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## **Reference Document**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Reference document**

The present document results from the deliberations of a working group established by the Executive Committee of the ELC in January 1999, with the mission of outlining the framework of a language policy for European universities as the objectives described in the statutes of the ELC are still very general in this regard.

First and foremost, it addresses heads of institutions, university associations and political decision-makers.

Its objective is the definition of the responsibilities of universities or institutions of higher education in promoting European linguistic and cultural diversity and in developing the future plurilingual and pluricultural European citizen.

It is intended to form a conceptual framework for recommendations and actions in education and in research, linked to developments in the professional, economic, socio-cultural and political domains. These will enable universities, not only to adapt, but also to control, to anticipate, even to influence these developments.

### **The importance of a language policy for European universities**

Universities are confronted with a major challenge at the present moment: that of greater European integration and the necessity of maintaining linguistic and cultural diversity in Europe. This will be achieved by fostering interaction between its languages and cultures, while at the same time remaining within the framework of globalisation, including its current requirements and the control of its effects. The resulting communication needs, for political, economic, cultural and social reasons, require a greater promotion of the knowledge and the practice of languages, aiming to achieve a plurilingualism which will harmoniously integrate linguistic plurality into the unifying context of globalisation.

Henceforth, the construction of a plurilingual and pluricultural European citizen that is open to the world, constitutes a major challenge for all educational systems and in particular for universities. Universities must consider their specific contribution in their dual role as providers of education and research. In other words, universities must respond to new linguistic and cultural needs through their educational structures while at the same time anticipating future needs through their research structures.

This is an appeal addressed to all the disciplines traditionally included in the area of languages, both as an object of learning and a means of mediation – provision for students of languages, of linguistics, teacher training, the training of trainers, service teaching, translator and interpreter training, preparation for mobility and autonomous learning – but this appeal is also addressed to all the disciplines that need to rally to the “language cause” particularly in the light of integrated education in languages and in specific disciplines. Languages must become everyone’s responsibility.

As each university moves forward, making educational and academic choices in relation to language, it must develop a language policy which will determine these choices. The objective of the present document is to clarify what such a policy entails and the conditions which must be met if it is to be realized.

It is more precisely a question of defining:

- THE OBJECTIVES, in terms of competencies which the university must promote in order to develop the plurilingual and pluricultural citizen,
- THE METHODS, which the university must develop to achieve these objectives,
- THE STRATEGIES which universities must implement to develop these methods and achieve these objectives.

## **1. OBJECTIVES**

### **What types of competencies must universities promote in order to create the European plurilingual and pluricultural citizen?**

While one may assume that students entering university are equipped both with linguistic knowledge and with a certain communicative know-how in foreign languages, it is for the university to lead them beyond this level, to enable them to communicate in different cultural and linguistic environments, so they can take on social, economic, political and scientific responsibilities at a European and international level.

In particular, the university has the task of dispensing what may be termed the higher levels of communicative competence, especially those which involve the ability to master the main types of discourse (oral or written, in production or in comprehension) to respond to:

Academic requirements (understanding complex texts, taking notes, producing academic discourses that are coherent and explicit, organizing arguments, following communicative conventions for seminars and rules of politeness, adapting to the interlocutor, etc.)

Professional requirements: specific discursive conventions in a domain of speciality (reports, types of discourse), social conventions in a specific context (presentations, interaction styles).

If the linguistic requirements of the new European citizen are to be adapted to new political, professional, socio-cultural and economic responsibilities, in a context which is in constant evolution and change, then one must go well beyond the traditional academic and professional requirements. They must be adjusted in terms of creativity as well as in their transversal nature, that is in terms of their capacity to learn to communicate while communicating in other languages and with other cultures.

Strategic competence, intercultural competence and multilingual competence will be specifically addressed.

#### **1.1. Strategic competence**

The concept of "strategic competence" entails both communication strategies and strategies for learning to communicate.

Communication strategies include all of the techniques that enable one to get by when faced with communicative difficulties in a language where one's competence is limited. More generally they entail filling in the gaps of other competencies to guarantee interaction and achieve communicative objectives.

Learning strategies include attempts at mastering new linguistic and communicative knowledge. More generally, they involve techniques used or deliberate actions that facilitate learning.

