



# Multilingual classrooms and monolingual mindsets?

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ECSPM Symposium, Darmstadt, September 26, 2018



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# Overview

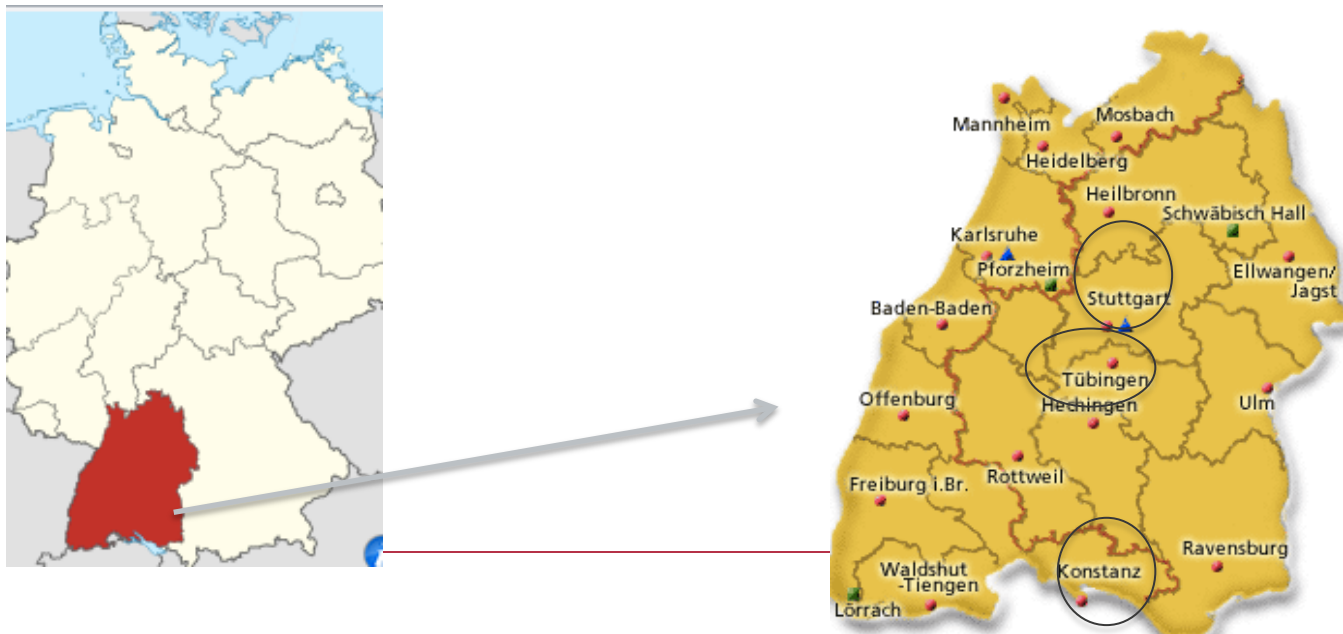
- I. Beliefs on multilingualism amongst teachers and teachers-to-be
- II. Factors influencing those beliefs
- III. Actions based on these findings to prepare teachers for the challenges and benefits of multilingual classrooms



## Background: Multilingualism in Germany

In all of Germany: 37.6% of 5-10 year olds and 35.9% of 10-15 year olds have a migration background (Federal Statistical Office, 2017)

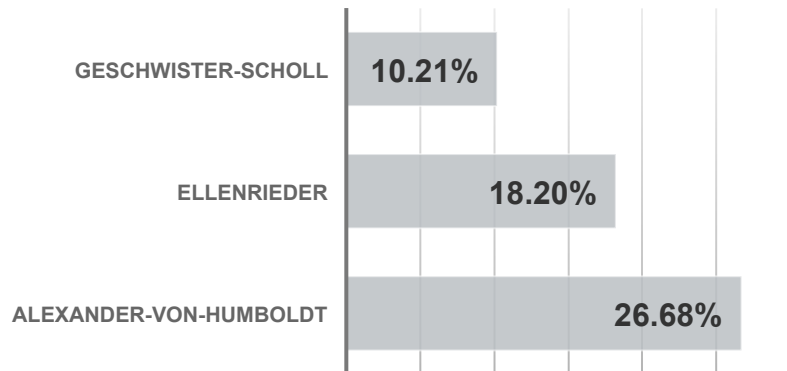
Federal state of Baden-Württemberg: 30% of students are multilingual (Federal Statistical Office, 2017)



