

**Thematic Network Project in the Area of
Languages II (TNP2)
Socrates-Erasmus Programme
(2000-2003)**

**DRAFT
MAJOR DOCUMENT**

Curriculum innovation

New learning environments

**Quality enhancement in higher education
language studies**

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Preliminary Remarks

This document is one of the outcomes of the three-year Thematic Network Project in the Area of Languages II (TNP2) (2000-2003), which was carried out with the support of the Commission of the European Communities under the Socrates-Erasmus Programme.

In the past three years, the importance of multilingual and multicultural competence and of linguistic diversity for an increasingly integrated and enlarged European Union open to the world has become a key issue in the EU's educational and social policies. In many ways, TNP2 constituted a response to this development. Driven by the conviction that higher education institutions have a crucial responsibility for the transmission of linguistic and intercultural skills, competences and knowledge and for language mediation, those engaged in the project sought to reach a clearer understanding of current and future linguistic and language-related demands in the economic, political and social environments as well as in the European higher education area being created, and to find ways of overcoming the frequently observed disconnection of higher education programmes and provision from those demands.

The project was structured into three sub-projects, which sought to address the overarching issue described from three different angles:

- (i) Sub-project One was devoted to Curriculum innovation. It covered the whole range of programmes and offerings which make up the area of languages in higher education – from the language portions in modern language degree programmes to language studies for students of all disciplines, from language teacher education to the training of translators and interpreters.
- (ii) Sub-project Two – New learning environments – the European learning space - was concerned with changes in higher education learning environments resulting from advances in new technologies and from student mobility, attempting to describe new opportunities for language learning arising from these developments as well identifying measures that have to be out in place if benefits are to be reaped from these opportunities.
- (iii) Sub-project Three – Quality enhancement in higher education language studies – sought to identify and further develop reference points relevant to the enhancing of the quality of language education in the university sector.

All three sub-project considered their specific themes against the background of three transversal issues: universities as actors in lifelong learning; the relevance of language studies to employability and to professional life; the European dimension.

This document consists of three reports prepared from within the three sub-project Scientific Committees. Each report is based on activities and outcomes carried out and produced at different stages of the three-year lifespan of the project, notably

- national reports prepared for a wide range of participating countries;
- a synthesis report drawing together the findings and recommendations of the national reports;
- the results of a written consultation carried out among project partner institutions;
- the outcomes of a workshop conducted in Year Two, at which initial recommendations, project proposals and examples of good practice were presented and discussed with project external stakeholder representatives;
- the outcomes of a number of TNP2 workshops conducted as part of the 4th Conference of the Conseil Européen pour les Langues ■ European Language Council (CEUELC), held in Aarhus (DK) on 26-28 June 2003.

During the lifetime of the project, the Bologna Process gained full momentum, as did the EU's Objectives Process. The Tuning Project constitutes the most important response to these developments on the part of the universities. As was indicated above, the area of languages as defined by successive European co-operation projects is not an academic discipline in its own right, but a field made up of a variety of programmes and offerings; it ultimately pervades the whole of higher education. This partly explains why experts engaged in TNP2 found it difficult fully to take on board and implement the Tuning philosophy and methodology.

In addition, experts were anxious to highlight European diversity – a natural outcome of the methodology adopted, whereby developments were initially mapped at national level. To give just one example, Sub-project One defined innovation in relative terms rather than measuring it against common reference points, as suggested by the open method of coordination promoted within the Lisbon strategy.

Whilst the document in its present state contains a host of stimulating proposals and examples of good practice, it requires further revision to make it more coherent and to bring it more into line with developments currently underway in universities across Europe. In particular, greater emphasis needs to be given to the opportunities for improvements and innovations in higher education language studies inherent in the Bologna Process. The revised document will also be made available in French and German.

TNP2 was a large project, involving 96 experts from 81 universities in 30 countries (including Switzerland) and 6 European associations. The three parts of the document were prepared in different ways, all of which had their advantages and disadvantages. However, irrespective of the working method applied, great care was taken to involve all individuals participating in the project in the preparation of the reports. I should like to take this to express my gratitude to all colleagues that participated in the project and to the TNP2 partner institutions and organisations. Without their dedication and support, this draft document would never have seen the light of day.

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Part I: Report on Curriculum Innovation

1. Introduction

Higher education in Europe is confronted with far-reaching changes in the external environment, including economic, political, technical and social changes, and a fast-changing international situation. It is also facing rapid changes in the internal environment, with the transformation of knowledge and skills, changing composition of the student body and shifting patterns of staffing. Languages are at the forefront of these changes, and are called upon to respond to the changing linguistic profile of staff and students, as well as the changing linguistic needs of the wider community. In facing up to these challenges, one of the most powerful tools at our disposal is the ability to innovate in our curriculum. And since many of the new needs are common to all countries, it is particularly valuable to engage in collective reflection at a European level, drawing lessons from the innovations and good practices that have been pioneered in a wide range of higher education contexts.

The members of the TNP2 Scientific Committee for Curriculum Innovation have undertaken this task between 2001 and 2003. As a first step, they compiled and revised national reports outlining curriculum innovation in their respective countries - Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. As a second step, they identified the patterns emerging from these reports. Their conclusions are presented in a summary report and an extended synthesis report, which are downloadable together with the national reports from <http://www.lang.ltsn.ac.uk/tnp.aspx>. The Committee recognised that there are many historical differences and particular circumstances in each country that affect foreign language learning and teaching. But it has identified a number of common developments and similar needs across the two dozen countries represented, and has begun to suggest measures that could be taken to extend good practice and ultimately improve students' experience. This chapter draws together the most important elements, which the Scientific Committee has identified as priority needs, recommendations and project proposals.

What is meant by the term curriculum innovation? For the purposes of this chapter, curriculum includes the content that is taught (areas of knowledge, disciplines included), the objectives pursued (purpose of programme, knowledge and skills to be acquired by students), and structure (the number of years of study, relationship between degrees at different levels, pattern of study, arrangement of units of study). Innovation is regarded as relative to the country concerned. It includes new practices and approaches that have been introduced in the past ten years, and new proposals under discussion. It also includes longer established practices, where these are examples of good practice that could be introduced as innovations in other contexts.

2. Political background

Changes in the external environment

Globalisation and internationalisation are common themes in all European countries. Many higher education institutions have established extensive programmes of international co-operation and exchange. EU membership has increased the motivation for learning foreign languages in many countries. Immigration levels have increased in many countries resulting in a need for greater multi-cultural understanding.

New technologies are having an enormous impact on higher education. Increasingly, ICT is becoming integrated with teaching methods and almost all universities are linked to the Internet. Some institutions have distance-learning programmes, e.g. in Iceland. And several countries are creating virtual universities, e.g. in Denmark and the UK.

Employment levels have had an impact on higher education throughout Europe. Unemployment figures are relatively low throughout Europe at present, although there are exceptions such as Bulgaria, where figures for 1998 show that 12.2% of the unemployed held university degrees. Low unemployment creates its own problems as higher education

institutions find themselves competing with the workplace for prospective students. These establishments face a challenge in devising ways of attracting new students.

There are particular circumstances in Central and Eastern European countries, which have undergone major changes in their political systems over 12-15 years. The economic and social consequences of these changes have had a major impact. Besides providing greater autonomy for higher education institutions, this has had an effect on mobility opportunities and languages taught (Russian is no longer compulsory and in many cases, English is now the first foreign language, e.g. in Latvia). The newly elected democratic governments in these countries have introduced a number of Parliamentary Acts addressing higher education issues.

The system of higher education

Details of the system of higher education in most European countries can be found at the Eurydice website - <http://www.eurydice.org>. There are different systems in different countries, although there are substantial changes in train in several countries, linked to the Bologna process.

Many governments are currently considering legislation, e.g. there have been recent Acts in Iceland and Ireland, and there have been recent initiatives in, e.g. Finland and the United Kingdom prioritising language policy and life-long learning. Much of the impetus is shared at European level, and the policy directions are reflected in the EU Commission's recent consultative documents on higher education, and on language policy.

Significance of the Bologna Declaration (June 1999)

The Bologna Declaration¹ is already having a major impact on curriculum planning in higher education across Europe. It is a statement of intent aimed at increasing convergence (including more transparency in qualification structures) among EU member countries while also improving the international competitiveness of the European higher education system. The intention is to create by 2010 "the European higher education area." The Declaration has received a positive reception so far but it is too early to predict its impact as the proposed measures to implement it are still at an early discussion stage, and are being pursued with different degrees of vigour in different countries.

The system of higher education in some European countries, e.g. Iceland, is already regarded as compatible with the Bologna principles. Recent developments in other countries have reflected the aims of Bologna. These developments include the adoption of a two-cycle degree system - undergraduate (level one) and graduate (levels two and three), e.g. in Sweden and France; the strengthening of the ECTS credits system, e.g. in Romania and Slovenia; and the promotion of student and staff mobility, especially through the EU's Tempus, Phare and Socrates programmes.

In countries where the system does not appear to be compatible with the Bologna ideas, the adoption of the proposed measures presents a challenge which will require a complete rethinking of the structure and content of higher education, e.g. in Belgium where the existing candidat/kandidaat degree is a two-year programme. In Slovenia where changes are already being implemented, it has been found that some institutions are adopting a far more radical approach than others.

3. The curriculum challenges for languages

The purposes of the Bologna declaration cannot be adequately met without substantial innovation within the language curriculum. The challenge is to develop curricula that support the aspiration to greater convergence across the EU. Languages have a key role to play in fostering better understanding between countries, greater mobility of students and staff across linguistic and cultural borders, and greater recognition of the real diversity within Europe.

¹ The text is available at <http://www.unige.ch/cre/activities/Bologna%20Forum/Bologne1999/bologna%20declaration.htm>

in literature or comparative linguistics.

The programme has been running for two years. Thus there are students in the 1st and 2nd years. The first cycle (3 years) comprises the learning of three languages, together with literature and linguistics courses in each of them.

The 2nd cycle is still under discussion, but it is likely that it will include interdisciplinary courses aimed at a more open education, and concentrated not only on traditionally philological subjects but also on a broader interdisciplinary range.

Advantages:

The programme crosses the boundaries between university departments (traditionally in Poland, linguistic studies are distributed according to families of languages). It is clear that the needs of the labour market do not correspond completely to this linguistic division. Young people do not understand why they cannot combine English, French and German studies. A certain university conservatism is however not easy to overcome. This programme is a step in the right direction. It can give students more opportunities to enter the European arena.

Possible dangers:

There are possible questions about the quality of studies. In the traditional degrees, students reached a high level of linguistic competence.

2) Staff mobility

Summary recommendation

The organisation of staff mobility should be improved at European level.

Reasons (why it needs to be done)

Currently the arrangements for staff mobility are fragmented and haphazard.

Detailed recommendation (what needs to be done)

A study should be undertaken to identify the problems and needs in the area of staff mobility within the Socrates programme, and to make recommendations for measures that could be taken to improve it.

Agency (who should carry it out)

It should be the responsibility of DG for Education and Culture to commission a study.

3) Research on learning and teaching

Summary recommendation

European level opportunities should be offered to undertake research into learning and teaching languages in higher education.

Reasons (why it needs to be done)

Whereas there is a good deal of work on the pedagogical aspects of language learning in the school system, there is relatively little work in higher education on teaching and learning languages or the cultures and societies related to

them. Many academic staff in languages are discouraged by their institutions from undertaking pedagogical research. There is also a general lack of funding sources for such research.

Detailed recommendation (what needs to be done)

Stronger cooperation is required between DG for Education and Culture and DG for Research, to explore means of encouraging pedagogic research in the area of languages. This might particularly focus on the position of languages in the 6th Framework programme.

Project proposals in curriculum innovation

4) Support Network for Languages

Summary of project

A support network for languages in higher education should be established, based on a small team with the task of providing an infrastructure, building capacity, and offering recognition and long-term continuity for trans-European projects and networks of exchange, whether virtual or face-to-face.

Reasons (why it needs to be done)

There are several existing networks in languages, including the Thematic Network. However, they are mostly dependent on short-term project funding, and restricted to a limited number of project partners. Some consortia, brought together for a specific project, develop into dynamic networks, with spin-off benefits beyond the immediate remit of the project. However, the existence of these networks tends largely to be dependent on project funding, and when this ceases at the end of the project, the network may fall rapidly into decay. They do not contribute substantially to building Europe's capacity to sustain and improve its performance in this area. Some projects succeed in finding exit strategies that secure longer-term funding to enable the continuation of the work they have carried out, or to maintain the network of participants. But these are relatively few.

It is also noticeable that European-funded projects in languages are not well disseminated, and do not achieve the impact hoped for. In large measure, this is because the dissemination phase comes at the end of the project when the main activity is winding down, when project staff are looking for new jobs, and when project partners are focusing on the next project. This is an inherent problem with project based funding, and it would be valuable to establish a separate infrastructure to carry out effective dissemination and maintain networks.

Detailed recommendation (what needs to be done)

A support network infrastructure should be established, comprising a small team with a specific remit to:

- continue and expand existing networks of contacts in the area of languages;
- provide opportunities for continued exchange and contact between participants in short-term projects and networks;
- disseminate and develop the outcomes of projects;
- provide a networking and information service for languages in higher education;
- encourage and facilitate innovation and cooperation.

Agency (who should carry it out)

The support network infrastructure could be the task of a new knowledge-brokering service established for the purpose, or of an existing national or cross-European agency, institution or association. DG Education and Culture should commission a feasibility study and consider allocating pump-priming funding.

Relevant example of good practice

The UK Subject Centre for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies
www.lang.ltsn.ac.uk
The Subject Centre is part of the UK's Learning and Teaching Support Network, a national scheme based on 24 subject centres, each supporting a different subject area. The Subject Centre for the area of languages is based at Southampton, and provides a service to all higher education institutions in the UK. Its functions include disseminating information on innovations and good practices, and on related issues of concern to the subject community; encouraging cooperation between institutions and associations to improve teaching and learning, and stimulating innovation. Its website is widely consulted by academics across Europe and further afield, and its conferences and workshops frequently have a European participation. It offers an example of good practice at national level.

5) Exploring "bilingual higher education": linguistic and non-linguistic issues

Summary of project

A series of pilot projects is required to stimulate further the use of a variety of languages as a vehicle for teaching disciplines other than languages, and to evaluate the results of existing examples of this bilingual approach to subject teaching.

General benefits of bilingual education

The effectiveness of bilingual education is now confirmed at the secondary level and bilingual programmes tend to be widespread throughout Europe. It is time to seriously explore bilingual education at the higher level, not only regarding linguistic issues but also for its benefits related to the subject matter (history, biology, etc.).

First, bilingual education is a good means of creating interaction between linguistic and non-linguistic curricula. It provides students with an intensive exposure to a second language, without adding too many language courses to their programme.

Secondly, bilingual processing of knowledge is supposed to have a positive impact on acquisition strategies. The "problematic" access to knowledge through a second language constitutes an opportunity for learning and for a better understanding of the linguistic nature or dimensions of academic knowledge.

Thirdly, the benefits of bilingual education are not just a natural consequence of using more languages in the curriculum, but depend on a specific pedagogical implementation. Such a pedagogy has not yet been explored and defined at the level of higher education, and bilingual education in many cases corresponds to a juxtaposition of different teaching languages rather than to a really articulated and comprehensive programme.

General aims of the project

The project aims to set up a framework for experiment and reflection for bilingual education at tertiary level. In reality, programmes of this type have been introduced rather patchily and are very little informed by research. It is thus a question of establishing an inventory of various forms of plurilingual education in the tertiary sector, of proposing a typology and of working out a framework of reflection (list of relevant questions) for research and evaluation.

The project aims at highlighting both the disciplinary and linguistic aspects related to plurilingual education. The goal is not only to provide an alternative "integrated" opportunity to learn languages, but also to make explicit the particular advantages of treating disciplinary contents in two languages. For example, to work on a bilingual biology course, sometimes on the "*têtard*" sometimes on the "*girino*" contributes to a clarification of different aspects of the concept, morphology in the first case and movement in the second.