These two types of strategies bring to light some specific characteristics of learning, notably linked to the problematic, to intentionality and awareness.

More generally, they come under the knowledge that can be qualified as typically academic, that is to say founded on cognitive, or meta-cognitive principles (reflexivity, representation, awareness, explanation, conceptualisation, critique, relativity, decentring, openness, anticipation, problem solving, autonomy, control, regulation, planning, anticipation, creativity, risk taking, decision) and on interactional principles (negotiation, exchange, confrontation of points of view, adaptation, management of otherness, cooperation).

## **1.2. Intercultural competence**

Management of otherness, a result of cultural diversity, is particularly important in what is known as intercultural competence, in the sense that language learning includes an understanding of the usage and practices of the other language community, which are indispensable for the success of interpersonal relations. Intercultural competence more particularly concerns the management of the communication between two individuals coming from different cultures and in particular the resolution of the conflicts and misunderstandings that result from these differences. This is not only with the goal of acquiring the values of others, but also of becoming more aware of one's own values.

To achieve this, the university must explicitly present itself as a multicultural zone and exchange facilitator.

## **1.3. Plurilingual competence**

It is important to underline that plurilingual competence does not mean the addition of multiple monolingual competencies which would mean that all the levels of competence would have to be mastered to perfection in each language. Plurilingual competence exists alongside the idea of partial competence – both in the level achieved in each of the competencies and in the types of competencies involved. The partial character of plurilingual competence is thus to be understood in a qualitative and quantitative fashion. To communicate can be understood as the type of language use for which a certain type or level of competence is required; plurilingual competence corresponds to operational and functional goals. This partial concept of plurilingual competence corresponds precisely with the possibilities offered by strategic competence, guaranteeing that a partial system will become a possible instrument of communication and a way of gaining access to new competencies. Therefore, the partial character of plurilingual competence is to be defined, not as a purpose, but above all as a learning method.

In order to establish a functional and operational concept of language teaching and learning, allowing a coherent and transparent articulation of competencies required and objectives to be attained, the Council of Europe's concept of levels of competence will be used as a basis (cf. *Modern Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment. A common European framework of reference*, Strasbourg: council of Europe, 1996.)

The partial character of plurilingual competence is in itself directly linked to the question of language choice and targeted objectives.

## **1.4. Language choice**

The choice of languages targeted by the measures mentioned above will be inspired by the "*White Paper on teaching and learning: towards a learning society*". It may be summarised by the formula 1 + >2: "It is becoming necessary for everyone... to be able to acquire and keep up their ability in at least two community languages in addition to their mother tongue". The objectives of these two languages will be defined respectively in terms of their function and in terms of identity - function for the widely spoken common languages and identity for the geographically close languages - while raising the issue of the status of languages (common languages, national languages, regional languages and minority languages).

Despite the exceptional position of English, the European Union is guided by the principle of the equality of national languages. Moreover, with the growing expansion of the Union, the number of official languages, which is currently up to 11, is likely to further increase in the near future. It is important to note that the Treaty of Amsterdam (1997), like its predecessor, the Treaty of Maastricht (1992), declares that all Union citizens have the right to write to any European institution in one of the official languages and to receive a response in the same language. Furthermore, the Representatives of the Member States, that is to say the Ministers, as well as

Members of the European Parliament, have the right to speak in any of the 11 official languages. Finally, European legislation must be available in all the Union languages.

In addition, it is likely that increasing mobility within the Union will increase interpretation needs still further, insofar as Union citizens will move around in the other member states without, at least in the beginning, mastering their respective languages.

For all of these reasons universities must respond to the double objective of on the one hand training highly qualified translators and interpreters and, on the other hand, preparing students to live and work in a multilingual and multicultural Europe by encouraging them to acquire plurilingual and intercultural competence.

### **1.5. The question of English**

It is up to the universities to overcome the contradiction between the demand at European level to enlarge the provision of foreign languages, including those of minorities, and the fact that the great majority of students study English. To prevent the danger of standardization, there is a need for action to raise awareness of the importance of conserving the plurality of our cultural and consequently linguistic heritage. Whether in the form of an exchange, of a professional future, or with the more general intention to broaden the mind, it is essential to perfect knowledge of languages, both in quantitative terms in relation to the languages concerned, and in qualitative terms in relation to the level of competence in each of them.