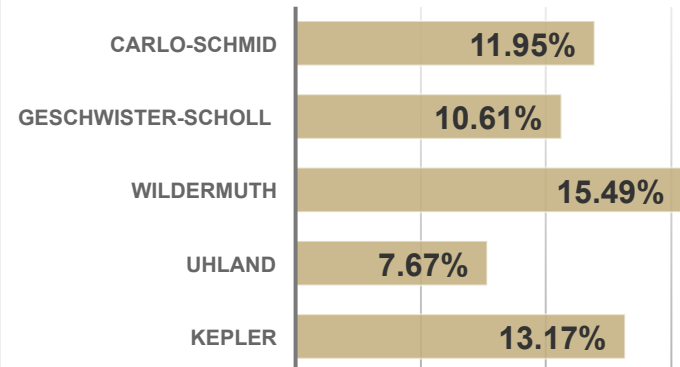


## „Potential“ multilingualism in the classroom

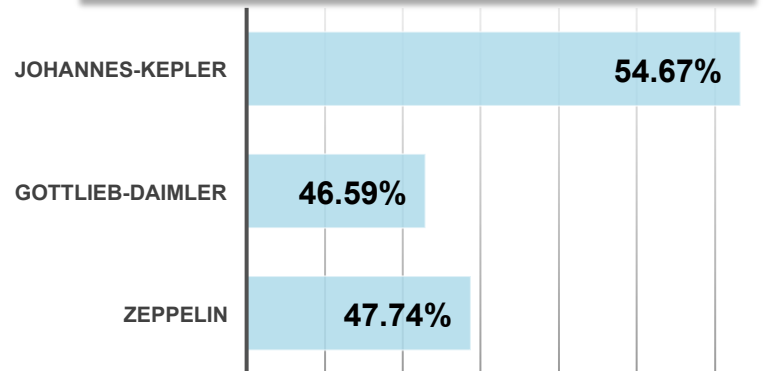
### Konstanz



### Tübingen



### Stuttgart



(Federal Statistical Office, 2017)



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## Beliefs

- *Teachers' beliefs*
    - subjective, influenced by personal experiences
    - Influence perspectives on teaching, learning, students (Hammer, Fischer & Koch-Priewe, 2016)
  - Teachers most important for fostering multilingualism (Morys, 2014)
  - Example: Teachers in training (n=433) with migration background show stronger enthusiasm and less prejudice with respect to multilingual students (Hachfeld et al., 2012)
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## Monolingual mindset

- In many schools still „monolingualer habitus“ / monolingual mindset (Gogolin, 1994, 2008)
  - Even in countries like multilingual Luxembourg: 66 biographies and beliefs of elementary school teachers show own multilingualism (Luxembourgish, German, French) as norm whereas other migrant languages are valued less (Morys, 2014)
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## Beliefs

- Survey of secondary school teachers in Flanders, Belgium (Pulinx, Van Avermaet, 6 Agirdag, 2015)
- 8 items on multilingualism in schools („*monolingual beliefs*“)  
(see also Agirdag et al., 2013)