Precise details of the project

With regard to the first aim, it is about establishing a critical directory of existing or potential forms of plurilingual education in the tertiary sector, in the various types of degree programme and in the various regions of Europe. The implementation of the Bologna system (bachelor/master) seems to be a good moment to organize this directory. Plurilingual education is in fact a good means of providing students of all disciplines with the language competences that are considered as transversal in the Bologna Declaration. It is about establishing a framework of reflection for plurilingual education in the tertiary sector, aimed at European researchers, who could thus coordinate their projects in this area. Concerning the second aim, it is about reflecting on the precise effects of plurilingualism on the transmission/construction of academic knowledge, linguistic and non linguistic.

For that, the project would rely on a great diversity of European teams, to examine the disciplinary and linguistic benefits of plurilingual education to the tertiary sector in various configurations:

- languages: English/German, Italian/Spanish, Finnish/English, Greek/French, etc.;
- disciplines: human and social sciences (e.g.: history), "hard" sciences and technology (e.g.: architecture), life sciences (e.g.: biology), interdisciplinary programmes, etc;
- teaching methods: lectures, group work, research seminar, laboratory, etc.

Resources and timescale

The project could be supported by research councils at national level. Ideally, it should run during the period 2004-2007. The end of 2003 could be spent constituting the network of researchers and mapping out the terrain.

Relevant examples of good practice

Bilingual qualifications in Switzerland
Certain bilingual university courses are now well established (e.g.: University of Freiburg in Switzerland), but their organization relates above all to administrative aspects (conditions for obtaining a bilingual qualification). To the best of our knowledge, there has been no attempt to develop a distinctive pedagogical approach to bi/plurilingualism, except perhaps in Switzerland at the recently formed Pedagogic High School in Freiburg.
University of Baia Mare, Romania, Department of Applied Language Studies – Centre of Canadian Studies
Brief summary of main features
The programme involves the study of Canadian Literature for 2 semesters (2 hours/week – course, 1 hour/week seminar) in English, and for 2 semesters in French. It is financed by the university from Government money and tuition fees.
Analysis of the innovation and good practice exemplified
Students of applied language studies become more and more interested in Canadian literature, culture and civilization. The novelty of the curriculum involves both the content and the study in two languages (English and French). The programme is very popular and attracts an increasing number of students. Most of them want to write their Degree Paper in Canadian Studies.

<i>Problems and Issues</i>
Graduates have proved to be well qualified, but their strong motivation seems to be rather immigration prospects than career prospects in Romania
Source of information
University of Baia Mare – Curriculum of the Department of Applied Language Studies

6) Careers

Summary of project

A project should be established to examine existing co-operation between universities and employers.

Reasons (why it needs to be done)

The creation of contacts between the universities on one hand, and companies and cultural institutions, on the other hand, could open new career prospects and, consequently a better motivation for graduates to look for jobs in their own country.

Detailed recommendation (what needs to be done)

A project should be established to examine existing co-operation between universities and employers, especially in the language and culture industries. It should map the types of contact and the benefits and drawbacks of cooperation. It should recommend on ways in which good practices could be extended.

7) Career tracking

Summary of project

A project should be established to examine existing mechanisms for tracking the career outcomes of programmes in languages.

Reasons (why it needs to be done)

The detailed tracking of career outcomes provides a valuable indication of the practical results of studying on a particular programme. It enables universities to feed the information back into curriculum development, and to evolve programmes that are more attractive and useful to students, and more highly valued by employers. Some countries have invested significant effort in this area, while others are currently considering doing so.

Detailed recommendation (what needs to be done)

A project should review practices of career tracking in different European countries, to establish what mechanisms have been established, and to evaluate their effectiveness and their usefulness to students and to curriculum developers. It should recommend on ways in which good practices could be extended.

4. Modern languages degree programmes

Introduction

Modern languages degrees have been an important part of European higher education for more than a century. Languages became established as a discipline in their own right towards the end of the nineteenth century, growing out of the study of grammar and the history of languages. Degrees evolved to focus increasingly on the literature associated with a particular language, and in the last forty years have expanded their scope to encompass a wide range of other cultural aspects and more recently the social, political and historical contexts. In the last ten years, however, the numbers of students choosing to study modern language degrees has begun to fall in many European countries.

This section deals specifically with language degree programmes for students who would consider themselves to be language students or linguists, as opposed to students of other disciplines who have also studied languages. Traditional language programmes are language degrees with a main focus on language, language history and/or literature, often known as 'philology'; traditional programmes provide "transversal" skills rather than specific vocational skills. The term alternative programmes is used to describe language degrees which may include applied language studies and/or wider cultural and socio-political studies. Alternative programmes may also combine language-related studies into one programme with studies in one or more other disciplines in roughly equal proportions. The extent to which these types of programmes are seen as distinct varies from one country to another: in some countries, there is a clear distinction between traditional language programmes and alternative programmes, while in others there is a continuum of programmes. Where they are sharply distinguished, it is considered that traditional and alternative programmes have different needs and are responding to different markets.

Traditional language programmes: recent changes in content, objectives, and structure

Content

Programmes are traditionally seen as providing language and 'content': on the one hand developing language skills, and on the other hand a knowledge of linguistics and literature. Throughout Europe, there is now a stronger emphasis on cultural studies and the titles of many degree courses have evolved to take account of this change. In many countries, an intercultural component has been added to the existing strands, while in Belgium, the trend has been for intercultural studies to replace the traditional role of literature. Language courses have generally become more contextualised and more practical with a greater emphasis on spoken proficiency than before. In the United Kingdom, for example, the curriculum has been revised to establish more courses aimed at improving the basic language skills of students. More professional subjects are being added to programmes in response to business needs, e.g. the introduction of business communication and translation courses in Belgium.

There have been recent changes in the choice of languages being offered and studied. There is now a greater willingness on the part of higher education institutions to offer languages other than the major European ones, e.g. Japanese, Hindi. The pace of change varies on a scale of caution to radical, from university to university as well as from country to country. Long established universities are reluctant to give up traditional courses but there are clear signs of a readiness to change and react to student demand. Many 'new' universities, e.g. in the United Kingdom, have moved away from traditional language programmes in order to distinguish themselves. In many countries, the mother tongue, regional languages and minority national languages (e.g. in Switzerland and France) are gaining a higher profile and becoming more popular. In several countries, languages have traditionally been studied in families (Romance, Germanic, Slavonic etc). There are signs that this is changing. For example, in Belgium, the traditional division according to language families is being abandoned so that in the future, it will be possible to study a combination of languages from different language families.

Objectives

Although the main objectives of traditional language programmes have not changed a great deal, the focus has shifted so that there is now more emphasis on developing students' communicative competence and skills that are more attuned to the workplace.

Structure

In most countries, language studies are a compulsory component, while content courses may consist of some compulsory and some optional courses. Frequently the first year of study includes a greater proportion of compulsory courses, to establish knowledge and skills needed for later study. In some countries, e.g. Cyprus, there has been a reduction in the number of compulsory courses and an increase in the number of elective courses. This development together with increasing modularisation, e.g. in Norway, leads to greater flexibility. Modularisation of courses is of particular benefit to part-time students, which has implications for the drive for life-long learning in many countries. Students now have the opportunity to choose from a wider range of languages and subject combinations. In the United Kingdom, students frequently prefer to study for a double honours degree (i.e. two languages, or one language and a specialisation) rather than the traditional single honours degree in one language. Greater choice is often associated with a more student-oriented approach than in the past.

Teaching and learning materials have changed dramatically in recent years with increasing use of the Internet and IT. Some universities have created web-based courses with some or all of their course materials being available online. These technological advances, together with the development of language centres in a number of universities, e.g. in Bulgaria, encourage greater learner independence. In former Communist countries such as the Czech Republic, many new books in the target language have been written or imported. In these countries, there is now the opportunity for greater student mobility. There is a tendency towards greater co-operation between departments and universities, as well as closer links with the world of work. Diverse forms of assessment have been introduced in many countries, e.g. the student portfolio in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic and Slovenia.

Reasons underlying these changes

Facing competition for prospective students from the world of work, universities have had to adapt their courses to meet the need for the large number of skills required by the work market. Traditional language programmes have been changed in response to student demand for greater flexibility. The job market and society in general place more importance on communicative ability and practical language training, so universities have adapted their courses accordingly.

In many countries, membership of the EU has had a positive effect on motivation to learn a foreign language and the choice of languages offered. However, the contrary effect has also been observed when negative public attitudes to Europe have contributed to a decline in motivation. The increasing trend towards exploiting technical resources in teaching has occurred partly because of the high priority some governments have given to the use of new technologies, e.g. in Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom. The new socio-political and cultural environments in former Communist countries have been the main driving force behind changes to language programmes, particularly in relation to issues such as student mobility and language choice - especially where the learning of Russian has been replaced by other languages.

Outside the demands of society, curriculum changes are often enforced by internal financial reasons. Changes in content may arise from changes in availability of teacher expertise, student demand, student feedback, and fluctuations in student knowledge base and abilities. Basic language courses in countries such as the United Kingdom have increased because students' language skills on entry have weakened. For the same reason, Swedish language programmes are now more practical and less theoretical, although as discussed above, there is also a demand for more practical courses from society at large. Changes in the system of secondary education have also had a knock-on effect in several countries.

Alternative programmes: content, objectives, and structure

Alternative programmes typically place a stronger emphasis on the acquisition of language skills, and may include components of languages for specific purposes, such as business or international relations. The content side of the degree is usually based in contemporary studies, with a less literary focus, and more attention to other cultural forms, such as cinema, and to the social and political study of the country or countries concerned. Often the degree contains a strong component of study in another discipline, such as politics or business studies, up to half of the degree. And the degree may be aimed at preparing students for a particular career area, for example, international business. Alternative language programmes are a recent innovation in many European countries, so it is difficult to identify specific recent changes in their content, objectives or structure. However, the technical and vocational focus of many of these programmes demands a degree of built-in flexibility in being able to adapt to technological advances and the needs of the workplace.

The drive for innovation in alternative language programmes tends to be led by social and vocational needs. Internationalisation has created a need for more in-depth knowledge of other cultures so cultural studies programmes have been created in response to that demand. Applied language studies programmes and 'Language with a Specialisation' programmes have been developed to meet the growing need in the workplace for experts in a particular field.

Bologna and Tuning

The discussions surrounding the Bologna process have increasingly focused on the issues of how degrees should prepare students for their future roles in society, with particular focus on the needs of citizenship, mobility and employability, but also recognising the need for personal development and the acquisition of learning skills needed to maintain and enhance skills and knowledge throughout life. There is considerable debate over whether degrees in a particular subject should be brought to converge across Europe in content as well as in structure, and the suggestion is increasingly canvassed that a distinction should be drawn between the first cycle (bachelor/licence) and second cycle (master) of degrees, with the first providing a general educational foundation, while the second prepares specific vocational outcomes. These debates should inform innovation in the languages curriculum.

Needs analysis

Traditional language programmes

The Scientific Committee has identified the following priority needs in this area:

- action needs to be taken in many countries to address the decline in student numbers;
- lack of variety in programme types needs addressing:
 - include new objects of study, such as film;
 - wider range of languages, including less taught;
 - content needs to address skills relevant to students' future careers;
 - there needs to be more flexibility in organising the curriculum;
 - there needs to be more innovation in methods of delivery.
- develop the European dimension of languages by putting languages studied in perspective in the context of plurilingualism and linguistic policies;
- greater interdisciplinarity between language, literature and social/cultural strands to give language programmes greater coherence;

- more co-operation between faculties and departments, between countries (recognition of awards) and more exchange of students and teachers;
- international recognition of qualifications and more robust system of credit accumulation and transfer;
- greater contextualization:
 - work experience/placement;
 - links with schools.

Alternative programmes

The Scientific Committee has identified the following priority needs in this area:

- raise awareness and enhance the status of these programmes by development of a stronger research base for languages for specific purposes;
- co-operation between "alternative" and "traditional" programmes should be firmly anchored in institutions and co-operation should be increased between institutions and external partners;
- the number of languages studied and the competence levels required need discussion, objectives need to be more sharply focused and assessment criteria standardised;
- development of materials for alternative language programmes;
- identify the potential career paths of students and adapt curricula in order to prepare students for entry into the "new" language-related careers.

Recommendations

8) Consultation

Summary recommendation

Higher education institutions should initiate consultation with major stakeholders, especially students and employers, to identify areas where curriculum innovation is needed.

Reasons (why it needs to be done)

Falling student numbers, high drop-out rates and dissatisfaction on the part of employers all suggest that current language degrees, both traditional and alternative, are less than optimal. However, there is a need to identify the causes of such dissatisfaction so that proposed innovations can be targeted to solve problems.

Detailed recommendation (what needs to be done)

Consultation is required with both students and employers.

a) Students

These should include prospective, current and recently graduated students. Consulting prospective students should give insights into language teaching at schools; consulting current students, sampling all years, should give insights into the school to university transition and the perceived coherence of programmes; consulting past students should give insights into career paths chosen.

i) Prospective students

These are students in their last year of school who are considering language degrees at university. Why are they interested in studying languages? What expectations do they have? What does and does not appeal to them about language programmes? It might also be informative to consult students who have decided not to consider language degrees. Why is this?

ii) Current students

These are students currently enrolled on language degree programmes. Have their expectations been met? What are the good and bad points? What changes would they like to see introduced?

iii) Past students

These are recently-graduated students. Are they in employment? If so, what type of employment? How easy was it to find a job? Is their university education relevant to the needs of their job?

b) Employers

What skills do they expect language graduates to have? Are their expectations met or do they find graduates ill-equipped for the job? What changes would they propose in university programmes?

Agency (who should carry it out)

These consultations should be conducted by universities in collaboration with schools, teacher associations, employer associations etc.

9) Rationales for studying languages

Summary recommendation

A project should be launched to assemble a list of rationales for studying language degrees, in consultation with major stakeholders.

Reasons (why it needs to be done)

Students can choose what to study at university, and unless they see a clear reason for studying languages at degree level, they are likely to choose other subjects in preference. There is therefore a challenge to articulate rationales for language study that will enhance the attraction of languages and lead to a wider social and academic profile. The basic question to which we need to give students clear answers is:

Why should I specialise in a language as a subject in its own right?

The full answers to this question will be complex and interconnected, no doubt. They will be slightly different for particular languages or groups of languages. And they will need to be presented in ways that make sense to students from different academic and social backgrounds and at different stages of their studies.

The rationale needs to be supported by something in students' experience that enables it to carry conviction, such as the enjoyment of learning, the intellectual challenge, the sense of achievement, or the fascination of foreign ways of living. But unless there are clear reasons, the choice of studying languages will not make sense to students.

Detailed recommendation (what needs to be done)

A systematic listing of reasons should be developed, to answer the question identified, and grouped to apply to a range of different student categories. It is recommended that rationales for studying languages should be collected and classified, in wide consultation with providers and language professionals.

10) Core curriculum

Summary recommendation

A project should be launched to work towards a set of common profiles for language degrees in Europe, including an agreed core curriculum.

Reasons (why it needs to be done)

A minimum core curriculum would benefit student and teacher exchange as well as improving the compatibility of degrees throughout Europe. If students and graduates of language degree programmes have a compatible background/degree, there will be greater intelligibility of qualifications and a shared understanding of what a language degree consists of.

Detailed recommendation (what needs to be done)

A project should be launched to apply the Tuning methodology to degrees in the area of languages, working towards a benchmark statement of what the agreed profile and core curriculum should be. It is likely to prove that several different models of degree are required, and pilot projects should be established to develop a common profile of each model of degree across a consortium of participating universities.

Examples of profile elements for a first degree (bachelor/licence) might include a requirement that it should contain a minimum of one third of the credits in the major language studied; that a minimum of one quarter of the programme should be devoted to learning of language skills; that it should contain a component of language practice/study abroad; that it should contain a written paper (thesis), worth a minimum of 10 ECTS credits.