English seems to be far from capable of resolving all the problems, particularly in the short term. Currently less than half of all Europeans can hold a conversation in English, while 89 % of students have learnt it. Generalized English is thus far from being the practical multipurpose language that it is claimed to be. Furthermore, if it serves immediate communication purposes, it cannot function as the language used when living in a country which has another language. To live in a community implies the practice of that country's language. English as a "*lingua franca*" maintains the confusion between a language necessary for a certain political (in particular that of the European institutions), economic and scientific level, and a language necessary for interaction among the citizens themselves.

Moreover, we must also raise the issue of the choice of the language in which we want to speak to the rest of the world. Other languages, such as Spanish, Chinese or Japanese, are showing signs of becoming important *linguae francae*, while English would seem to be presently losing ground vis-à-vis other languages on the Internet. It would be harmful for universities not to anticipate future developments and against their vocation not to try to adapt them. Therefore, they could do more than increase quantitatively and qualitatively the opportunities they offer in languages, by becoming authoritarian in linguistic choices and by requiring, for example, that a certain percentage of programmes be given over to plurilingualism. Plurilingualism stemming from a detailed analysis of various contexts - regional, national and international - in which every university is included.

Nevertheless it appears illusory to imagine that each student will have an array of languages and it is preferable to have within European universities a multiplicity of persons speaking several languages. The need for greater diversity in language choice and the possibility of developing them on the basis of partial competencies, far from replacing the work of interpreters and translators, on the contrary reinforces the necessity to resort to them as a complementary measure, given the level of competence which is targeted.

### **1.6. Regional and minority languages**

If linguistic and cultural diversity are considered as an essential element of the European heritage, and if the individual and collective linguistic rights of non-European immigrants living in the European Union member states or other states are recognised as enriching for cultural and linguistic diversity (with reference to the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages

promulgated in 1998 by the Council of Europe), it is essential that the university takes on its responsibilities vis-à-vis this double challenge of the construction of Europe. A challenge which can be accepted if one judges that the heritage to be defended is not so large, the 225 languages of Europe representing only 3 % of the total of 6000 languages spoken worldwide.

The university, in the domain of regional languages and minority languages, can be challenged in its three spheres of responsibilities, namely academic language studies, the training of language teachers, translators and interpreters, and language training for students of other disciplines.

- In the case of regional languages, the university can give academic language studies the opportunity to contribute to the knowledge of, preservation of and promotion of a specific language. It can encourage teacher training to focus on plurilingual education and to offer translation and interpreting courses in the language in question, or it can develop courses in this language.

- For minority languages, the university can encourage academic reflection on the language and the original culture of its community. Likewise it can encourage socio-linguistic studies on the position of this language in the regional, national and international context, so as to target a better understanding of this community. It can develop teacher training to take account of the particular language in plurilingual education, train translators and interpreters to use it and finally, offer courses in the language, notably for professionals (doctors, lawyers, etc.) who have to be in contact with this community.

### **1.7. Continuity and rupture between the university and other institutional levels**

For all the challenges that the university is called upon to take up, it is nevertheless dependant on language policy set up at national level. In applying the principles listed above, it must develop and enlarge existing knowledge taking into account continuity with former educational levels. However, it is important to underline that it has considerable room for manoeuvre, insofar as its choice of languages, of objectives and of required competencies, are also dependant on its specific situation, notably its place in the academic world and its necessary meta-cognitive dimension.

The university must be capable not only of adapting to continual economic and political changes, but also of reflecting on them, theorising on them and anticipating them. In doing so, it should be capable not only of using these models under pressure from the outside world but also of going beyond them, insofar as these models constitute not only the instruments, but also the objects of knowledge to be constructed and to be perfected.

### **1.8. Plurilingualism as an instrument of cognitive and social mediation**

Plurilingualism in the university constitutes not only an object of learning to be developed, but also a method for developing other knowledge. If it is acknowledged that language has an essential role to play in the organisation, the conceptualisation, and in the control of knowledge, the importance of plurilingualism for the university will be self-evident. The presence of a plurality of linguistic systems will serve in a way as a catalyst, to making the linguistic and cognitive domains more intricate.

In particular, there is a need to examine the role of plurilingualism in the furtherance of knowledge, in the practices established by universities, as well as in the development of knowledge itself and its products.

