dit, « vous faites le contrôle de réactivation **comme ça** » … « **on** nous a demandé de faire comme **ça** et donc je suis **totalement** libéré de toutes critiques si ça ne marche pas ». Il y a aussi ça ! C'est l'institution … il faudrait que l'institution leur fournisse ceci … un kit didactique appliqué les yeux fermés.
>
> **NL23**Teacher tips !
>
> **AN23** Voilà ! Voilà ! Mais bon, je les comprends aussi puisque quand on est stagiaire dans cette forme de … stagiaire maintenant-là avec … en responsabilité, on est face à des problèmes tous les jours. On veut de l'efficacité. On voudrait une réponse tout de suite alors qu'il n'y a pas **une réponse** tout de suite … il n'y a pas

Stephen Metcalf of the Guardian captures the way neoliberalism moves people away from independent thought and even collective thought, displacing experts and institutions on the way:

> The internet is personal preference magnified by algorithm; a pseudo-public space that echoes the voice already inside our head. Rather than a space of debate in which we make our way, as a society, towards consensus, now there is a mutual-affirmation apparatus banally referred to as a "marketplace of ideas". What looks like something public and lucid is only an extension of our own pre-existing opinions, prejudices and beliefs, while the **authority of institutions and**

> **experts has been displaced** by the aggregative logic of big data.[1] (Metcalf, 2017, p.7)

At the very end of the interview, Philippa came out with her understanding of the situation in England. What she describes corresponds with the EU policy documents that have been presented in this study alongside the EU legislation that has been passed:

> **PH46 (England)** Oh, they just don't want – ok – I mean 'off the record' the Tory government wants to disempower teachers. They don't want kids to get a good education. They want kids to be well-behaved robots and not to be critical thinkers. They want to keep them in their place as a pool of unemployed people because then you've got much more power.

In PH46, Philippa makes it clear how the 'Tory government' are actively promoting the neoliberal agenda: 'They don't want kids to get a good education.'

5.2.5 Effort, willpower, confidence and conviction – is it enough?

Hypothesis 3

> I expect to find that English, French and Scottish MFL teacher educators demonstrate continuance (effort to continue and 'stick at it') and engagement (sense of responsibility and duty: willing to expend time and energy) and motivation (self-efficacy and collective efficacy) as outcomes of commitment.

In this section, I present evidence of data that indicates outcomes of commitment: continuance or 'sticking with it', engagement or willingness to spend time and energy, demonstrates confidence in one's ability (self-efficacy) and confidence in collective efficacy. With this in mind, evidence in interview data will concern career choice decisions, drive to do research, to get qualified, and search for relevant experience and personal development; willingness to help and support colleagues, and struggle to be recognised and to promote MFL. The Scottish teacher educators through their SCDE Languages have already demonstrated their commitment simply by setting up this group and achieving what they have achieved. Their everyday struggle to defend languages is demonstrated by Lottie when she says:

> LO24(…) in all my working life as a teacher I was always fighting in a corner for languages, because the headteachers and the whole guidance system keeps

[1] https://www.theguardian.com/news/2017/aug/18/neoliberalism-the-idea-that-changed-the-world

> saying to the children three sciences, you have to do English, maths and three sciences.

Unfortunately, the English teacher educators no longer have a forum or a network and they are seriously under threat and it is clear that despite their commitment, they cannot achieve more than they do at present because of the neoliberal agenda at play in England. In this sense, they are experiencing a reduced sense of collective efficacy as teacher educator colleagues are deciding to retire instead of continuing for a few more years. In addition, the younger colleagues are not even aware of what used to exist so this makes it more difficult for a collective reaction from the profession:

> **NL46** Do you think people like yourselves will continue to struggle for it?
>
> **RE46**… well I'm not sure really, to be honest, I do think that there is quite a lot of **early retirements** and it's worrying as well that **younger and newer teacher educators will not know what went before** and won't have an **understanding of that kind of collaboration** across universities and also with schools.

This does not mean that the English teacher educators are not making an effort on an everyday basis in their localwork environment not only in terms of what they do but in their attitude towards the primary MFL teacher education system in which they work. Kate is very aware of the importance of maintaining a positive attitude and believes that it is crucial element in the fight to improve the situation. For her, there is no choice: "**we have to** change it from the inside somehow". This is an expression of determination and strong self-efficacy as she clearly believes that the profession can overcome the challenges it faces as long as colleagues maintain their enthusiasm. However, it is also worrying that it is only their enthusiasm that makes the difference between a 'sink or swim' scenario which reveals the extent of their vulnerability:

> **KA44** It's, you know, when you were asking about the trainees being positive - that's the only thing that I ever communicate to them is positivity! Although, you know, with things like transition and critique and what have you, we encourage critical reflection so they're very aware of all the issues, but **we have to change it from the inside somehow**. If you **don't keep that enthusiasm going, it's just going to die a death, isn't it, really?**

I have therefore chosen to present data from the French group. Not only do the participants know each other but they have also interacted with each other at critical moments of their careers providing an opportunity to gain insight into the potential of

teacher educators to collaborate and demonstrate continuance, engagement and self/collective efficacy. Consequently, in this section, I present a case study analysis of participants who all work at the same ESPE in France: Sarah, Marie-Louise and Alison.

There appears to be evidence that Marie-Louise not only enriched her own professional development when she embraced the culture of informal and formal practitioner research at university but she also went on to enhance that of her colleague, Sarah, who needed guidance and support as a novice teacher educator. We learn that the research background and experience that Marie-Louise had built up as a teacher educator did in fact benefit Sarah albeit indirectly.

