

Summary

Nowadays, the intercultural dimension and plurilingual and pluricultural competence are central to the didactics of foreign languages. Some evidence suggests that the foreign language classes are the perfect place to link cultures: learners have the opportunity to experience and analyse cultural otherness, and to use this experience to reflect on matters that are usually taken for granted within one's own culture and environment. This, in turn, requires the abandonment of the monolingual ideal (which has long dominated Europe) and the promotion of pluralistic approaches, a new paradigm for language teaching/learning described in detail in the *Framework for Pluralistic Approaches* (2007).

This thesis explores the idea of integrating an intercultural approach in the teaching/learning process of French for Diplomats. This work is focused on the foreign student public attending a 1-year Master's programme at the College of Europe in Natolin, and this work constitutes a contribution to the didactics of *French for Specific Objectives* (FOS). The didactic questions raised here aim at clarifying the manner in which "French for Specific Objectives" and "Interculturality" are articulated to each other.

The purpose of this thesis is to demonstrate that plurilingual and pluricultural competence deserves serious attention with regard to the process of French language teaching for young professionals. The appearance of the *Reference Framework for Plural Approaches to Languages and Cultures* (FREPA) has notably prompted a more in-depth analysis of plurilingual and pluricultural competence, a crucial competence in the modern didactics of foreign languages. It is therefore essential to take this new reality into account, and to adapt to it also in the case of training for young adults, including future diplomats. It is with this in mind that this thesis develops its analysis over five chapters.

Chapter 1 (*L'enseignement du français à des publics professionnels en tant qu'objet d'études*) focuses on the importance of language for professional purposes as well as the evolution of different linguistic currents over the 20th century. The most fundamental theories of professional French learning are presented. The chapter concludes with an analysis of the A1 / A2 Diplomacy Workbook : *Objectif diplomatie A1/A2 : le français des relations européennes et internationales* and a *Diplomatie.com* workbook for learning French in the context of international and European relations. **Chapter 2 (*Des besoins aux compétences. Le rôle des compétences dans la construction du programme du français de la diplomatie*)** provides a detailed profile of a diplomat who notably relies upon plurilingual and pluricultural competences, as well as sociolinguistic and pragmatic capacities. In the chapter it is argued that the professional language is not reduced to a limited vocabulary and that courses of French for diplomacy should not be limited to linguistic aspects, as it currently is the case. **Chapter 3 (*Opérationnalisation de la compétence plurilingue et pluriculturelle dans l'optique d'un Cadre de Référence pour les Approches***

Plurielles des Langues et des Cultures. L'exemple du français de la diplomatie) first focuses on theoretical concepts and the application of the pluralistic approaches that contribute to the development of plurilingual and pluricultural competence. It also shows how pluralistic approaches can be implemented in the course of French for diplomacy. **Chapter 4** (*Choix méthodologique pour la recherche empirique*) describes in detail the problems linked to the empirical research conducted. Research on the development of plurilingual and pluricultural competence is pursued through analysing the most suitable qualitative methods and data collection techniques.

The above-mentioned chapters lay the foundations for illustrating the core of this research, which is analysed in **Chapter 5** (*Présentation et interprétation des données recueillies dans la recherche empirique*). In this last latter it is argued that a plurilingual and intercultural education goes hand in hand with the development of reflexive capacities, self-assessment skills and learning autonomy, as well as awareness of cultural alterity.