Thematic Network Project in the Area of Languages
Sub-project 8:
Language Provision for Students of Other Disciplines

Organisation of Language Teaching for Students of Other Disciplines in Institutions of Higher Education in Europe

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1. INTRODUCTION

The organisation of language teaching for students of other disciplines in Institutions of Higher Education in Europe is marked at all levels by great diversity and complexity. This variety can be seen in the following areas:

- the importance, the offer and the status of languages in the curriculum of non-specialist students;

- the structures for language teaching set up in the institutions of higher education, and their degree of institutional integration;

- the organisation of language courses for students of other disciplines;

- the status, professional training and qualifications of language teachers;

- the collaboration both within and outside the establishments of higher education.

To begin with, in the context of the EU there are differences from one country to another; in some countries language teaching is well established and recognised, covering the needs of all the students and offering a wide choice of languages, whilst in others it is more or less non-existent. The same differences occur within a national framework between one Institution and another.

The infrastructures set up within the Institutions are equally varied and can even vary in different sectors of the same Institution. The same observation applies to the status and training of those responsible for teaching languages to non -specialising students, a task which is sometimes carried out by a faculty professor and at others by teachers working for a very modest hourly rate. Course content, avowed objectives, and methods used range from those that are highly theoretical and rather divorced from students' needs to those that are oriented towards the practical use of the language, employing a variety of up-to-date strategies aimed not only at satisfying students study needs and preparing them for academic exchange programmes but also providing them with the language tools necessary for an active professional life in the multilingual European context. These different tendencies can be discerned

from one country to another, but they also exist in Institutions belonging to the same country, and may even coexist in different parts of the same Institution.

2. THE IMPORTANCE, THE OFFER AND THE STATUS OF LANGUAGES IN THE CURRICULUM OF NON-SPECIALIST STUDENTS

2.1. Types of language programmes available for students of other disciplines

Higher education institutes offer a wide variety of language learning programmes for students of other disciplines. Often language studies can be combined with an otherwise non-language orientated degree course. Apart from this, the following variants exist: on the one hand there are various types of language course, either compulsory or optional, which form an integral part of the main course of study, and are designed specifically for students of other disciplines; on the other hand there exists a wide variety of language-learning opportunities, mostly very practical in content, aimed at covering the needs of some or all of the students of a particular establishment.

The following variants exist:
1. A combined degree in which languages comprise one or more of the main branches in an otherwise non-linguistic degree; alternatively students from other disciplines can choose a language offered by the language department of the university as an optional subject; in these cases the approach is often literary and academic, with the exception of the more recently introduced professionally oriented degrees.
2. The study of one or more languages forms a compulsory part of the otherwise non-linguistic degree course.
3. Optional language modules which can be combined with other subjects.
4. Teaching of non-linguistic disciplines in a foreign language, or on a bi-lingual basis, sometimes involving a partnership between two countries, in which students are obliged to pursue part of their course in the foreign country (this is known as immersion learning).
5. Elective language courses, completely separate from degree course programmes, aimed at some or all of the student population irrespective of faculty. These courses may concentrate on specialised language (so-called Languages for Special Purposes -LSP), or on study skills; or they may prepare students for a study period in a foreign country, or for situations where they need a foreign language for professional purposes; they may initiate a student into a completely new language or maintain or perfect languages already learnt. Most of these courses include the possibility of learning in autonomous or semi-autonomous situations, or in partnership with someone whose mother tongue is the target language - in tandem. These courses are often known as service courses.
6. Language courses for foreign students from abroad, in particular those participating in EU exchange programmes. These course exist everywhere in the community and for that reason will not be discussed further.
7. Absence of any kind of language course for students from other disciplines.

2.2. The importance, the offer and the status of languages in the curriculum of students of other disciplines in the EU, Iceland, Norway and Switzerland

Generally speaking, language courses for students from non-linguistic disciplines are not very widespread; the choice of languages, the number and type of courses on offer, the number of contact hours allocated, the subject matter taught, and the number of students participating are all limited. Language learning carries little weight in the overall context of degree courses.

Briefly summarised below are the main discernible tendencies regarding language courses offered, and the place they occupy in the curriculum of other disciplines, with respect to EU countries, Iceland, Norway and Switzerland. In view of the very complex situation found in each institute or university, not to mention that existing at national level, this overview is very general. It is mainly based on the 1995 SIGMA report entitled "Language learning in higher education institutes in Europe", and also on the results of a questionnaire sent to a certain number of European higher education establishments in 1997. (See also appendix 1 and 2: Synoptic table and qestionnaires in English, German and French)

2.2.1. Austria (A)

The study of languages can, and sometimes must (for school subjects), be combined with other disciplines.
Only in commercial studies, and in the first, and sometimes second cycle of studies in social and economic sciences, is language learning compulsory (first English, then French, Italian, Spanish or Russian). In these faculties some courses and seminars are given in English.
All the Higher Professional Schools (Fachhochschulen) offer English, above all as a specialised language. In some of these schools it is compulsory to study two languages and to complete a study period abroad.
Most of the universities offer general language courses, separate from the degree programmes, and these courses are available to students from any faculty. The popularity of such courses has led to the establishment of language centres (Graz and Linz) which are, however, not yet fully equipped and can only partially satisfy the demand. They propose a wide range of courses, including less widely spoken languages such as Swedish, Serbo-croatian, Welsh, Gaelic and modern Greek, etc. It is also possible to learn certain specialised technical languages, to do with hydrology, forestry, civil engineering, etc., as well as writing courses in English. These courses are partly financed by the participants.

2.2.2. Belgium (B)

There is no interdisciplinary degree programme combining languages and non-linguistic subjects. But students from other disciplines can follow optional courses, including languages, which are separate from their main subjects.

In almost all faculties language study is either compulsory or optional, and this is also true for post-graduate courses in commerce (Business) and law. From one to three languages may be compulsory (mainly English, French, German or Dutch) but these are only allotted from 30 to 90 hours a year per language which in not enough to achieve mastery at a high level. Usually it is the language departments that organise courses.
Apart from this, language centres are enjoying considerable success. Their courses have to be partly financed by the participants. The language certres offer tailor-made courses for scientists and medical students, etc., and are all equipped with language laboratories and multimedia centres for autonomous learners or those studying less widely spoken languages.

2.2.3. Switzerland (CH)

Languages can be combined with other disciplines as degree subjects, particularly in humanities.
It is only in certain faculties such as Law or Economics that languages are either compulsory or optional during part of the degree course (German or English for 2 to 3 hours per week); at Fribourg University it is possible to do a bilingual German-French degree in Law and Economics.
A high level of proficiency in English, German and French is required for admission to certain post-graduate courses.
In the two Polytechnic schools (Lausanne and Zurich), and in some post-graduate courses, the subject matter is partially taught in English.
Language centres, or similar, and often quite rudimentary, infrastructures, exist in all the higher education institutions, as well as language laboratories and multimedia centres which enable students to learn new languages or perfect already acquired linguistic skills (German, English, French, Spanish, Italian, and sometimes Russian, Chinese, Arabic, Japanese, Portuguese, etc.). Study skills and specialised languages are also offered as extra curricula subjects; in some of the higher schools of learning students must contribute financially towards the running of these courses.