Sarah made the decision to become a teacher educator approximately thirteen years ago after having spent her teaching career as a secondary teacher. Just before making the transition from secondary to higher education she was bored with what she was doing at the lycée technique and felt as though she was stagnating not only in terms of her everyday teaching but also because she no longer felt a connection with her teaching colleagues:

> **SA1 (France)** So, I've been a teacher trainer since September 2005 and I came to teacher training after my experience in the secondary system because I was a *conseiller pédagogique* for many years. I was also fed-up with teaching students, teenage students – I was in a lycée technique – mostly boys – vocational training you know – not motivating enough. I was 13 years in the same lycée but after 13 years I was getting tired and also getting tired with my colleagues. I was in X at the time so I couldn't really think of any place to move to apart from the lycée general which was a lycée. I didn't feel like that and it was also because I had had experience in teaching younger children and going into the primary schools and doing *anglais précoce.*
>
> **NL2** Did you do that on your own initiative?
>
> **SA2** So, I did that at first when I first started teaching in the 1990s when I had the CAPES in 1990 because it was under experimentation then and the place where I was living, which was Y, was experimenting the whole of the CM1 and CM2 programme. I took part in it for three or four years. I did that at the beginning of my career.

She had already been involved in teacher education as a school-based *conseiller pédagogique* at the start of her career in the 1990s when she was involved in research into primary languages in CM1 and CM2 and this perhaps explains why she felt so dissatisfied

with her current role given that she had already acquired experience and knowledge as a 2nd order primary teacher educator. It also explains why she was not interested in teaching at the lycée because from the very start of her teaching career, she had manifested an interest in primary MFL and had had the opportunity to get involved in a research project. It would seem therefore that this positive experience had left a strong impression on Sarah and provided a foundation for her future career path; however, this also meant that she was all the more frustrated as there appeared no opportunity open to her to exploit the experience and expertise she had developed in the domain of primary MFL. Consequently, when she learnt that English teachers were "badly needed" at primary school, she "decided to go there and start teaching again". Sarah therefore made a 'conscious choice' to get involved in primary MLF. This decision was motivated by the fact that she "knew how to do the job" reflecting her awareness that she could make a positive contribution as a primary MFL teacher. This was not a spur of the moment decision because she had "had two classes CE2 and CM2 at the time and (she) did that for two or three years" whilst continuing to work at the *lycée technique*. Working in two different schools obviously demands extra effort because not only would Sarah have to adapt to two very different teaching cultures but would also have to juggle various constraints such as time and travel between the two schools:

> **SA2** (…) When I came to X, at first, I think they didn't need anybody and then one day, *à la rentrée*, we got a letter from the inspection that they badly needed teachers to go back to primary schools. So, I decided to go back because I knew how to do the job but not everything of course. So, I decided to go there and to start teaching children again. So, I had two classes *CE2* and *CM2* at the time and then I did that for about two or three years I think. I heard about the job at the *IUFM* from a lady in charge of the … she was a *conseiller pedagogique départemental de la LV à l'école donc du premier degré,* and she knew that the *IUFM* was looking for somebody. It was also because they needed someone because the concours was changing in 2006 and they were anticipating in 2005 the need to have somebody there to organize lessons and everything, and so that's why I got the job.

On learning from a "*conseilleur pedagogique départemental de la LV à l'école donc du premier degré*" that the "IUFM was looking for somebody", Sarah applied for the part-time post and got it. She then goes on to describe the extent to which she was thrown into the deep-end without any formal induction support to help her develop the knowledge, understanding and skills necessary for her new role. This represents a very common

experience for newly recruited teacher educators in France given that there is no formal requirement in France for a training period. This is linked to the fact that teachers with the CAPES are qualified to teach not only at college and lycée but also at university level. It is therefore considered that the very first year as a probationary teacher is considered sufficient which explains why Sarah states that "you're taken because you're apt". It is assumed that if you are offered the post as a teacher educator then this means that you have been recognised by the institution as someone with expertise to do this job. In addition, she explains that it is not expected that you ask for help or training because you have chosen to do this job of your own free will: "You *want* to work at the IUFM? Ok? Then get on with it and do it!" Only teacher educators, who move from one category to another, undergo training. For instance, a teacher with the CAPES who then qualifies as a *Maître du Conference* (MCF) has to undergo a probationary year to be permanently recruited in that particular category of HE lecturers. In this respect, the probationary year is a requirement which is more based on the change in civil servant category than on the need to be trained for the new job role:

> **NL4** Do you think there is a difference between a teacher trainer and a normal language teacher? Would you say it's a similar job or would you say there's a distinct difference?
>
> **SA4** Of course! It is! I mean I don't think you can be one without being the other – I don't think you can be a trainer without being a teacher but you could be a teacher without being a trainer (laughs). It's linked, of course, but it's not something that's very obvious at first because when you've never been a trainer, of course – you asked me if I'd had any training at all – I didn't get any, of course. When you get into the IUFM you just do it because you're taken because you're apt. You want to work at the IUFM? Ok? Then get on with it and do it! (laughs)

Sarah emphasises the fact that at first, she found it hard to adapt to her new job because there was so much to learn. This is understandable not only because she did not benefit from a training period which would have gradually prepared her but she admitted that to a great extent that it was difficult to discern the full nature of what being a teacher educator was all about until she had to do it: "but it's not something that's very obvious at first because when you've never been a trainer". From the very start she was involved in setting up courses and on-going training for teachers and although she lacked knowledge

and experience, this served as a spring-board to build up her own teacher educator knowledge and skills:

> **SA3** The director in charge of X at the time was very concerned about the *politique des langues* and everything. He organized a *pole: comment on appelle ça? Une equipe de pilotage? Un groupe de pilotage?* To give the M2s training to teach English. It was not compulsory at the time. It was not in the *plan de formation*. It was something extra he wanted to give the students and funnily enough the fact of giving more lessons to the students was not seen positively by the students because they saw it as something on top of the rest. So, it was seen as an extra thing. So, well we built a *plan de formation* and we built a *stage à la fin de l'année. C'était un stage de je ne sais plus de combien c'était - de trois semaines, je crois. Au mois de juin après que tous les cours ont été terminé, on a donc fait un planning de stage avec les CPD - les PEMF – moi, lui aussi. On faisait des sortes de conférences pour tout ce qui était politique. On a expliqué le Cadre Européen etc. et puis après on a fait des choses beaucoup plus pédagogiques qui ressemblent beaucoup plus aux sessions, ce qu'on fait avec nos M2 maintenant. Mais avec beaucoup moins de – moi je ne savais pas grand-chose parce que c'était le tout début. Je ne connaissais rien. Je n'avais rien lu donc c'était ça qui m'a mis un petit peu le pied à l'étrier, qui m'a permis de construire un peu la connaissance de l'anglais, de l'enseignement de l'anglais dans le système du premier degré quoi.*