Examples of profile elements for a second degree (Master) are that it should contain advanced studies in the major subject; and a more considerable written paper (thesis) of a minimum of 20 ECTS credits.

Relevant example of good practice

BA programme in English Philology at the Department of English Philology, Vilnius University
<i>Brief summary of main features</i>
The BA programme in English Philology at the Department of English Philology of Vilnius University is a four-year programme leading to a BA degree in English Philology. Vilnius University is a state-funded institution, although the university accepts a considerable number of fee-paying students as well.
<i>Analysis of the innovation and good practice exemplified</i>
<p>The main strength of the Department is the spirit of innovation and change.</p> <p>The Department of English Philology has very successfully adapted to the sweeping changes that have occurred in the economic, political and educational systems of the country. Currently the Department offers a wide variety of courses which can be roughly divided into the following areas: language proficiency classes which comprise the study of grammar, phonetics, academic writing, vocabulary enhancement, translation and interpreting.</p> <p>Considerable emphasis is placed on developing oral fluency and writing skills of the students. All these aspects are taught by different teachers, which leads to a better quality of the overall course and to a more objective assessment of the student's language proficiency.</p> <p>The second block of courses comprises theoretical subjects such as Introduction to Germanic</p>

Linguistics, History of English language, as well as Theoretical Syntax and Morphology and innovative courses in many areas. The latest developments are the courses in Corpus Linguistics and Corpus-Driven Language Study, the main aim of which is to introduce students to new innovative methods and approaches to language learning and to promote a corpus-driven language study where a student is placed in a position of a 'researcher', provided with a wide resource of authentic data (the students work in a computer laboratory and use the BNC as their main source of reference).

Finally, the Department offers courses on Culture Studies of English-speaking countries, which include exploration of history, geography, culture and civilization of these countries. Besides British and American Studies, students are welcome to choose courses in the field of Canadian and Irish Studies.

Of special importance in the education of students is research paper writing, which creates opportunities for one-to-one interaction and comes close to tutorials. The students are expected to pursue research in linguistics, both theoretical and applied, ELT, Culture Studies and Literature (papers on literature are supervised by the World Literature Department).

The Department offers programmes of study at the undergraduate and graduate levels leading to the following degrees: BA in English Philology; MA in English Linguistics; PhD in Linguistics.

Problems and Issues

Linguistics, unfortunately, is not the most popular choice, so the Department gets weaker entrants. Another big problem is connected with the difficulty of recruiting new teachers because of low salaries at state universities.

Source of information: www.vu.lt/english/menu/depar/philo.htm

5. Language teacher education

Introduction

Language teaching and learning in primary and secondary school education is a key to the future multilingual and multicultural Europe. An extensive comparative study on Foreign Language Teaching in Schools in Europe, published by Eurydice (2001), describes the different language teaching systems at primary and secondary level. It also includes the aims, content and structure of the curricula of elementary schools. It can be accessed at <http://www.eurydice.org>. Universities have most of the responsibility of training the teachers, at least initially.

Initial teacher training refers to the training received before entering full-time service as a teacher at primary or secondary level. There is an important distinction between teachers of early language learning and others. Prospective early years/primary schoolteachers are trained to teach a variety of subjects, whereas prospective secondary school teachers receive specialist training in one or more subjects, including foreign languages.

Continuing teacher education (in-service), often referred to as in-service training, is provided by many institutions of higher education. Provision is diverse and varied – it is a highly developed and innovative area in some countries, but limited in others.

The Scientific Committee had the opportunity to discuss the preliminary findings of the report, commissioned by the European Commission (DG Education and Culture) on the Training of Teachers of Foreign Languages.² It broadly endorses the recommendations of the report, which are as follows:

1. A European Benchmark for Language Teacher Training should be developed, to provide a common understanding of the different processes and components involved, and guidelines for good practice.
2. An accreditation framework should be established to provide a basis for comparability, and to recognise flexible routes to the status of qualified teacher at European level.
3. A voluntary programme of Quality Assurance should be established at a European level with European factors as guiding principles.
4. A support network for language teacher training should be established, based on a small team with the task of building capacity, providing an infrastructure, and offering recognition and long-term continuity for trans-European projects and networks.
5. A major European resources service should be established, including a portal web-site, to provide access to information and materials for language teachers and trainers.
6. The development of arrangements for dual qualifications should be further encouraged.
7. Closer cooperation should be encouraged between training institutions and partner schools, and between education departments and language departments.
8. All in-service training courses should be accredited at local or national level.
9. An Advisory Group on European Teacher Training should be established to work with national agencies to co-ordinate key aspects of language teacher training.
10. European Qualified Language Teacher Status should be introduced, qualifying its holders to teach in any member state, and use the title 'European Language Teacher'.
11. Teacher trainees should be required to achieve agreed levels of linguistic competence corresponding to their specialist, semi-specialist or non-specialist teacher status.
12. European Language Mentor status should be introduced to recognise key individuals involved in training.
13. Teacher trainees should gain experience of teaching in more than one country.
14. Teacher trainees should be able to compile their qualifications by taking different units in different countries.
15. Specialist language teachers should be trained to teach more than one language.
16. Language teachers should be trained in the skills and approaches necessary to make students aware of their role as European citizens, and more training materials should be developed to support this training.
17. All teachers should be trained in using ICT approaches for interactive use with pupils in the classroom.
18. Increased training should be provided in bilingual teaching approaches, and pilot projects should be implemented in each country.
19. Research should be commissioned on three key areas:
 - a. developments in the teaching of native language as a foreign or second language, and the impact of these on the teaching of foreign languages.

² M. Kelly et alii, 2002, The training of teachers of a foreign language: development in Europe
<http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/policies/lang/languages/download/downloads.html>

- b. how trainees might best be trained to recognise and respond to the diversity of social and linguistic contexts in which their teaching will occur.
 - c. the current level of ICT for language teacher training and future development needed in this area.
20. More effort needs to be made to make initial teacher training modules and in-service course content available online and in other distance learning forms.

Needs analysis

In addition, the Scientific Committee has identified the following key needs in the area of initial teacher training:

- improve the status of language teachers;
- a greater practical training component in many countries;
- more development of specialised subject-based teaching methods;
- more access to the insights of applied linguistics;
- more courses for teachers of young language learners;
- more information on the training of teachers in non-native language schools.

And it has identified the following key needs in the area of continuing teacher education:

- link qualifications and salaries to continuing teacher education;
- develop e-learning in order to reach more teachers;
- chance for teachers to go back to university for one term in-depth study at regular intervals;
- better qualified teachers with a clear professional identity;
- more languages (Less Widely Used languages);
- adult language learning;
- teacher training for higher education;
- training in development of teachers' language competence is important.

Recommendations

11) Balance and integrity in subject and pedagogical aspects and theory and practice

Summary recommendation

Teacher Training curricula should achieve a balance between pedagogical aspects and subject contents as well as theory and practice relevant to the teachers' roles and functions

Reasons (why it needs to be done)

Teaching being a complex activity needs simultaneous thought and action on a wide number of issues and interactions that take place in a classroom. It is obvious that alongside good language skills the trainee should have relevant professionally significant knowledge about linguistic and cultural aspects of the target language, such as stylistics, history of the language, lexicology etc. This results in discussion first of all about the amount of theory and practice, secondly, the links between theory and practice and, thirdly, about the organisation of the teacher education process. Accordingly, traditional models of teacher education seem to be in need of substantial changes as it is necessary to provide situations for holistic personality development in the teacher education process.

Teacher education has a traditional distinction between theory and practice on two aspects:

1. subject knowledge and pedagogical theory on the process of learning and teaching;
2. integrity of pedagogical theory and engagement in some form of actual teaching.

Therefore, it is not enough simply to include relevant theoretical courses in the curriculum. Greater awareness and integration of pedagogical aspects into the subjects themselves as well as an integration of theoretical aspects and practical implementation in the tasks teachers have to fulfil, should be achieved.

The professional roles, functions and tasks the teachers are expected to fulfil and the qualifications necessary to fulfil professional roles and tasks must be taken into consideration. The basic aspects of the teacher's education are acquiring competencies to establish learning environments and to transform academic knowledge into teaching and learning situations. Obviously it is not enough only to identify a concurrent model as most suitable for the goals in teacher education, but it is necessary to find ways and means to ensure real integrity in this process.

There are several opportunities for strengthening the links between subject studies, development of pedagogical thinking, professional skills and competencies and relevant personality traits:

- Professionally focused (oriented) teaching ■ learning of the subject courses by specially organised study process, which means that the students learn the subject courses as prospective teachers, i.e. as a tool for their professional activity. The subject courses are a means rather than the goal. Accordingly, in the teacher education process the focus must be on the design of professionally significant learning situations.
- Good balance between the theory and practice within the process of learning subject specific methodology with the focus on the learner rather than the subject, so as to ensure a learner-centred teaching ■ learning process.

This can be achieved by a student-centred approach in the teacher education process and by close integrity and consecutiveness of the content and the process of acquiring the subject specific methodology, observation practice at schools, micro-teaching and teaching practice at school by strengthening reflection and research aspects.

Another very important aspect in teacher education is the balance between educational theories and practice. It is not enough to deal only with applied linguistics and pedagogy. It is necessary to include teaching and learning theories, general educational psychology, psychology of learning, sociology, classroom management as management of students' learning, development of competencies of creating a supportive classroom climate, sustainable learning motivation, etc.

It is necessary to implement a problem-based approach in the process of acquiring the meaningful theories and also to provide various contexts and challenges during the teaching practice throughout the programme. Therefore, firstly, it is important to include professionally significant courses; and secondly, to ensure integrity by organising the content around professionally relevant problems and consecutive observation, microteaching, and teaching practice throughout the whole period of studies.

To ensure closer links between theory and practice and the subject and pedagogical theories it is necessary to include problem based studies which together with a comprehensive research-based and reflective approach is essential for development of high level professionalism.

Detailed recommendation

Future EU reports on Teacher Training curricula should emphasise the need to achieve a balance between pedagogical aspects and subject contents as well as theory and practice relevant to the teachers' roles and functions.

Implementation – Agencies

The above-mentioned recommendations can be implemented in the following way:

1. It would be useful to have a supplementary project when a group of interested people from various universities could discuss and come to terms about common guidelines for the balance and amount of subject courses, educational theories and practice.
2. Each teacher education institution could reorganise the curricula according to the teachers' prospective roles, functions and tasks.
3. The staff of teacher education institutions must have pedagogical competences as teacher trainers, accordingly there is need for training of teacher trainers. This can be done in institutions by staff development departments.

Relevant examples of good practice

Faculty of Education and Psychology in the University of Latvia

Brief summary of main features

The teacher education curriculum in the Faculty is developed as a concurrent professional curriculum. The courses are spread in the curriculum evenly from the first up to the fifth year: there are about 40% of subject courses and 40% of pedagogical courses and 20% of courses of general education.

There is a strong tendency to professionally oriented teaching ■ learning process, i.e. wherever possible and relevant the students analyse, reflect on issues and act from the teacher's viewpoint. There is a wide use of student-centred methods with the focus on the student as a prospective teacher.

There is consecutive step-by-step organisation of the observation ■ teaching practice: from theoretical issues - linked with observation practice - to microteaching teaching practice at schools.

New selective problem-based courses are being introduced now as well as a special programme for training of mentors for the teaching practice at school.

The five year concurrent FL teacher education programme has been worked out in the Faculty of Education and Psychology in the University of Latvia. The programme is state financed.

The main goal of the programme is to offer the students opportunities to learn and develop competences necessary for teachers' professional activities.

Great attention is paid to continuous improvement of the programme by:

- implementing the principle of professionally oriented studies of each and every course in the programme, e.g. language courses, linguistic courses, literature and culture, educational theories, etc.
- implementing student-centred teaching/learning methods in the study process.
- working out and implementing continuous observation and teaching practice integrated in the process of acquiring educational theories and methodology of teaching/learning foreign languages.

The latest example of integrity of teaching/learning methodologies and observation and teaching practice was introduced in 2001 by the Department of FL Teaching /learning Methodology. The programme of continuous observation and teaching practice was worked out integrating theories of education, psychology of learning, applied linguistics, methodology of FL teaching/learning.

Planning of implementation of the programme included the pattern of sequence of lectures and seminars followed by observation practice at school under the guidance of mentors after each theoretically discussed group of issues. At seminars and practical classes students also practised micro-teaching with their peers.

Every week there was a lecture, a seminar, and students observed 2 lessons delivered by mentors at schools. The plan of observation was based on the material of the week's lecture and seminar . Observation was followed by a practical class during which evaluation of the observations and group discussions took place. University lecturers participated in the discussions.

Analysis of the innovation and good practice exemplified
<p>The organisation of observation within the framework of the FL teaching/learning methodology course helps to bridge the gap between theoretical courses at the university and active teaching practice at school and between the university and school in general.</p> <p>It helps the students to get ready for their active teaching practice at school, to develop their professional critical thinking and reflective approach to teaching/learning languages. Schools have an opportunity to learn innovations in theories, approaches and FL teaching/learning practice.</p>
Problems and Issues
<p>It must be admitted that there are some difficulties in organizing the above-mentioned process. It is rather time consuming as:</p> <p>mentors need to be prepared, the programme and the tasks must be prepared by a team of university lecturers, there must be time for the team to follow and reflect all through the period and, if necessary, changes must be introduced, the university lecturers need additional time to learn what is going on at schools, the teachers have additional duties and this demands additional financial assistance.</p>
Source of information
www.lu.lv Faculty of Education and Psychology
E-mail: akackere@hotmail.com

Teacher-line – separate intake for language teacher trainees
Brief summary of main features
<p>The Department of English at the University of Jyväskylä started in 2000 a teacher- training programme where a number of students are admitted both to the language department and to teacher training. A similar system started at the Department of German in 2001. A special teacher-line was also introduced in 2001 at the Department of English and the Department of German at the University of Helsinki, followed in 2002 by the Department of Scandinavian Languages and Literature (Swedish). The teacher-line will have its own quota in the intake of new students.</p>
Analysis of the <i>innovation(s)</i> and good <i>practice(s)</i> exemplified
<p>These programmes have dealt with the imminent shortage of foreign language teachers (especially English, German and Swedish) that the Ministry of Education has identified. Being linked closely to the traditional philology programmes, the teacher-training will give a full language specialist education (as opposed to e.g. a special training programme of a lower standard).</p>

<i>Problems and Issues</i>
It has been slightly difficult to get young applicants to commit themselves to applying to a teacher-training programme; most philology students are mature for this choice only later in life.
<i>Source of information</i>
See section 3.2.5. in the Finnish national report. On the internet, see e.g. www.eng.helsinki.fi

Integration of didactics and practical training in teacher education
At the Department of Modern Languages, Umea University, didactic components are integrated in all course units all through teacher training programmes, thus stressing their vocational character. Students are regularly given observation tasks, based on various aspects dealt with both in didactics courses and other course units. These tasks are to be performed at the respective partner school, where students spend from one day up to several weeks at a time depending on the overall organisation of course units. Classroom observations are followed up at the university, where students are given the theoretical basis and supported in analysing didactically the practices observed. In the first term only observation tasks are given, while later on in their studies students also practise teaching under the supervision of an experienced teacher at school as well as of teacher trainers from the university. School-related activities make up one fourth of the 60 ECTS required for teaching at secondary level of the nine-year compulsory school. The aim of the new system is to link theoretical courses more closely with actual teaching practices, thus increasing students' motivation, but also to give students a chance to reconsider their choice of profession at an early stage.
<i>Problems that have been identified so far</i>
Finding suitable partner schools is sometimes problematic. The new system requires a higher standard of supervising teachers' qualifications than before, as they are expected to be more closely involved in reflective activities, following students' own teaching sessions. There is a great need for immediate in-service training of these teachers, but as a consequence of financial restrictions on the part of the municipalities, specially designed teacher training activities can only be supplied on a long-term basis.
There is also some concern that as a consequence of the time spent on school-related activities students' proficiency development will be slowed down and that there will be less scope for the deeper aspects of traditional course units.
<i>Contact persons:</i> Ingela.Valfridsson@tyska.umu.se , Anita.Malmqvist@tyska.umu.se

12) Early learning

Summary recommendation

Teacher training curricula should be designed to integrate early learning and language learning aspects.