2.2.4. Germany (D)

Combined degrees do exist in which it is possible to integrate a language with a wide variety of other disciplines
Language courses of two to eight hours per week (often English, then French and Spanish), form either compulsory or optional elements in some degree courses, especially in economics and technical subjects and very frequently at the Higher Professional Schools (Fachhochschulen). Quite often it is a question of learning a specialised language.
All the higher schools of learning offer language courses for students in non-linguistic disciplines. There are, however, wide differences as regards methodology and the number and type of language taught. The most common formula consists of language courses (German, English, French, Italian, Spanish, Russian, Turkish, modern Greek, Tchek, Polish, Arabic, Danish, Finnish, etc.) which are aimed at the entire university community; they are completely separate from the faculty curricula, and they are not recognised or

validated by any form of examination, and do not gain any credits for the students. These courses are frequently organised by language centres which are often equipped with language laboratories and multimedia facilities for those who want to learn autonomously, but decentralised course also exist. As there are not many courses, they are often heavily over-subscribed, classes are huge and meet only 2 to 3 hours per week. As a result quality suffers. Students are sometimes expected to pay for these courses. Language centres may be responsible for teaching all practical language courses, both specialised and non-specialised, in a particular university.

2.2.5. Denmark (DK)

Combined degrees exist in which half the course consists of the study of two languages, one as a main subject, the other as a subsidiary branch (English, French, Spanish, German, Russian, and also Japanese at Copenhagen and Arabic at Odense), and the other half is comprised of commercial/economic subjects. One university offers bilingual German/Danish courses during the first three years of study. In addition to this optional language modules exist in technical disciplines and in engineering. A considerable number of courses, especially in commerce, are taught in English.

However, apart from those already mentioned, language courses are not otherwise integrated into university curricula. In fact, in certain establishments, language classes for students from non-linguistic disciplines is totally lacking. It is up to the students themselves to learn how to read in English, French, German, Swedish and Norwegian in order to understand the reference books and scientific literature for their courses. A high level of proficiency in English is often required for university entrance.

2.2.6. Spain (E)

Combined degrees (language plus non-linguistic subject as a major) are more or less inexistant.

However, in certain disciplines, such as economics, medicine, engineering etc., language study is integrated into the curriculum (especially English), and is sometimes compulsory. This is particularly true in the private universities and in the study programmes of post-secondary professional schools. Elsewhere, these course are optional, have little time allocated to them, and are considered to be of only marginal importance in the teaching programmes. Students consequently have low achievement levels in languages.

In a few universities, Carlos III for example, economics courses taught in English have recently been introduced.

Language courses for students from any faculty do exist; they are usually general in nature, using various methodologies, and concern English, German, French, Italian, and Basque. Language centres are becoming more and more popular, but the students sometimes have to pay for the courses, and they do not generally gain credits for language studies.

2.2.7. France (F)

Languages form an integral part of all degree courses for non-linguists. Foreign language learning, mainly English, German, Spanish, and Italian is officially included in the first two years of the programme leading to the Diploma of General University Studies (DEUG). However, there is a difference in language policy between the Grandes Ecoles and the universities. In the Grandes Ecoles, the emphasis on languages is stronger than in the universities. Medicine and the University Diploma in Technology also have their language modules. However, the number of teaching hours is not specified, and it is up to each institution to decide how and when languages should be taught. Moreover, languages carry little weight in the final examination results. Because of this, the importance of languages is often underestimated. Course content for teaching the four skills, and for specialised languages, is defined by official texts. In the case of humanities the emphasis is placed on written comprehension; in law, economics and the sciences a more practical oral mastery of the language is required, whereas in the competitive recruitment examinations for secondary school teachers candidates have to demonstrate advanced writing skills. From one establishment to another the infrastructures for language teaching vary widely, ranging from language centres with extensive facilities for autonomous learning, to language course organised by the university language departments themselves.
Since 1995, in certain universities, language study can be integrated with other disciplines, law or economics, for example, while at Nantes it is now possible to do a combined Anglo/French degree in European Economics.
It should also be noted that in post-baccalaureat, professionally oriented courses, e.g. electricity, language study is compulsory.

2.2.8. Finland (F)

Combined degrees exist in which students can study one or more languages together with any other discipline.
Apart from a few scientific disciplines, all faculty courses include the study of two languages. This becomes three for economics students; of these one must be the national language which is not the student's mother tongue, together with one or two other languages (usually English, French, German, or Russian at Helsinki university). The number of teaching hours varies with each faculty. Language courses, which carry 10 to 20 credits, are based on written comprehension, oral skills, and the acquisition of specialised languages. Management schools give more weight to language acquisition than do other universities, although Helsinki does offer a combined degree in law and English, and in general a growing number of courses, sometimes a whole study programme (in logistics or social sciences for example), is given in a foreign language. Language learning is compulsory in polytechnic colleges.
Language centres have existed in Finland since 1970, and they are responsible for all language teaching. They are fully equipped for autonomous learning. Helsinki, for example gives classes in 20 languages, and it has facilities for autonomous learning in 42 languages. The Centre for Applied Language Studies for the Universities of Finland, based in Jyväkylä, provides valuable

help in course planning, documentation, assessment, research, information and in-service training.

2.2.9. Greece (GR)

A combined degree in which languages comprise one or more of the main branches in an otherwise non-linguistic degree does not exist.

However, in all universities and also in higher technical and professional institutions language learning is compulsory or optional for all students of all disciplines. The knowledge of a language is necessary to obtain a diploma (8 to 16 credits). Various university language departments offer language courses (primarily English and French, and to a lesser degree German, Italian, and Russian) which extend over six semesters. Course content and the methodology varies according to the students field and specialisation. The courses are usually general in nature or aimed at the acquisition of specialised languages or study skills. Some of these courses are organised by language centres and are partly student financed.

2.2.10. Italy (I)

Combined degrees do exist.

In almost all universities it is compulsory to know at least one language. Courses focus on written comprehension in order to facilitate the reading of scientific literature.

Over the last few years a new law has encouraged the setting up of language centres in about twenty universities. They provide courses for the whole university community in the following languages; English, French, German, Russian, Spanish, and sometimes Catalan and Arabic. The main courses offered are general language courses, specialised language instruction, and those preparing students for foreign exchange programmes. Some of these courses are student financed. Self-access centres also exist.

2.2.11. Ireland (IRL)

Over the past few years study programmes have been developed in which one or more languages, (French, German, Spanish, and sometimes Russian, Gaelic, or Italian), occupying 20% of the programme, can be combined with so-called professional disciplines such as commercial studies (in all universities since 1989), law, computer studies (4 universities), and to a lesser extent scientific studies (physics or chemistry), and those branches connected with communication, journalism, insurance, European studies, and sport. These are 4-year courses and include a six-month stay abroad.