In addition to the experience of doing the job, Sarah believes that being helped by her UCD[1] teacher educator colleagues, and her colleague, Marie-Louise in particular, was what enabled her to understand her role more fully as it gave her access to the key notions she needed in order to progress and develop as a teacher educator:

> **NL5** So, what do you think actually helped you become the teacher trainer you are today?
>
> **SA5** Well, experience I suppose. Experience and working with colleagues. Year by year, I was improving everything I was doing at the IUFM because I was thinking back on what I'd done the previous year and what had worked.
>
> **NL6** Yes, what worked?
>
> **SA6** Yes, this worked and that didn't work, and this of course was good. Also, the UCD helped me because I heard what the others were doing on the other sites.
>
> **NL7** Yes, because in fact teacher educators are quite isolated really, aren't we?
>
> **SA7** Yeah, exactly. At some stage I was asked to organize a stage de formation continue for which Marie-Louise came and gave me the keys to it because it had

[1] UCD (unités de concertation disciplinaire)

been done in X and I didn't know how to do it. It was a three weeks stage and they were not students they were real teachers – *instits*[1]. They were coming for three weeks to the IUFM and I was the **only** teacher!

NL8 (Silence and sharp intake of breath) OK!! (we laugh)

SA8 So, she helped me a lot in designing the course, in making the timetable, you know, in analysing different points which had to be dealt with in English, pure English songs you know.

NL9 Games?

SA9 Games and everything. She advised me what to give to other people like the CPD, like the PEMF, to take a step back and not be always in front of them all the time. So that it was not only just me and so that you're not the only person *référente.*

Indeed it was Sarah's more experienced colleague who helped her make the transition from being a teacher of pupils at school to a teacher of teachers. Marie-Louise provided Sarah with knowledge about how to adapt her behaviour to adults (PE), identify the needs of the primary school teachers attending her course whilst promoting cooperation between the various teacher educators (CPD and PEMF) who work in the different contexts of teacher education in the local authority with the objective of promoting a joint vision of the institution.

Her impressions and feelings of inadequacy as a novice are reflected in this account of her first UCD meeting with her other MFL teacher education colleagues when she describes just how little she initially grasped concerning pedagogy and research: *"tu vois, ils faisaient références à des choses"* and about teacher education generally: "*et je n'avais pas de vision de l'ensemble"*. She realised that it was not a question of language because they had all "been speaking French all the time" but rather a difficulty in understanding the overall aims and purposes of teacher education and its terminology. She is convinced that her professional experience would have been far more arduous had she not had the help and support from Marie-Louise and her UCD colleagues in conjunction with her own 'on the ground' experiences gained from visiting student teachers in their classrooms:

NL10 So, you think, possibly, without that input from the UCD and from Marie-Louise it would have been very different?

[1] Jargon used to refer to 'professors des écoles'.

SA10 Yes, of course. It would have been really difficult in fact. Of course, I read things and looked at the internet, you know all the kinds of things that you do when you don't know something but it's not the same, it's not the same. I also gained from understanding what was being done at the IUFM, because at first, I just couldn't understand it. I remember the first meeting. They were all speaking my language – French – and I came out of that 4-hour meeting and I came out of the room and I said to myself but "what is it?" **They've all been speaking French all the time. It is not a question of language because it was my language.** I did not understand one thing of what was going on and I didn't understand the consequences – the impact of la formation. Tu vois, ils faisaient références à des choses et je n'avais pas de vision de l'ensemble. Je ne savais pas. Ils s'engeulaient et je ne savais pas pourquoi. Et je ne comprenais rien, rien, rien. C'est vrai que les années faisant le fait aussi que je visite les stagiaires et que je voie à quoi ressemble l'ensemble de la formation, ça m'a aussi aidé à voir ce que moi, je pouvais apporter en tant qu'enseignant, d'une part d'anglais, et aussi en tant que formatrice d'anglais.

Murray and Male (2005) explain that this shift from first-order practitioner to second-order practitioner sets up a need for newly appointed teacher educators to acquire new and extended pedagogical skills of teacher education. However, there is an assumption that the new recruits already possess pedagogical expertise. This assumption is likely to result in "feelings of professional unease and discomfort" (p.17) for newly appointed teacher educators who, on the contrary, experience the unique position of 'expert become novice'. Sarah expresses disarray and stress in her voice when she recalls the extent to which she did not understand the discourse of her peers: "*Je ne savais pas. Ils s'engeulaient et je ne savais pas pourquoi. Et je ne comprenais rien, rien, rien !*". The lack of knowledge and understanding at the start of her professional experience as a teacher educator clearly left her feeling disempowered at the time but thanks to the UCD culture of informal support and assistance, her teacher educator colleagues enabled her to gradually access this new professional environment. According to Murray and Male (ibid) it takes on average three years for a newly recruited teacher educator to become a confident second-order practitioner which confirms why Sarah points out that it was only after **years** of visiting students in their classrooms and making an effort to build up an understanding of teacher education as a whole that she was eventually able to identify what **she** contributes as an individual to both the teaching of English and to teacher education: "*ça m'a aussi aidé à voir ce que moi, je pouvais apporter en tant qu'enseignant, d'une part d'anglais, et aussi en tant que formatrice d'anglais*". This mission to contribute despite the challenges she faced and the trying moments she