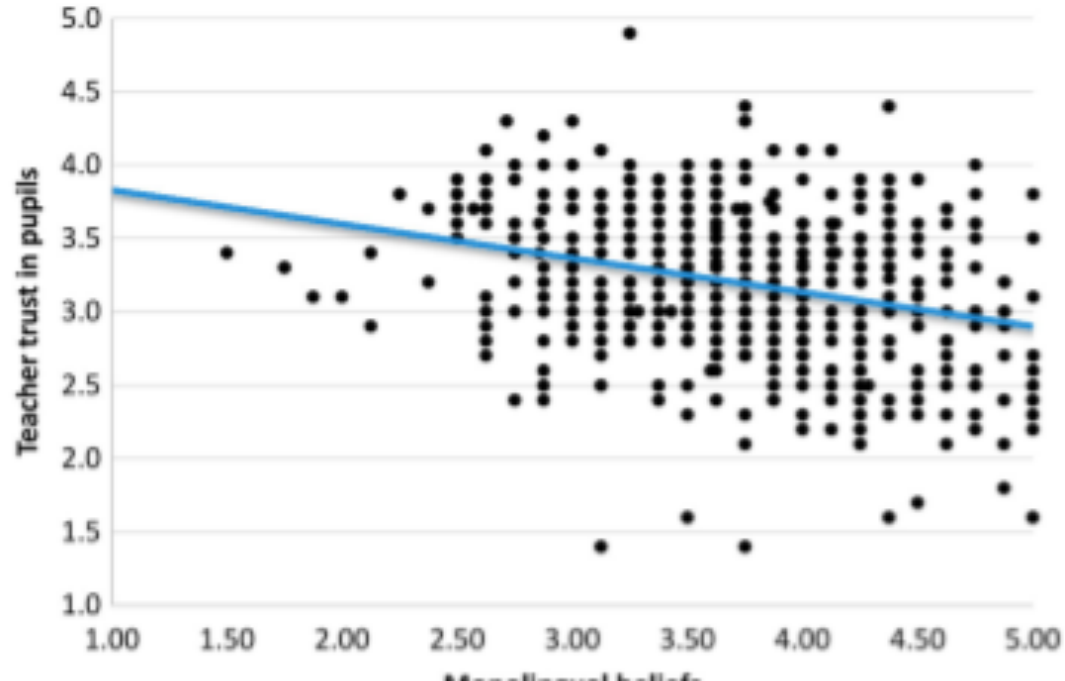
**Table 2.** Items of monolingual beliefs in education scale.

Item	Description	(Completely) Agree
1	Non-Dutch speaking pupils should not be allowed to speak their home language at school	77.3%
2	The most important cause of academic failure of non-Dutch speaking pupils is their insufficient proficiency in Dutch	78.2%
3	The school library (classroom library, media library) should also include books in the different home languages of the pupils	12.8%
4	Non-Dutch speaking pupils should be offered the opportunity to learn their home language at school	6.8%
5	By speaking their home language at school, non-Dutch speaking pupils do not learn Dutch sufficiently	72.1%
6	Non-Dutch speaking pupils should be offered regular subjects in their home language	3.2%
7	It is more important that non-Dutch speaking pupils obtain a high level of proficiency in Dutch than in their home language	44.7%
8	It is in the interest of the pupils when they are punished for speaking their home language at school	29.1%

Note: Percentage of teachers answering 'agree' and 'completely agree' are shown ( $N$  teachers = 674;  $N$  schools = 48).

Monolingual beliefs: 1-5  
5= very monolingual:  
**3.7 (SD 0,6)**

→ Female teachers: less „monolingual“ mindset



Monolingual /  
multilingual views  
and trust in pupils  
correlate highly

(Pulinx, Van Avermaet & Agirdag, 2015:11)





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## German teachers

- **Survey Becker-Mrotzek et al. (2012):**
  - Only 33% of the teachers (n=512, different school types) feel well-prepared to deal with multilingualism in the classroom
  - 61% of the teachers do not foster the German language in the classroom
  - 96% of the teachers find fostering the German language important, also in non-language subjects (82%)



## Survey among teacher education students in Tübingen and Konstanz (Rinker & Ekinici, in prep.)

- November/December 2016 (Konstanz)
- April 2018 (Tübingen)

	Konstanz	Tübingen
General profile	Teacher education students of different subjects Language-related subjects n=96 Non-language related subjects: n=52	Teacher education students, all study German as subject
n / gender	148 (102 f, 46 m)	149 (123 f, 25 m, 1 x)
Mean age	22.8 yrs	22.8 yrs
Own multilingual background	17	48



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# Survey with teacher education students

- Structure:
  - Awareness of and level of preparation for linguistic heterogeneity
  - Beliefs on linguistic heterogeneity in the classroom
  - Relevance of subject areas/gender/language background
  - Beliefs on Multilingualism in general
  - Role of home languages



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## General preparation for working in multilingual classroom