In addition, all universities offer optional language courses above all in commercial studies, in science and technology, and also in architecture, economics and social studies. In Regional Technical Colleges it is either compulsory or optional to study languages for 2 to 4 hours a week during one or two years. These courses have a strong orientation towards preparing students for professional life in a multi-lingual, intercultural environment. Conscious of the growing importance of languages, and with financial help from the European Structural Foundation,

many universities have set up language centres and facilities for autonomous or semi-autonomous learning.

2.2.12. Iceland (IS)

Combined degrees exist.

Iceland has one university in which, since 1994, the economics faculty offers optional courses in three languages, namely English, German, and commercial French, at 4 different levels. A similar development is planned for other faculties. However, this project is advancing slowly through lack of adequate funding. A language laboratory is available at this university, but no self-access facilities.

In order to make this university more attractive for exchange students more and more faculty courses are being taught in foreign languages.

2.2.13. Norway (N)

Here it is possible to combine language study with that of non-linguistic disciplines. But within these non-linguistic disciplines there are no compulsory language courses. Some optional courses exist, in law for example, where students can learn English, German, or French (legal terms) for 5 hours a week spread over 2 semesters; similarly students studying science and mathematics can opt to study French, Spanish or Italian, and if they reach a high enough level in French, they can participate in a course at Caen University / France that has been specially developed for them and which counts towards their diploma.

No other course exist which can be combined in any way with other disciplines.

2.2.14. The Netherlands (NL)

Higher education institutions have recently introduced four year programmes, combining so-called professionally oriented studies (e.g. communication studies) with a language component. Optional language learning can also be integrated into a Leisure Study programme, and six-month optional modules in specialised languages are available to students in Administration, Business, International Law, Education Studies, Pedagogy, and Political Science. Until now these modules have been limited to a few languages and disciplines, but the tendency is to greater number and diversity and in some fields a certain language competence is required as a pre-condition to course admission (International Management, European Legal Studies. etc.)

Language centres have been established in some universities, as well as multimedia centres for autonomous or semi-autonomous students, and here it is possible to learn a wide choice of languages. Elective language course are also available for the entire university community.

2.2.15. Portugal (P)

It is not possible to combine language study with that of other disciplines. A small number of compulsory or optional courses do exist, mainly English, in the curricula of a number of disciplines such as sociology, journalism, media studies, engineering, and computer studies; they exist to a lesser degree in law,

economics and architecture. These language courses can last from one to three years, and require 4 to 6 contact hours per week. What is taught is quite often a specialised language. Although many universities have language centres these are mostly concerned with training language teachers for the state secondary schools. A few of them, however, do provide compulsory language course for students from non-linguistic disciplines, as well as elective courses for which the students have to pay. These facilities are lacking in some institutions, while self-access centres are more or less non-existent.

2.2.16. Sweden (S)

There is a wide choice of combined degree programmes. All faculty curricula, especially in economics and management, include language modules (one semester of English, and two of German, French, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, or Russian). Moreover many faculty courses are taught in English, German, or French.

Elective language courses also exist, and these are open to all faculty students. Uppala university offers 40 European, Asian or African languages. Other courses teach specialised languages, or seek to improve reading or writing or oral skills. University language departments are often responsible for organising these courses.

2.2.17. United Kingdom (UK)

In many universities modern languages (mainly French, followed by German, and Spanish) can be combined with other disciplines on a 50/50 basis. Other degree course are continuously being developed which include languages but which occupy only 15 to 25% of course time. Such combined courses are found not only in disciplines like history, computer sciences, economics, law, psychology, social sciences, and European studies but also in conjunction with scientific subjects - biology, chemistry, mathematics, etc. Course objectives include the mastery of productive and receptive skills in one or more languages, and also some sociocultural knowledge of the countries where the languages are spoken. Many courses require the students to spend a year in a foreign university.

Other disciplines include language studies in their curricula either as compulsory or optional subjects requiring a few contact hours per week. Again, course objectives vary from subject to subject, and may include either receptive or productive skills, or the acquisition of a language for special purposes.

In certain universities (e.g. Bath) close collaboration exists with modern language departments, and certain non-linguistic courses (e.g. in engineering or mechanics) are taught in a foreign language, primarily German.

Very many British universities have language centres which offer elective courses to the entire student community and which are partly financed by the students. They quite often prepare candidates for recognised exams, and are frequently equipped with self-access centres. A few such centres (e.g. Cambridge or Hull) are very well established and recognised to the extent that they have the status of a university discipline.

2.3. Language studies for students of other disciplines. A summary

At a national level language courses for students of other disciplines is everywhere present albeit not very widespread in Spain, Norway and Portugal. It is axiomatic that sound higher education involves the mastery of one or more foreign languages. A few countries have adopted an official language policy with regulations and guidelines which govern the teaching of foreign languages to students from non-linguistic disciplines. In these countries the main European languages, among which English dominates, followed by German and French, are widely taught (France, Belgium, Finland, Italy). In other countries the compulsory or optional study of languages is mainly integrated into business studies and law courses, where there is a strong awareness of the needs of graduates and their future employers working in a multicultural context .

Europe is evolving rapidly, and in the context of the globalisation of the workplace, of science, of research, and, in the framework of programmes such as ERASMUS, the growing mobility of students, the question of language competence is of increasing urgency in all disciplines. Awareness of this has encouraged many countries to develop combined degree courses which integrate languages into their curricula, and to create language centres as in Austria, Ireland, Iceland, Italy, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom.

Again in response to this need, and above all in the United Kingdom and Ireland, many courses have been developed in which languages are integrated into so-called professionally oriented programmes of study. Initially such study programmes were not highly regarded and were criticised for not producing real specialists. But their broad interdisciplinary approach is now recognised as an advantage, as this gives graduates greater flexibility in their choice of future profession.

Nevertheless, language studies carry relatively little weight in the curricula of non-linguistic disciplines. Even if they do form part of the study programme, it is usually only for a few hours each week during a limited length of time, the focus is restricted to the acquisition of specialised terminology, or the written comprehension of specialised texts, and in the final examinations language competence carries little weight. The choice of languages on offer is often quite restricted and rarely includes the less widely spoken languages. For all these reasons students tend to underestimate the importance of languages, devote too little time to learning them, and consequently have a limited mastery of them.