experienced as she persevered to gain the knowledge and experience required to develop her expertise in teacher education is clearly an example of commitment to primary MFL teacher education in which she views both English as an MFL and teacher education as intertwined *Marie-Louise felt responsible for Sarah (commitment).* And then, we discover that Sarah went on to help another colleague, Alison. Sarah spent many years working on one site of the ESPE based in a small rural town. The fact that there are not as many students in such towns as there are on the campuses in the big cities, she was the only English teacher. However, she eventually changed location and started work at an ESPE site where she found herself with other English teacher educator colleagues. I will now focus on the relationship between Sarah and Alison. As a reminder, Alison has never taught in a secondary high school in France or in England and consequently her views concerning MFL secondary teaching are based on her own representations of what happens in high school language lessons. Sarah recounts how she helped Alison integrate and the extent to which this was a positive learning experience not only for Alison but also for herself. This is an example of a strong sense of self-efficacy because Sarah is aware of her strengths and is ready to take risks to overcome her apprehensions. In addition, she is grateful for this opportunity and recognises that working with Alison helped her reflect upon her teaching thanks to the fact that Alison is English and has a different approach to teaching than she does :

> **SA14** Voilà, Voilà, oui, oui parce que j'avais déjà essayé des choses et je savais ce que moi, **j'étais capable de faire et pas faire**. Et alors après, **j'ai réessayé d'autres trucs** parce qu'elle m'a pas mal bousculée parce que moi je suis française et elle, elle est anglaise. Du coup dans la façon de voir les choses, à la façon d'enseigner et de gérer le groupe, etc., vous avez des façons qui sont très différentes des nôtres et de notre représentation à nous et **cette confrontation-là m'a beaucoup aidée aussi** parce que **j'ai tenté des trucs** que, tu vois, des trucs en ateliers et tout ça, alors que je me disais – oh ba ba ba bah – et de quoi encore, mais non. Et **ça m'a beaucoup aidé aussi**.

Sarah also recognises that although she benefits from the fact that she can keep up her English skills thanks to Alison, there is a mutual exchange. Sarah's extensive experience as a teacher educator was indeed of great value to Alison. Sarah had developed most of her skills as a teacher educator over a period of seven years and this had not been a straightforward process. It had demanded a lot of effort, reflection and research, but now she feels she has reached a point where she feels confident about her professional

development. Again, this confidence is an example of her strong sense of self-efficacy regarding her teacher educator expertise as well as her capacity to transmit this expertise to her colleague :

> **NL15**Qu'est-ce que tu penses avoir apporté à ta collègue ?
>
> **SA15** Je pense que de la recherche des 7 ans, ça lui a servi **parce que j'avais quand même construit pas mal de choses –tu vois**. J'avais fait le tri déjà de pas mal de choses – elle sait que ça lui a servi et puis le fait aussi, je pense qui l'a aidée, c'est de conduire à deux la même chose : le même plan de formation à deux comme ça et d'échanger parce que souvent on avait cours le même jour donc on pouvait se voir et on disait alors pour toi ça a marché ? Moi, j'ai fait ça, moi j'ai fait comme ça. Ah toi tu as fait comme ça ? Ah moi, j'ai pas fait comme ça. Ah bah oui, tu avais raison ! Oui, ok, puis, tu vois comme ça ? Je pense que ça aussi c'est très intéressant et moi ce **qu'elle m'a aussi beaucoup apporté, c'était de parler anglais.** J'ai eu le CAPES en 1990, et tu sais quand tu parles pas du tout anglais à tes collègues, tu as un anglais qui devient pauvre. Tu parles qu'à tes élèves alors quand tu parles à tes élèves, moi, entre 1990 à 2005, tu n'es que dans tes classes, donc moi j'étais en collège et puis ensuite en lycée et tu parles qu'à tes élèves un anglais qu'ils sont susceptibles de comprendre, donc tu fais des formes simplifiées.
>
> **NL16** C'est vrai !
>
> **SA16 Tu t'abrutis un peu aussi.** J'avais fait un programme Européen, tu sais une étude sur le e-learning qui se passait en anglais, juste pour ça. Je m'en f* du e-learning, j'aimais bien mais je ne suis pas venue pour ça, c'était pour parler en anglais. **Et ça m'a fait pas mal de bien**. Deux ans après, je suis arrivée ici et donc ça a apporté aussi le pouvoir de communiquer ce que je faisais en anglais. C'est aussi une difficulté, la terminologie et tout ça. C'est compliqué. Ce n'est pas vraiment une langue de travail parce que, tu vois, c'est comme, là, je commence en anglais, et au bout d'un moment, ça buscule. Des idées arrivent tellement vite que je parle en anglais, je parle et puis … c'est c* parce qu'avant, ça ne me gênait pas. Quand je dis avant, c'est avant, **quand je suis sortie de mes études, moi j'étais presque bilingue quoi, je pouvais dire ce que je voulais quand je voulais mais tu ne peux pas t'imaginer ce que c'est de vingt ans de « the /fiʃ/ (fish) » (laughs), c'est dur.**

Sarah is clearly passionate about English and is extremely motivated by any possibility to speak English. In SA16, it is clear that Sarah's content knowledge of English is very secure and she makes every effort to maintain her level which highlights her commitment to her subject area. Having an opportunity to speak in English to her colleague is percieved as vital for Sarah just as it is to work as a team. The advantage of working with Alison for Sarah is the opportunity to reflect on the work they have done in order to

identify strengths and shortfalls: "ça et alors le fait de partager et de faire les expériences, de revenir en arrière, de proposer des trucs". This again indicates the motivation of these two teachers to persevere in building up the most effective teaching programme possible. Sarah concludes that there were two stages in her professional development. In addition, the benefits that both Sarah and Alison managed to draw from this situation is an example of emergence where the whole is greater than its parts: "[l]'enrichissement de deux personnes qui travaillent en équipe, c'est très, très porteur":

