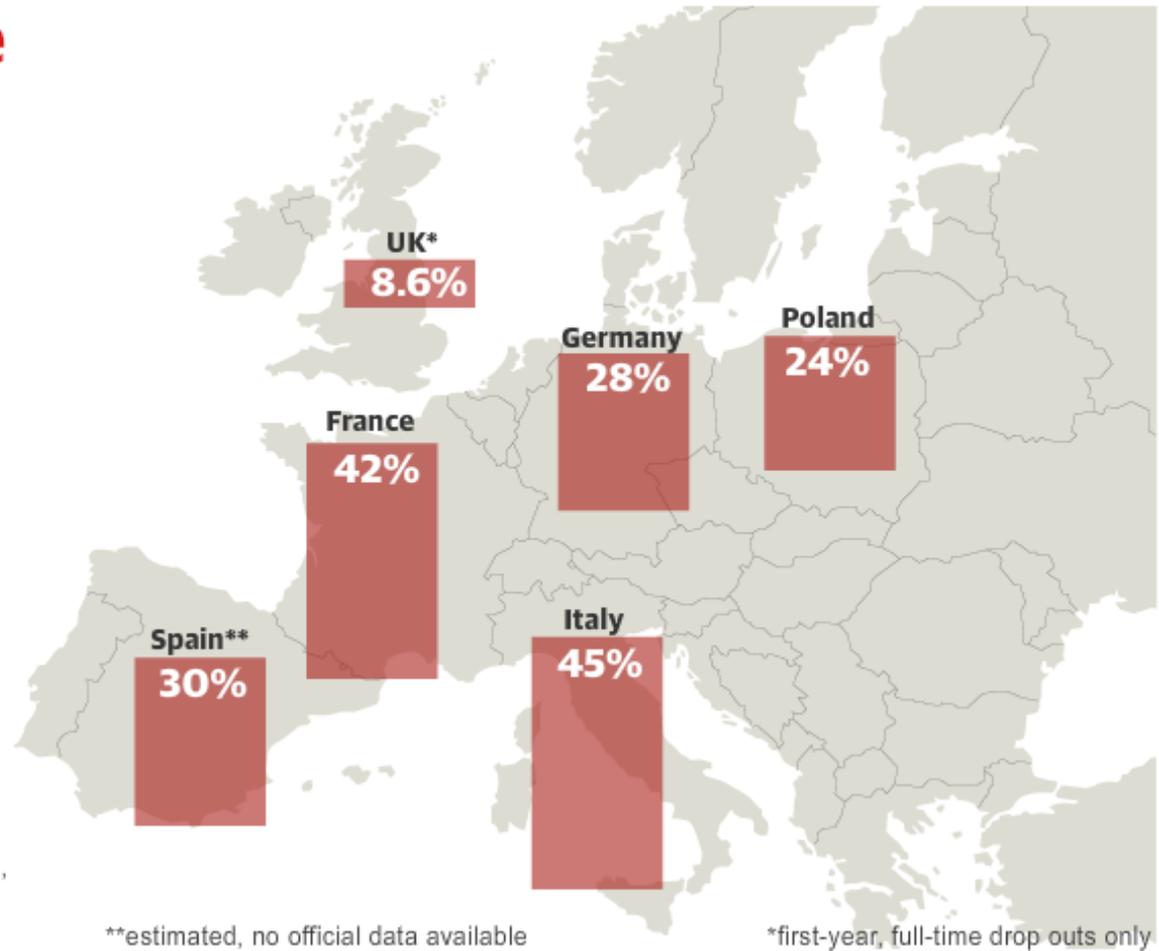# The Study and Production of Texts

Lesson 4

Homework for lesson 4

- p. 19: Read the article and study the tables. Do not do the writing task.