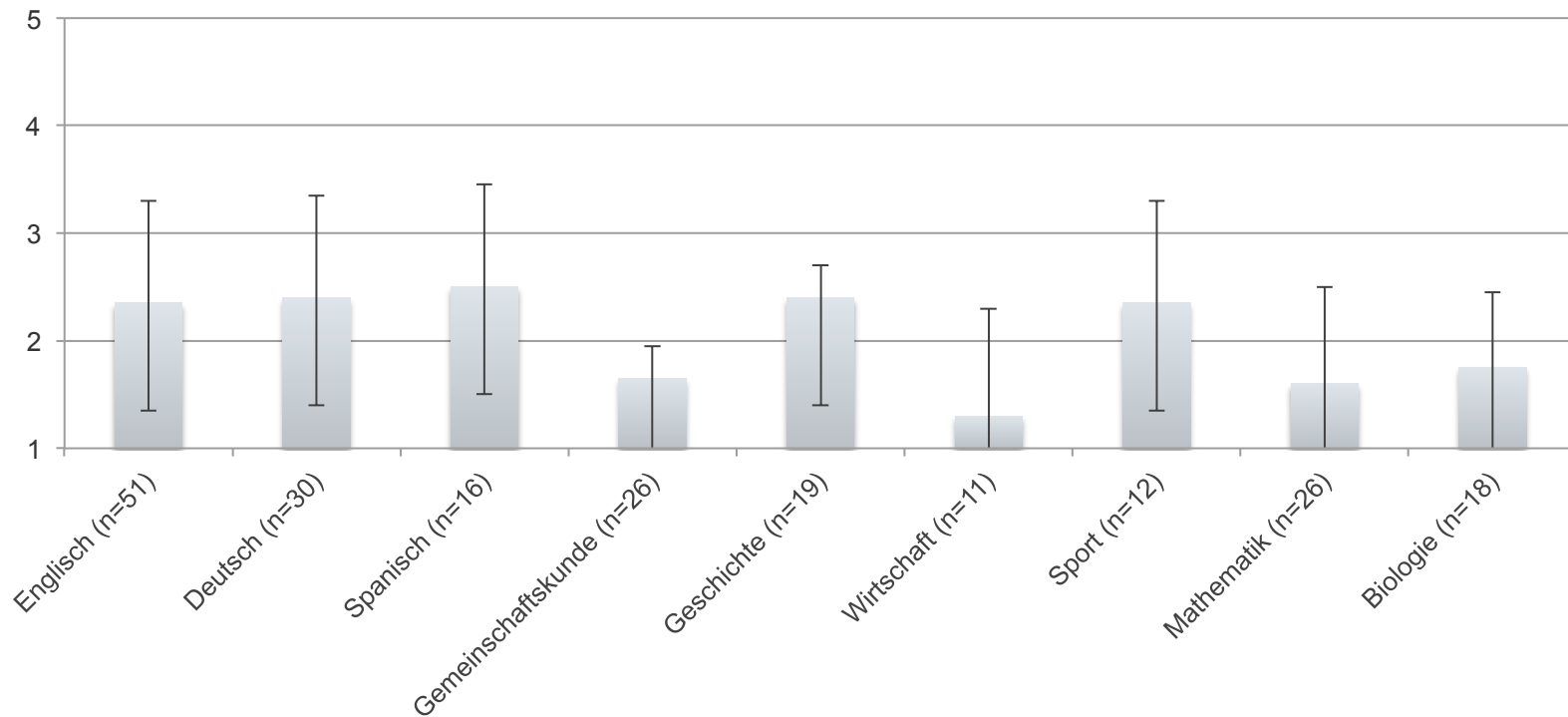
- 33% of students feel well or very well prepared (compare with study by Becker-Mrotzek et al., 2012)
- Significant difference between monolingual and multilingual students in preparation ( $p < .000$ )

(Konstanz-  
only; n=146)

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## Preparation for linguistic heterogeneity in the individual subjects at Uni Konstanz



(Scale 1-5, 1= poor, 5= very good)

(Konstanz-  
only, n=146)



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## Relevance of linguistic background of students