> **SA11** Et voilà la suite de mon orientation. Bon, j'ai beaucoup progressé dans les 7 ans à X. Au bout de 7 ans, je suis venue ici et j'ai beaucoup progressé entre la première année et la 7ème année. Franchement, quand je regarde mon travail et même encore, tu vois, quand j'ai tout regardé dans mes dossiers et cetera **quand je regarde ce que je faisais au début, et ce que je faisais à la fin** mais le fait de venir ici et de travailler avec Alison, ça m'a beaucoup beaucoup aidé évidemment - ça et alors le fait de partager et de faire les expériences, de revenir en arrière, de proposer des trucs. **L'enrichissement de deux personnes qui travaillent en équipe, c'est très, très porteur.**

The first stage involved a personal effort to improve her PCK as a teacher educator over a period of seven years: "*quand je regarde ce que je faisais au début, et ce que je faisais à la fin*". This effort is an outcome of her commitment to primary MFL teacher education and then the second stage involved her effort to mentor her colleague, just as she was mentored herself by Marie-Louise, which again illustrates her commitment to primary MFL teacher education. However, she insists that she would not have been able to be a good mentor had she not had that essential first formative experience: "*je pense que si j'étais arrivée ici sans avoir eu l'expérience d'abord de débuter toute seule, ça aurait été different*". This highlights her awareness of the importance of this initial experience in the shift from proficiency to expertise:

> **NL12**C'est ça qui change ?
>
> **SA12** Oui ça change beaucoup de choses, oui, énormément. Mais je pense que ça n'aurait pas été aussi fructueux si je n'avais pas, moi, pendant 7 ans cherché de mon côté. Tu vois, **je pense que si j'étais arrivée ici sans avoir eu l'expérience d'abord de débuter toute seule, ça aurait été différent.**
>
> **NL13**C'était important de faire ton propre chemin ?
>
> **SA13** Oui, oui.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

6.1 Research conclusions

This thesis set out to examine how Modern Foreign Language teacher educators, working in primary initial teacher education at a higher education institution in the three European Union education systems of England, France and Scotland, demonstrate their commitment towards early foreign language learning and teaching and explores the challenges and obstacles they face. The overall aim of the methodology adopted was to generate a rich variety of qualitative data to build as complete a picture as possible of the context being researched to be able to answer the following research question and its three sub-questions:

How do Modern Foreign Language teacher educators demonstrate their commitment to primary foreign language teacher education in the education systems of England, France and Scotland despite the challenges they face in their work with primary MFL student teachers?

The sub-questions which emanate from this overarching research question:

1. *What personal contribution do they believe they make to primary MFL teacher education in terms of their professional standards, values and expertise?*

2. *What obstacles do they face in the course of their professional lives in achieving their goals?*

3. *What efforts do they make to achieve their goals and how successful do they believe they are on an individual level and collective level?*

<u>Research question 1</u>

What personal contribution do they believe they make to primary MFL teacher education in terms of their professional standards, values and expertise?

The data which provide evidence to answer this question comes from two sources. The first source of data deals with the contribution that MFL teacher educator participants

make on a micro level and concerns interview data. The second source of data from the and the second *Teacher National Framework for languages: plurilingualism and pluriliteracies* (Scottish Council of Deans of Education Languages Group, 2017).

It is clear from interview evidence that all the participants contribute to primary MFL teacher education because first and foremost they love teaching, they care deeply about children's learning and they have built up the **expertise** to help guide student teachers into the teaching profession with empathy and understanding. One of the Scottish participants, Lottie voiced many concerns over Kevin's teaching, and at one point says: "but I thought the delivery was just awful", yet she describes the attitude and advice she would give him in the debriefing: "If that was my student I would be very **positive in my feedback**, highlighting the good reinforcement but I would be stressing 'you have to get children to interact' and then any of these discipline problems would have disappeared" which reflects that teacher educators like Lottie are fully aware that the **student teacher is on a path** and **their job is to help them on the way**. As Rebecca pointed out: "that young teacher, you know, the one we saw - he had a lot of personal attributes and qualities as well" illustrating that **they visualize the potential**. This is the success scenario that Bandura (1993) believes is so crucial. Teacher educators who **recognise the talent in young teachers** and show them **how to teach more effectively** sow the seeds of education for future generations. EU policymakers suggest that teachers should be trained by school-based teacher educators; however, this means that the opportunity for student teachers to access theory would be limited and without theory, there can be no progression. It took Marie-Louise (Fr) to reach the age of 45 before she really grasped **the relevance of research** to her teaching and what a difference it made. Marie-Louise entered the teaching profession in the same way that EU policymakers are currently pushing for with their plans to dismantle teacher education across the EU: "when I started being a teacher we were just put into classes and we had to teach and that's all". The informants all recognize that that is not the way forward and insist on **pedagogy**: "how much easier it would be to do lessons with theoretical underpinnings" laments Rebecca (Eng). Not only would Kevin's pupils learn more in the lessons with better pedagogy but the pupils would enjoy it and it would be easier for Kevin to manage. Without information and knowledge about what is missing, there is a risk that student teachers like

Kevin give up and abandon teaching simply because they believe they have done all they were able to do and are not cut out to be teachers. As Philippa points out: "you gotta have content pedagogical knowledge and **part of that knowledge is your awareness of own limitations**". In this way, teacher educators **contribute to the future success of teachers** such as Kevin in their career as teachers by helping them develop this awareness so that they are in a position to move from novice to expert one day as long as they are motivated to do so. In addition, there are many examples in the interviews that teacher educators at every level demonstrate a will to cooperate and work together; however, the collaboration of the Scottish MFL educators is perhaps the most striking example of all in the setting up of the *National Framework for languages: plurilingualism and pluriliteracies.* As highlighted in chapter five (5.1.3), the MFL teacher educators in the SCDE Languages group consider that they make an important contribution to primary languages as they aim to create "the conditions in which **every** child in Scotland **will** learn two languages in addition to their mother tongue (SCDE Languages Group, 2017, p.3). In addition, they take **full** responsibility for education because they indicate that they intend to create the conditions necessary so that **all children** benefit from the 1+2 Languages Policy "every child in Scotland". Most importantly, they use the high epistemic probability linked with the word "will" to express certainty about the outcome. This statement therefore illustrates the commitment of Scottish MFL teacher educators collectively as they express a 'conscious choice' to care about and dedicate themselves to the children of Scotland's language learning which corresponds to the definition of commitment (Klein et al., 2012).

