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Maarika Teral is a research fellow in the field of Estonian as a Foreign Language at the University of Tartu. She graduated in Estonian as a Foreign Language from the University of Tartu Faculty of Philosophy (1997). After that, she has worked as a teacher of Estonian. Since 2004, she has taught Estonian as a Foreign Language at the Institute of Estonian and General Linguistics at the University of Tartu Faculty of Philosophy.

Maarika Teral has studied bilingualism and language contacts, focusing on the Estonian used by expatriate Estonian communities.

She has also studied the methodological problems of teaching Estonian as a Foreign Language (e-learning of the Estonian language).

Maarika has participated in the development of several e-courses aimed at beginners, and the SOCRATES Lingua projects SMALLINC—An Interactive Approach to Language and Culture (2001-2004) and ONENESS—On-line less used and less taught language courses (2004–2006) which were funded by the European Commission.