However, in developing knowledge, organising, implementing, creating or disseminating it, we are still dealing with interactive processes, whether it is through social and verbal interaction that new knowledge (linguistic or disciplinary) is learnt, developed, negotiated, structured, organised, controlled, managed, regulated, invented, elaborated, transmitted, and taught. In this sense the plurilingual dimension is essentially a process of co-development of knowledge.



## **2. METHODS**

### **How can the university make the achievement of these objectives possible and foster their achievement?**

For the university to respond to such objectives implies a fundamental rethinking of structures and in particular on the disciplinary divisions on which it is currently based. The opening up of nations and of cultures must be followed by an opening up of knowledge and of the subject disciplines that develop knowledge, with interdisciplinarity in a sense relying on a "cognitive and interactive framework", based on the transversal nature of languages.

#### **2.1. The decompartmentalization of disciplines**

Interdisciplinarity is not to be understood within traditional categories, but must equally transcend these categories to create new types of relations, new amalgamations, and even new disciplinary fields. It must lead to a rethinking of the dangerous simplistic schema that separates cultural and literary knowledge (humanist and abstract), from scientific and technological knowledge (tangible), both at the level of teaching and of research.

Languages must become everybody's responsibility and not only that of specialists (linguists, language teachers, interpreters or translators).

#### **2.2. The decompartmentalization of languages**

This decompartmentalization must have an impact on languages as a disciplinary field.

- First of all Internal decompartmentalization or "inter-languages". This will entail encouraging comparative studies, emphasizing divergence and convergence at all levels of linguistic analysis, and thus establishing the criteria on which the idea of "language families" (Romance languages, Germanic languages, Slavic languages, etc.) is based. This is necessary not only for descriptive ends, but also for educational ends. Demonstrating links between languages must facilitate access to these languages.

- External decompartmentalization, as one of the major problems that impede interdisciplinarity and plurilingualism is the polarisation of language studies, confined to structures that primarily direct them inwardly, into their own ways of development and transmission. Language teaching must become interdisciplinary, particularly by fostering interfaculty diplomas or degrees, allowing the combination of languages with other disciplinary fields in the same way as "Area Studies". Here language studies are in direct contact with connected fields such as sociology, anthropology and psychology, courses which examine how language as a medium and instrument is used to promote the exercise of power in society. This role of languages as instrument must go beyond the humanities and take one more step towards the natural sciences.

If one wants to resolve the paradox of an ever-increasing linguistic demand in the face of a growing lack of specialists, the university must think globally about languages, by considering them certainly as objects and as instruments, but also as resources to be recorded, valued and developed.

This requires new forms of collaboration between academic conceptions and functional (or service) conceptions of languages in the university.

#### **2.3. Plurilingual education in the university**

One possibility of improving the links between languages and other disciplines lies in plurilingual education (or bilingual education or immersion) applied to the university context.

This teaching consists in providing education in the discipline in more than one language, at variable rhythms and intensities, while at the same time offering language training as a complement. This is a provision of teaching *in* languages alongside the teaching *of* language. Recent research has clearly shown the superiority of plurilingual education in terms of foreign language learning, if one accepts the concept of partial mastery of a language.

In the case of the other disciplines, in the humanities or natural sciences, studies carried out until now have already shown a number of non negligible benefits of teaching provided in more than one language or in an other language than the native language, in terms of specific cognitive effects. The “plurilingual screen” can influence development, organisation and learning pace of new knowledge.

One way of imagining plurilingual education at university level would be to encourage students to follow courses and to read publications in several languages, to invite external experts to give courses and lectures, to better exploit the linguistic and cultural diversity which already exists in the form of foreign students present in the courses.

In short, plurilingual education would be the “natural” way to put language teaching in context, from a cognitive and socio-cultural point de view.

It is nevertheless important to underline that the internationalisation of universities or their desire to internationalise, is leading them to provide more and more courses in English, thus risking to reduce even the very idea of plurilingual education to the mere integration of English; the objective being, on the contrary, to promote an effective plurilingualism involving greater language diversity.

It must also be noted that plurilingual education does not only concern the university in relation to the teaching/learning method of its own students. In addition to its traditional role of training language teachers, it must also train teachers according to these principles at all institutional levels and thus develop methodologies which conform to these new demands. It is in this sense that Masters programmes must be developed for plurilingual education.