<u>Research question 2</u>

What obstacles do they face in the course of their professional lives in achieving their goals?

The data that provide evidence of the obstacles that MFL teacher educators face come from two sources. The first source is a set of documents studied for the purposes of understanding more about the ideology influencing EU teacher education policy:

1 A report by the European Commission Report, *Supporting Teacher Educators for better learning outcomes (*European Commission, 2013) which was used to

inform EU legislation: *Council Conclusions of 20 May 2014 on effective teacher education.*

2 A book published in 2017 by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Pedagogical Knowledge and the Changing Nature of the Teaching Profession (OECD, 2017) which refers to the European Commission report as one of its sources and is even more explicit in its critical stance against EU teacher educators.

The aim of analysing discourse in these documents was to identify the position of EU policymakers in order to throw light on the difficulties and obstacles the primary MFL teacher educators in this study experience. Neoliberalism lends itself to discourse analysis as it promotes its ideology through language using very powerful literary techniques and devices.

The second source of data used to find evidence of obstacles facing MFL teacher educators were found in the interviews with MFL teacher educator participants in the three European Union (EU) education systems of England, France and Scotland. Following Apple and the work of Mark Olssen's (1996, p.340) the key differences between classical liberalism and neoliberalism were presented. As a reminder classical liberalism presents a negative conception of state power where the individual is perceived as an object that needs to be set free from the interventions of the state. Classical liberalism promotes the notion that an individual is autonomous and enjoys freedom and so the role of the state is to limit and minimize intervention according to theoretical principles such as universal egoism (the self-interested person) and the invisible hand theory which ruled that the "interests of the individual were also the interests of the society as a whole" (ibid) so respecting the "laissez-faire' maxim. In contrast, neoliberalism regards the state positively as it creates the "appropriate market by providing the conditions, laws, and institutions necessary for its operation" and that it is the duty of the state to incite an individual to be enterprising and competitive (ibid).

The European Commission document revealed itself to inculcate the neoliberal ideology. This text aims to exploit and **promote negative stereotypical images of "bad teachers**" as sub-professionals who are out of touch with their students and do not really care about

what they teach. Effectively, teacher educators are presented here as members of a **profession in crisis, needing "support**" from national authorities and employers in order to help them build up a "quality culture" (p.36). The authors of this report clearly advocate that **autonomy be restricted** and trust and responsibilities only granted "once" teacher educators have built up "this quality culture" (ibid). Clearly then, the discourse in this text corresponds with Olssen's perspective and so adds weight to the argument that this European Commission report is indeed influenced by neo-liberal ideology.

The three education systems are not all as influenced by neoliberalism as each other. University-based teacher education in England is being eroded and judging from interview data, the English teacher educators are extremely pessimistic about the future of teacher education. Their situation is probably the worst-case scenario. Not only is "there **no funding**" but Master's courses are closing down because there are **no candidates.** Pressure on the Enlish teacher educators is coming from all directions; however, this pressure is futile as the heavy workload for the teacher educators and their students means that the conditions are not conducive to a learning environment: "…academic assignment(s) (…) are quite useful but **they don't have time to do them properly**… and they get frustrated by that as well." Kate, in England, is aware that the government, just like the European Commission, is against the teacher education profession: "I do feel that with the white paper, it's obvious that the **government does not want us to be involved**". In France, the pressure comes from the requirement to certify student teachers at a linguistic level that the majority do not possess which in turn puts pressure on teacher educators and their students. Sarah points out "we are more **vulnerable because of the B2**". The problem with this requirement is that it implies that everyone can learn a language easily whereas the teacher educators in this study say the contrary: "**it's a hard, academic discipline**" says Kate (Eng). This is an example of the contradictory nature of neoliberal rhetoric which insists on everyone obtaining a qualification in the full knowledge that it is impossible for people to attain the standards required when funding is cut and workload is increased. This is illustrated by the situation in France where the majority of students need to obtain a Master's degree to enter the civil service as a teacher and demonstrate that they have reached B2 CEFR level. Given that the majority of students do not actually reach this level is an issue because a choice has to be made. On

the one hand, A2/B1 students who obtain their Master's degree irrespective of their CEFR level means that primary children are likely to be taught English by a non-expert teacher with all the consequences for language learning that that entails. On the other hand, a decision to withhold the Master's from students who do not demonstrate B2 CEFR level would potentially result in thousands of children without a teacher in the classroom particularly given the current teacher recrutement crisis. It appears that it is the former which is generally adopted by teacher educators as the lesser of two 'evils' and demonstrates the strong commitment of teacher educators to the overall well-being and education of children in the education system. To a great extent, the French teacher educators do this at the expense of the subject they teach and their own status given that as a consequence of taking this path, the CEFR B2 level Master's degree requirement in France is likely to lose its significance. This is what is known as 'dumbing down' the qualifications. This is also reflected in "very vague" (KA24 (Eng) curriculums which are more directed towards an instrumental/utilitarian education than an intrinsic one where culture is central. The challenge facing England at present is that the neoliberal agenda has been in place for so long that languages are in serious danger of disappearing from the universities. In contrast, the Scottish government **listens to the Scottish educators** but this was not without a struggle and demonstrates a very strong commitment. For many years, the Scottish government bypassed MFL teacher educators them in favour of agencies. However, as Chris explains it is the teacher educators who have the knowledge and experience to recommend and make effective changes. It is refreshing that the expertise of the teacher educators has been at last recognised by the Government of Scotland. Chris (Scot) points out with frustration that time has been lost because he states: "essentially it sounds a bit arrogant but they should have called up the teacher educators from the start! **We're supposed to be the experts!**" The situation in France is unclear as there are many changes to teacher education on the horizon and unfortunately, it would seem that the changes are inspired by EU neoliberal policies; however, this is beyond the parameter of this study.