At the moment only a relatively small proportion of non-linguistic disciplines are taught in a foreign language, principally in those countries where less common languages are spoken, but this tendency is growing rapidly. There now exist several examples of bilingual programmes in which two counties collaborate in developing a curriculum and in which the students must complete part of the course in the "foreign" country. Moreover, between 1976 and 1982 under the auspices of the European Commission, 18 management study programmes were elaborated in British universities and polytechnics,

involving a mixed teaching body from Britain, France, and Germany, thereby initiating a new method of language learning.
Elective language courses, available to all students in a given institution, and which do not form an integral part of the degree programmes, are often of very good quality and offer an extended choice of languages. They quite often represent a high percentage of all courses on offer, and yet most of the time they gain no accreditation, are not mentioned in the final diploma / degree awarded, and in some cases are not even validated by a certificate, even though many students invest considerable effort into their language studies. This lack of recognition does little to encourage students to learn new languages, or even to perfect their level in a language previously studied, especially when their degree programmes are already weighty. This observation applies particularly to autonomous, semi-autonomous and tandem oriented students. Besides such elective courses cannot cope with the often heavy demands for language instruction.
Finally, in every country there is a lack of investment in the infrastructures necessary for teaching languages to students from non-linguistic disciplines, above all in the appointment of people
qualified to teach the appropriate skills, and in spite of the growing demand for their expertise it is these people who are most affected by budget cuts. This situation is closely linked to the question of the status of those employed to teach languages in institutions of higher education and the fact that language teaching is not considered to be an academic discipline in the full sense of the term. This topic will be dealt with later in this paper.

3. EXISTING STRUCTURES FOR LANGUAGE TEACHING AND THEIR INTEGRATION INTO ESTABLISHMENTS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

3.1. Institutional integration of existing structures

In European institutions of higher education a number of different infrastructures have been created in order to ensure that language courses are available to those form non-linguistic disciplines, but despite their apparent diversity, certain features are common to all countries and these are outlined below.
1. Courses may be organised by language centres, which may be dependent on a faculty or a professor; or they may be provided as a service under the aegis of the direction or central administrative body of the institution; or they may be specially mandated to a private organisation outside the university.
2. Courses may be organised within a faculty (e.g. law, business studies)
3. Courses may be given by teachers sent from language departments to other faculties.
4. Courses may be set up within language departments to cover the needs of students form other faculties who require either compulsory, optional or elective language instruction, as is the case for English, French, or Oriental languages.

5. Courses may be under the responsibility of a university department of languages and culture specially aimed at teaching languages to students of other disciplines.
6. Autonomous language learning may take place in multimedia centres, resource centres, or language laboratories.

Sometimes only one of these variants exists in an institution. In Finland, for example, (with the exception of one university) all language-teaching resources are concentrated in language centres and it is these which are responsible for all language courses given to students from non-language oriented disciplines. Similar centralised structures also exist in France and in Germany. At Humbolt University of Berlin and other universities in Germany, language centres are also responsible for providing all practical language courses even to those studying languages as an academic subject. In England, Essex and Sussex Universities fall into this same category.
Sometimes it is a language department which covers the linguistic needs of the entire university population; this is the case at Uppsala University in Sweden.
In other cases non-linguistically oriented faculties have their own language teaching units to cover the specific needs of their students, for whom one or more languages form a compulsory component of their degrees. This is very often the case in France.
Departments of culture and language are a feature of some universities (Limerick in Ireland or St Gall in Switzerland) and here the aim is to teach languages and related intercultural aspects to students from non-language departments.
However, according to the evidence it is true to say that in the majority of institutions some or all of these structures coexist.
In one particularly widespread model, students learn one or more languages, which gain credits or are mentioned in the final degree / diploma, within the faculty of their main discipline (law, business studies, etc., and sometimes scientific or technical subjects) or in a modern language department. Elective language courses, on the other hand, which are not accredited, are taught in language centres. This model is found extensively in the United Kingdom, and to a lesser degree in all European countries with the exception of France and Finland.
Language centres are a relatively recent innovation and were created to cover the growing need for practical language courses. For this reason they frequently coexist along with more traditional language teaching units found in language departments or other faculties. In the case of Italy or the United Kingdom it is the language centres that manage the audio-visual and multimedia resources for the language departments. Because they must sometimes be semi-independent financially, they often offer course to the general public (this applies specially to the United Kingdom and the Netherlands) or they require a financial contribution from the students.
Other scenarios can be found in which the infrastructures are multiple, uncoordinated, and poorly publicised within the university or higher learning institution. This is especially true of elective courses. There are usually either

budgetary or historical reasons for this complexity and lack of transparency, but one major reason is certainly attributable to the considerable autonomy and jealously guarded prerogatives enjoyed by the different faculties within a single institution. Situations can therefore arise in which different departments offer language courses to their students without mentioning them in their official brochures, despite the fact that a language centre exists with the express aim of fulfilling the same function, The opposite situation can also occur in which students from any faculty are free to attend courses in any other faculty, one of which may be the practical language courses offered by the university language department. In certain other cases, where the language departments organise language courses it is difficult to distinguish elective courses from other types of course. In still other instances it is a non-linguistically oriented faculty that proposes an elective language course open to all students; a department of ethnology may offer courses in Indonesian for example, or an international relations service or even an embassy may offer language courses at a university. There are frequently opportunities for autonomous language learning in the multimedia centres belonging to non-language oriented departments, or even in centres devoted to language specialists, not to mention so-called tandem arrangements or mixed language tutorials.

3.2. Teaching and research

Looking at the way in which the infrastructures, and the people who teach in them, are integrated into the institutions as a whole, the first thing to note is that teachers responsible for giving language courses to students from other disciplines generally have some other function in their seat of learning. They may be in charge of teacher-training for the state schools, or involved in post-graduate education, or in theoretical linguistics courses for specialists; some may be conducting research into the didactics of language teaching and university teaching, doing basic, literary or intercultural research, to mention just a few of the possibilities; still others may be preparing and publishing pedagogical material for language learning, conducting an assessment of such material, testing and certification, defining language levels and their descriptors; another group may be organising in-service training courses for teachers or other professionals.

In this field, as in others, there are no fixed patterns. In every country, establishments can be found where people teaching languages to students from non-language disciplines do research, and others where they do not, irrespective of whether or not they give compulsory, optional, or elective courses, although those involved in teaching compulsory courses are more likely to be doing research than those who are not.

3.3. An appraisal of language teaching to non-language specialists

The situation outlined above reveals much about the attitude adopted towards practical language teaching in higher institutes of learning. This attitude is ambiguous in the sense that neither the university authorities nor faculty

members seem able to decide whether this type of language teaching should be considered as a fully-fledged academic subject worthy of research, or whether it is simply a service limited solely to teaching. In higher education generally, there is little awareness of, or concern for, how knowledge is transmitted, and little attention is paid to the importance of efficient teaching tools and methods. As a result, the task of language teaching as well as the necessity of learning foreign languages at all is often under-estimated or disregarded. But this is to ignore the fact that teaching and research are indissociably linked. In fact, language transmission and acquisition together form the object of serious research, which is indispensable in every field, including that of higher education, and for all levels and ages concerned.

In fact, the aims and objectives of language learning and the curricula of these courses, which include languages for special purposes, general language teaching to a very high level, or courses linked to intercultural studies, are very different from language courses offered to children or as part of adult education programmes. Courses take place in a completely different context, one in which the participants have already acquired learning strategies, and may often already know one or more languages; teaching methods therefore need to be different, and, just like any other academic subject, they need to evolve and constantly be adapted. This is especially true with the advent of new technologies which involve a completely new approach to and appraisal of ways of teaching. All these aspects, and many others require both theoretical and practical research (action-research), so that language teaching to students of other disciplines can respond to the same demands for quality and renewal of knowledge as with any other academic subject.