However, the development of plurilingual methodologies presupposes resorting to tangible frameworks of reference, which it is also incumbent on the university to develop through research projects and networks of current experiments, while at the same time equipping itself with the necessary instruments to evaluate and guarantee quality.

## **2.4. Physical and virtual mobility**

If plurilingual education is to become the centrepiece of university language training, it must complement other types of training, making use of new technologies and particularly of exchange pedagogy based on student mobility – physical or virtual mobility.

Following courses in a foreign university offers precisely that access to a domain of knowledge through another language, that will result not only in advances in each of the domains - linguistic and non-linguistic, but also in developing the meta-cognitive tools for the reciprocal evaluation of these two domains. It is in this sense that the university becomes a place of language resources, while at the same time carrying out its cognitive and socio-cultural tasks.

As for virtual mobility through new technologies and in particular the Internet, it must be exploited to the full, either as a means of interaction, by encouraging students to take part in academic discussion on the Web (chats), or as a means of learning, informing them of different types of programmes available. The students must be given the critical instruments so that they will not consume just anything, not be trapped by the fascination of the medium at the expense of the message. New technologies and the Internet can also be used as a means of assessment or self-assessment of competencies (cf. DIALANG).

Considering its impact in the development and transmission of knowledge, the language question must, as a matter of urgency, become a priority for the virtual university. For the moment, the virtual university essentially concentrates on the natural sciences, maintaining and even reinforcing the partitioning of disciplines, and running the risk that the adoption of English by a large majority will go against the very principle of the linguistic diversity recommended here.

## **2.5. New domains of education and research**

While the primary responsibility of the university as an institution of education lies in the transmission of knowledge, its duties go well beyond the cognitive sphere. It is also a place and instrument of socialization, which must communicate the values on which the rights and duties of tomorrow's citizen are based.

Consequently, in addition to the new disciplinary fields resulting from the remodelling or displacement of frontiers between existing disciplines, and which require an appropriate level of functional competencies (technological communication, basic principles of human management, etc), new areas of teaching and research may also be conceived, that would be directly linked to the demand of the construction of the European plurilingual citizen. Examples include intercultural awareness courses, dealing with questions of the validity of the value systems, beliefs and attitudes on which the existence of neighbouring communities are based, or more generally, language policy courses, which analyse the fundamental role of languages in the construction of knowledge and of the socio-cultural fabric.

While the teaching of languages, literature and linguistics are privileged sectors for dealing with these questions, it is important at this time that these questions go beyond the linguistic domain and become a necessary component of other university curricula.

## **2.6. Recycling of disciplinary domains**

In addition to decompartmentalization of disciplines, and the introduction of new teaching domains, the "recycling" of certain areas or disciplinary sub-divisions can also be envisaged. These would in a way have a sort "meta" role in relation to the university's transformation process. They would have a particular mission to study the decompartmentalization and the emergence of new academic fields, as part of the normal education of their own students on the one hand, and as service teaching for related disciplines, on the other. For example, one might entrust to sociology the task of developing and transmitting the idea of interculturality and of implementing it. One might entrust to psychology the objective of developing some of its syllabuses in the sense of a cognitive and interactive framework, and one might entrust linguistics the task of considering language and discourse, not only in their own right, but particularly in their relation to knowledge and culture.

## **2.7. Motivating education as a lifelong process**

Whether in terms of disciplinary decompartmentalization or in the emergence of new disciplinary fields, strategies must be developed, not to oblige but to encourage students to follow these streams, by selling languages both as "key skills" and as "graduate skills", that is to say as professional, socio-cultural, cognitive and economic advantages, as well as achievements to be recognised in terms of explicit awards in diplomas.

The integration of languages in academic programmes as a pre-requisite at the beginning of university studies or even as a requirement incorporated in the programmes could be a further step forward. Language transversality must progressively become clear and a real added value in university courses at all levels of culture, learning and languages. Transversality and linguistic plurality must also encourage the university to question its operational principles, notably concerning language use in formal situations, such as those of examinations or vivas for doctoral

thesis. For example, why not allow foreign students use a language other than that of the host university or to use more than one language?