Reasons (why it needs to be done)

More and more countries have started or are about to start early language learning – at different levels, at kindergarten age, in elementary education or up to the 5th or 6th grade. This trend reflects developments on several levels: the heightened general awareness of the necessity for language learning and for training at an early stage due to economic, political and cultural changes; increase of mobility and cultural exchange; results of linguistic,

sociolinguistic and neurolinguistic research; changes in the educational systems, centred on communication, media and outcomes; awareness of greater flexibility in employment, etc. It goes without saying, that learners of different ages have different needs and thus young and youngest learners must be taught in different ways, according to their special skills and language development. Subjects as well as pedagogical knowledge have to be adapted to that. Most important is a high standard of language proficiency of the teachers, as errors acquired at an early stage take great effort to be corrected in later years.

Most teacher training institutions, those of the primary teachers as well as language teachers, have been slow in reacting either to the trends, set by private initiative and the private sector, or to the public integration of early learning into the curricula of primary schoolteachers or secondary school language teachers.

Detailed recommendation (what needs to be done)

The integration of different aspects of early learning should be a key feature in the design of teacher training curricula, as elective modules in traditional language teacher training, as alternative modules, as special courses or as INSET. As most European countries have special kindergarten and primary teacher training institutions, often not part of the universities, special care has to be taken to integrate high quality language training into these curricula or develop additional modules.

This recommendation on the integration of early learning into teacher training must be seen as complementary to the integration of "late learning", adult language learning, into curricula at different levels of training.

At European level: a network should be established to bring together those involved in teacher training for early learning.

At national level: The legal framework and the financing should be ensured at a national level, and co-ordination should be encouraged between institutions involved.

At institutional level:

- development and integration of special courses or course-modules for language teaching at an early stage;
- courses for primary teachers with an emphasis on language skills, pronunciation,
- courses for secondary school teachers with an emphasis on pedagogical aspects for teaching young learners, psychological knowledge, teaching language with the help of playing, children's literature etc.
- post-graduate modules
- INSET modules
- international co-operation in modules-design and networks for the exchange of good practice: mobility of trainers of trainees, development of materials, discussion of experience with exchange of teachers in the school environment
- modules with credits: possibility of training over a longer period and in different institutions: co-ordination of programmes for early learning

Agency (who should carry it out)

Ministries, HE institutions, INSET institutions, foreign cultural centres, private educational sector with accreditation

13) Importance of e-learning and its European dimension

Summary recommendation

The complexity and the challenges of e-learning for the training of teachers and teaching of foreign languages can only be successfully met by co-operation, networking and the exchange of experience.

Reasons (why it needs to be done)

There is a general consensus that E-learning could greatly facilitate the teaching and learning process, making it more individualised, opening institutional and national barriers, facilitating the exchange of experience at the teacher and student level, making it more efficient and less expensive, especially for less widely spoken languages and giving the learners and teachers greater freedom of time and space so they can adapt their work to their possibilities and needs.

Nevertheless it poses great difficulties of implementation because of the differences in:

1. material lack: many institutes do not have the necessary e-equipment, students as well as teachers
2. lack of know how
3. lack of experience and knowledge
4. the extensive input of time and knowledge to prepare adequate e-material and e-didactics
5. lack of evaluation and examination experience
6. calculation of the work load for learners and especially teachers.

All these gaps have to be filled.

Detailed recommendation (what needs to be done)

At European level: projects need to be launched developing elearning programmes in this area. Also a network should be established of institutions involved in elearning provision for teacher training.

At national level: The legal framework and the financing should be ensured on a national level as well as co-ordination between the institutions.

At institutional level:

1. special courses or course-modules for course design and preparation of material
2. INSET modules
3. international co-operation in modules-design and networks for the exchange of good practice: mobility of trainers of trainees, development of materials
4. modules with credits: possibility of training over a longer period and in different institutions; co-ordination of programmes for e-learning

Agency (who should carry it out)

Ministries, HE institutions, INSET institutions, foreign cultural centres, private educational sector with accreditation

Relevant examples of good practice

I Te	ii ogra	in ELT, National and Kapodistrian it of A
<p>The programme is intended to provide senior students of the Faculty of English Studies with the training they need in order to meet new educational and professional demands in the ELT field. It consists of two core courses (Applied Linguistics to English Language Teaching and Learning, and ELT Methodology), a number of elective courses (such as language and culture in language teachinglearning, the pedagogic discourse of ELT, error analysis and language teachinglearning) and a number of activities connected to the core courses. These activities are offered each academic year with the collaboration and help of teachers and teacher trainers who are not on staff, but who are attached to the Faculty as special collaborators of the Initial Teacher-Training programme. They include:</p>		
<p>i) Practice teaching in schools</p>		
<p>Students are given the opportunity to systematically observe the teachinglearning process and to teach in an EFL class of a state or private school for a period of 4-6 weeks during two academic terms. They work closely with the class teacher who helps them prepare themselves so that progressively they are able to take over the class themselves.</p>		
<p>ii) Participation in Independent Workshops</p>		
<p>Independent Workshops deal with a variety of practical issues in ELT. Each workshop focuses on a different theme and is open to a limited number of 20 students per class, so that it is possible for the tutor to carry out practical work in class and complete supervised project work. Examples of workshop themes offered each year: Teaching EFL to young learners: From theory to practice, Practical aspects of the teaching of English to young children, Computer-assisted language teaching for children, Class management: Planning for motivating lessons, Teaching English through drama, Planning to use creative activities in a learner-centred class, Humanistic methodology to ELT, Using creative activities for the development of intercultural awareness, Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL), Testing and assessment, Managing learners, Motivating adult learners of English, Designing a syllabus for the teaching of ESP (English for Special Purposes).</p>		
<p>iii) Attending Extra-Credit Seminars</p>		
<p>Seminars on special topics of language education may be either very practical in nature or they may focus on theoretical issues. Examples of seminar topics offered: Open and distance learning, Systemic functional grammar and educational linguistics, Assessing multimedia materials for ELT.</p>		
<p>iv) Doing an individual project</p>		
<p>Students may, upon certain conditions, be given the opportunity to do an independent project individually or in groups, on a topic chosen from a project sheet, and thus have a chance to work on a practical area of ELT that interests them. Project work is supervised.</p>		

Innovation

The programme includes a variety of activities in addition to core and elective courses. A lot of information concerning studying material, information for the course, etc is also available electronically. Moreover, teachers collaborating with the Faculty will soon be given an opportunity to belong to a virtual community of EFL teachers that is being developed by staff of the Department of Language and Linguistics, and be able to exchange teaching ideas, expertise and information concerning theoretical issues in language education and research.

Problems

The large number of students (over 400 each year) does not allow the participation of all students in all the activities connected to the core courses.

Contact: <http://www.uoa.gr/english>

14) Accreditation

Summary recommendation

Criteria for accreditation and validation of language teachers' practical experiences and knowledge, acquired either in courses abroad, in INSET- modules or in co-operation with other European institutions should be developed at European level and specified at national level in accordance to a standard set of common core qualifications, competences and skills. A European Qualified Teacher status should be introduced.

Reasons

The Synthesis report stressed the diversity of teacher education and training curricula in member states and thus the differences in teachers' qualifications and competences. Nevertheless there are also great similarities in the goals to be achieved, skills and competences to be transmitted, problems to be addressed and needs already identified. In view of economically or knowledge based mobility, enhanced by the lack of a communication barrier, a general transparency and tuning of teacher education outcomes is certainly advisable. One of the incentives for better quality and greater concordance could also be the status of Euro foreign language teacher.

Detailed recommendations

Therefore it would be useful to diagnose qualifications recognised throughout the countries. Common guidelines for the curricula could be defined, common criteria for competences, leaving space for national needs and specifications.

This could be done by a European teacher-training agency (as given in Recommendations) or a project could be developed. In the creation of validation and accreditation standards the already existing European agencies should be included.

Validation of INSET modules has to be viewed in accordance to the principles and possibilities of LLLL. (Language Portfolio for Teachers of Foreign Languages)

Agencies

European networks, Ministries, HE institutions, INSET institutions, Accreditation and Validation Agencies

6. Programmes in language mediation

Introduction

The language industries are changing rapidly. The role of translators and interpreters is evolving in response to the increasingly complex varieties of discourse, including audiovisual media and internet communication (email, chat, etc) and the growing range of technical tools now available. In addition, new roles are emerging for language intermediaries in written and oral communications, and for agents and other intermediaries with linguistic and intercultural skills as well as disciplinary knowledge. Due to increasing internationalisation, there is a growing need for well-qualified translators and interpreters but relatively little specialised training in this field in comparison to the level of demand. This is becoming an increasingly differentiated, specialised and "high-tech" sector. The training of translators and interpreters in many European countries is described in some detail in the TNP1 sub-project reports: Translation and Interpreting. These reports can be found at <http://www.fu-berlin.de/elc/tnp1/SP7NatReps.doc> The sub-project also made extensive recommendations in this area (www.fu-berlin.de/elc/en/tnp1prod.html) and their recommendations are still robust and relevant.

Needs analysis

The Scientific Committee has identified the following priority needs:

- develop and expand provision at all levels;
- greater diversity in languages (EU and non-EU) covered;
- training including training for teachers of translators and interpreters;
- integration of practical work experience into programmes.

Recommendations

15) Incorporate work experience into translating and interpreting programmes

Summary recommendation

Translating and interpreting programmes should incorporate work experience in the curriculum of their final year students in the form of work placements in translating and interpreting environments.

Reasons (why it needs to be done)

It is felt that a degree in translating and/or interpreting can only lead to a professional qualification if it includes experience of the workplace and working conditions. This applies especially to interpreting degrees, where there is no possibility of having new employees work under supervision. For translation degrees, work placement is the only way to have students experience workplace realities of teamwork, deadlines, etc.

Detailed recommendation (what needs to be done)

- some form of work placement (several short time placements, or one longer) should be incorporated in the curriculum and credited;
- contacts with translating and interpreting employers to result in an inventory of available placements;
- quality of placements (i.e. relevance of tasks to the degree) should be monitored.

Agency (who should carry it out)

- government to provide the legal framework and the necessary flexibility;
- institutions in cooperation with employers.

16) Understand and respond to the changing nature of the language industry

Summary recommendation

Institutions should study the labour market and student potential with a view to equipping students with the skills and attitudes needs for successful employment.

Reasons (why it needs to be done)

A degree leading to a professional qualification should be relevant, hence up-to-date with developments in the profession. This applies to evolutions in the type of jobs as well as to evolutions in the nature of the jobs. The changing European context has also had an influence on the requirements on the level of types of languages.

Detailed recommendation (what needs to be done)

- institutions should devote time to studying evolutions in the market, and revise their curricula to take these into account;
- institutions and employers should meet regularly with this aim;
- institutions should invest in the necessary equipment;
- institutions should envisage including new languages in the curriculum.

Relevant examples of good practice

The annual JICS (Joint Interpreting and Conference Service) conference of the EU-interpreting services with the training institutions serves this aim for the needs of conference interpreting in the EU.
The annual CIUTI (Conference permanente Internationale d'instituts de Traducteurs et Interpretes) meeting/conference provides a platform for the meeting between training institutions and international employers.
The IAMLADP-working group of the UNEU has elaborated a report on this topic.
Flanders
With a view to the enlargement of the EU, the Flemish government has provided an incentive subsidy to the 5 Flemish translating and interpreting institutions with a view to setting up programmes for the languages of new accession countries. The government in part subsidizes full programmes for Polish, Czech and Hungarian, and introductory programmes for Polish and Latvian for a duration of 5 years.
Integration of Translation/Interpreting Skills and Subject Competence
Brief summary of main features
The programme is being implemented in Ventspils University College in Latvia. The goal of the programme is training of translators and interpreters of the first degree. Training is focussed on three languages simultaneously:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English-Latvian-Russian,
German-Latvian-Russian.

<p>The programmes were developed to meet the regional needs, therefore the basic characteristic feature of these programmes is blending of the language acquisition, acquisition of translation/interpreting skills and obtaining adequate competence in business and management, legal matters, especially those connected with contract area, as well as of transportation and technological processes.</p>
<p>Analysis of the innovation and good practice exemplified</p>
<p>The aims of the programme have been worked out taking into consideration the regional market peculiarities, i.e. there will be no possibility for narrow specification in the near future therefore it is necessary to train highly qualified translators/interpreters:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • for the local and central government institutions of Latvia,
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • for private economic structures in Latvia and abroad,
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • for providing translation and interpreting services to the EU institutions.
<p>The whole study process is organized so that there is maintained the closest relationship possible between the study process and the reality of translators and interpreters work by establishing contacts with the potential employers, familiarising the students with the specific character of providing translation/interpreting at concrete companies and institutions and encouraging students to do translation or interpreting parallel to their studies.</p>
<p>The students are also doing research work in those branches of applied linguistics related to translation studies.</p>
<p>The programme was designed in 1996. Ventspils University College is the only institution which has opened the Department of Translation Studies with full-length studies(8 semesters) which is in line with the development trends and the future of the region and Latvia. The programmes offered in Ventspils differ from others in a quantitative aspect, namely, by the number and combination of languages included in the programme (English/German-Russian-Latvian) and by the number of types of translation(written,consecutive, simultaneous).</p>
<p>The programmes are broad and at the same time intensive.</p>
<p>During the studies students must have a translation (pre-diploma) internship of four months. The internship is organized in the most important companies and organizations on the regional and country levels.</p>
<p>Problems and Issues</p>
<p>There is a need to include a greater number of languages as electives. It is necessary to develop distance education. International contacts, especially in regard to internship, must be broadened.</p>
<p>Source of information</p>
<p>www.venta.lv; E-mail: juris.bal@venta.lv</p>

17) Develop professional profiles

Summary recommendation

National and international organisations should develop professional profiles for the different language professions.

Reasons (why it needs to be done)

At present, translating and interpreting institutions train students on the basis of their experience and their fragmented information about what the market demands. Professional profiles describing specific translating and interpreting jobs and outlining requirements and expectations would clarify the situation.

Detailed recommendation (what needs to be done)

define specific jobs in language mediation

- describe these jobs in detail: tasks, requirements, skills, level

Agency (who should carry it out)

Educational authority in cooperation with major employers, translating and interpreting associations and translating and interpreting institutions.

Relevant examples of good practice

Flemish Educational Authority
Brief summary of main features
In 1995, the Flemish government charged the Flemish Educational Council (VLOR) with the writing of professional profiles and course profiles for higher education. The professional profiles for translator and interpreter were elaborated by a committee of representatives from training institutions and representatives from professional organisations.
The professional profile consists of a description of the profession and the professional context, a description of the tasks involved in the profession, and the skills and attitudes required.
Analysis of the innovation and good practice exemplified
The descriptions are based on an analysis of the profession and the tasks involved. Tasks, skills and attitudes are itemized and operationalized.
Problems and issues
The document distinguishes between two professions only: translator and interpreter. As such, it generalizes over several more specific professions, which are not clearly identified and defined as such.
Source of information
www.vlor.be

18) Meeting diverse needs

Summary recommendation

Training institutions should develop alternatives next to standard undergraduate programmes in order to support further professional development.

Reasons (why it needs to be done)

- rapid changes in the profession mean that older graduates may need retraining;
- specialization in the profession means that flexibility of employees decreases; this can be remedied by providing short courses in specific subfields;
- in several countries translating and interpreting programmes are aimed at language students; practice elsewhere has demonstrated that providing translating and interpreting programmes to non-language students can be fruitful.