4. ORGANISATION OF LANGUAGE COURSES FOR STUDENTS FROM NON-LANGUAGE DISCIPLINES

4.1. Global programmes

When considering the practical organisation of language courses for students from other disciplines, it is rare to find an overall conception, applicable to all languages, in which the content, levels to be attained, and teaching methods are set out, except in France, where these parameters are determined by official texts. What is lacking at the present time is a global system of evaluation criteria which can be used to assess both student attainment and the different levels of courses offered. However, language centre associations in various countries are currently working on this problem and are publishing sets of criteria for certification, valid at national level. In Finland, for example, this type of work is promoted through the Centre for Applied Language Studies of Finnish Universities at Jyväkylä; and in Germany 25 institutions of higher learning have adopted the UNICERT model, created by the association known as "Arbeitskreis der Sprachenzentren, Sprachlehrinstitute und Fremspracheninstitute", which, for a few languages, determines the framework governing course content and objectives to be attained at 4 different levels, and which has inter-university recognition. Only Potsdam University, in Germany,

has developed an overall concept for language teaching that is applicable to all languages.

4.2. Principle objectives of language courses

In all the countries under discussion, most language courses, whether compulsory, optional or elective, concentrate on the acquisition of the four main language skills together with vocabulary work, and the teaching of languages for special purposes. In less frequent cases there are courses dealing with study skills, or that are targeted at specific aptitudes such as reading strategies, translation, writing or speaking skills, learning strategies, etc., all in an academic context. To a lesser degree there exist courses on intercultural understanding, which are aimed at preparing students for foreign exchange programmes, or simply at widening their outlook. This type of course is more frequently found in northern European institutions. Other courses with specific objectives, such as the study of literature, for example, can also be found. Generally speaking, there is a certain continuity in the levels offered which enables students to pursue their studies over an extended period of time.
So far as course content is concerned, it is difficult to ascertain exactly what is taught, as it is usually the teachers themselves who design the courses and create their own teaching material. It is widely acknowledged, however, that there is a regrettable lack of up-to-date material available for teaching languages for special purposes.

4.3. Certificates

When it comes to assessing language level attainment, or linguistic competence generally, there are virtually no certificates or examinations that have international, or at even national recognition in higher education institutions. Vague descriptors or imprecise definitions of linguistic competence mean that it is often very difficult for a future employer, for example, to know exactly what a student has actually learnt. Certain measures have been taken to improve this situation at a national level, in Germany (UNICERT) or in France, for example. Some higher education centres, such as the Copenhagen Business School in Denmark, make use of "The Community of European Management Schools (CEMS) Language Test". There is now a recognised need for a co-ordinated evaluation system, and the Council of Europe has undertaken valuable work in this field (e. g. with its Swiss framework project), whose aim was to identify internationally approved competence levels, which could equally well serve as assessment criteria for the higher learning institutions. Internationally recognised examinations of the kind offered by Cambridge University, The Goethe Institut or TOEFL are sometimes proposed for students taking elective, or, in rare cases, optional courses. The examination entrance fees have to be paid for by the students, but the certificates are recognised by future employers as proof of sound linguistic knowledge.

4.4. Types of course

Language courses usually consist of 2 to 4 contact hours per week over a six-month period at a time in the week fixed at the outset. As a general rule classes are of between 10 - 30 participants, but it can happen that classes are unlimited in number, which renders efficient learning impossible.
These courses can be combined to a greater or lesser degree with autonomous or semi-autonomous learning, facilities for which exist in almost every country except Portugal. Recently there has come into being another variant which consists of tailor-made self-access learning in which individually negotiated programmes take into account the learner's special needs, his / her learning pace and style. This approach guarantees greater flexibility in dealing with large numbers of students, because it enables groups to be formed at any time, consisting of students from many faculties, with different objectives and language levels, working with different media and language learning tools.
There is another, less widespread, model in which the programme is conceived as a series of modules, each comprising a bloc of lessons given during a semester.
Intensive courses frequently take place during university vacations, and although these are usually elective courses, it can happen that special preparatory courses are organised for students whose main programme of study requires a particular language level, or for foreign students coming to study from abroad.
Tandem systems are usually well-organised and sometimes accredited. In these, two students with different mother tongues teach each other their respective languages by meeting regularly at a time which is mutually convenient. This type of learning is available on the Internet.
The Internet is, of course, widening the scope of language teaching; for example, in 1996 the Language Institute at the University of Hull set up the Merlin Project for distance learning of English at intermediate level. Eventually it is aimed to reach a wide public, but at the moment, it is at the pilot stage and is mostly being tested and monitored in a university context.

4.5. Infrastructure

Higher education institutes which offer language courses to students of other disciplines are generally more or less suitably equipped with rooms, audio-visual aids, language laboratories, and, more recently, multimedia centres. Almost everywhere in Europe institutions are in the process of either replacing ageing language laboratories with multimedia centres, or creating the latter ad hoc. But situations also exist in which there is a marked lack of rooms which lend themselves to modern, varied teaching situations, and because of the great increase in student numbers over recent years many of the structures set up to propagate language learning are being stretched to their limits; this, coupled with budget cuts, means that they can only partially satisfy the increasing demands being placed on their resources. Finally, it should be noted that in very many institutions there is no provision whatsoever for teaching languages to students from other disciplines, either as a matter of policy or due to a lack of

means, and that this situation exists everywhere, apart form those countries where language teaching is compulsory.

4.6. Evaluation of teaching and methods used

On the whole, institutions in which languages are taught to students from non-language oriented faculties carry out frequently assessments on the quality of their teaching. Apart from the traditional examinations and tests used to assess students' attainment levels, they use evaluation questionnaires which are distributed at the end of each course, or ask an external body to assess the quality of the teaching, or even require students to make self-assessments of their own progress. This leads to continuous improvement in the efficacy and quality of teaching, because it pinpoints weaknesses in the approach or methods which can then be eliminated. Compared with other disciplines, language teachers are among the most innovative and dynamic, as far as teaching methods are concerned, and in general make use of a wide variety of modern techniques including the use of all the available media, adapting them to different learning styles. In his article entitled "University courses for non-specialists" in *Thirty years of language teaching* (edited by E. Hawkins, CILT, 1996, pp. 70-80) James A. Coleman writes in connection with language teaching in Britain: " Teaching quality, however, is often **not** a problem: ironically, while specialist linguists are taught by untrained and variously committed individuals whose main interests lie in a non-linguistic domain, SODs (Students of Other Disciplines) may well be taught by trained and experienced language teachers...." (p. 75).
This is certainly true in those countries where teacher training programmes exist. But in countries like Italy, where there is no basic teacher training, teachers simply tend to reproduce the same grammar-based approach by which they learned foreign languages, in spite of the fact that the government does put on in-service training courses to encourage more communicative methods of teaching. For more on this subject see Silvia Serena, "Kommunikativer Ansatz in der Lehreraus - und Lehrerfortbildung in Italien", in *Sprachen fur Europa* by H. Purschel and D.Wolff (Hg) (AKS,1990, pp 618 - 626). In Portugal, Spain, and Greece there is less awareness of the need to use modern didactic tools in language instruction, and here, as in many European establishments language teaching is still very traditional and theoretical. But once again, so far as methodology is concerned there are wide variations among different institutions in the same country, among different language teaching organisms within a single institution , and even at the level of one language.

