

European and national trends impacting on EFL development in public education and private tuition sectors in France

Las tendencias europeas y nacionales que influyen en el desarrollo del inglés como lengua extranjera en los sectores educativos público y de clases particulares en Francia

Noemi Rámila Díaz

Université de Paris Nanterre

noemi_ramila@yahoo.es

Abstract: Research on the new economy has revealed that globalisation has changed the value of actors' linguistic resources, modifying at the same time the linguistic market (Bourdieu, 1982; Heller, 2003, 2005). In Europe, English has known an outstanding development, which has led to changes in education at the public and the private levels. More specifically, in France, even if today foreign languages are studied as a compulsory subject at school, many students look for an alternative way of learning English, adults and children alike. Despite the fact that the development of English has been studied in relation to formal education, little attention has been given to the private sector. This study would fill the blank as offers a comprehensive overview on the spread of English in the French national education system as well as in the private tutoring sector, by looking at linguistic macro policies and by analysing other domestic measures.

Keywords: development of English, private tutoring, globalization, language policy, linguistic market, European Union

Resumen: La investigación orientada a la nueva economía revela que la globalización cambia el valor de los recursos lingüísticos de los actores, modificando además el mercado lingüístico (Bourdieu, 1982; Heller, 2003, 2005). En Europa, el inglés ha experimentado una amplia expansión, lo que ha conducido a cambios en la educación, a nivel público como privado. Más específicamente, en Francia, aunque los idiomas extranjeros se estudian como asignatura obligatoria durante la etapa escolar, muchos estudiantes buscan una manera alternativa de aprender inglés, niños y adultos. A pesar de que el desarrollo del inglés ha sido estudiado en relación con la educación formal, se ha prestado poca atención al sector privado. El presente estudio trata de colmar esta laguna y ofrece una visión global sobre la difusión del inglés en Francia, tomando en cuenta el sistema de educación público y el nivel privado de clases particulares, analizando para ello políticas supranacionales y nacionales.

Palabras clave: desarrollo del inglés, clases particulares, globalización, políticas lingüísticas, mercado lingüístico, Unión Europea

1. Introduction

Research on the new economy has revealed that economic, political and social moves have a powerful influence on linguistic trends all over the globe. According to some authors, globalisation has changed the value of actors' linguistic resources, modifying at the same time the linguistic market, not only at the level of linguistic exchanges where English is considered as cultural capital, (Bourdieu, 1982) but also in the metaphorical macro-level sense (Heller, 2003; Heller, 2005). As a result, some languages are gaining ground over others. In Europe, English has known an outstanding development over the past twenty years (see for example, Phillipson, 2003; Graddol, 2006), which has led to changes in education not only at the public level but at the private level as well. If English has been a language very much studied for a long time in Europe, today is not only the most widely taught language in the European Union (EU) (Eurydice 2017), but also the language perceived as the most useful (González Cruz and Luján García, 1997; Eurobarometer 386, 2012; Bergström, 2018). More specifically, in France, even if today foreign languages are studied as a compulsory subject at school, many students, children and adults alike look for an alternative way of learning English. This alternative way of studying languages may be in the form of private tuition courses, and consequently language private tuition companies have known an outstanding development all over the country.

The aim of this article is to offer a comprehensive analysis of the development of English in Europe and more specifically in France, by looking at linguistic macro policies and by analysing other domestic measures. The focus of the article is then sociological and linguistic. Thus, of the three groups of studies within the language and society paradigm by Trudgill (1978: 2), ethnomethodological, sociological and linguistic in orientation, and purely linguistic in nature, the following article could be classified within the second group. Also, this article falls into the "sociolinguistics" category, being "sociolinguistics" used as an umbrella term "covering all kinds of investigations into how language matters, socially, politically and economically" (Heller *et al.*, 2018: 16). In the present case, I look at how the development of a language can have intertwined political, social and economic implications. In addition, this article tackles overall language policy and therefore the methodological approach is historical-structural. The objective of the present analysis is twofold:

1) at *de jure* level, to know what the main European and French linguistic policies are, including the efforts to protect the French language and some other domestic measures;

2) at *de facto* level, to review the main European and French reports over languages in order to find out how developed ESL is in Europe in general and in France in particular.

For that purpose, the article is divided into two main sections. The first section explains core European linguistic policies. This section offers also an overview of the development of English in the EU over the last 30 years. This macro level approach would allow us to understand the influence of EU recommendations and whether they are achieved. The second section is focused on France. This section deals with the revision of the main linguistic policies, and also explains some measures taken in order to regulate menial jobs that may indirectly have an impact on the linguistic market.