- p. 54: Read article on Latvia and Russian

- Download and read the file on factivity

- Download and read the commentaries for tables 2 and 3, p.12

- Write a data commentary comparing the drop-out rate for Italy and the UK (slide 12). Use the information about tuition fees on slide 13 as a possible explanation about the drop-out rate.
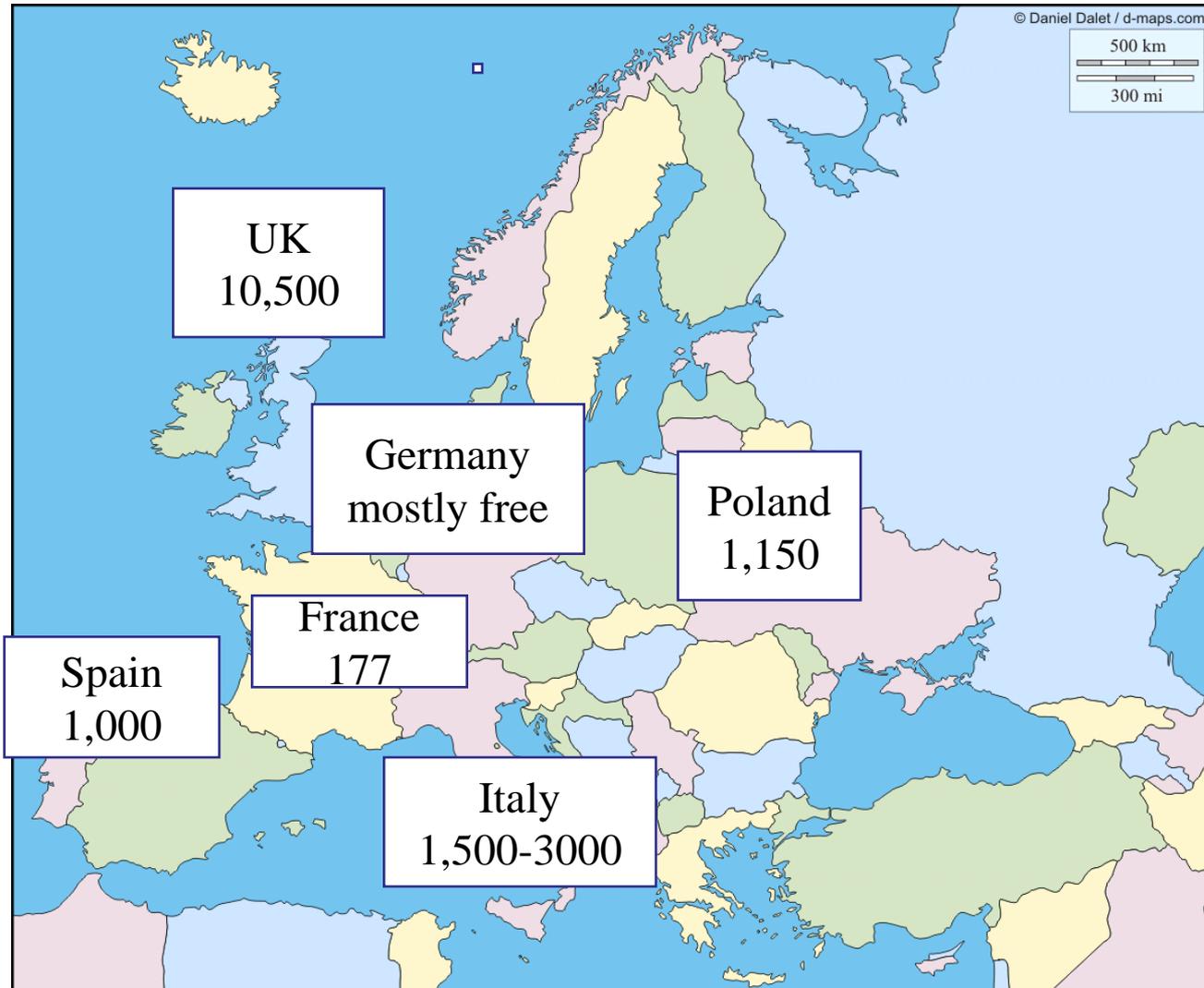
Drop-out rate