<u>Research question 3</u>

What efforts do they make to achieve their goals and how successful do they believe they are on an individual level and collective level?

The Scottish teacher educators through their SCDE Languages Group have already demonstrated their commitment simply by setting up this group and achieving what they have achieved. The Scottish MFL teacher educators have made **a concerted effort** to set up the *National Framework for languages: plurilingualism and pluriliteracies* despite the challenges they faced. They were literally ignored by the Scottish government for many years and not given the 'trust and responsibility' for language learning in primary schools that is in alignment with the recommendations of EU policymakers. However, that changed recently when Scottish teacher educators' efforts finally paid off and they were **recognised for the experts that they are**. This indicates a high level of **individual and collective efficacy.**

In England, the context is more complicated for primary MFL teacher educators because networks have disintegrated and there are so few MFL teacher educators at present that it appears too overwhelming for those in teacher educator positions to do anything: "some university departments have closed or some have shrunk to almost nothing" (RE42). The **English teacher educators no longer have a forum or a network** and they are seriously under threat and it is clear that despite their commitment, they cannot achieve more than they do at present because of the neoliberal agenda at play in England. However, the current situation in the United Kingdom is **far from stable as a consequence of Brexit** and therefore it is very difficult to anticipate what may happen in the future. Despite the challenges that the English teacher educators are currently experiencing, they demonstrate a strong commitment to primary MFL teacher education through their day-to-day work with their student teachers, school-based colleagues and their struggle to fight for more student places on their teacher education courses: (KA42) "well I've only got **very small numbers**, you see! (bursts out with exasperated laugh). This is what **we're fighting against all the time**". During interview, I was keenly aware of their frustration and desperation. Although the English teacher educators that I had interviewed all worked at different universities, they had all experienced a recent visit from OFSTED inspectors. They all felt that this was a positive signal that at last there was some interest in their specific contribution to primary MFL teacher education pedagogy and research. Only the most committed of professionals would be so inspired by this small ray of hope.

To answer the third research question, I concentrated on how French teacher educators collaborated with each other. There is evidence that they make every effort to work together demonstrating continuance and engagement. When colleagues need help and support, there clear evidence to show that each teacher educator comes to their assistance. However, this help can be characterised as teacher education induction support. For instance, Marie-Louise not only enriched her own professional development when she **embraced the culture of informal and formal practitioner research** at university but she also went on to enhance that of her colleague, Sarah, who needed guidance and support as a novice teacher educator. The research background and experience that Marie-Louise had built up as a teacher educator did in fact benefit Sarah albeit indirectly. Once she felt more secure as a teacher educator, Sarah, then helped her new colleague Alison to learn all about the French school system. Alison had never taught in a primary or secondary school and had barely any experience of teacher education before taking on her position at the ESPE. This demonstrates **the will to help colleagues in an informal on-going manner**. There was no financial gain nor any official recognition from university administrators. This demonstrates not only **a sense of responsibility towards the professional development of colleagues** but also the fact that they were ready to help their colleagues indicating the **altruistic nature of the support** that these MFL professionals lend each other in order to become better teacher educators. I use the word 'responsibility' because every teacher educator is aware of the impact teacher education programmes have on future teachers in laying the foundations for their future career. The motivation to collaborate also demonstrates the commitment of all the colleagues I interviewed. This completely contradicts European Commission and OECD policy documents who label teacher educators as adhering to "different professional standards and values" (European Commission, 2013, p.12). However, it would appear that the French teacher educators are in a similar situation to their English colleagues in the sense that the national policymakers are not listening to them and not implementing language policy that reflects research findings concerning early language learning at primary school.

Limitations of study

One difficulty I faced was having to conduct interviews on Skype. The essential difference was that Scottish teacher educators had watched the video clips before the Skype interview rather than in my presence. This meant that they provided summary versions of what they thought of the lesson and I did not experience their immediate reactions and comments. However, the points they raised illustrated that they probably would have had the same reactions as their French or English colleagues as they all shared very similar standpoints. Another limitation in this thesis was the challenge of coding and analysing the rich interview date despite the use of NVIVO which was indeed invaluable and time-saving. This is because it was very difficult to include in the analysis all the points raised during interview because all the data were so rich and relevant.

Another challenge has been the fluctuating political situation over Brexit. I would have liked to have explored the impact of Brexit in more detail because it is likely that there will be an impact on the English and Scottish education systems in the near future; however, the situation at the time of writing is unclear and therefore beyond the parameters of this study. Another difficulty I faced was the fact that there was no previous study involving teacher educators, commitment as a unidimensional concept in the area of education or the impact of neoliberal policies on teacher education. This made it easier to make a novel contribution to research but deprived this study of similar frameworks to test key findings.

Recommendations for future research

This study has examined primary MFL teacher education in the three systems of England, France and Scotland and can therefore act as a springboard for the identification of similar difficulties affecting teacher educators from other education systems in the EU. One avenue for further study would be research into the impact of neoliberal policies regarding teacher education of other languages or domains linked to language teaching such as English for special purposes (ESP).