2. The European Union and languages

The European Union was born in 1951 after the Second World War, under the name "European Coal and Steel Community" (ECSC) and united six countries: France, Germany, Italy, Belgium, The Netherlands and Luxembourg. The project, inspired by Jean Monet in 1950, wanted to prevent future conflicts by creating commercial bonds among countries. The ECSC has undergone several enlargements over time: between 1973 and 1986 six countries joined the EU (Denmark, Ireland, United Kingdom, Greece, Portugal and Spain); in 1995, three more countries became part of the community (Austria, Finland and Sweden); the most significant enlargement took place in 2004-2007, when twelve countries entered the union¹, and recently Croatia has joined the EU becoming its 27th member in July 2013.

EU linguistic policy is based on fostering multilingualism, although languages as well as education depend on the different countries' governments. Some examples of the many ways of fostering multilingualism are the European linguistic programmes (Lingua) and the exchange programmes that take place all over Europe, at the student level (Erasmus) or at the teacher level (Socrates, Erasmus +). The linguistic question has always been considered as a hotly debated issue. From the beginning it was decided that all the official documents had to be translated into the different languages of the members (Treaty CEE, 1958: art 248) and this policy has been applied to every new enlargement in order to assure equality to the new partnerships. As a result, in 2013 after the last enlargement, there are 24 official languages in the EU and important documents have to be delivered in all these languages. However, as pointed out by Zouogbo (2013: 142), one of the consequences of this policy is its high cost. Moreover, despite the efforts made by the EU, some scholars argue that institutional encouragement towards multilingualism contrasts with the fact that inside the different European institutions working languages are reduced to English or French (Truchot, 2008: 80).

¹ In 2004 the Czech Republic, Estonia, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Slovenia and Slovakia; in 2007, Romania and Bulgaria.

2.1 European Linguistic policies

The most important article regarding languages is the article 126 of the Treaty of Maastricht, 1992 (article 149 of the Treaty of Amsterdam, 1997). In this article, the EU firmly declares that is determined to foster the cultural and linguistic diversity of the member states. In addition, the EU decided to focus on multilingualism after the European Council meeting in Barcelona, on 15th and 16th March 2002. The Barcelona meeting established as an objective the improvement of the mastery of basic skills, in particular by teaching at least two foreign languages from a very early age. Moreover, in order to assure European cultural and linguistic diversity the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union was proclaimed in December 2000. The article 22 of the Charter says that 'the Union shall respect cultural, religious and linguistic diversity', thus fostering respect for others. In a staff working document accompanying the 2012 strategy by the Commission 'Rethinking education', for the first time, a benchmark can be found regarding language learning. Also, the European Union has developed the Common European Frame of Reference for Languages, which is a guideline for teachers and learners. Although it is not a linguistic policy, the CEFR is representative of European trends in languages teaching and learning.

2.2 The development of English in Europe

Although English has been studied for a long time in Europe (Truchot, 2008), over the last twenty years statistics not only suggest an increase in the number of speakers but also in the way how English is perceived. Indeed, the European Commission offers us two valuable tools in the form of periodic reports: Eurobarometers and Eurydice reports. Up to date, three Eurobarometers have been dedicated to study the linguistic background of people over 18. These surveys take part of a series called 'Europeans and their languages' (Special Eurobarometers EB 54.1b, 2001; EB 243, 2005; EB 386, 2012) and help us to understand the development of English in Europe. Their results show that English is the most widely studied language. In Figure 1, the results of the three Eurobarometers to the question 'which languages do you know well enough to have a conversation, excluding your mother tongue?' show an increase on ESL speakers in the last 20 years:

	2001 (EB 55.1)	2006 (EB 243 wave 64.3)	2012 (EB 386)
English	32%	34%	38%
French	14%	11%	11%
German	14%	12%	12%

Fig. 1: Results to the question 'which languages do you know well enough to have a conversation, excluding your mother tongue?' Source: EB 54.1 (2001), EB 243 (2005) and EB 386 (2012)

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As it can be seen the percentage of ESL speakers has increased over the years, from 32% in 2001, to 34% in 2006, and finally to 38% in 2012. In addition, Europeans think highly of English: in the Eurobarometer of 2012 (Eurobarometer 386), it is stated that 67% of the Europeans that took part of the study think that English is the most useful language and 79% think that it is the most useful language for their children. In order to understand these results, it is important to take into account the different enlargements of the EU and the linguistic education of the new members. For example, traditionally in Eastern European countries the most studied second languages were Russian or French. However, after the collapse of the URSS, Russian was substituted by the study of German. Therefore, it is not surprising that in 2012 French and German do not seem to have decreased in number of second language speakers. Nonetheless, the number of ESL speakers seems to be growing steadily despite the different enlargements and the fostering of multilingualism on the part of the EU. In fact, these results are confirmed more recently by those of the EB 466 (2018) focused on education. This report shows that English continues to be the most frequently studied second language by Europeans (38%) at school or at university. It also indicates that English is the language that most people would like to improve (64%).