5. TEACHER STATUS, TRAINING AND QUALIFICATIONS

5.1. Status of language teachers for students of other disciplines

In every country studied wide variations in status exist. They consist of the following:

1. Professors or lecturers with permanent contracts

2. Professionally appointed teachers.
3. Teachers with limited contracts (doctorate students or assistants).
4. Teachers paid by the hour.
5. Others, including post-graduate students.

In a single establishment the teaching staff may be 100% permanent (particularly lecturers and assistants) or 100% teachers paid by the hour (in France the "vacataires"). These two extremes are, however, rare. Although teachers with different status can generally be found within the same institution, the most common solution is to employ teachers who are paid by the hour, often at extremely low rates, (e.g. £ 17 in Limerick / Ireland, DM 32.20 at Humbolt University, Berlin / Germany), which take no account of the amount of work involved in one hour's teaching (design and preparation of courses, adaptation or creation of teaching aids, correction of students' work, administrative tasks, professional training required). Paid time is rarely allocated to the creation or modification of teaching material for specific teaching purposes. What is more, apart from not receiving a viable salary, a teacher's social security contributions are often not paid, neither is there any hope of career advancement within the higher education establishment. Under these conditions, therefore, it is hardly surprising that this type of teaching is largely undertaken by part-time female personnel.

5.2. Male-female percentage

The results of the questionnaire sent to a large number of higher education establishments in Europe show clearly that there is a strong correlation between status of teacher and gender. As a general rule, the higher the status of a post, the less likely it is to be occupied by a woman. The contrary is equally true and there are extreme cases where 100% of the teachers are hourly-paid women. In very many institutions the percentage of women employed varies between 70 and 95%, as, for example, at Southampton University, where 95% of the teaching staff is female, but is composed of 10% professors or lecturers with permanent contracts, 40% of personnel with limited contracts, and 50% of teachers paid by the hour. There are a few cases where the teaching staff is not predominantly composed of women; Uppsala University in Sweden is one of them. Here 80% of the language teaching staff are lecturers employed under permanent contract, and only 20% are hourly-paid teachers. At 60%, the percentage of men employed is higher than normal. In Belgium, Denmark, Norway and Sweden the percentage of men employed is generally higher than elsewhere (between 20 to 60%).

5.3. Consequences of the employment conditions

The widespread employment of hourly-paid teachers can lead to a vicious circle of negative consequences. On one hand it can affect the quality of teaching through a loss in motivation, and a lack of stability among the teaching staff. A stable team of teachers is vital to the harmonious development

of language programmes, to the maintenance of a high standard of teaching in all the courses, and, by extension, to the creation of a good reputation for the team as a whole. In this context, and in view of the high demands imposed by university-level teaching, the employment of hourly-paid staff can only detract from the credibility of this type of language teaching.

On the other hand, higher education establishments represent a predominantly masculine environment, especially at professorial level, in research, and in those prestige faculties such as the sciences, law, and economics where policies and programmes of study are decided in the majority by men.. In this universe the unfavourable working conditions coupled with the high percentage of women employed, reinforce the false impression that teaching languages to students of other disciplines is not really an academic subject and therefore of no great importance. Consequently, the subject attracts little research attention, in comparison with more prestigious fields such as literature, for example. By the same reasoning, even that small minority who do have permanent contracts (professors and lecturers) or limited contracts (doctorate students and assistants), and who may be able to allocate 15 to 50% of their time to research, even they quite often choose to do a research project in a field other than language teaching, whereas more research into this area could, among other effects, lead to its revaluation. Serious efforts are being made to increase the amount of research into the didactics of teaching languages, but the impact is not yet sufficient to bring about a change in mentalities.

5.4. Consequences on budget allotments

At a time like the present, when budget restrictions are the order of the day, higher education establishments tend to concentrate their resources on what they consider to be their most important priorities, which do not as a general rule, and for reasons given above, include language teaching for students of other disciplines. This subject tends to assume the role of poor relative when it comes to the distribution of funds, a position which is further reinforced by the fact that other faculties consider that the language teachers pose a threat as rival claimants for a diminishing supply of money.

At the same time as the demand and need for competent language instruction is steadily increasing, mainly because of increasing mobility (e.g. exchange programmes such as SOCRATES, or bilateral conventions which encourage exchanges between institutions on a world-wide basis), it is precisely in this sector that teaching posts are being considerably reduced in number, simply because they carry such little weight in the academic scene, governed as they are by contracts on an hourly basis, exclusive of social security contributions. Students are then left to organise their language learning as best they can. The suppression of teaching posts is made even easier by the fact that the organisms responsible for language teaching to students of other disciplines are quite often widely disseminated throughout the university, with a poorly designed administrative framework, or may even consist of subsections of other administrative units in the institutional hierarchy, without any kind of

representation on decision-making committees and therefore no means of defending their interests.
Of course there are other higher education establishments which are more aware of the need and right of students to have access to this type of teaching, and they continue to provide such courses. However, there is an increasing tendency to rely more and more on poorly paid teachers employed by the hour, or simply to increase the number of teaching hours per week for teachers with permanent contracts, in order to cope with the increasing numbers of students. In mainstream faculty courses it is possible to increase the size of teaching groups. In language teaching this strategy has an extremely negative effect on the quality of teaching. An increased teaching load naturally leads to a diminution of research time.

5.5. Language teacher recruitment criteria

A prospective language teacher should comply with some or all of the following criteria:

- possess a university degree
- have been trained as a language teacher
- be experienced in this field
- be a native speaker of the target language.

Almost everywhere a university degree is required. In other cases only a teacher training qualification coupled with experience in this field is necessary. People employed very often hold a university degree in their native language, but do not have a teaching qualification.
The percentage of native speakers varies between 10 to 100% of the teaching staff, and very often it oscillates around 50%. It should be noted in this context that teaching competence is not the most important criteria so far as employers are concerned. This is probably linked to the fact that as yet at university level there is no recognised training for people involved in teaching languages to students of other disciplines. The development of such training is essential in order to ensure high teaching standards and generally improve the quality in this field.

5.6. In-service training

In-service training is very often available, either in the establishment in which the teachers work, or in other forms, e.g. by observing other classes, by an exchange of ideas and opinions in group discussions, by video recording lessons and then discussing the efficacy of methods used, etc.. In Finland, the Centre for Applied Language Studies organises a year-long course, which is available to all the language centres in the country, and is specially aimed at those teaching languages for special purposes.

One or other of the following variants is widely available in the higher education institutes;

- teacher trainers from 'outside' are invited to work with teachers
- participation to in-service training in the field of didactics
- delegates attend congresses / conventions
- teachers participate in the work of professional associations
- teachers take part in European research projects.

