



English Curricula

A comparison of basic principles and main aspects of contents of the English curricula in Baden-Württemberg and Italy (autumn 2016)

NB: Whereas the Baden-Württembergian Curriculum is a federalized one, the Italian one is valid for the whole state of Italy. Baden-Württemberg is implementing a brand new curriculum at the moment.

I. Basic principles

While **intercultural communication** plays a central part in the curriculum of Baden-Württemberg (BW), the Italian one focuses on that aspect to a much smaller extent.

Due to the different structures of the German and Italian school systems as such, **differentiation** has always been an integral part of the Italian educational concept; in BW, on the other hand, it has become a central aspect because the primary teachers' recommendation is not obligatory any longer.

Both curricula underline the teaching of foreign languages in a **holistic way**; they also favour a **student-centered approach** of teaching.

II. Main aspects of contents

According to both curricula, the role of **grammar** is to be diminished to a 'serving role' in order to promote communicative and comprehension skills.

With regard to **vocabulary**, the BW curriculum puts a much greater stress on the acquisition of local variations (BE/AE, Australian colloquialisms etc.) than its Italian counterpart.

Comprehension skills play a central part in both curricula as well as **presentation skills**.

Dictation, however, as a special kind of listening comprehension, is neither obligatory in Italy nor in BW.

While classic **translation** has been all but abolished in both curricula, **mediation** has taken its place but only in the BW curriculum, where it plays an important role regarding intercultural communication.

Reading out plays a very marginalized role in both curricula as recent studies have shown that it does not really further text comprehension.

Regional studies are essential for the BW curriculum's intercultural approach; in Italy they only play a minor role.

On the other hand, **literature** is crucial to the Italian curriculum whereas it has lost some of its significance in the new BW curriculum.

The **ratio of written and oral performance in the final exam** is 2.1 in BW and 3:2 in Italy.

Both curricula aim to promote the students' command of the English language to level **B2/C1**.

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