



# Preparing for the VOLL classroom: A didactic seminar for vocational teacher trainees in theory and practice

## Schriftliche Hausarbeit im Rahmen der Ersten Staatsprüfung für das Lehramt an Berufskollegs

This paper aims to develop a didactic seminar for students at the University of Duisburg-Essen in order to react to the imperative need for an adequate and demand-oriented teacher training. It may serve as a contribution to supply vocational teacher trainees with specific theoretical and practical knowledge as well as vocationally oriented didactic skills that might prove to be useful before entering the second phase of initial teacher education (ITE) in Germany.

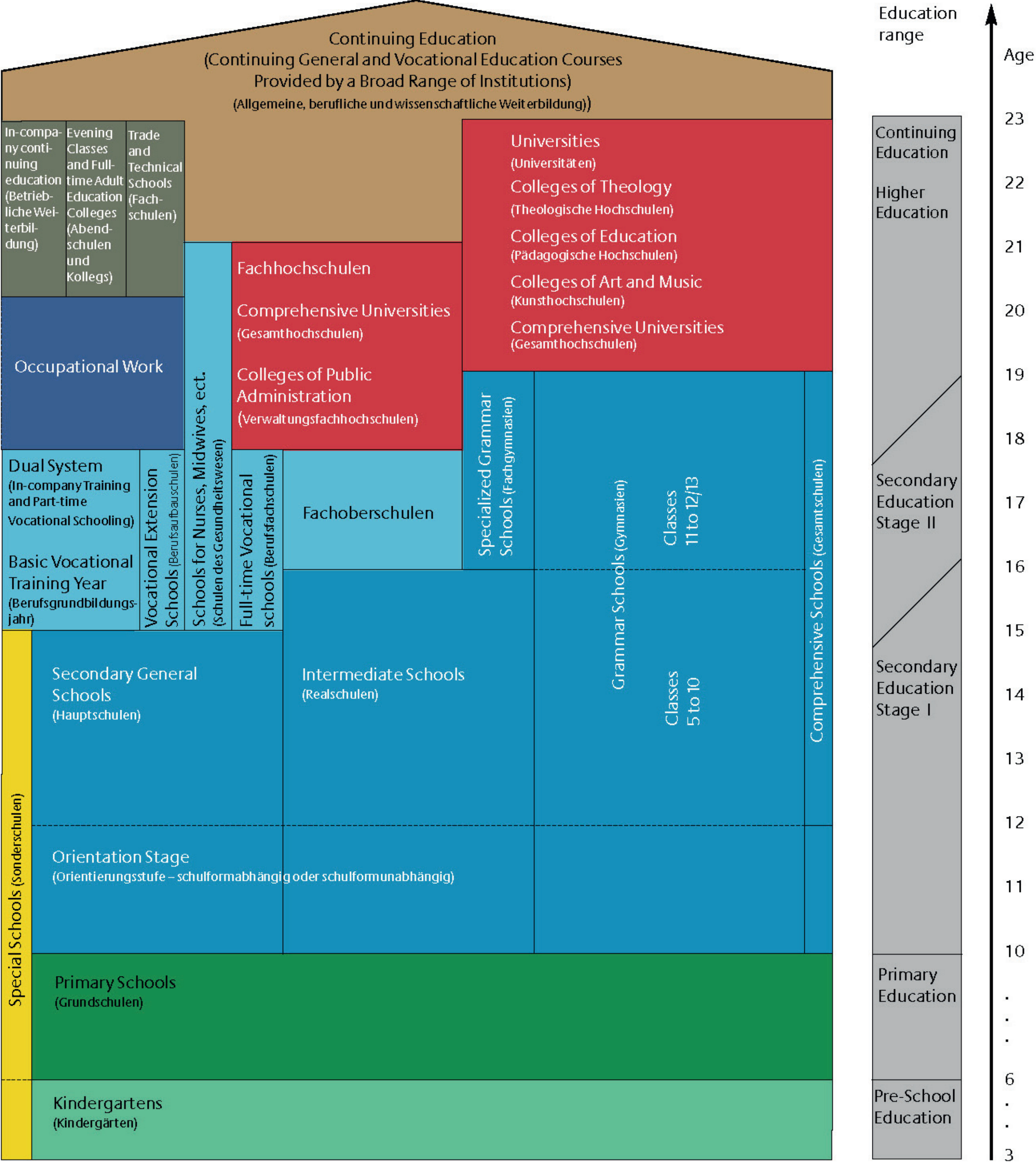
The importance of English language skills as a key qualification in the working world increases steadily. As a consequence, English language teaching (ELT) and especially vocationally oriented language learning (VOLL) currently face the challenge to meet the so-called megatrends such as globalisation and multi-cultural societies.