Detailed recommendation (what needs to be done)

- identify target groups;
- create course modules for specific target groups.

Agency (who should carry it out)

- institutions and translating and interpreting associations should identify target groups;
- government should provide the legal framework.

Relevant examples of good practice

University of Bucharest, Language Studies for the Translators, Interpreters and Terminologists Department
Brief summary of main features
The institution involved is the Translators, Interpreters and Terminologists Department of the University of Bucharest. The University is funding the programme, partly from Government money, partly from tuition fees.
The 3 rd year students majoring in translation studies benefit of curriculum innovation with a new course (2 hours/week) and seminar (2 hours/week) which is designed to meet their need of becoming acquainted with a wide variety of texts that they might translate in their future careers. Therefore the main idea is to equip the students with the ability to identify the main specific features of all types of texts and to immediately transfer them into the target language.
So, the course is aimed to familiarize students with text formats and text features mainly in the area of specialized translations (economic, scientific, medical, legal, religious, newspaper texts).
Analysis of the innovation and good practice exemplified
The basic idea is to compare parallel or quasi-parallel texts and to identify their features as well as the major characteristics of the language used in such texts. The same analysis is done for parallel texts in both languages (for instance, an instruction leaflet in both languages) and based on such a comparison and various conclusions are drawn which can be seen as generally true for the text type under discussion.
This approach to language is more appropriate for a translators' department and it turns the teaching process into an interactive activity, eliciting the students' reactions and involving them in the

development of the class. Students are asked to undertake various projects, such as text collection, text analysis, text comments, and so on. It also teaches students to make use of a wide range of information sources, encompassing both the classical ones and also the Internet. It can also be considered a good preliminary preparation for their consecutive and simultaneous interpretation classes, as they come to be familiar with a host of texts, of various formats and on very different topics.

Problems and Issues

One limitation might be the fact that one cannot always find the appropriate parallel texts, or, for highly specialized texts there may be difficulties related to the content of the text, so one has to contact a specialist before going into the analysis of such a text. It is a time consuming procedure, but it needs to be done, if one wants the class to be successful.

Source of information

University of Bucharest – Curriculum of the Translators, Interpreters and Terminologists Department

Suggestions

Exchanges of materials with other European departments of languages involved in translations could be very useful.

Heriot Watt University in Edinburgh

Heriot Watt University is unique in the UK in offering MA (Honours) courses at level one in both Applied Languages and Translating and also in Languages (Interpreting and Translating). Both courses last four years and include a compulsory full academic year spent abroad. Language studies include Oral and Written Translations, Essays, Precis-writing and Note-taking, and all the major branches of Interpreting - Liaison, Consecutive and Simultaneous. This intensive language work is complemented by studies in History, Institutions, Current Affairs, Literature, European and International Organisations, Linguistics, and Translation and Interpreting Studies. The year abroad is spent at one of the University's fifty partner institutions and forms an integral part of the course. Before graduating students are required to submit two dissertations, one in each of the major languages studied.

www.hw.ac.uk/prosp/ug/courses/

7. Language programmes for students of other disciplines

Introduction

The provision of language learning opportunities for students of other disciplines is a rapidly growing area of demand. Students increasingly understand the value of adding language skills to their qualification in engineering, business studies, law and many other subjects.

The kind of provision they may expect to find is of two main types:

- 1) degrees where a language component is integrated into the programme as a compulsory element. These degrees are normally focused on another subject (e.g. law, engineering, business) but include a requirement to study a language as a minor, supporting element (often 25% of the degree);
- 2) language courses studied alongside (rather than integrated into) non-language programmes. This includes courses studied as options by students of other subjects, where they may choose to study a language, but could choose courses in another discipline instead.

For the purposes of this chapter it is not useful to differentiate between language studies integrated into non-language programmes and general and subject-oriented language courses accompanying non-language programmes as they both have substantially the same needs and recommendations.

In this area, there is a great diversity of structure between different countries and between different institutions in the same country. The Scientific Committee noted that examples of good practice in this area included certification of achievements. The European Language Portfolio could also be used in this context.

Language provision for students of other disciplines is a highly innovative area where rapid changes can occur. This is due in part to the vocational nature of the programmes. This sector is particularly dynamic in some countries, although provision is unequally developed.

Language provision and support for mobile students

Provision for mobile students varies throughout Europe. Some countries have a tradition of providing foreign language courses for mobile students while in others, such as France, developments in this area are relatively recent. Large-scale student mobility is a relatively recent development in some countries, particularly the former Soviet influenced states, so the need for this type of provision is new in many countries.

In general, the emphasis is on teaching foreign languages to incoming students with less emphasis on those going elsewhere. Provision for outgoing students does not match provision for incoming students. Students going abroad without adequate language training find survival in a European academic environment very difficult. Outgoing students need greater linguistic and intercultural preparation.

Non-language programmes or parts of programmes taught through one or several other languages

This is a relatively small but growing phenomenon. In some countries, whole courses are offered through a non-native language and in others, there may be lectures and/or course materials in a foreign language.

Needs analysis

The Scientific Committee has identified the following priority needs in this area:

- organisational forms - more co-ordination/bringing people together where there is such a diversity of teaching;
- there needs to be an organisational structure that links Language Centres more to Language Departments. Language Centres are sometimes independent and sometimes part of a department;
- there needs to be closer co-operation in the curricula of language departments and between Language Centres and departments in terms of exchange of information and collaboration;
- some Language Centre teachers are native speakers without training, but this is not enough for teaching purposes. People teaching languages should be appropriately qualified.

Recommendations

19) Preparation for mobility

Summary recommendation

More linguistic and cultural preparation is required for students intending to work or study in another country.

Reasons

As student mobility increases, more courses for incoming students are organized by the host university. Such courses supplement but do not replace a preparation, which is all too often lacking. There is no systematic linguistic preparation of outgoing students in their home universities. The incoming students are then confronted with new programmes, a new pedagogical approach, a new academic culture in addition to language difficulties. If exchange programmes are intended to be more than an introduction to another culture and a gratifying personal experience, outgoing students should be better prepared linguistically to ensure their scientific success. If so many outgoing students come back to their home countries with few or no credits, it is often due to their lack of language competence.

Language courses are offered by all European institutions of higher education, but language courses for students of other disciplines are less well provided. In many instances, the courses can be offered but cannot be integrated into a non-language programme. Such courses can also be very specialized (English for Law) and are therefore not appropriate as a preparation for time abroad.

Detailed recommendation

The implementation of the recommendation will take into account the differences in foreign language abilities throughout the European community. Certain countries stress the need for learning a foreign language at an early age and their speakers are fluent in one or several languages when they start their higher education.

- Devise general language courses offered to all students from other disciplines, which can be integrated into a non-language programme.
Institutions with a foreign language requirement should not impose a language, but should give the students freedom of choice. Languages other than English should be encouraged as English is already the widest taught language in schools and as a result most students show a certain proficiency in English and are eager to learn more. In addition, mobility to the United Kingdom and Ireland is restricted due to the extreme demand and students should be encouraged to choose other countries.
The language courses should be taught by language departments or language centres and should be free of charge. In a time of budget reductions, it is conceivable that courses which are now designed to meet specific professional needs should be reorganized to also meet the needs of outgoing students.
- Establish a long distance, e-learning centre/network for outgoing students
The centre/network should enable the students to better prepare their stay abroad. It presupposes that all European institutions of higher education propose a detailed and up-to-date web page that students can consult. Too many students are still to this date deterred by the difficulty in obtaining information on the host university. The e-learning centre should also offer language courses online, a necessary move to increase mobility to smaller countries.

Agency

The recommendation is to be addressed to Ministries of Education and leaders of institutions of higher education.

Relevant examples of good practice

Norway

Very few countries to this date offer specific courses for outgoing students. Norway proposes a 15 ECTS credit course in French and German in Norway followed by a 15 ECTS credit course in the host country. In 1984, the creation of language courses for science students aimed at increasing the number of students taking a year in France and Germany. The courses had two components: a 15 ECTS credits course in Norway and another 15 ECTS credits course at the University of Caen and at the University of Kiel. The courses abroad were intensive and were taught before the semester start at the respective Norwegian- French/German Study Centres. The courses are no longer financed by the Colleges of

Sciences, but partly by the students themselves through grants from the State Educational Loan Fund. They are now offered to all students planning to study in France/Germany. The course in Caen is for example a 7-week intensive course (24 hours a week) and is credited with 15 ECTS credits by the home university. The course emphasises oral comprehension and expression, trains students in taking notes and prepares them for their studies at a French university through specialised assignments, oral presentations in their specialities, project reports.

The Department of Lithuanian Studies at Vilnius University

Brief summary of main features

The Department of Lithuanian Studies at Vilnius University, which was set up ~~1 September~~ 1 September 1990 with the aim of teaching contemporary Lithuanian to foreigners and conducting courses of the Lithuanian language to the speakers of other languages has developed into a very modern centre meeting the demands of a much broader and varied audience.

The Department offers a modern course of Lithuanian as a second language as well as introduction to Lithuanian literature, culture and history. The Department also gives a one year language course as well as short summer and winter courses.

Analysis of the innovation and good practice exemplified

The Department has also developed a plethora of new-generation textbooks of the Lithuanian language. The teachers of the Department together with their partners from abroad designed a whole package of tests for assessing the knowledge of the Lithuanian language. The Department has elaborated and published a series of functionally oriented Lithuanian language descriptions "Threshold " and "Vantage" (modelled along the lines the Council of Europe publications "Threshold" and "Vantage"). At present the Department is working on the last addition to a series "Waystage". The publications will provide a sound basis for a comprehensive, realistic assessment of the communicative requirements of non-native speaking residents using the state language.

Problems and Issues

The Department considers a lack of language teaching management skills as their main problem. The staff of the Department are professionals who can easily come up with a new idea and develop a new course, however, the marketing of the course is more problematic.

Source of information <http://www.vu.lt>

20) Greater cooperation with institutions to ensure exchange of expertise and good practice

Summary recommendation

Measures need to be taken to improve cooperation and networking between universities.

Reasons

The national reports reveal a great need for co-operation between university institutions. The lack of co-operation at national level is even more noticeable at European level. Effective practices which exist in institutions are not well known. Few examples of exchange of experiences were reported, which is a particular misfortune for the development of teaching languages to students of other disciplines. It should be stressed that the need for language knowledge (either mother tongue specialist language or foreign languages) is increasing but there is little research in this area, and similarly there are few publications on this subject. Many universities have language courses of this

type but their quality could be improved if there was a greater exchange of experience. This co-operation is also crucial in language education for student mobility and for researchers in the European domain.

Detailed recommendation

National and international networks should be created:

- to exchange existing experience and especially good practice
- to develop training programmes
- to share teaching and learning methodologies
- to develop content for independent learning and for e-learning
- to share materials and human resources

Specific publications (in paper or electronic format) should be developed:

- to facilitate the exchange of research work on the teaching/learning of languages, in particular languages for specific purposes
- to disseminate the results of projects to develop teaching methods within this framework

Studies should be carried out::

- to discover real needs in various contexts
- to develop the relationship between training required by the world of work and that which is provided by the universities (this will require co-operation between educational institutions and employers)

Agency

This recommendation is addressed to:

- a university institutions
- university associations, national and international
- organizations which manage co-operation, at national and international level
- researchers in language teaching
- language teachers

Relevant examples of good practice

Cercles
A concrete example of co-operation in this area is the circulation of information which exists within the framework of the European Confederation of Language Centres in Higher Education.
Journal LSP and Professional Communication
Another example is the journal LSP & Professional Communication, published by the Danish Society for Language for Special Purposes and Professional Communication.
Cross-border study programmes
<i>Brief summary</i> The universities of Southern Denmark

number of programmes in linguistic and cultural communication at bachelor and master levels. These involve the study of one or more foreign languages - Danish, English, German – with business studies or communication studies. These programmes involve students from Denmark and Germany, as well as other countries. To date levels of enrolments are high and the venture can be described as successful.

Analysis of innovation

These programmes reflect curriculum development based on cooperation between two institutions in two EU member states. This cooperation is at all levels: administrative and teaching. The main innovation is that students are awarded a degree from both institutions.

Problems

There have been problems with collaboration on some of the programmes and the choice of languages is limited.

Contact address: www.studieguide.sdu.dk

"Language and Communication Sciences", interdepartmental and interuniversity programme at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

This postgraduate programme is organised by the Departments of French, German and Italian together with the Telecommunications Sector of the Faculty of Electrical Engineering of the Technical University of Thessaloniki. The programme leads initially to a Diploma of post-graduate studies and eventually to a doctoral degree. It has two main objectives:

- a) Specialisation in Language Didactics, Language Sciences and Communication Science, and
- b) Application of Information and Communication Technology to Language Studies.

The programme leading to the Diploma of Post-graduate Studies includes 350 course hours on the following subjects:

core material: signals and data processing, statistics and computer sciences, semiosis and communication, theories of meaning, etc.

two series of major subjects: methodology of scientific research, non-verbal communication, intercultural communication, analysis of needs and linguistic auditing, design and development of teaching material, technologies of distance learning, etc.

Innovation

The existing law for postgraduate studies has allowed the development of interdepartmental and interuniversity programmes. This is one of the very few programmes in which language departments organise a postgraduate programme with a Technical University.

Contact: <http://www.frl.auth.gr>

Foreign languages at the Europa-Universität Viadrina Frankfurt/Oder
Identification:
The initiative came from the university as a whole and is supported by the regional government of Brandenburg/Germany. All departments of the university are collaborating with the language centre:
Sprachenzentrum an der Europa-Universität Viadrina
August-Bebelstraße 12
15234 Frankfurt (Oder)
Brief description:
The language centre of the Viadrina University plays a central role in the overall conception of all study programmes of law, economics and cultural studies, and is well integrated into them. The language centre of the Viadrina University offers courses in English, French, Polish, Russian, Swedish, Spanish and Finnish. The language courses are obligatory for students of all internationally oriented programmes in the areas of economics, law and cultural studies. All courses are arranged in 6 subsequent levels with 4 teaching hours per week. Its final examinations lead to certificates of the UNlcert system, which is a common standard for foreign language proficiency certification. The two highest levels of certification belong to special purpose languages in the domains of economics, law and culture. Depending on the individual regulations of the programmes students have to take obligatorily courses in foreign languages other than English. For instance, the Bachelor programme International Business Administration contains 8 weekly hours of a general foreign language course (other than English).
Especially valuable contributions to European cooperation are binational qualification profiles as manifested in double degree programmes. In the area of law it is possible to pursue a double degree of German and Polish law.
Part of the lecture in the single subjects is held in English.
Courses take place during the term, but intensive courses are also offered during the vacation. Foreign students can improve their German language skills in special classes providing support throughout the programme of studies and Summer courses in German are also held as a form of preparation for study at the Viadrina.
Furthermore, new learning environments are supplied through a multimedia Self-Access Study Centre. This facility is available at the University where students have the opportunity to get directly in touch with the culture of the language they are learning via interactive computer games, multimedia databanks as well as video and satellite television. Students also have access to the INTERNET, providing authentic, up-to-date information and direct communication with the native speakers of the particular language they are learning.
Conceptual background:
The language centre and its intimate integration into all study programmes is deeply rooted into the overall philosophy of the Viadrina University. The university has achieved a good reputation in the few years since its establishment.
Students and instructors find there an environment which promotes intellectual exchange and, as such, is influenced and characterised by international contacts. The opportunity to study together with classmates from Poland as well as other nations of Europe and the rest of the world is a special attraction: many in fact regard it as a great enrichment of both their academic and personal lives, as it leads to the development of close contacts, frequently deepening into friendships across European

borders that are, in turn, often maintained in later life following the years at university.
This human potential represents a great treasure for a continuation of peaceful and successful coexistence in Europe. It is an important basic thought, in fact a principle of constituent significance for this university to promote and to expand the international character. In its daily work, these efforts include the intensive support of instruction in foreign languages which are extended to the entire range of learning opportunities offered by the three faculties.
One example for international cooperation and intercultural exchange is the close partnership with the Polish Adam Mickiewicz University in the city of Poznan, which finds very visible expression in the cooperation embodied by the Collegium Polonicum in Slubice.
Relevance to the area:
The Viadrina University is a good example of language provision for other disciplines. It responds to the needs of international cooperation in all professional fields and research. Foreign language provision is integrated into the single study programmes. It responds to the need of raising intercultural awareness.
Distinguishing features:
It is an outstanding feature of the Viadrina University that it contributes through research and teaching to promoting European integration and dialogue. Furthermore a central motivation of the university is to give young people a chance for professional, personal and social integration into the evolving Europe. A strong emphasis on foreign language skills is a central means for attaining these aims. The university provides a good example of collaboration between neighbouring countries.
Wider applicability:
The idea of promoting European citizenship through an integration of foreign language provision with other disciplines is well applicable to other contexts. Especially the aspect of collaboration of two neighbouring countries is a model to be imitated, because it serves as a basis of intercultural communication on all academic and societal levels.
The model is working particularly well in the context of geographical neighbourhood. But this model can be transferred by a further development of international partnerships between universities and a growth in student and staff exchange programmes. One aspect consists of an internationalisation and cultural opening of study programmes through teaching in other languages than German in all disciplines. Especially valuable is the other aspect of an orientation to Eastern Europe, where the Viadrina University is an example with regard to Poland which can be spread out to other Eastern countries.
Foreign language skills can be still more motivated and integrated as international degrees (Bachelor and Master) and double degrees can be obtained.
Further information:
http://www.sz.euv-frankfurt-o.de/

21) Provision for meeting EU policy goal 1+2 languages

Summary recommendation

Universities should take greater steps to support the aim of students acquiring competence in two languages other than their mother tongue.