I found the coping mechanisms of the teacher educators in this study very developed. They displayed strong resilience and got on with their teaching responsibilities despite the

challenges and obstacles. However, it was when I interviewed the English teacher educator participants, that I realised the extent to which these colleagues were suffering as a consequence of neoliberal policies. I found them to be far more fragile and vulnerable than their colleagues in France and Scotland. It was not only what they said that brought this home to me but their body language and tone of voice. One of the participants was almost in tears at one point because she was so disheartened and in disarray no matter how committed she was to MFL teacher education as she has no control over what lies ahead in the future. A longitudinal ethnographic study of teacher educators would therefore also provide invaluable insight into the challenges these professionals face and a closer insight into how they are affected on a personal and professional level.

6.2 Conclusion to chapter

Discourse analysis demonstrates that there is evidence from EU policy documents that the ideological stance of EU policymakers is aligned to the neoliberal agenda whilst the National Framework for Languages (NFfL) document based on plurilingualism, diversity, policy and legislation, and transformative practices demonstrates commitment to primary MFL. An examination of EU policy documents and EU legislation highlight the paradoxical and incongruous discourse regarding (i) EU political ambitions to improve early language learning alongside (ii) its criticisms directed against EU teacher educators in terms of their commitment, professional values and standards. Interview data shows that despite the obstacles in their path, all participants display outcomes of commitment in terms of motivation, continuation and engagement. However, there are significant differences in the degree of motivation depending upon the education system in which the participants work. The English participants face greater obstacles than those working in the other two systems and there is a risk that primary MFL teacher education based in higher education institutions is in danger of collapse because there are so few applicants for primary student teachers who specialize in MFL. The long-term impact of neoliberal policies in place in the English education system has resulted in a significant reduction in the number of students applying to specialize in MFL primary and consequently the number of HEIs offering courses is dwindling. French MFL teacher educators are more secure than their English counterparts for the time being because all primary school

teachers are required to teach MFL in their primary classroom. However, the high number of student teachers who fail to reach level B2 (CEFR) is a growing concern and is likely to have a negative impact on primary MFL primary teaching and learning in the future if there is not a change in policy. The French MFL teacher educators express low levels of collective efficacy because they do not believe that the situation will change in the near future. In fact, there are signs that the situation is evolving but not necessarily in the way most French teacher educators imagine because the present French government under Emmanuel Macron plans to restructure teacher education and replace the *ESPEs* with *les Instituts Nationaux Supérieurs du Professorat et de l'Education (INSPE)* and the situation is not clear. In contrast, despite Scottish primary MFL teacher educator participants currently experiencing similar difficulties to their French colleagues particularly regarding the MFL competence of their student teachers, the situation is perceived as far more positive because they experience collective empowerment as MFL teaching professionals in terms of national language education policy influence. This was demonstrated by the Education Languages Group (Scottish MFL teacher educators) who have set up the National Framework for Languages (NFfL) based on plurilingualism, diversity, policy and legislation, and transformative practices. Education systems such as France and England would do well to follow the example of Scotland because even the International Monetry Fund admits that "there are aspects of the neoliberal agenda that have not delivered as expected" (Ostry et al., 2016, p.1). Indeed, the IMF is concerned about high costs because of increased inequality associated with neoliberal policies, and also because increased inequality "hurts the level and sustainability of growth" (ibid., p.2). They conclude that:

> The evidence of the economic damage from inequality suggests that policymakers should be more open to redistribution than they are. Of course, apart from redistribution, policies could be designed to mitigate some of the impacts in advance – for instance, **through increased spending on education and training,** which expands equality of opportunity (…) These findings suggest a need for a more nuanced view of what the neoliberal agenda is likely to be able to achieve. The IMF, which oversees the international monetary system, has been at the forefront of this reconsideration.

The IMF have recognised that paradoxically neoliberal policies set up a negative feedback loop where inequality might instead undercut growth which is "the very thing that the neoliberal agenda is intent on boosting" (ibid., p.4). At present, this message

does not seem to have been understood by policymakers in Europe because instead of aiming to spend more on education, the opposite has been done. In addition, spending more money is not likely to have much impact on improving children's education unless the entrenched ideas that neoliberalism promotes such as 'competition', 'accountability', 'consumer choice', and 'quality' are eradicted. This thesis has demonstrated that it is thanks to research and their commitment to primary MFL teacher education that the teacher educators in this study have attained expertise. The Scottish education system is an example of what can be achieved in teacher education when there is the political will to empower teacher educators and take on board research findings in policy decisions. However, the situation is currently much bleaker for teacher educators in the English education system. Research opportunities for teachers in England seem to be more and more limited because of a lack of financial investment in teacher education. In addition, MFL expertise is becoming very scarce which is a worry for primary MFL teacher education. Again, neoliberal policies set up yet another adverse feedback loop in terms of MFL competence. The Pearson CBI 2016 survey of business[1] "revealed that 54% of employers were dissatisfied with employees' foreign language skills (…) and it has been estimated that this lack of language ability loses the UK an estimated 3.5% of economic performance[2]". What impact may this have on the number and expertise of future teachers entering primary MFL teacher education? The French education system is on the verge of moving towards the English neoliberal model that is also favoured by EU policymakers. This thesis offers suggestive evidence that both England and France, albeit at different stages, are on a neoliberal path moving them towards a society where teachers are disempowered and children are deprived of an education that would enable them to be critical thinkers and achieve their full potential. The second path that Scotland is already on would instead lead the English and French towards an education system which trusts its teachers and teacher educators to ensure that all children benefit from the very best education possible and where foreign language learning is valued not just for business but because the ability to use languages for communication provides enjoyment and valuable

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[1] Pearson CBI 2016 Survey: http://www.cbi.org.uk/cbi-prod/assets/File/pdf/cbi-education-and-skills-survey2016.pdf

[2] Forman and Peck (2013), 'Costs to UK of language deficiencies as barrier to UK engagement in exporting : https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/309899/Costs_to_UK_of_language_deficiencies_as_barrier_to_UK_engagement_in_exporting.pdf

intellectual stimulation, contributes to an awareness of the nature of language and language learning, offers insights into other cultures and develops in young people a positive attitude towards human diversity and intercultural awareness.

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