As far as young students are concerned, there are also surveys carried out periodically by Eurydice, a European network of information regarding educational issues. The results offered by Eurydice also demonstrate an increase in the number of young students of English in Europe. Figure 2 shows the percentages of primary and secondary students that took English as a subject at school:

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2010	2014
Primary Education	44.9%	46.4%	53.1%	56.4%	59%	63.7%	73%	79.4%
Secondary Education	76.6%	74%	83.1%	83.3%	85.7%	92.2%	93.7%	97.3%

Fig. 2: Percentage of primary and secondary students that followed English lessons at school in the EU.
Source: Eurydice, 2002; Eurydice, 2006; Eurydice, 2012; Eurydice, 2017

As it can be seen, according to the Eurydice reports of 2002, 2006, 2010 and 2017, at the level of primary education in 2002, 44% of the students took English as a second language; in 2006 this number increased up to 59%; in 2010, 73% of primary students took English as a second language at school and; in 2014 this percentage increased up to 79.4%. As for secondary students, Eurydice reports of 2006, 2012 and 2017 show that in 2003, 74% of secondary students took English as a subject in all the European Union; in 2006, this number

increased to 85.7%; in 2010 the tendency continue up to 93.7% and in 2014 almost all the students learned English (97.3%).

In addition to these results, two points need to be clarified: the fact that English is mandatory at an early age in many European countries; and the different trends regarding second language teaching in western European countries and eastern European countries, as mentioned before. In fact, by 2007, English had become a compulsory subject at school in over half of the countries in the EU15, this policy being already adopted in 1982/1983 in many of these countries (Eurydice, 2008). However, this is not a trend found in central or eastern countries, where English was not a widely taught second language at school. As an example, in 2002/2003 Latvian authorities recommended the compulsory study of English, but soon after they decided to leave the choice of language to students or schools (Eurydice, 2008: 45).

As a preliminary conclusion, multilingualism in the European Union seems to be not only a hot issue but also a paradox. On the one hand, taking into account the EU actions and recommendations, multilingualism is fostered and cherished. However, on the other, at the level of practice, European reports indicate the progressive use and development of English. These facts are in line with the overall positive individual attitudes towards English in Europe before Brexit (see for example, (Bems, 1990; González Cruz and Lujan García, 1997; Pulcini, 1997) but also after Brexit (see for example, Berström, 2018). Indeed, in the EU27, France is the only country, along with Sweden, that has taken measures to protect the national language in an effort to contest this trend as it is shown in the following section.

3. The case of France

The French system is considered by some authors as representative of monolingual, mainstream education countries where even if a second language is studied as a subject, bilingualism is almost never accomplished (Baker, 2006: 223-224). As far as linguistic policies are concerned, France is a monolingual country, as established in the second article of the French constitution of 4th October 1958: the French language is among the symbols of the French Republic as the flag, the national anthem or the maxim. In fact, France is one of the rare countries where the national and official language is protected by law: the Toubon law, of 14th August 1994 on the use of the French language. The Toubon law is a powerful instrument because it mandates the use of French in many contexts, as for example in official government publications, advertisements, in workplaces, in commercial contracts, or in all government-financed schools.

In contrast to this protectionism, English has become a *de facto* widely spoken, taught and used language (see for example: Truchot, 2008; Forlot, 2010; Heran, 2013; Leistikö, 2015). Indeed, little by little English is entering the

national education system, where, generally speaking, students have to take two mandatory second languages².