Only in rare cases is in-service training compulsory and remunerated as a percentage of working time (e.g. 15% at Humboldt University in Berlin, Germany; 12% at the University of Oslo, Norway; 5% at Reading University, U.K.) Usually teachers attend training sessions outside working hours, and often at their own expense.

In a world where learning theory and teaching methods are changing rapidly it is essential to continually update one's teaching skills in order to maintain a high degree of professionalism. The whole sphere of language instruction for example will be considerably modified by the integration of new technologies and techniques such as multimedia, guided self-access learning, or distance learning, to the extent that dispersed learner-centred teaching will now taking precedence over teacher-centred classroom situations. The responsibility for learning is more and more being taken over by the learner, who needs to clarify his needs and objectives, exercise great self-discipline in organising his learning time, and be capable of a fine-tuned degree of self-assessment in order to efficiently monitor his progress. The teacher's job becomes that of language councillor whose task is to advise the learner on an appropriate choice of material and learning strategies suited to his / her personality, give consecutive feedback, etc. In the future teachers will have to deal with heterogeneous groups of students with very different needs and levels.
Paid in-service training should become compulsory for all language teachers in higher centres of learning to ensure that they acquire the necessary skills to keep abreast all the new developments, ranging from syllabus design to course evaluation.

6. COLLABORATION INSIDE AND OUTSIDE HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTES

The following types of collaboration have been taken into account:

- within the same higher education establishment
- among higher education establishments at national level
- among higher education establishments at international level
- with non-university associations in the field of didactics of adult language teaching
- with other extra-university organisations.

In recent years, great efforts that have been made, through all sorts of projects, to encourage collaboration among higher education establishments, but in spite of this actual co-operation remains quite limited. It is more developed at all levels in the United Kingdom, Ireland, Germany, the Netherlands and France,

but much less elsewhere. In Denmark and in Belgium collaboration functions well within establishments, but less well with outside organisations.

6.1. Collaboration within higher education establishments

In any higher education institution there are varying degrees of co-operation and co-ordination between personnel teaching languages to non-specialists, particularly in the following areas: exchange of teaching material, in-service training, use of available equipment and infrastructures, regular interdepartmental meetings, common responsibility for the management of multimedia resources or for the development of research projects.

Various services also collaborate with people giving language courses to students of other disciplines, above all those people responsible for the smooth functioning of audio-visual and computer centres, and technical equipment in classrooms; those who are qualified to advise on the purchase, maintenance and correct use of sophisticated multimedia or computer equipment. In this last context collaboration sometimes extends to the conception and design of interdisciplinary multimedia projects. University admissions services sometimes cooperate in sending out publicity material on courses available, but very often collaboration of any kind with other university services or departments is completely lacking.

If collaboration does exist between faculties and those who teach languages to non-specialists, it is usually closest with those concerned with business studies where languages form an integral part of the university curriculum; co-operation focuses on the development of course materials, on topics that are interdisciplinary, or to questions related to the evaluation of language courses given. Sometimes it is also a matter of sharing infrastructures. In some universities, especially in the United Kingdom collaboration takes place with all faculties as a matter of course, with study board meetings, course committee meetings, etc. There should, in fact, be much closer co-operation between language teachers and those teaching other disciplines not only to encourage more interdisciplinary teaching, but also to ensure that more courses in other disciplines are taught in a foreign language. In this were the case then apart from linguistic help, language teachers would also offer suggestions as to suitable teaching methods, because the structure and presentation of a course given in a foreign language is very different from that of a course given in the student's mother tongue.

Apart from a few exceptional cases it is on the whole true to say that due to poor collaboration only a small proportion of the available resources are being efficiently exploited.

6.2. Collaboration among higher education establishments at a national level

Although recent years have seen a marked increase in the amount of collaboration taking place among higher education establishments in individual countries, the phenomenon is still not widespread. It usually takes the form of membership of nationally constituted associations, participation in

commissions and conferences, organisation of congresses, joint research and other projects, publication of articles and reports. Higher education establishments which are geographically close to each other may collaborate academically in order to widen the choice of languages and types of course offered to students.

In many countries over the last 20 years various factors have led to the creation of professional associations. First is the need to communicate with teachers doing the same kind of work in other institutions; secondly budget cuts, real or threatened, have highlighted the need to use and share resources and knowledge (know-how) more efficiently.

One type of association (e.g. the *Asociacion Espanola de Lenguas para fines espcificos*) is concerned with a particular language or objective, and these are often very dynamic and innovative bodies. There are also associations of language centres, or of people teaching languages for non-specialits in higher education establishments. The following is a selection:

- APOCLES / Portugal;
- DULC (since 1981) ALTAL / UK, which is actively concerned at the present time with the integration of new technologies into language teaching;
- RANACLES / France which will shortly be editing the *Livre blanc des centres de langues* which will contain information on the following items: aims and organisation of language centres, form and content of courses, evaluation and certification, computer assisted language learning (CALL), multimedia, research;
- AKS / Germany which has been very active for a long time now in drawing up guidelines on the conditions necessary in order to provide language teaching for non-language specialists that is of an appropriate quality and complies with the high academic standards required;
- VALS / ASLA / Switzerland;
- CPPDCLVI / Italy;
- NUT / the Netherlands and that part of Belgium where Dutch is spoken. This association has been concerned recently with the question of adequately preparing students for linguistic and cultural exchange programmes, etc.

All these associations include some or all of the following points among their aims and objectives:

- the formation of a lobby group, which is essential to strengthen the position of those teaching languages to non-specialists in higher centres of learning, and which should enable language centres to defend themselves better against the threat of budget cuts, or of privatisation. One of the results of privatisation is that the teaching no longer complies with the specific requirements of an academic context (e.g. English for the social sciences, writing scientific reports in foreign languages, etc.)
- to establish national status-quo reports on the organisation of language teaching for non-specialists
- to make an inventory of research projects, to describe specific teaching skills, etc.
- to upgrade and establish language teaching as a formal academic subject

- to widen the choice of languages available to students by encouraging collaboration between higher education establishments
- to create a nation-wide network of language centres (Web site circulating information, giving details of research projects or of teaching material that can be used for distance learning)
- to organise in-service training for teachers
- to guarantee the quality of teaching in higher education institutions
- to describe good functioning models
- etc.

It is these associations that have been largely instrumental in raising national awareness of the requirements necessary for the provision of high quality language teaching to students from non-language oriented disciplines. Unfortunately such associations do not yet exist everywhere.

It is very much to be hoped that each country will eventually have an association through which can be channelled all information concerning the range of courses and choice of languages available for students from other disciplines as well as descriptions of research projects in this field. This information is required for each university and for the country as a whole.

6.3. Collaboration among higher education establishments at international level

Collaboration at international level often take place through inter-university conventions, through work contacts with universities in other countries, via networks such as the CEMS-Network (Community of European Management Schools) or in the context of various congresses and conferences or exchange programmes (ERASMUS). Collaboration is by no means general.