Moreover, considering the rapid changes in scientific, economic, socio-cultural and political contexts, this ‘transversal’ learning must be part of a continual lifelong process. The university must above all provide the basic principles which can be applied to autonomous and independent training in the future. This is one way for the university to lay the foundation, in cognitive, socio-cultural and linguistic terms, for the principle of more general autonomy, “learning to learn”.

## **2.8. Assessment and self-assessment**

If new types of knowledge are to be defined, together with new instruments to attain them, it will be necessary to set up new forms of assessment and self-assessment for the higher level based on new criteria and new norms. These are, in particular, the objectives of the new European Portfolio (currently being adapted for higher education), which is capable of integrating the learner’s “linguistic capital” in institutional and non-institutional contexts, in terms of the languages in question, the level of competence attained, and the communicative skills recorded. It is essentially a formative evaluation conceived as a method of improving both communicative and intercultural language competencies and performance.

The DIALANG diagnostic test is based on the same principle of learner autonomy and self-assessment. It enables the level of competence to be determined through a computerised format, and shows where there is room to improve the mastery of a foreign language.

The university Portfolio and DIALANG, academically developed and validated, should provide operating tools for an education based on a “transversal” and “longitudinal” conception of competence.

## **2.9. The university as place of language research**

While the university must develop both new objectives and new ways of attaining them, in the education of language students, trainers, trainers of trainers, as well as mediators such as interpreters and the translators, it must also acquire the necessary instruments for informing, controlling, testing and improving these new objectives and methods through fundamental and applied research. It must imagine both new objects of research and new forms of research, notably in the light of current Thematic Network Projects or European programmes. The question of linguistic, cognitive, socio-cultural, economic and political challenges of plurilingualism are a priority for a university which is open to an open Europe.

That implies a broad and open definition of research, in direct contact with the “world”, even a functional and operational definition of the academic field itself, while at the same time guaranteeing it a label of quality, a reflection which will inform actions at the methodological level as well as the level of language policy. Among these actions, it is the responsibility of linguistics to offer a reflection, even courses, on language politics in the European context, offered to language students, to students of other disciplines (in virtue of the principle of transversality quoted), and to their university colleagues.

This is a more general appeal to the academic field to create, through to its own reflections, the conditions necessary for the transformation of the framework in which it evolves. So that the change of the university is not a simple adaptation to the world (socio-cultural, political or economic), but more particularly, the source of its own change, which may, in turn change the world.

### **3. STRATEGIES**

**What strategies should the university implement to develop these methods and achieve these objectives?**

One can respond to this question by seeking unexplored methods, by attempting to bring a new point of view to bear on previously explored methods, or by in imagining new relationships between the previously explored methods. The objective is that this zone of liberty and creativity that is the university constitutes its own coherence in order to define more precisely its zone of influence vis-à-vis the political, economic and professional domains.

#### **3.1. The university as partner**

In order to have a real influence the university must first become a partner, an interlocutor, in the full sense of the term, on the one hand, able to listen to the questions which are addressed to it so as to be capable of responding to them, and on the other, able to act on these questions in taking a stance in relation to them and reformulating them.

For the university, to become an interlocutor, is to participate in the definition of the questions that are addressed to it and therefore to contribute actively to the process of co-development of the European plurilingual citizen.

#### **3.2. The university as a decision-making entity**

So as to become a “consultative partner”, the university must first recognize itself as an entity, as an institution conscious of the role that it has to play, conscious of its responsibilities. This is absolutely essential if the university is to become a zone of creativity recognised by the European political authorities, capable of teaching those for whom it is responsible to become citizens of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, capable of accepting, assuming and living the cultural and linguistic diversity of Europe.

#### **3.3. New means of communication**

However today, language recommendations of European institutions, and notably those of the Council of Europe, of the European Parliament or of the Council of Ministers, only indirectly attain their target, reaching individuals rather than the academic institution. Moreover these recommendations have a relatively mediocre impact, in that they have little or no constraining effect. A communication which simply consists of recommendations does not become reciprocal, and the persons or the institutions targeted by these recommendations do not feel involved or consulted, they are not very conscious of their role.

If the university is to become a partner in the political and economic worlds, it is first necessary to redefine the methods of communication which must be set up between them, in other words to see this communication as a process of negotiation and collaboration.

