

Foreign Language Teacher Education: The Polish Case¹

Abstract

Foreign Language Teacher Training Colleges (FLTTC) were established in Poland as an answer to the need for drastic changes in education in 1992. By the year 2001, FLTTC had managed to graduate the number of teachers the market demanded, yet the quality of these programs was questioned. This paper presents an in-depth understanding of the impact of FLTTC on teacher candidates' learning and development, as described by the participants, and the challenges that FLTTC faced during its early development process. A two-way mixed method was used to better understand the purpose, process, successes, and challenges faced by this alternative teacher education program. The data reveal that the teacher candidates mainly applied to FLTTCs to learn a foreign language, and they used their degrees as a springboard to obtain better-paid jobs. Although the teacher candidates had a positive perception of their teaching skills, building true college-school partnerships was necessary for the development and learning of teacher candidates.

Key words: *teacher education, foreign language, college, policy*

Introduction

Foreign language learning is regarded as a European priority, and with this idea in mind earlier candidates for the European Union as well as new candidates initiated important changes in their education to develop foreign language educators. Among those countries, Poland established foreign language teacher colleges to meet the demand of the education market. Nevertheless, there is little

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