Percent

Number of Universities »
Number of students »
Students - per cent »
Cost »
Students studying abroad »
Drop out rate »

UK*
8.6%

Germany
28%

Poland
24%

France
42%

Spain**
30%

Italy
45%

Sources: HESA, Universities UK, OECD, BIS, Statistisches Bundesamt, HIS. Spanish, Polish, Italian governments, UNESCO,

**estimated, no official data available

*first-year, full-time drop outs only

Annual Tuition Fees (euros)

UK
10,500

Germany
mostly free

Poland
1,150

France
177

Spain
1,000

Italy
1,500-3000

K McLachlan

4

Example commentary

- Further education is the focus of a survey published in 2012 on the Guardian website.

- The data examined was collected in six EU countries, namely France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Spain and the UK, and compiled from statistics provided by each country and UNESCO.

- Two key areas were the drop-out rate and tuition fees.

- Data for the UK and Italy reveal remarkable differences.

Example commentary

- As can be seen, in the UK fewer than one in ten (8.5%) full-time first-year students abandon their undergraduate degree course.

- In contrast, almost half of students in Italy (45%) drop out of the course they enrolled in.

- This could be attributed to two main factors.

Example commentary

- Firstly, in the UK, applications are capped and are course specific. Applicants are selected on the basis of their grades and, in certain cases, following interviews.

- It is less likely therefore, that a candidate will feel unsuited and decide to drop out.

Example commentary

- In Italy instead, most courses are open to all high school graduates irrespective of their final results and students can also change course relatively easily.

- In other words, many students may realise they are unsuited for their chosen course and decide to leave or change to another degree course.

Example commentary

- The second factor regards tuition fees. The annual cost is relatively low in Italy (around €2,500) whereas in the UK fees can reach £9,000, equating to approximately €10,500.

- In Italy, therefore, abandoning a degree course has less financial impact whereas the consequences are more serious in the UK.

- In other words, the financial burden for UK students may be another reason for the low drop-out rate. (265 words)

Factive and non-factive verbs

The chart appears to show data ….

OR

The chart shows data ….

Which is correct?

The chart **shows** data ….

Factive and non-factive verbs

People in the UK are not interested in learning languages.

OR

The results suggest that people in the UK are not interested in learning languages.

Which is correct?

- The results suggest that people in the UK are not interested in learning languages.

Why?????

P. 14, table 5

Describe and comment in approximately 100 words on these three countries. Begin with a topic sentence about the chart.

EE

Russian   66%

English   46%

German   22%

LV

Russian   70%

English   39%

Latvian   23%

LT

Russian   80%

English   32%

Polish   15%

Data commentary: p, 14, table 5

Table 5, from the Eurobarometer Survey for 2006 on multilingualism published by the European Commission, focuses on the three most widely known foreign languages. The survey was conducted in the EU25 and also included the official candidates at that time: namely Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania and Turkey.

(46 words)