Reasons

The creation of a real European space in which mobility of students and workers is a reality is only possible if the candidates for mobility know the languages of the target countries. University education must therefore take this into

account and offer language courses. It is noticeable that in many countries universities do not require students of non linguistic courses to have foreign language knowledge (either at entry or at the end of their course).

Detailed recommendation

It is necessary:

- to sensitize students to this question by showing them the advantages of linguistic knowledge, in addition to good training in their area of study
- to create conditions for all pupils to learn two foreign languages at secondary school, and for linguistic knowledge to become an admission requirement for entry to university
- to create foreign language courses in universities in parallel to degrees in particular disciplines
- to promote student mobility between various countries in all areas of study
- to create systems of validation for language knowledge at the end of university education, using for example the European Language Portfolio

Agency

These recommendations are addressed to the Ministries of Education, universities and student associations.

Relevant examples of good practice

The University of Bath
The University of Bath provides a good example of the many innovative programmes in modern foreign languages which have been a notable feature of developments at UK universities in recent years. The course at level one in Modern Languages and European Studies requires students to study two languages to an advanced level (chosen from French, German, Italian, Russian and Spanish). It is based on the concept of 'integrated language learning', has a predominantly contemporary focus, and incorporates studies of Politics and Society, Culture, and Language as well as European Studies. All students are required to spend their third year abroad at a partner institution(s) or in approved employment. From the second year on students are able to choose from a wide range of optional courses while continuing their intensive study of two languages.
http://www.bath.ac.uk/esml/
Language Centres throughout Europe promote the learning of a diversity of foreign languages. The following are just a few examples of these centres.
The Language Centre at Copenhagen Business School
Brief summary
Copenhagen Business School established a self-sufficient language centre in 1997, which offers a variety of <u>language services</u> and professional and academic <u>language courses</u> to staff and students, including exchange students, as well as outside participants. Courses range from individualized programmes in languages such as Chinese, Japanese, English, German, Italian and Spanish to specialised courses in English. Language services include translation and editing.
Analysis of innovation
This is the only university-based language centre in Denmark. Traditionally, non-university organizations offer language courses to non-specialists. This initiative by Copenhagen Business School is thus breaking the mould.
Problems
The courses do not give academic credits and there is a bias towards English in the services and courses offered.
Contact: www.cbs.dk/departments/langcen

The Language Centre at the University of Helsinki
Brief summary of main features
The Language Centre at the University of Helsinki is the biggest of the university language centres in Finland. Its ca. 100 teachers provide tuition in 20 languages and self-learning facilities for 42 languages.
Analysis of the innovation and good practice exemplified
This is a constantly developing specialist unit in adult education and foreign language learning. The research carried out at the Language Centre concerns mainly teaching, testing and adult learning – and these are also areas in which the Centre has been co-operating e.g. with the teacher-training of the philology departments (see e.g. Finland's First Example of Good Practice). The newest innovations include short courses on press language in Spanish and Russian where beginners quickly gain elementary knowledge of the languages. The Language Centre has also developed <u>ALMS</u> based teaching for the needs of students (Autonomous Language Learning Modules).
Problems and Issues
In many countries the philology departments do the teaching here carried out by the Language Centre, and this may cause some misunderstanding with incoming exchange students and staff about the role of the Centre.
Language Centre at Umeå University
The newly established Language Centre at Umea University is an integrated part of the Department of Modern Languages and mainly acts as an administrative unit. Its most important aim is to promote language learning in all walks of life by identifying new target groups for language learning, by extending the scope of in-service teacher training, and by acting as an intermediary between these groups and the Department of Modern Languages. Some identified target groups are
A) within the university:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students of Business Administration, Law, Engineering etc., who require an element of foreign languages for professional purposes Postgraduate students, lecturers and researchers, who need to improve various linguistic skills (e.g. academic writing, academic presentation) in order to function professionally in an international environment Students e.g. on ERASMUS-exchange programmes, who need to improve their communicative skills and cultural awareness before going abroad Administrative staff, who need language skills for professional purposes
B) outside the university
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> inadequately qualified teachers teaching languages at various levels, who need courses leading to formal qualifications teachers and other staff working with promoting language learning among teachers and students companies, organisations, and local agencies; contract teaching for specific purposes
Some other areas of responsibility are cooperation with Culture Institutes, e.g. the Goethe-Institut, the British Council, Institut Français, etc. organising popular lectures, and inviting writers-in-residence.
Contact person: philippe.grampeix@franska.umu.se

22) Training of teachers

Summary recommendation

Training programmes are required for teachers of languages for specific purposes (to students of other disciplines).

Reasons

One of the problems in teaching languages as part of a non linguistic course is the training of the language teachers. In the majority of cases the teachers have no specific training in the language of the disciplinary content of these courses. Traditional methodologies and strategies are often ineffective in these teaching contexts. The educational objectives are not clear to the teachers.

Detailed recommendation

It is necessary:

- to create specific training for language teachers in the area of teaching/learning foreign language for specific purposes, and in the teaching of terminology
- to develop continuing teacher education
- to develop research in this area and to engage teachers in research projects in this field
- to develop, test and disseminate various teaching/learning methodologies for specific audiences

Agency

This recommendation is addressed to teachers and to universities engaged in languages for specific purposes, and especially to Heads of language departments with responsibility for the recruitment and continuing education of teachers.

8. Continuing education

Introduction

The demand for language learning in the wider population is growing substantially, particularly where businesses are discovering an increased need to equip their staff with language skills. There are many private suppliers of teaching for these purposes, but universities are increasingly called upon to provide services, under the title of continuing education or lifelong learning. The term "continuing education" has a different meaning in different countries. In order to establish clarity and consistency, here the term is taken to mean language-related courses offered by higher education to business employees, or to general adult learners who are not full-time students. It could also include such courses taken by students outside their degree programme. The main objectives of language studies in continuing education are to promote lifelong learning and improve the linguistic and professional abilities of the general public. In this sector, higher education now finds itself in competition with commercial companies and in some countries private provision is widespread.

Target groups

Continuing education is targeted at adult learners. They may be members of the general public who are interested in learning or developing skills in a foreign language for reasons of career or personal development. In the Czech Republic and Slovenia, for example, there are "3rd Age" universities where mature students are taught by other seniors. Courses may be specifically targeted at business people (either general business language courses or courses related to their particular specialisation). In some countries, e.g. the United Kingdom, continuing education

courses are becoming increasingly popular among undergraduates and postgraduates, who attend part-time language classes outside their degree programmes. In Cyprus, Greek courses are aimed specifically at prospective students, as this is the language of instruction at the University of Cyprus. In many countries, there are also language courses for foreigners.

Needs analysis

The Scientific Committee has identified the following priorities in this area:

- to train teachers of continuing education;
- training in new technologies;
- distance learning;
- co-operation with external partners.

Recommendations

23) Definition of Life-long Learning

Summary recommendation

It is recommended that a common definition of life-long learning be adopted across the EU.

Reasons

It is evident that life-long learning can currently be understood in a variety of ways across the EU (e.g. sometimes interchangeably with 'continuing education'; often with the emphasis implicitly or explicitly on post-retirement). There is the clear potential for confusion as Europe's discussion of important life-long issues develops.

Detailed recommendation

Wide consultation is required across a number of agencies in Europe, including universities, EU agencies, and funding bodies. After being thoroughly debated the proposed definition should be adopted across the EU.

Agency

The consultation which is envisaged should be organised and co-ordinated as part of the proposed project on life-long learning within TNP3.

24) Teacher Training

Summary recommendation

It is recommended that a Europe-wide programme be devised for the training of teachers of foreign languages within the context of life-long learning.

Reasons

Although programmes exist which cater for the training of teachers of foreign languages who work in schools, colleges and universities, relatively little provision is currently made for the training of those whose students are no longer in full-time education, whether at school, college or university. Given the increasing importance of life-long learning, there is a clear need to train teachers of foreign languages with a particular expertise in the needs of learners who are either in full-time employment or retired. This provision will improve the EU's skills pool while also increasing the adaptability, social cohesion and sense of personal fulfilment of its citizens.

Detailed recommendation

In order to establish the specific competencies which will be required of a trained teacher in the context of life-long learning wide consultation will be needed across a number of agencies in Europe, including universities, employers, and EU agencies. University courses in teacher training should provide for a specialism in the teaching of foreign languages in the lifelong learning context while at the same time ensuring that all trainee teachers of whatever specialism are enabled to see their work within the framework of lifelong learning.

Agency

The consultation which is envisaged should be organised and co-ordinated as part of the proposed project on life-long learning within TNP3.

25) The role of universities

Summary recommendation

It is recommended that a clear and consistent agreement be reached across Europe on the specific role of universities in the development and implementation of strategies for the teaching and learning of foreign languages within the context of life-long learning.

Reasons

The Bologna Declaration of June 1999 committed the EU to the creation by 2010 of 'the European space for higher education'. In order to introduce a desirable degree of shared practice across the EU's university sector without damaging the rich variety which is one of its strengths it is important to promote a process of convergence where appropriate. Among the areas where such convergence appears desirable, particularly in view of the EU's commitment to the development and implementation of strategies for life-long learning, is the specific role of universities in the teaching and learning of foreign languages in the latter context. To date comparatively little work has been done in this field, despite its importance to the next stage of the European project.

Detailed recommendation

Wide consultation is required across a number of agencies in Europe, including universities, employers, and EU agencies. In particular, the role of universities in the following areas requires clarification:

- the provision of teacher training
- the ensuring of wider accessibility to courses in foreign language learning (outreach into the wider community)
- greater flexibility in terms of expected outcomes (e.g. acceptance of the concept of 'partial competence')

26) Certification

Summary recommendation

It is recommended that, as part of a strategy for life-long learning, a single system of certification be introduced across the EU for the recognition of levels of competence achieved in the field of foreign languages.

Reasons

In the field of education one of the main difficulties which in the past has complicated the achievement of greater harmonisation across Europe has been a lack of clarity about the relative value of the various awards which have been given, largely on a national basis, to mark achievement in a particular area of endeavour (the problem of equivalences). Given the EU's unqualified commitment to the principle of multilingualism, competence in foreign languages is self-evidently a prerequisite for the development of a truly European citizenship. It is therefore essential

for social, political and economic reasons that levels of competence in foreign languages should be established using a system of certification which is common to and fully understood across the entire 'European space for higher education'. It is proposed that, as part of their role in the context of life-long learning, universities across the EU should adopt a single, universally accepted system of certification.

Detailed recommendation

Wide consultation is required across a number of agencies in Europe, principally universities but also employers and EU agencies, in order to

- explore the need for a system of certification across the EU
- investigate whether certification necessarily implies formal assessment of achievement (as opposed, for example, to attendance alone)

Project proposals

27) Project on Lifelong Learning and Foreign Languages

Summary:

In view of the vital importance to Europe's future of life-long learning in modern foreign languages, it is recommended that appropriate provision be made across the EU for a better understanding of the particular role of universities in promoting life-long learning.

Reasons:

The increasingly strong focus on life-long learning across Europe is reflected in the buoyant demand for the teaching and learning of modern foreign languages. This demand can be observed among all sections of the population, including adult learners, business people, students and prospective students. It promotes intercultural understanding, underpins the development of a strong European identity and enhances social and political cohesion by promoting social inclusion, equality of opportunity, active citizenship and human (notably linguistic) rights. It has an important economic dimension in terms of the individual citizen's increased adaptability and employability and, more generally, helps to replenish the EU's skills pool. In view of the evident importance of life-long learning it is essential to ensure that the current patchwork of approaches in terms of aims and objectives, methods of provision and delivery, and certification of outcomes is replaced by an EU-wide system which will better serve the present and future needs of Europe's citizens.

Action required:

A project should be set up to investigate and report on how the recommendation may most effectively and expeditiously be put into practice. The group entrusted with carrying out the project should consist of partners representing a variety of important constituencies (universities, employers, certifying bodies etc.) from a number of EU countries reflecting the continent's rich educational traditions and current practices. Initially the group will produce a series of linked reports on individual aspects of the project and will present these for discussion and further development at seminars held in a variety of European locations. The main final outcome of the project would be a book-length study including specific recommendations on the role of universities, the intention being that these are to be disseminated and, in due course, implemented across the EU.

Agency:

The project report should be addressed to the EU Commission, national Ministries of Education across Europe, professional bodies which are directly affected (e.g. institutions representing practitioners in life-long learning) and other major stakeholders

Part II: Report on New Learning Environments

Executive Summary

It is important to emphasise at the outset that the overall aim of TNP2 is to stimulate improvements and innovations in higher education programmes and learning modes in the area of languages. The main rationale behind TNP and its three subprojects has been for higher education institutions to look at themselves: what are we doing, what can we do better, where are we not good enough, what can be achieved with increased cooperation and what is required to improve performances. It is also of paramount importance to stress that higher education institutions cannot create improvements alone. Decisions, action and funding are necessary at institutional, national and European levels to make real change and development happen.

This report presents the results and recommendations of the TNP2 subproject on New Learning

Environments (NLEs) in the area of languages. It is one of three subproject reports following from TNP2, the other two focusing on quality enhancement and curriculum development.

The report includes numerous examples of good practice to provide inspiration for further development of language teaching and learning in higher education at individual, national and European levels.

Language and intercultural competencies play an increasingly important role in furthering and strengthening multilingualism in Europe and are thus crucial to the successful implementation of the Bologna-Prague-Barcelona process. With the rapid expansion and development of new information and communication technologies, the possibilities for developing NLEs for language teaching and learning increase dramatically, and place NLEs at the centre of efforts to fulfil the Bologna-Prague process.

Using and further developing ICT-based NLEs present decision makers at institutional, national and European levels with an important challenge. The basis for a genuine breakthrough towards furthering multilingualism - be it for students in higher education or for life long learning – exists and is amply documented in this report. However, in order not to waste this golden opportunity there is a need for imminent action and for decisions at the three decision levels referred to.

At European level there is a specific need for continuous networking and for common, more standardised and flexible learning platforms to ensure easy access of resources and sharing of expertise. Funding of research into NLE-assisted language learning and staff development is also necessary.

At national level there is a particular need for the adoption of language policies throughout the education systems, not least in higher education, in order to ensure that multilingualism is supported and backed with funding.