The French *Direction Générale de l'Enseignement Scolaire* (Directorate-general for Schools of the French Ministry for National Education) (EDUSCOL, 2011) as well as the *Sénat* (Legendre Report, 2004) and the Ministry of Education (Halimi, 2012) carried out a series of surveys at elementary, secondary and high school level. These surveys show the development of English as far as young learners are concerned in the national system of education. Yet, the information is not complete as depending on the year, these surveys target students of different ages. Figure 3 shows the development of English in the French national system:

	2002	2009/2010	2010/2011
Elementary level		90.1%	91.1%
Secondary level	90%	93%	
High School level	89%	94%	

Fig. 3: Number of students at elementary, secondary or high school level that take English as a subject at school. (Source: Legendre 2004; EDUSCOL, 2011; Halimi 2012)

As far as the elementary level is concerned, in 2009, 90.1 % of students followed English courses, being 91.1 % in 2010/2011 (EDUSCOL, 2011). According to a survey by the *Sénat* in 2002 (Legendre, 2004), 90% of the students at secondary level in France took English as a subject. Moreover, in 2011, 93% of 4 945 975 secondary students followed English at school (Halimi, 2012). In 2002, 89% of High School students in France took English as a subject (Legendre, 2004), and in 2009, 94% of the high schoolers in the study followed English classes (Halimi, 2012). As a result, it could be said that in France, the trend of studying English as a second language starts at an early or young age.

Moreover, until 2013, at university level PhD theses should have to be written in French, with very few exceptions (Costaouec, 2013: 143). However, English has turned to be more and more necessary, becoming even compulsory for some *concours* (entrance examinations). As an example, in 2010, the French *Conseil d'État* confirmed that English would be the only valid language to enter the *École nationale de la magistrature*, a prestigious law school (<http://actu.dalloz-étudiant.fr>, 31 July 2010). In addition, some senators in February 2013 (www.senat.fr) signed a 'proposition of law on the attractiveness of French universities' (*Proposition de loi relative à l'attractivité universitaire de la France*) in favour not only of the teaching in other languages than French at school, but also of the completion of theses in other languages at university level. Finally,

² Since 2007, the first second-language is introduced at the age of seven and the second second-language at the age of fourteen. Since 2010 the study of a second second-language is compulsory for everybody in the national system as it does not depend on the option of studies as it was in the past.

in 2013, the Law on Higher Education and Research was issued, the so-called loi Fioraso, *Loi n° 2013-660 du 22 juillet 2013 relative à l'enseignement supérieur et à la recherche*. According to this law, English can be officially used at university level, confirming the tendency toward the use of English in high education and in Academia. In fact, according to Heran (2013) the survey ELVIRE carried out by the INED between 2007-2009 among 1,963 university research laboratory managers and 8,883 researchers, shows that 83% of the participants think that English is the most used language in their domain, and 42% out of this percentage think that it is in a monopoly position. On a different note, in 2020, according to the *Arrêté du 3 avril 2020 relatif à la certification en langue anglaise pour les candidats inscrits aux diplômes nationaux de licence, de licence professionnelle et au diplôme universitaire de technologie*, the French government appeals to the use of external organisations for the validation of the results of English exams in national Modern Language Bachelor diplomas. By this *Arrêté*, the French government would not recognize national exams and/or teachers, and therefore benefiting private organisations over the national system.

One interesting dynamic is the so-called “Anglicization” of the universities. As an example, in 2017, in order to attract more students, respected universities and business schools changed their names: the *École supérieure de commerce de Dijon* is called now Burgundy School of Business, and the *École supérieure de commerce de Troyes* has become South Champagne Business School. What is more, Campus France, a French agency for the promotion of higher education, through its application Programs Taught in English³ shows the growth of programmes delivered in English. According to the site, in 2018, 1,328 programmes in English were offered all over France, which means an increase of more than 50% from 2014. In January 2020, 1,478 bachelor or master programmes are delivered partially or completely in English, a rise of 60% in the last 5 years.

As far as adults are concerned, several surveys show the increase in terms of ESL speakers over the years. The first survey was conducted by INSEE (Bodier, 1998) in 1996 and 46 million French citizens over 15 were interviewed. According to the results, at that time English was not a widely spoken second language. For example, it shows that 62% of the respondents did not have any knowledge of a second language and only 40% acknowledged knowing a second language. Regarding English, 74% of the respondents could not follow a small talk and 64% did not have any knowledge of the language. However, in 2006 according to the French factsheets of Eurobarometer 243, 34% of the French people interviewed knew English well enough to have a conversation. In addition, following the French factsheets of Eurobarometer 386 (2012), the number of respondents to the same question increased up to 39%. More recently, in 2019, following the results of a survey over 1,505 people by IPSOS

³ Available at <<http://taughtie.campusfrance.org/tiesearch/#/catalog>>.