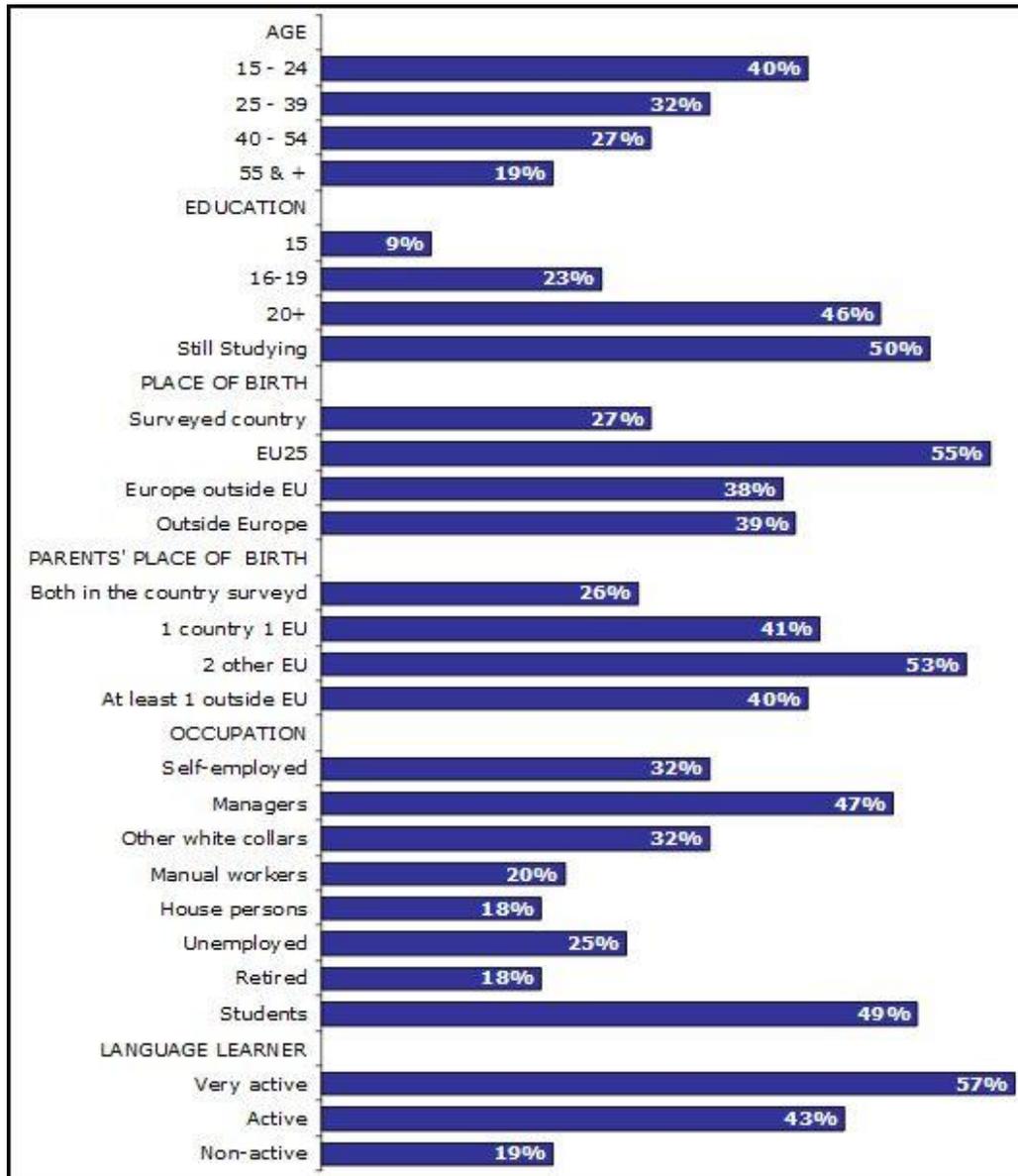# Data commentary: p. 14, table 5

Russian is listed in seven countries and is the most spoken foreign language in the three Baltic States of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, with 66%, 70% and 80% respectively.

(29 words)

Data commentary: p. 14, table 5

Although their geographical location could explain these figures since all three countries border on Russia territory, the main factor is that all three states were part of the former Soviet Union and Russian was the lingua franca.

(36 words)

Checklist

- Paragraph structure (topic sentence, highlighting statements)

- Lexical cohesion (repetition of words and use of lexical nets)

- Connectors

- Grammatical cohesion (pronoun or article reference, modality for hypotheses)

- Tense consistency

- Anaphoric reference (backward reference)

- Cataphoric reference (forward reference)

Test next week

- Revise all slides and information on data commentary

- The three charts will be based on familiar information

- The test will last 90 minutes

- No dictionaries or notes.