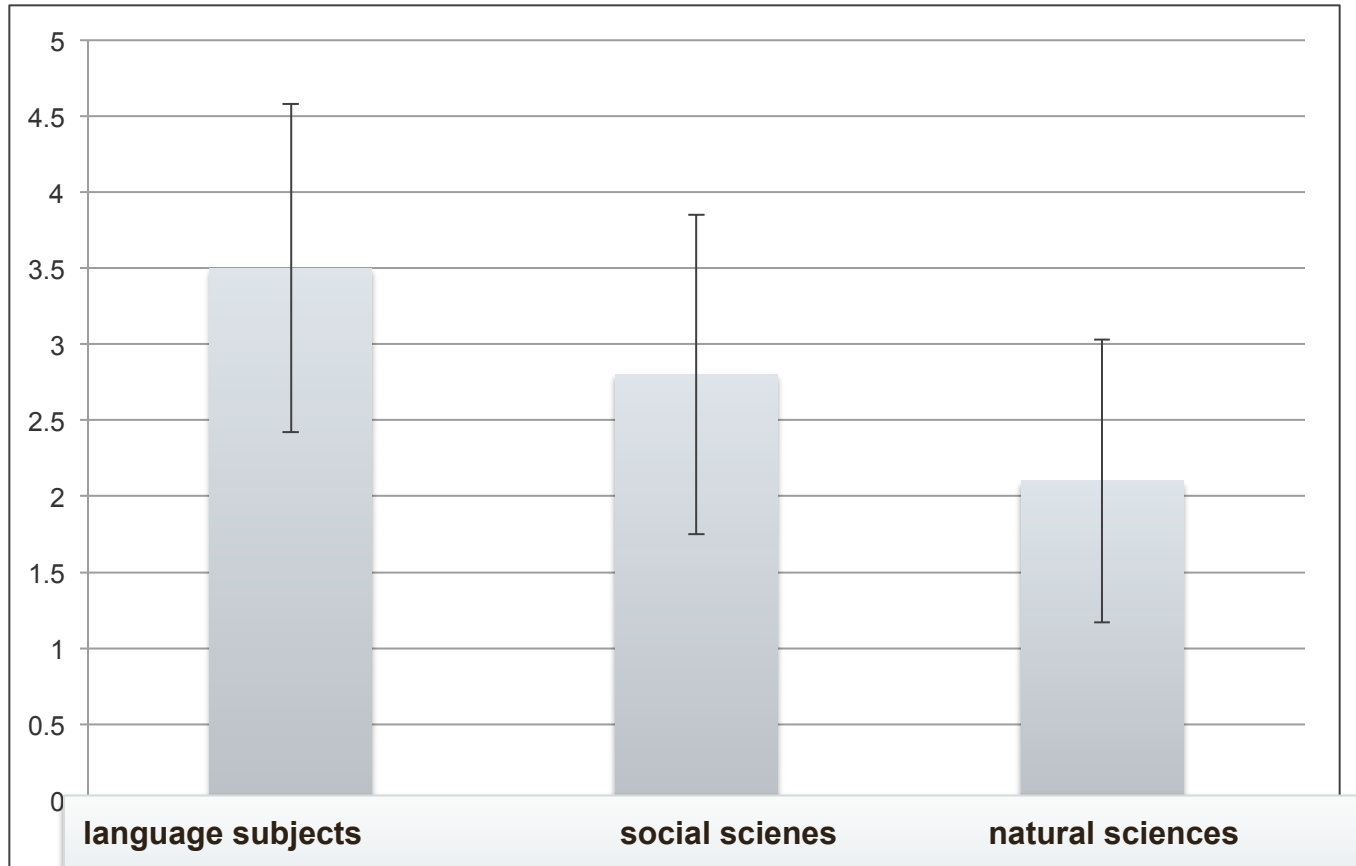
- For own subject
- 48%: yes
- 6,8%: no
- 45,2%: depends on subject

(Konstanz-  
only, n=146)

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## Relevance of language background of the students in the different subject areas?