(Vacas and Boisson, 2019) in France, English would be the first second language for 71% of the participants, 25% out of them would use English in their professional life at least once a month, and 22% would use it in their personal life at least once a month. Moreover, 54% would be prompted to take English lessons in their free time.

The development of the English language is in tune with the results of recent studies about individual attitudes towards learning this language in France. Indeed, at the individual level, French speakers seem to have a very positive image of the English language and of learning English. For example, Flaitz (1988: 187) concludes that “positive attitudes are generally widespread and they increase with higher levels of education” and further adds that it “may come as a surprise to those convinced through first-hand experience or anecdote that the French do not like the British”. Flaitz (1988) explains the perception of French people being negative towards English by using the concept of cultural relativity. In 1999, Ager in his study of the results from a survey of the *Société française d'études par sondages* (SOFRES, French Society of Survey Studies) discovered that roughly more than half of the respondents had a positive opinion about American English and far more respondents used positive terms to describe the use of English in everyday life such as “modern” (44%), “useful” (30%) or “amusing” (19%), in contrast to “snobbish” (14%) or “annoying” (14%). Moreover, Oakes (2001) has reached to similar conclusions and more recently, in her study about French linguistic attitudes towards English, Walsh (2015) shows that 98% out of the 401 respondents (ages ranging from 15 to 65+) think that it is important to know English and 86% agreed that children should learn this language from primary school, showing also that the respondents do not think of English as a threat. However, individual attitudes towards English seem to contrast with the protectionist measures taken by the French Government as seen previously.

In addition, I argue that the scope of the phenomenon is not restricted to public schools or university programmes, but it would concern as well the private sector, where the teaching of English has become a very profitable affaire. Indeed, private tutoring, although not a new trend, knows an extraordinary success all over the globe. Even though a growing body of studies have focused on the so-called shadow education in France (Glasman, 2004; Bray, 2009; Collas 2013; Oller and Glasman, 2013), up to date very little attention has been given to the ESL private tutoring market (Rámila Díaz, 2015). This is the focus of the following section.

3.1 Private tuition in France

Private tuition is developing very fast for the last twenty years in France. In fact, France has become the country with the most developed private tuition

system in Europe (Piquemal, 10 January 2013)⁴. As showed by Bray (2009) one of the reasons of the extraordinary success of private tuition enterprises lays on a tax reduction programme. This programme was created in 1991 by the French government to fight against casual labor, which is illegal in France. Between 1993 and 1996, a system of employment checks was developed, which were replaced by the Chèque Emploi Service Universel (CESU) (Universal employment checks) by mandate of the Boorlo law. In fact, these are employment checks for private individuals that made possible to hire someone on a personal service basis. One of the consequences of this system is that all incomes have to be declared by employer and employee, regardless the informality of the service. At the same time, following this system, people can easily pay part time workers/employees and legally employ them.

Some examples of personal services are cleaning, baby sitting, gardening, helping elderly people and it includes as well private lessons at home. As a result, many enterprises offering private lessons take advantage of this system (Bray, 2009: 97). In addition, enterprises benefit from another tax reduction, an exoneration of the employer security contributions stipulated by the same system. As Melot (2007: 104, cited in Bray, 2009: 72) points out, as a consequence of the tax reduction programme, in 2007 the sector was "exploding": in 2006 it registered its sixth consecutive year of growth above 15 %. Despite the deceleration due to the crisis in 2008, more recently, according to the Xerfi report 2017, France is the European country with the most lucrative private tutoring market and the third country in the world regarding the delivery of at home private lessons.

As far as students of English at a private tuition level are concerned, a distinction should be made between adults and children as their goals are different. Regarding schoolers and high schoolers, Melot in his report of 2007 shows that over 75% of Parisian high school students followed private lessons, (Melot, 2007: 105, cited in Bray, 2009: 72). In addition, Pech (2008, cited in Bray, 2009: 67) shows that in 2008 over 1 million schoolers took private tuition courses in France. Glasman et Collonges (1994, cited in Glasman, 2004: 54) stressed that High School students take principally private lessons on maths, physics or languages, as they have to prepare the general exam *Baccalaureate* at the end of compulsory education. Indeed, according to the special report by Xerfi (2012b), English private tutoring enterprises are among the most profitable franchise enterprises in France in 2012. Thus, it is not surprising the rapid expansion of companies that offer English language private tuition all over the country.

As regards adult education in France, a law has been issued to ensure a long-life learning programme for employees, the *Droit Individuel à la Formation*

⁴ Available at <<http://www.liberation.fr>>.