Overview: Lesson unit for the seminar

Lesson 1	<b>Introduction</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Aims and content of the seminar</li><li>Course requirements (portfolio)</li></ul>	Lesson 8	<b>ICC in VOLL -1-</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Byram's model</li></ul>
Lesson 2	<b>The German VET system -1-</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Courses of Education (<i>Bildungsgänge</i>), Dual system</li></ul>	Lesson 9	<b>ICC in VOLL -2-</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The INCA model</li><li>ICC in vocational curricula</li></ul>
Lesson 3	<b>The German VET system -2-</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Current criticism and reforms</li></ul>	Lesson 10	<b>Didactic methods in VOLL -1-</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Action-oriented methods</li></ul>
Lesson 4	<b>The concept of learning areas -1-</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Key features</li><li>learning areas and VOLL</li></ul>	Lesson 11	<b>Didactic methods in VOLL -2-</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Cooperative learning</li></ul>
Lesson 5	<b>The concept of learning areas -2-</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Consequences and challenges</li></ul>	Lesson 12	<b>Lesson units in VOLL</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>How to plan a lesson</li><li>Sample lesson unit: ICC</li></ul>
Lesson 6	<b>Teaching adults in VOLL</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Problems, potentials,</li><li>The change of the teacher's role</li></ul>	Lesson 13	<b>Students' presentations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>How to give a feedback</li><li>Students present their learning-arrangements</li></ul>
Lesson 7	<b>The Common European Framework</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The purpose of the CEFR / Proficiency levels</li><li>KKK-Fremdsprachenzertifikat</li></ul>	Lesson 14	<b>Final lesson</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(Presentations: continuation)</li><li>Course evaluation, concluding reflection</li></ul>

### Education in Germany

Basic structure of the Education System of the Federal Republic of Germany



Vocational schools are obliged to teach English as a reaction to the country's economy and labour market requirements. Monika Hahn, member of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (*Ständige Konferenz der Kultusminister der Länder - KMK*) asserts:

“Der Anteil der Berufe mit fremdsprachlichen Anforderungen ist in den Neuordnungsverfahren der letzten 10 Jahre kontinuierlich angestiegen.

Wegen der zunehmenden Internationalisierung und Globalisierung der Wirtschaft haben Fremdsprachenkenntnisse über die Verknüpfung mit Anforderungen zum Erwerb einer interkulturellen Kompetenz, die in den Ausbildungsordnungen festgeschrieben wird, stark an Bedeutung gewonnen.”

These changes obviously generate new tasks for English language teachers in the field of VET – above all in view of the premise that they are responsible for the quality of VOLL. To successfully maintain this standard it becomes clear that initial teacher training (ITT) in Germany has to enter new dimensions in order to enable English language teachers to provide their students with the skills they need to get a foothold in the job market.

These new dimensions represent the focus of this paper.

The education of vocational teachers has always been put in second place throughout universities in North-Rhine-Westfalia (NRW). The results of several interviews confirm this incomprehensible circumstance. Silja Fehn, curator of the English department at the University of Muenster states for instance:

“Das Mauerblümchendasein der Schulform entspricht nicht der Realität und den Ansprüchen.”

She confirms that there are no special seminars for vocational teacher trainees, whereas at the same time the exigency of an autonomous field of research is more than advisable.

Universities in NRW still neglect to react to the fact that vocational school teachers are in need of a training that substantially differs from the one teacher trainees receive who will work at other types of schools. Bärbel Diehr from the University of Wuppertal emphasises:

“Die Bedürfnisse zukünftiger BK-Lehrkräfte sehen anders aus als die anderer Lehramtsstudierender.”

Without any doubt the concept of a didactic seminar for vocational teacher trainees may only function as one out of a number of necessary steps into a direction which acknowledges the need of fundamental structural changes concerning the current vocational ITE in Germany and especially in NRW.