

The Language Assistant Scheme in Slovenia

A Baseline Study

Edited by

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The Ministry of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Slovenia
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Table of Contents

	Foreword	
Chapter 1	The Education System in Slovenia <i>Zdravka Godunc</i>	1
Chapter 2	The Language Assistant Scheme in Slovenia <i>Danila Beloglavec and Bronka Straus</i>	9
Chapter 3	Overview of the Study <i>Karmen Pižorn</i>	23
Chapter 4	Classroom Observation <i>Vidojka Harej, Tanja Nemec and Lois Beaver</i>	41
Chapter 5	Teachers <i>Milena Forštner and Lučka Pristavec</i>	55
Chapter 6	Students' Perspective <i>Jožica Nuč and Karmen Pižorn</i>	71
Chapter 7	Language Assistants <i>Lois Beaver and Nataša Žemva</i>	89
Chapter 8	Mentors <i>Karmen Pižorn</i>	107
Chapter 9	Headteachers <i>Branka Dobovšek-Dekleva, Bronka Straus and Nataša Žemva</i>	117
Chapter 10	Main Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations <i>Branka Dobovšek-Dekleva, Lois Beaver, Karmen Pižorn and Nataša Žemva</i>	127
	Epilogue	141
	Appendices	143
	References	183

Table of Appendices

- Appendix 1* **Classroom Observation Schedule, Focusing on Teacher/Language Assistant**
- Appendix 2* **Classroom Observation Schedule, Focusing on Students**
- Appendix 3* **Post-Lesson Interview Schedule for Groups of Students**
- Appendix 4* **Post-Lesson Interview Schedule for Teachers**
- Appendix 5* **Post-Lesson Interview Schedule for Language Assistants**
- Appendix 6* **Interview Schedule for Headteachers**
- Appendix 7* **Questionnaire for Other Language Teachers**
- Appendix 8* **Questionnaire for Language Assistants**
- Appendix 9* **Questionnaire for Mentors**
- Appendix 10* **Sample of Completed Sociogram**
- Appendix 11* **Contract between the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport and the host school, 1999/2000**
- Appendix 12* **Instructions for Arranging Employment and Residency for Foreign Language Assistants, 2000/2001**
- Appendix 13* **Timetables of Induction Courses, 1998/1999, 2000/2001**
- Appendix 14* **English Language Assistants Recruited through the Central Bureau for Central and Eastern Europe from 1994 onwards**
- Appendix 15* **The Structure of the Education System of Slovenia**

Foreword

This is the first baseline study concerning language assistants for foreign language teaching in Slovenia. Therefore, we hope that it will be both successful in its aim and that it will encourage further studies of its kind. It is intended for those who are interested in the educational practice of non-native and native speakers collaborating in the teaching process - whether they are involved in the Language Assistant Scheme in Slovenia or would like to be, or whether they have similar experiences or interests.

Foreign language education is of vital importance to Slovenia. The introduction, in 1994, of language assistants to some Slovenian primary and secondary schools was an attempt to improve the students' proficiency in learning foreign languages.

After six years the effectiveness of the scheme needed to be evaluated. The Ministry of Education, Science and Sport and the British Council commissioned a joint project to understand the current operation of the scheme and to provide an initial evaluation. Therefore a *baseline study* was selected as the most appropriate method of investigation. The Baseline Study examines the status quo of the Scheme in the school year 1999/2000.

In chapters one to three, the report describes the Slovenian education system, the origin of the Language Assistant Scheme and the way that the Baseline Study was organised. Chapter four focuses on classroom observation. Chapters five to nine concentrate on the following stakeholders: the teachers, the students, the language assistants, the mentors and the headteachers. Chapter ten reviews the findings and, makes initial recommendation for the improvement of the Scheme.

The views and perspectives expressed in this volume do not in any way represent the views of the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Slovenia or The British Council and are solely the responsibilities of the individual authors acting in their private capacity.

We hope you enjoy reading the report.