At institutional level these policies at European and national levels must be implemented in the form of institutional policies and practices to ensure that all students get access to language teaching in foreign languages through the means of NLEs and thus acquire tools and skills to add on language skills throughout their studies at university as well as afterwards. Finally, the necessary changes of infrastructure at institutional level are the responsibility of higher education management.

The report distinguishes between ICT-enhanced and mobility-derived NLEs. It is important for decisions to confront and address both of these and to ensure that both of them are consciously approached and supported in future developments of language teaching and learning in higher education.

1. Introduction

Although there is general agreement that academic expertise in today's globalised world presupposes multiple and sophisticated language and communication skills and a versatile mastery of technology, it is very often implied, at least indirectly, that these skills develop on their own or as a by-product of learning the "real" content of expertise, i.e. the subject matter. Furthermore, language learning is still often mainly seen as learning about the language (i.e. learning the system and structure), rather than learning to use the language for personal and professional purposes. These views are reflected, for instance, in avoiding the use of the words "language" and even "communication" in discussing, say, the development of knowledge or professional qualifications, and opting

for cognitive terms like "learning skills", "synthesising", "analysing" and "capacity to work in teams and to make decisions collaboratively". Yet, knowledge cannot be constructed unless there is access to some way of expressing it and sharing it with others, and teams cannot work together and make collaborative decisions without communicating with one another – be it in a face-to-face situation or through electronic means. As we encourage and increase student and staff mobility and as we move towards what is called dynamic and networked expertise, we also move towards heightened demands for spontaneous, reciprocal, interactive and co-operative communication and problem-solving in several languages in real and in virtual contexts of learning, teaching, and working. The skills involved in coping with these demands, as well as with information management in general, need to be addressed in higher education in particular, because they are at the heart of creating a true European education and research space and ensuring a competitive edge for our graduates.

The rapid expansion and development of new information and communication technologies (ICT) and increased mobility have already created both immense challenges and an immense potential for all education, and particularly for language and culture learning and teaching. From the latter point of view, they have created what has been defined in our TNP2 subproject as two new learning environments (NLE), namely, a technological learning environment, enabling network-based, electronic and mobile (i.e. via computer and the mobile telephone) learning, teaching and communication and a "natural" learning environment, enabling face-to-face multilingual and multicultural interaction and exposure. When integrated in the Higher Education (HE) curricula, these environments can play a key role in promoting the kinds of skills that are underlined or of concern in discussions around the Bologna-Prague process, in the Tuning project, as well as the other TNP projects, to give a few examples. Ways in which this integration might be possible have been investigated in the subproject on NLEs and in the workshops it has organised. Suffice it to say at this point that much work needs to be done both in terms of infrastructure and teacher and learner development for the full potential of new learning environments to become used in language learning and teaching, as well as in education in general.

The present report is based on the work of the TNP2 subproject 2 Scientific Committee over the years 2000-2003, as well as on other relevant documentation and research findings. The period is characterized by substantial changes and challenges in the European Higher Education area both in terms of degree structures and contents and in terms of orienting towards the permeation of technology and the resulting exponential growth of information and knowledge. In addition, mobility (physical and virtual) and networking continue to create new demands for the kinds of skills and approaches needed in the various academic, professional and policy endeavours of both individuals and institutions. Pursuit and maintenance of linguistic and cultural diversity, as well as the new online intercultural communication skills are yet another set of challenges to be addressed in both education and workplaces. Successful coping with these changes will require mutual respect and joint efforts of all parties involved in order to enable the flexible and stepwise development of structures and contents that allow for and promote individual learning paths and continuous, informed updating of skills, knowledge and expertise, as well as their assessment. One key task for higher education is to ensure that graduates are able to develop the necessary tools and personal life-long learning approaches during their educational careers, in other words, that in addition to becoming experts in their fields they also know how to communicate their expertise, how to learn more and how to assess and direct their learning – whether in a "new" or an "old" working and learning environment. The principal task of subproject 2 has been to consider in what ways technology-driven and mobility-derived new learning environments would best contribute to the implementation of language curricula and instruction aimed at both language and non-language students and to the development of multimedia literacy, intercultural communication competence and life-long learning skills – skills that are crucial for graduates to be successfully employed in the European labour market.

The main purpose of this report is to present information and evidence which can be used both by academic staff making decisions about their pedagogical approaches and instructional designs and by educational decision-making bodies involved in promoting and developing the diversity and quality of the European HE area either locally, nationally or at the European level. For this reason, the main part of the report, i.e. the part dealing with needs and recommendations for action, is divided into three sections, which deal with the individual level and the organizational levels, although actions at these levels are often intertwined in practice. For each recommendation presented, possible ways of implementing the recommended action are explained and examples of good practice

to date are presented if they are available. Both the recommendations and the examples are the outcome of the work done collaboratively in the subproject both in the form of national status reports and through discussions and electronic communication.

Systematic and informed integrating of New Learning Environments into HE language learning and teaching is a complex process that involves great technological, pedagogical, psychological and policy-level challenges. It offers an immense potential, but there are also many obstacles which can only be overcome through systematic and joint efforts. One general obstacle is the variety of terminology used, in particular, with issues relating to ICT, the knowledge society, and the skills and learning outcomes to be pursued in education. Therefore, it is necessary to briefly discuss the premises established in the subproject as background considerations for identifying the core criteria and prerequisites, as well as actual recommendations and examples of good practice. The final chapter of the report outlines some European-level project proposals.

2. Background to Subproject 2 Recommendations

2.1. Definitions: New Learning Environments & Independent Language Learning

The concept of New Learning Environment was defined by the scientific committee of the subgroup in the following way: NLE refers to two kinds of new learning contexts, each of which is extremely varied in its potential and in the approaches that it offers for language learning and teaching, namely

1. The learning environment created by new information and communications technologies (ICT), enabling e(lectronic)-and m(mobile) learning and teaching, as well as virtual mobility; hereafter: ICT-enhanced environments, and
2. The learning environment created by new human resources available through (real, physical) mobility i.e. use of the presence and experience of multilingual and multicultural staff and students for language and culture learning and teaching purposes; hereafter: mobility-derived environments.

The latter environment does not appear to be used systematically in European Higher Education language teaching, but there are already some indications of related activities (e.g. Internationalisation at Home, non-language academic staff training for integrated language and content instruction; pre-mobility briefing and training in intercultural communication and particularly in LWULT - less widely used and less taught - languages) in some countries.

As regards ICT-enhanced environments, then, there are two main "models" according to which they are implemented in language education:

1. The **ADD-ON** model, which tends to consider the new environment as additional to the existing structure and practice, i.e. no changes in the existing system are necessary; and
2. The **ADD-IN** model, where NLEs are integrated into the existing system thus causing changes in its structure and content and in professional development. This model also implies institutional and departmental policy decisions.

The first model is characterised by a more unsystematic use of ICT-enhanced environments in the sense that the use is typically based on individual initiative. Existing practice and materials are transferred to the NLE as such, often for economic reasons. There is no overall effort to adapt learning tasks in such a way that the potential of WWW, for instance, would be used in a relevant way, not to mention any efforts to improve or inform technologies rather than only invest in them and use them. The resulting materials, then, become confined to traditional transmission models of learning, focusing on drill and practice, as well as self-administered tests which only require low-level cognitive skills.

The second model is usually a collaborative effort based on institutional strategies and the outcome is often some pedagogical innovation. Users are aware of the added value of using ICT in each particular learning context, and make informed decisions about the kinds of tasks and activities that contribute to the aims and

learning outcomes desired. There is a tendency for institutions to pass through the first model in their pursuit of the second, unless proper pedagogical preparation and training is available. Learning environments are only as good as their underpinning learning ethos, and many universities which emulate networked learning and the development of virtual campuses often end up trying to reproduce real university learning environments based on very traditional models of knowledge transmission. The same applies to language education. The changes in the attitudes, initiative, and approaches required from both learners and teachers in order to manage knowledge and skill construction together in a reciprocal partnership while using new technologies in a flexible way are substantial in nature and can only be implemented over a considerable time period.

At the individual level, the use of NLEs for language learning and teaching is closely linked with **learner and teacher autonomy and life-long learning (LLL) skills**. Development of these involves substantial psychological and pedagogical changes and new skills which have to do with changing teacher and learner roles and increased awareness of responsibilities. In other words, both teachers and students need to adopt new approaches to learning, teaching, and assessment, because learner autonomy or life-long learning skills cannot develop without learner-centred instructional designs or without teacher autonomy. Furthermore, a special skill requirement for the ICT-enhanced environment is **multiliteracy**. It refers to both technical competence as well as to information and multimedia literacy (i.e. ability to locate and critically evaluate online information, to produce and interpret complex documents comprising text, image and sound, as well as to use the information in an ethically acceptable way). In addition, multiliteracy includes competence in computer-mediated communication, which is an essential factor in building networked expertise and collaborating in education and research. Both teachers and learners need to develop skills to this effect.

For the mobility-derived environment to contribute to language and culture learning and to support the academic achievement pursuits of the mobile students, non-language academic staff also need to make changes in their pedagogical practice. Without a learner-centred approach or any support systems it is often unrealistic to expect mobile students to independently increase and diversify their linguistic and intercultural communication competence to any great degree or to benefit fully from their mobility experience of subject studies. Thus, **staff development** needed for the NLEs to be successfully used in Higher Education **concerns not only teachers involved in language education but all teachers responsible for multicultural and multilingual student groups**, as well as the institutions as a whole. Aims, learning outcomes and instructional designs have to be clarified explicitly and proper support infrastructure established in the institution.

Independent Language Learning (ILL) is the term that has been used in the subproject to refer to the life-long learning skills and learner autonomy required in NLE language learning. In addition to the psychological and instructional aspects addressed briefly above, one of its basic prerequisites – as in adult language learning in general – is the **criterion of social relevance** of the content to be learnt. Whereas "language" is seen as a discipline to be studied by linguists and a subject taught by teachers and adapted pedagogically to facilitate learning, it can also be seen from the perspective of how it is experienced by the users in their social realities. Adult learners tend to see language and the relevance of language learning from a functional point of view: if the content and method of learning do not appear relevant to them, the quality of the experience remains poor. Adults also usually have many experiences of language learning and therefore well-developed and fixed learning styles and strategies. For this reason, they can be very efficient language learners. However, their views and beliefs about how languages are learnt and what kinds of learners and communicators they themselves are, very often stem from school and from more traditional settings, in other words, from settings where they were not involved in any way with decisions about either content or approach and method. Therefore, the kind of involvement required in independent language learning in an ICT-enhanced or mobility-derived environment can be quite overwhelming and places considerable demands on their awareness level of the learning process and on teachers' professional expertise and instructional design. Learners must have proper tools for making informed decisions about the direction of their language learning, and teachers must learn to elicit learner information and tailor contents in order to make the whole learning environment relevant and motivating for adult students. It is particularly important in Higher Education to work in close dialogue with non-language subject teachers and departments and with the academic labour market. Fixed beliefs and misconceptions about the learning and teaching process are a further obstacle to learning, as are many affective factors that tend to influence adult learners' confidence in

foreign language communication. Furthermore, **independent language learning means different things to different people and cultures**. For instance, in the national reports the term was defined either directly or indirectly as an approach involving one, several, or all of the following:

1. Management of one's own learning (also called autonomous/self-directed learning) (i.e. making decisions on aims, content and methods of own learning and assessing the learning process and its outcomes).
2. Learning independently outside the regular classroom with or without teacher guidance (e.g. in a self-access centre, abroad, at home).
3. Learning alone, with a partner, or with a support group (e.g. tandem or buddy learning, collaborative groups, etc.).
4. Using structured or unstructured (i.e. authentic, natural) materials.
5. Using NLEs for continuous, life-long language learning.

In other words, independent language learning was seen both as a skill that the student has or needs to develop, and as a format or method that the student follows in his/her learning. There was a tendency for countries where ILL was seen as a skill to have arranged learner training for the students, in other words, there were sessions to teach the students how to set aims, monitor one's learning process, do self-assessment, select input, and make any kinds of decisions necessary for autonomous language learning. Continuous guidance by language advisors or teachers was also available (e.g. U.K., France, Switzerland, Finland).

To polarise roughly, there are two potential contexts for language learning: one with a structured content (i.e. a teaching-learning context) and one with an unstructured or natural content. Both can be "authentic", in other words, they can be composed of real and authentic language which is relevant for whatever the learners are attempting to learn. The basic difference is that in the first context, the teacher or materials writer has structured the content (input) stepwise in such a way that learning is facilitated, whereas in the second context, the learner has to know how to notice and choose what content will improve his/her competence. Noticing (i.e. being alert to and analytic about the accuracy and appropriacy of language elements) is particularly crucial for becoming accurate in the language, as well as for being able to assess and monitor one's learning. Lack of well-developed self-assessment skills often results in feelings of non-progress in communication competence, which is one of the greatest obstacles for independent and life-long language learning and therefore requires special attention in Higher Education in particular. Whereas the ICT-enhanced environments include both structured and unstructured learning material, the mobility-derived environment as such does not do so unless particularly the teachers giving non-language subject instruction are trained to process their materials in this way. Naturally, both environments increase learner contact with the language.

2.2 Opportunities and obstacles in using NLEs for language teaching and learning

A summary of the potential offered by New Learning Environments to Higher Education language learning and teaching and the obstacles still preventing their full use is presented here in a table format. This is to avoid overlapping with the rationales given in the section on recommendations below. More detailed accounts of the present state of affairs and of the prerequisites with which these obstacles can be moved are also given in the Synthesis Report and other reports of the subproject, available at <http://www.taalnet.ugent.be/tnp>

ICT-enhanced environments -		Mobility-derived environments -	
Opportunities (+)	Obstacles (-)	Opportunities (+)	Obstacles (-)
authentic or structured content (input)	overload of information, requires informed decisions	authentic/natural context	unstructured input, requires noticing
wide access, equality	technical requirements	immediate relevance	restricted access
opportunities to plan, assess and take control	misplaced savings new skills, learning	promote intercultural competence	non-integration, clique formation

ICT-enhanced environments –		Mobility-derived environments –	
Opportunities (+)	Obstacles (-)	Opportunities (+)	Obstacles (-)
	tasks		
efficient dissemination	lack of accountability	assessment in a "real" communication context	superficial learning, non-comprehension
promote critical information management	plagiarism, unethical use of resources	spontaneous, real-time language learning strategies	non-participation, negative attitudes
promote LWULT languages	new forms of collaboration needed	pedagogical innovations	new teacher skills
networked expertise	copyright and ownership problems		

In 2002 a survey was carried out by the TNP2 project on what developments were seen as important by European Higher Institutions in terms of the three subprojects. The findings indicated that 85 % of the respondents regarded the use of New Learning Environments in higher education as a very important direction and 10 % as an important direction for their development in the near future. The survey items were formulated on the basis of what the subgroup 2 Scientific Committee had established as the general prerequisites for a successful use of New Learning Environments and Independent Language Learning approaches in Higher Education.

The prerequisites for integrating NLEs include the following:

- Institutional policies and support;
- Appropriate and adequate technological infrastructure;
- Training of students and staff in flexible and appropriate use of NLEs;
- New pedagogical solutions, new learning approaches, new learning culture;
- New strategic management skills, mentality and attitude change at both individual and institutional levels;
- Critical thinking and evaluation skills needed to make informed decisions;
- Close co-operation and collaboration and sharing of information and experience.

It is clear that the most crucial criteria for dealing with the new technological and pedagogical challenges in higher education include ensuring an adequate institutional infrastructure, continuous professional development and increased co-operation between all parties.