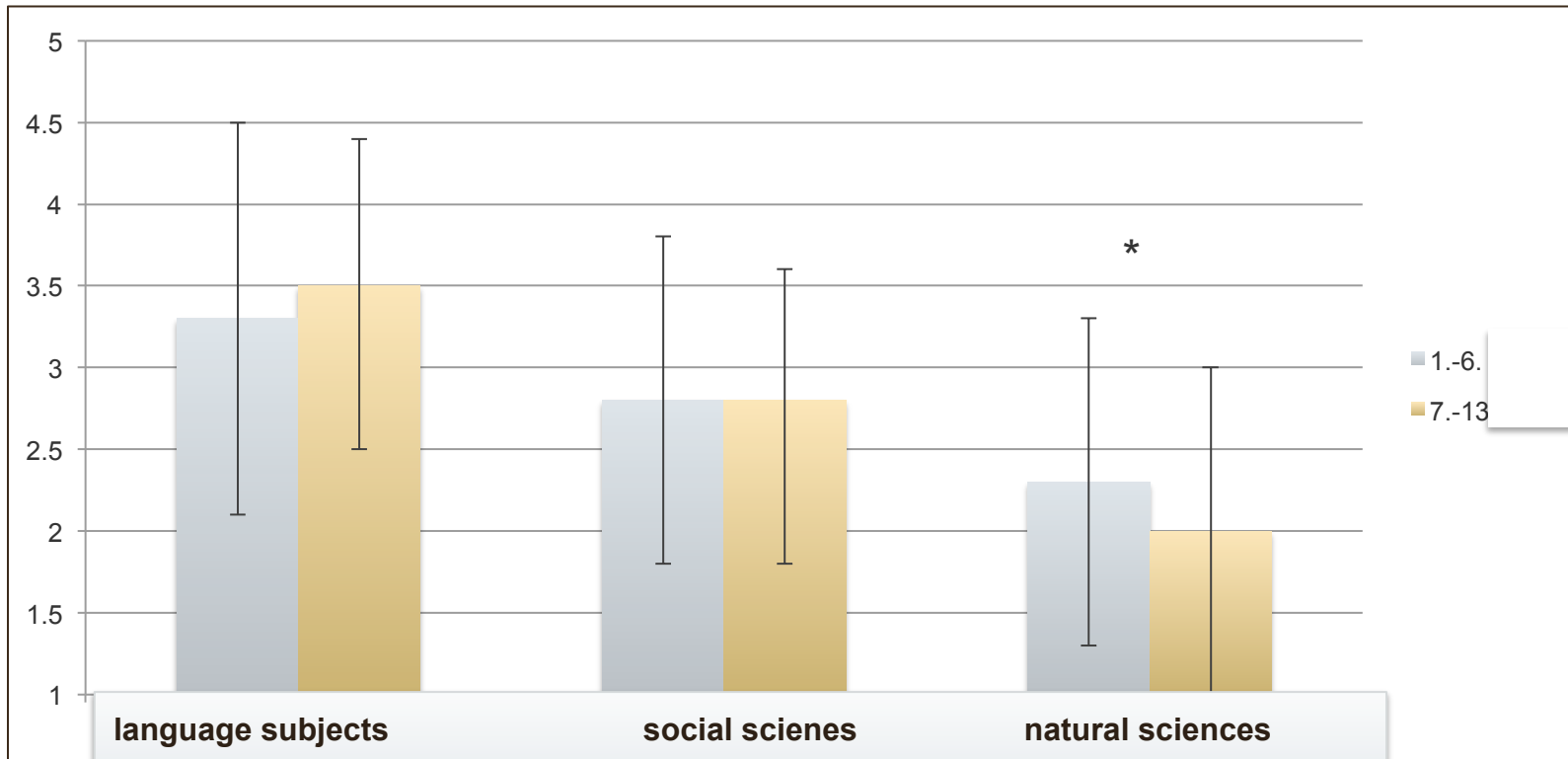


Scale 1-5, 1= not important, 5= very important)

(Konstanz-  
only, n=146)