One of the main reasons for the improvement in collaboration among European institutions for higher education was the creation of CERCLES (European Confederation of Language Centres) in 1991, under the auspices of the LINGUA programme. The aims of CERCLES are:

1. the creation of Language Centres in European establishments of higher education
2. the promotion at international level of research in foreign language learning
3. the promotion of international and interdisciplinary co-operation between Language Centres.

More than 200 centres throughout Europe are at present members of CERCLES, which is also in contact with universities in eastern European countries.

The European Commission and the Council of Europe have also largely contributed to an increase in collaboration at international level through different projects, which have in turn led to greater awareness of, and activity in, this sector.

New opportunities for collaboration and an exchange of ideas have become possible thanks to the World Wide Web. For example "The Professional

Language Advisers Network (PLAN)", initiated by Marina Mozzon-McPherson at the University of Hull, aims to place language advising on a sound, professional footing. It was created as the outcome of a workshop, "Introduction to Language Advising", organised by Lucila Makin at the University of Cambridge in July 1996. At the present time there are many other networks dealing with different aspects of the didactics of language teaching.

6.4. Collaboration with non-university associations the field of language teaching

In most cases there is no formal collaboration, and it is in fact quite rare. But those involved in teaching languages to students from non-language oriented disciplines are quite often members, on an individual basis, of national or international associations, whose main concern is language teaching to adults, e.g. IATEFL for English or IDV for German. These associations serve as a valuable source of ideas on language teaching methods.
Efforts are being made to extend and develop collaboration between language teachers in higher establishment of education and those in other fields. For example in 1995 the European Centre for Foreign Languages (EFSZ) was created at Graz / Austria, under the auspices of the Council of Europe. The aims of this Centre are to promote language learning, especially minority languages. It organises conferences and in-service training seminars, with the aim of finding solutions to the problems inherent to this type of teaching, and serves as a European platform for everybody involved in language teaching, from those responsible for, and expert in, the theory and practice of teacher training, to those specialising in teaching methods. All teachers working with students of other disciplines are invited to participate in study groups attached to this Centre.

6.5. Collaboration with other organisations outside universities

In a certain number of countries such as Finland, France, the United Kingdom, and Ireland, the establishments of higher education carry out needs analyses, targeted at employers associations, chambers of commerce, or personnel managers of major companies, to find out exactly what are their language requirements, and on this basis language programmes are developed which respond as closely as possible to the actual needs. This approach is most often used by polytechnics. Otherwise, collaboration with, regional authorities, chambers of commerce, other professional organisations, or employers is relatively little developed.
There is often a degree of collaboration at an individual, rather than institutional level. An example that is often cited is the co-operation with the examining bodies of the Goethe Institute, the University of Cambridge, the Alliance Francaise, DELF, and DALF, etc., who provide assessors for their examinations, or train examiners. Occasionally there is collaboration with commissions working on the revision of exams. Although in most countries there is little contact with future employers, in a few cases language centres are

mandated to provide in-company language courses. Closer co-operation could obviously provide universities with valuable information as to the real language needs of employers, who, in turn, would also gain by a clearer understanding of what can be achieved in the universities, above all what are the requirements for attaining a high level of proficiency in languages.

7. CONCLUSION

Language centres which enjoy a good reputation in their own institution are those which have a serious commitment and are well-organised. They stand out because they have developed linguistic and teaching skills to a high level, or because they have specialised in research into a specific didactic aspect of language learning, thus contributing to the international renown of the institution of which they are a part. Outstanding examples are the University of Reading, whose centre of applied linguistics is famous; Humboldt University in Berlin, which is responsible for practical language teaching not only to students from non-language oriented disciplines, but also to students specialising in languages; the Universities of Cambridge and Hull, both of which are very advanced in integrating new technologies into language learning; the Centre de Recherche et d'Applications Pédagogiques en Langues at the University of Nancy 2, which specialises in self-access learning; and the Institut fur Sprachlehrforschung at the University of Bochum, etc.

Whilst it is true that there does already exist a certain number of efficiently organised centres which serve as models for the provision of language courses for students of other disciplines, generally speaking it is the variety of structures, the lack of global concepts, the poor co-ordination and limited choice of courses and languages on offer which characterise the language teaching field in most of the establishments of higher education in Europe today. It is therefore necessary to envisage a reassessment and reorganisation of this field. But there is not only one model of good functioning. The structures must be adapted to national and regional conditions, and be appropriate to the specific requirements of each institution. It matters little whether they are centralised or decentralised provided that they are flexible enough to deal with large heterogeneous numbers of students, and adapt to the rapidly changing needs of the modern world.

The ideal model would be based on a preliminary teaching project which has received the approval of all those concerned, and which has the backing of an institution that is aware of the importance of languages for the entire student community. Language teaching to students from non-language oriented disciplines should be recognised as a separate academic discipline.
This model would include a global learning programme, applicable to all languages, and would comprise on the one hand a description of syllabuses, attainment levels, teaching methods, and a uniform system of certification; and on the other would define administrative structures and responsibilities for the

overall direction and organisation of specific language courses for non-specialists.

It would maintain active contacts both within the higher education establishment, and at national and international level with a view to creating synergies, widening the choice of languages available, avoiding duplicate offers of courses from neighbouring institutions, and encouraging close liaison between teachers and researchers. It would employ an adequate number of personnel, be equipped with appropriate rooms, equipment and facilities, and take account of the amount of time it take to produce suitable teaching material.

This ideal model would be run by a competent and strongly motivated group of people with a marked team spirit and sense of co-operation, composed in the majority of teachers with satisfactory, permanent work contracts, who would be able to give adequate backing to hourly-paid teachers whom it is occasionally necessary to employ to cover the teaching of certain courses. The teaching staff would of course use modern, up-to-date teaching methods, and would be able to devote a certain percentage of their working time to research into didactics, the publication and creation of appropriate teaching material, and to in-service training.

The model would be flexible enough to propose a wide variety of languages and language learning situations for students of other disciplines, whilst at the same time complying with the high level requirements of university teaching. Asiatic and African languages would be included in the offer, as well as those that are less-widely spoken; one formula might be to propose a major and related minor language together, e.g. German with Dutch.

Time must be allowed for in the main university timetables to accommodate language study, and enable students to participate in intensive courses. In order to increase their contact with languages other than their native tongue, there would be extensive opportunities for guided self-access learning, as well as numerous university courses taught in a foreign language (for example, by visiting professors). Students would have to complete part of their studies abroad. Study programmes in foreign countries, (not forgetting those speaking less well-known languages), should be encouraged, even made compulsory.

Finally any effort made by students to improve their language competence should be recognised by certificates or credits towards the main degree.

Language courses should be free.

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6. Collaboration inside and outside higher education institutes

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6.2. Collaboration among higher education establishments at a national level
6.3. Collaboration among higher education establishments at international level
6.4. Collaboration with non-university associations the field of language teaching
6.5. Collaboration with other organisations outside universities

7. Conclusion

References
Appendix 1, Synoptic table
Appendix 2, Questionnaires