

*Enseigner/acquérir des langues étrangères en Suisse*

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ABSTRACT

With the exception of immigrants, most inhabitants of institutionally multilingual Switzerland are not bi- or plurilingual. The law therefore prescribes the teaching of a second national and a further foreign language (mostly English) from elementary school onwards. Minimal standards must be reached by the end of compulsory schooling. Nevertheless, there is a certain resistance against this regulation, in particular in the German-speaking cantons; English — in a supposedly monolingual mode — is increasingly preferred to the national languages. This paper argues not only that plurilingual forms of communication are both useful and frequent in daily life, but also that “English as a lingua franca” is, in many cases, just another form of mixed speech, a situation which needs to be reflected in the educational system.