(DIF)⁵ (individual training right) that was replaced in 2015 by the *Compte personnel de formation* (CPF) (personal account for training). According to this programme, all workers have the right to an amount of hours of continuing vocational training, mostly in the form of private tuition (in enterprise or at home). Although all kind of courses are proposed to employees, following a survey carried out by Demos (2009: 7), 60% of the employees ask for language courses in order to use their individual training right. In 2012, another survey by Demos (2012: 12) shows that 50% of the employees that benefited from this programme in the public sector took language courses. Indeed, adults are compelled to study English because it is regarded as important for their professional development. In fact, in France, according to the French factsheets of 2012 (Eurobarometer 386), 61% of the respondents find that one advantage of learning an additional language is to be able to use it at work. Along with this, Fourcade et al. (2017) in their report focused on the development of the newly implemented CPF programme, stated that language certifications were highly demanded. Certainly, in 2016 about 40% of the employees in the programme had chosen to pass TOEIC or BULATS, both of them English certificates. Balmat (2018) in her report states also that 42% of the employees in the CPF programme in the year 2015-2016 followed English lessons in order to pass the TOEIC or BULATS certifications. Also, the latest report DARES (2018) shows that the most demanded courses by employees in 2017 in the CPF programme were languages, and specifically certifications in English such as TOEIC, BULATS or Test Bright Language.

Finally, different reports (Xerfi, 2012a; Xerfi, 2012b; Xerfi, 2017) encourage investors to participate in the emerging market of English private tutoring enterprises, showing the importance of these franchises nowadays and the outstanding growth of the sector.

All things considered the spread of English in Europe in general and in France in particular is a fact. In most European countries the study of a second language is mandatory in order to implement multilingualism as encouraged by the EU. However, as a result of this measure English seems to be the language most widely taught in Europe (Eurydice, 2008; Eurydice, 2012, Eurydice, 2017) and therefore, would be receiving a favourable treatment in the European linguistic market. Even in France, English is developing as well as in the rest of the EU, despite the measures taken by the Government to ensure the primacy of the national language. Indeed, at *de jure* level the French government has been obliged to change their minds and to make room for a foreign language. In this country, at *de facto* level English has little by little gained ground, not only at the national education system level, but also at the level of private tutoring. As a result, English is becoming the language of high education and prestigious business schools and universities are changing their

⁵ Available at <<http://travail-emploi.gouv.fr/le-droit-individuel-a-la-formation,1071.html>>.

names in order to cope with this trend. Finally, new economic dynamics such as private tutoring should be taken into consideration in order to explain the present linguistic market.

4. Conclusions

The aim of this study was to offer a comprehensive analysis of the development of English in Europe and more specifically in France, by looking at *de jure* level of linguistic policy and other domestic measures, as well as by analysing European and French reports and studies to know the spread of English at *de facto* level. As far as European linguistic policies are concerned, the results show that in spite of the efforts made in favour of multilingualism by the EU, English seems to be the language the most developed in Europe. English has become not only the most widely taught language (Eurydice, 2008; Eurydice, 2012; Eurydice, 2017), but also positively perceived (Berns, 1990; González Cruz and Luján García, 1997; Eurobarometer 386, 2012). In France, even if the government has taken measures such as the Toubon law in order to protect the national language it seems that the development of English in many areas would be unstoppable. Certainly, English is the most studied second language in France, at elementary level and at High School level (INSEE, 2012; EDUSCOL, 2010; Forlot, 2010; Leistikö, 2015). In addition to the French national education system, students also resort to private tuition companies to learn English. As far as adult education is concerned, adults may also be compelled to study English for professional reasons. Two measures seem to be helping the spread of language private tuition companies. One of them is the employment check programme (CESU) by which individuals could employ services on a personal basis (Bray, 2009: 97), the other measure being the individual training right for employees (CPF), as despite the wide range of courses offered to employees, according to a series of surveys (Demos, 2009, 2012; Balmat, 2018), employees tend to prefer English examination courses. At the attitudinal level, French citizens seem to have very positive perceptions of English (Flaitz, 1988; Ager, 1999; Oakes, 2001; Walsh, 2015), which might have helped to its development.

As a conclusion, the development of English in France cannot be explained from a single viewpoint but macro and micro levels have to be taken into consideration. Not only does European linguistic policy encourage citizens to learn languages, but also French economic measures act as a powerful trigger for students to seek English private tuition at home or in-company lessons.

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