... depends on the number of semesters studied



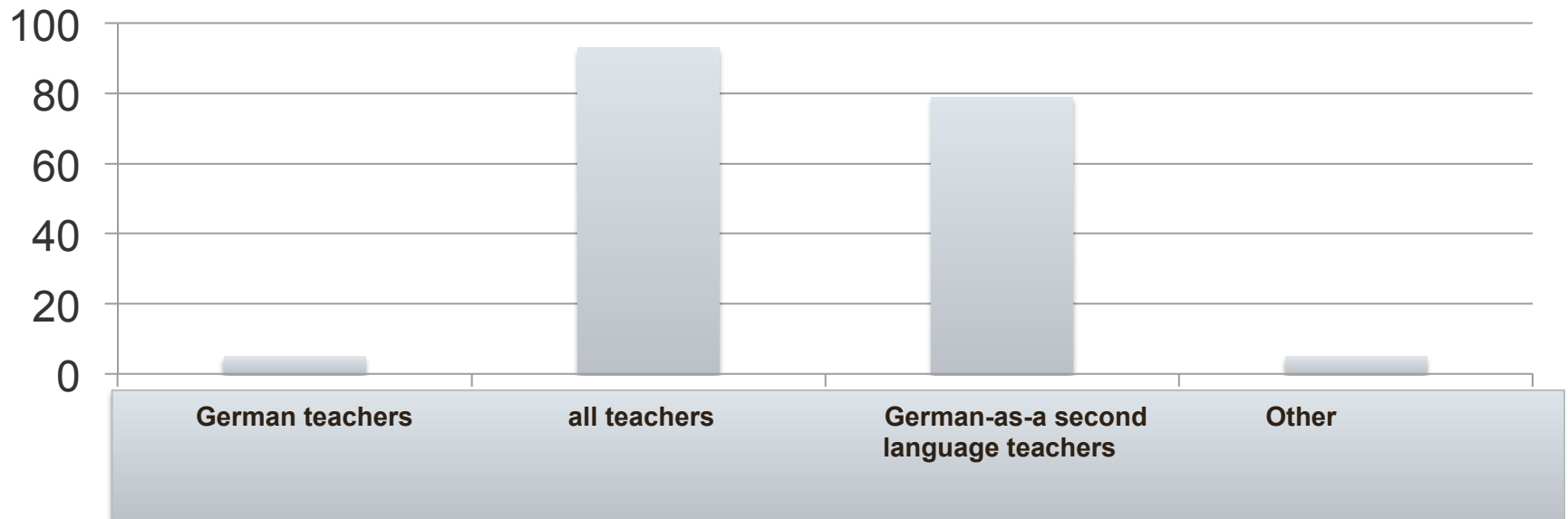
(Semester 1-6:  
n = 67

Semester 7-13:  
n = 58)





## Who should provide German language assistance at schools?



Absolute values, multiple answers possible

(Konstanz-only, n=127)



Assertion	% (compl) agree  n=775 Belgian teachers, secondary school	% (compl) agree  n=84 German teacher ed students, Konstanz	% (compl) agree  n=149 German teacher ed students, Tübingen
The most important cause of academic failure of minority-language speaking pupils is their insufficient proficiency in the majority language	78,2%	32,9%	22,8%
It is more important that minority-language speaking pupils obtain a higher level of proficiency in the majority language than in their home language.	44,7%	33,8%	29,5%

→ Significant difference in responses of monolingual and multilingual subjects for question of academic failure

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Assertion	% (compl) agree  n=775 Belgian teachers, secondary school	% (compl) agree  n=84 German teacher ed students, Konstanz	% (compl) agree  n=149 German teacher ed students, Tübingen
Pupils speaking the minority language should be offered the opportunity to learn their home language at school.	68,0%	61,2%	51,0%
Pupils speaking the minority language should be offered regular subjects in their home language.	3,2%	9,4%	20,5
By speaking their home language at school, pupils speaking the minority language do not learn the majority language sufficiently.	72,1%	32,9%	30,9%
The school library (classroom library, media library) should also include books in the different home languages of the pupils.	12,8%	60,5%	60,4%
Pupils speaking the minority language should not be allowed to speak their home language at school.	77,3%	27,5 %	42,2%
It is in the interest of the pupils when they are punished for speaking their home language at school.	29,1%	15,8%	1,4%



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## Monolingual Mindset?

- 5= monolingual, 1= multilingual
  - Belgium: 3,7
  - Uni Konstanz: 2,78 (SD 0,53), n=43  
→ Uni Tübingen: 2,62 (SD 0,64) n=149
  - significant gender differences among teacher education students  
(men: more monolingual mindset), as in secondary teachers
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## Summary

- Overall, teachers and teacher education students do not feel well-prepared for linguistic heterogeneity in the classroom
  - Preparation varies with respect to perceived requirements in the different school subjects
  - Mindset roughly right in-between monolingual and multilingual mindset in younger generation of teachers
  - Differences between gender and own linguistic background
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## Discussion / Outlook

- Reported problem in data collection: Difficulty to judge somewhat theoretic scenarios (e.g. teaching all subjects in the heritage languages largely impossible)
  - Data on beliefs does not give any information on actual implementation
- Further data collection currently underway with secondary school teachers in Germany
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## Discussion / Outlook

- How can these general positive attitudes towards multilingualism be turned into actions for linguistic responsive teaching?
- „Monolingual bias“, not ill-will, rather, too little knowledge; many teachers would like to know more (Haukas, 2018)
- An „all teachers to be linguistically responsive in all subjects“ policy like in Norway (National Board of Education 2016) (Spreitz, 2018) or Finland (Professional development on linguistically responsive teaching for ALL teachers) (Alisaari & Leena, 2018).
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# Thank you for your attention!

- Questions?

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