#### **3.4. The learning process of the university system**

Nevertheless the university must learn to become this zone of creativity recognised by the European political authorities, as it must learn to become a place of language resources while at the same time carrying out its cognitive and socio-cultural tasks. However, learning presupposes motivation, a reason for learning, and this reason is not self-evident for a university which is not very conscious of the role it has to play. Consequently it must be rendered conscious of its responsibilities while at the same time defining the conditions necessary for assuming them.

It should acknowledge the transversality of languages, as educative, academic, cognitive, socio-cultural, economic, professional and political assets and it should also acknowledge that it recognises itself as a linguistic resource, that is as a setting for this transversality and for its implementation. In this perspective, it is advisable to take note of existing methods so as to value them and make them profitable, to make the most of available competencies. Numerous competencies are at present left uncultivated because of a lack of opportunity to use them.

Hence the importance of finding strategies which will encourage university officials to have an interest in all this. The interest must be aroused by explaining to university authorities the philosophy within which its own transformation process must develop, aiming to fully assume language and cultural diversity. A philosophy showing the importance of making language policy more than mere ideology and the necessity of having a critical apparatus for the evaluation of the ideology implicit in language policy. A philosophy in which the university does not only appear as the shop window of a country but also as a place where knowledge is dispensed as an element of global heritage, a place where the most knowledge possible is available, while at the same time emphasizing the importance of language in the development, implementation and transmission of this knowledge.

Nevertheless, in addition to educative, academic, professional, socio-cultural and political motivations, languages should equally be “sold” to universities as financial resources.

### **3.5. Financial resources**

The application of a Language policy certainly has a cost, but the process of European integration is historically unique and is worth this price. It is advisable to underline to what extent this cost can be an investment. It is thus necessary to encourage the university to invest more efficiently in progress, because in the future, a university which does not invest in languages will go into decline. In fact it is more a question of attitude than a financial problem.

While it is clear that those responsible for financing universities are limited in the extra resources that they can provide, they may nevertheless be interested in innovative projects and in particular projects that bring a number of partners together. Partners such as governments, local authorities (regions or towns), international institutions and business.

If need be, legal devices could be created, if they do not already exist, in particular enabling the conditions and the priorities of financing to be clearly defined.

### **3.6. University networking**

The importance of these transformation processes makes it necessary to organise universities into networks, at the levels of language policy, research and education (new projects, new experiments, creation of didactic material, etc.).

A mutually transparent and clear effort must be taken on by universities, not with the aim of creating homogeneity, but to make their specific characters clear, so that they can be recognised and that they may reciprocally learn and evolve.

Finally, a greater dissemination of examples of good practice must be encouraged so that these reciprocally develop between the different (university and non-university) institutions.

The potential for innovation in teaching in non-university institutions could be considered and exploited more fully, while at the same time seeking to overcome the taboos and claims in relation to intellectual property.

### **3.7 Pilot universities for the implementation of language policy**

Raising awareness among heads of universities of these principles should be the responsibility of the ELC/CEL, with some pilot universities in the first instance, aiming to implement and test the strategies set up with the collaboration of specialists in language policy. Universities that have already initiated developments in the area could participate as pilot universities and this would involve a comparison of their experiences.

This phase of awareness raising could be carried out in the form of “implementation projects”, within the framework of a very official demand, clearly named and undertaken with the full commitment of the institutions COM or CE, which would aim at the creation of a “mainstream” in university language policy. The idea is not to impose, but to convince and to rally to the cause an increasing number of universities, through positive and innovative experiments, based on a “common ideal”.

In the same way it seems unwise to attack the disciplines head on, but rather to imagine “constructive strategies” inviting them to reflect on the possibilities offered by the decompartmentalization and the transversality of languages. It is a question of convincing the specialists on the “ground” as well as the political decision-makers and the institutional directors. To implement such a language policy in European universities in general, the experiments led by the pilot universities must result in the elaboration of a guide, presenting in a clear and coherent way the objectives, the instruments and the strategies of implementation.

Let us underline that what is involved here are open principles, that are constantly evolving, being refined and questioned in the light of research developing alongside their implementation, with the aim that these principles be constantly developed both theoretically and practically. The idea being that action fosters the principles that organise this action.

## **CONCLUSION**

A language policy for universities would be a way for academia to stay visionary, while at the same time becoming involved in policy and practice. We will call it a “methodological revolution”.

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