2.3. Connection with other HE development efforts

In addition to close connections with the other two TNP2 projects – curriculum innovation and quality, the subproject on NLEs also relates to what is being pursued in the Bologna-Prague process and proposed by, for instance, the Tuning project. The most obvious connections have to do with learning outcomes, life-long learning, promotion of mobility, cultural and linguistic diversity, transparency of curricula and assessment, multimedia literacy (including critical information management) and European co-operation in HE research and development. For example, using NLEs for language and culture learning presupposes a learner-centred approach and the development of independent learning skills. These skills are referred to as "generic competence", "core skills", or "transferable skills" by the projects above. Their main implication, however, is the same for all learning: these are skills that enable life-long learning in that they are a prerequisite for being able to assess and direct one's learning according to new challenges of, say, mobility or an international workplace. Furthermore, if we accept what was argued in the introduction above, namely, that knowledge and information are incomprehensible and inaccessible

if the language through which they are constructed and in which they are embedded is not available, then, e.g. in mobility programmes, the participants must have an adequate mastery of the language of instruction in order to pursue their desired learning achievements.

Becoming an academic expert is not only a knowledge acquisition process but also a socialisation process in that students also become socialised into the kind of language and communication that is typical and required in the respective scientific field and academic profession. Thus, language and communication skills are also closely related to subject-specific competence and not only to generic competence, to use the terminology of the Tuning project. To achieve this e.g. in mobility programmes, then, students need to have a certain threshold level mastery of the language of instruction, to be polished during their studies. The key question in terms of the two-tier degree structure proposed in the Bologna process is, then, the question of what levels of communication competence should be set as the desired learning outcomes for the first and the second degree and how they could be monitored and assessed. Considering this question is particularly pertinent with regard to designing European Master's programmes through institutional co-operation, as well as for dual (or joint) degrees and vertical (?) mobility (i.e. completing the first degree in one country and the second degree in another) in general. Using NLEs to their full potential will continue to play a significant role in these developments.

As regards the promotion of cultural and linguistic diversity, then, NLEs provide an opportunity for offering pre-mobility language and intercultural programmes and assessment (the virtual mobility principle), and can play a significant role in maintaining particularly the less widely used and less taught languages (LWULT) at an academic level. Similarly, they offer opportunities for becoming comfortable with technology and developing multiple expertise for international employability (e.g. skills for project and information management, synthesising and analysing, collaborating in intercultural teams, etc.), if proper instructional designs and networking are used in Higher Education.

More specific connections with European efforts and proposals are mentioned in the rationales of the recommendations to follow.

2.4. Future scenario - when all obstacles have been removed

To draw an ideal situation on the basis of Subgroup 2 work, then, institutions would have overt policies that contribute to and support the development of multiple expertise on a cross-curricular basis. Language and communication skills development would be seen as an integral part of this expertise and of any professional profile, and not as something separate. Language teaching for academic and professional purposes would be integrated with subject studies as far as possible to develop the abilities needed to communicate your expertise to others. Higher Education language teachers would be knowledgeable about adult language learning processes and about the instructional options available, and willing and able to involve learners in course design. They would also be experts in guiding and advising learner efforts. The concept of language would be seen as a balance between the system and its use in the same way as theories are applied in other disciplines. There would be a continuity and progression of language skills throughout the educational career. All ways in which technological skills, independent learning skills, communication confidence and intercultural competence can be promoted in education would be used. Thus, investments made to enhance institutional infrastructures, pedagogical expertise and learner autonomy and involvement, as well as multiple forms of assessment, would also be investments in the quality of learning outcomes and employability. Finally, extensive and focused co-operation would ensure diversity and comparability of competences, flexibility in contents and approaches, as well as informed decision-making based on collaborative research and development. Pursuing these goals certainly represents both a natural and a virtual "new learning environment" for all parties involved in higher education.

3. Needs and Recommendations for Development

In the following section the recommendations that were drawn up by the Scientific Committee and the Steering Committee of the Subgroup on New Learning Environments are brought together, and their rationales are

explained. These recommendations are the result of the work that led to the National Reports and the Synthesis report. The recommendations were also discussed extensively during the Copenhagen Workshop of the subgroup held in June 2002 (see http://www.taalenet.ugent.beltnplfs_copenhagen.htm) and the Workshop on New Learning Environments held during the ELC Conference in Aarhus in June 2003 (see <http://www.sproq.asb.dk/elec2003NVorkshop2.htm>). National reports, as well as the TNP1 reports (available at <http://www.taalenet.ugent.beltnp>), also include examples of good practice.

The recommendations have been grouped together according to whether they address issues that are mainly relevant to individual learners and teachers; institutional and national policy makers and the European policy making level. In most cases, however, action is needed at several levels.

The examples of good practice below have been selected to illustrate the kinds of developments and practices that are already being implemented in various European countries, often simultaneously and with slight differences in application. Very many other examples could be mentioned, and the ones selected do not necessarily relate to only one recommendation, nor do they cover the whole scope of the recommendation. The criteria for selecting these particular ones included a) variety of infrastructures and technological expertise involved; b) range of pedagogical expertise required; c) range of languages; d) range of countries; e) applicability as a framework or model for other languages and situations; and f) usability as a foundation for further development. (For an extensive, thematically arranged list of ICT in language learning and language teaching, see also <http://www.icc-europe.com>)

3a. Recommendations related (primarily) to the individual level – Students and Teachers

The individual level recommendations (REC) are divided here between students and teachers to indicate that students are not only "objects" of action, but also active participants in the process. Similarly teachers are also "learners" in the construction of knowledge and expertise and in the development of their roles. The recommendations presented can only be implemented through joint action and effort.

REC I

Students

Systematic learner training for independent language learning (ILL) and use of ICT-enhanced New Learning Environments (NLEs) and their support systems.

Teachers

Continuous pedagogical and technical training and support for teachers to guide and support the learning outcomes and core competences pursued for students

Supporting language learning with new technologies (ICT – Information and Communications Technology) can only lead to the creation of effective NLEs if some important requirements are met, i.e. if students and teachers are prepared to integrate new technologies in the learning/teaching process; if technical resources, infrastructure and support are explicit parts of a larger policy that guarantees easy access to students and teachers; and if students are stimulated and know how to take control of the learning process and to analyse their needs. In other words, the instructional design has to be learner-centred.

What emerged again and again during the activities of the subgroup is that the continuous training of teachers is crucial to the introduction of NLEs. Language teachers must become motivated in order to invest a considerable amount of time and effort in setting up innovation schemes that will lead to different types of learning environments. Resistance to change is still a major factor that hinders the widespread integrated use of technology and learner-centred designs, and often it is inspired by insecurity and/or lack of training and support. Furthermore, many teachers are worried about reductions in staff and face-to-face contact time that they feel will result from the introduction of ICT in the language teaching practice. This is based on the misconception of thinking that ICT, once introduced, would be used to deliver the whole course rather than using the added-value principle. In reality, however, teaching through NLEs is more labour intensive and also more complicated than

traditional face-to-face teaching. In addition, new job profiles for teachers are being created as a result of the introduction of NLEs. These will therefore lead to a need for more teachers rather than fewer. To counter both the misconceptions and to cater for the need for more teachers continuous staff development is a prerequisite.

So far, however, most staff (and learner) training has concentrated more on technical computer skills than on how NLEs can be used to facilitate self-directed and independent language learning or how the learners' skills for this can be enhanced through appropriate learning tasks given by the new kind of "teacher". Partly because of this, **teachers are not adequately informed or confident in taking a more proactive role in the development of the kinds of learning platforms or materials that would inform technologies, rather than remain confined by what is available.**

Some of the skills that using ICT in language learning and teaching and **using Virtual Learning Environments (VLEs)** require of students and teachers are as follows.

Core skills for students	Core skills for teachers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keyboarding and other (technical) ICT skills • Online communication and negotiation skills • Group work in an online conference, including collaborating and sharing • Searching on the Web and evaluating results • Networking and research skills • Online reading, note-taking & commenting • Writing and editing individually and collaboratively using multimedia methods • Range of learning styles and ILL skills • Assessment skills • Critical thinking and other skills needed in life-long learning (LLL). • Time and workload management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching/facilitating the students' core skills • Designing materials, web pages and suitable learning tasks • Using template text; sharing online activities with other teachers; FAQs; managing expectations about email; stimulating student self-help • Thinking through how to integrate face-to-face and virtual teaching • Presentational skills and learning community building in VLEs • Selecting suitable platforms • Resisting unrealistic pressures and workloads • Avoiding unrealistic expectations • Recognising the true value of ICT and selecting appropriate blended approaches to teaching

IN whatever way we apply ICT in the practice of our daily teaching, being learner-centred implies a general set of values – an emphasis on respect for the learners, for example, and a willingness to take account of the social and economic grain of their daily lives. Students face demands, and construct identities outside the classrooms or new learning environments. Being learner-centred means recognising this as a relevant factor for life-long learning, as well as the fact that people do not all learn in the same way – hence the emphasis on learning styles. Similarly, the approach taken should be learning-centred, i.e. teachers have to know more about online learning processes and how they can be supported in pedagogy.

Attempts to overcome problems of ineffective and inefficient use of the facilities have resulted in the emergence of various solutions. A particularly striking one is the emergence of a new professional role, the language learning adviser, which was initially positioned in the self-access centre and acted as a bridging figure between resources, new learning environments and the traditional academic structures (classrooms and lecture theatres). Subsequent development of the role has called for a need to integrate some of his/her skills in traditional teaching. There seems to be agreement that learner autonomy and ILL are best developed parallel to the pedagogical approaches of the teachers or advisers, in other words, the students need informed teachers in

order to get guided practice and experience in learning in various NLEs before they can fully adopt the role of a self-directed and independent language learner

<p>Example of good practice for teachers</p> <p>ONLINE POSTGRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN ADVISING FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING</p>
<p>Brief summary of main features</p> <p>The Postgraduate Certificate in Advising for Language Learning offered by the Language Institute of the University of Hull, U.K., is aimed at graduates and professionals with an interest in language learning. They may be, or hope to be, employed as a language tutor, language adviser, material designer or manager of a language centre. They will have an active interest in promoting autonomous learning/self-directed learning in their present or future capacity. The Language Institute also offers a Master's Programme in Language Learning and Technology.</p>
<p>Analysis of the innovation(s) and good practice(s) exemplified</p> <p>This Certificate is a unique programme which has been designed to answer the training needs resulting from the new demands put on language staff in Higher Education. It aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a useful foundation of teaching and learning theories • Prepare staff in the utilisation of new learning environments • Prepare staff in evaluating and designing open and distance learning materials • Develop new professional skills to perform an effective role regarding language learning support and the promotion of learner autonomy • Develop the competencies of emerging roles such as e-tutors or developers • Provide a recognised qualification for the new profession of Language Adviser. <p>To date over 40 people from a variety of countries and education sectors (secondary, further education, higher education and the private language sector) have attended this course to enhance their abilities to support learners in open and independent learning programmes or simply to integrate such new skills and knowledge in their teaching approach.</p>
<p>Problems and Issues</p> <p>The programme is quite costly.</p>
<p>Source of information</p> <p>http://www.hull.ac.uk/langinst/ma/pg-cert.htm See also http://www.ict4lt.org/</p>

The misconceptions related to ILL (e.g. learning alone, without guidance, without partners, without control, etc.), i.e. common attitudes that prevail both among students and teachers, contribute to the reluctance that some teachers feel about the use of these kinds of approaches and to the frustration of students who have attempted to engage in ILL without any preparation. Added to these are the technical skills – often better among students than among staff – and the critical evaluation skills required for selecting suitable input from e.g. the Internet. It is not surprising that implementing NLEs and ILL departmentally is often met with considerable resistance particularly in cases where there is evidence of economic reasons behind the proposal.

While it is probably true that students resist taking responsibility of their own learning in many countries, hence making the introduction of autonomy more difficult, it is equally true that participating in an online environment can be very daunting. Since you may not know about the abilities of your fellow-students you may be insecure about personal achievement. Successful use requires absolute clarity about assessment criteria from the very start, but above all creating a sense of community and the realisation that you have to achieve something as a group. In addition, a whole range of cognitive, social and technical skills are required which may have to developed as part

of the course. Students' expectations about technology may be misguided completely, for instance when they expect technology-enhanced learning to lead to results more quickly and with minimal effort.

Examples of good practice for teachers and students

1) VIRTUAL CLASSROOM NICENET (<http://www.nicenet.org>).

Brief summary of main features

Nicenet, an Internet Classroom Assistant (ICA), is a successful ICT application founded in 1995 by Internet professionals as a tool for providing services for secondary and tertiary education. As the authors introduce it, "the system was designed not as a replacement for the classroom, but rather as a supplement allowing greater communication and sharing of information among students and between teachers and their students. However, Nicenet does not restrict the use of the ICA for any purpose". KTU teachers find it very useful in updating language courses with the latest information as well.

Analysis of the innovation and good practice exemplified

The main advantages of the Nicenet classroom are that it is very easy to apply, does not require any special skills or programmes, and is free of charge.

The menu of the classroom consists of several sections: Class members, Class schedule, Documents, Conferencing, Personal messages, Link sharing. Learners can familiarize themselves with the syllabus and the materials of the course, carry out required tasks and paste them in the "Documents" section, write messages to their peers and teachers, exchange ideas, etc. The networked learning environment resulted in increased collaboration among students and new positive changes in teacher-student relations. A students' survey confirms that active involvement and networking in language learning leads to higher motivation and satisfaction. It is also a great possibility for teachers to update course materials and make them accessible to the class in a simple way. Nicenet has been successfully implemented in both General Language Practice and ESP courses.

Problems and Issues

The Virtual Classroom has limited application of graphics, however, the "Link Sharing" section helps to introduce a variety of other websites.

Source of information

A.Daubariene, J.Zdanyte (2003) *Internet-Based Learning Activities. Sharing KTU Experience and Ideas* Teaching English with Technology, Vol 3, No 2, April 2003

<http://www.iatefl.org.pl/call/callnl.htm>

Examples of good practice

2) CIEL LANGUAGE SUPPORT NETWORK – promoting independent language learning

Brief summary of main features

CIEL was one of several national UK projects funded initially by HEFCE in 1997-2000. The main aim was to identify and disseminate best practice in the area of independent learning and its integration with the language curriculum through regional networks developed around Leeds Metropolitan University, South Bank University and the University of Southampton.

Analysis of the innovation(s) and good practice(s) exemplified

The project produced downloadable CIEL handbooks intended as practical guides to integrating independent language learning with the taught curriculum in an institutional context. These handbooks deal with integration of ILL, managing ILL and its policy considerations, resources for ILL, assessment and supporting ILL, and making ILL accessible for learners. In addition, there are seminars and workshops for teachers, learning materials swapshops, and newsletters and other publications, as well as learner training and support.

Source of Information

<http://lciel.lang.soton.ac.uk/>

3) See also related examples for REC 4, 5 and 9.

REC 2

Students

Systematic and structured use of NLEs for LLL and employability (tailored language programmes for professional and academic purposes).

Teachers

Identifying communicative prerequisites implied by job descriptions in real life and designing socially relevant learning tasks, materials and programmes for them.

Educated citizens of the 21st century will need to use languages not only for simple communication, but rather for the kinds of complex negotiation, collaboration, analysis, critique, and construction of knowledge required by an information economy and society. This is reflected more and more often in current job descriptions and requirements. Standard language-based syllabi - formed by lists of structures and functions to be mastered - will not be enough. We will need to practise principles of situated learning - in other words engaging learners in the kinds of authentic tasks and problem-solving activities that they will actually encounter in the future. Having students carry out complex project work involving negotiation, collaboration, goal-setting, meaningful communication, and the development of challenging 'products' will prepare them for the kinds of language usages which will be required at the workplace. With the World Wide Web becoming an essential medium of information exchange in economic, academic and civic affairs, the literacies of accessing and publishing web-based information must also become part of the language teaching curricula of all students. Students will need to develop a whole new range of foreign language literacies, which involve emerging forms of communication, reading, and writing using online technologies.

Examples of good practice

1) INTERNET-BASED ACTIVITIES IN LANGUAGE LEARNING/TEACHING

Brief summary of main features

Work with the Internet is being successfully integrated into language learning at the Centre of Foreign Languages, Kaunas University of Technology (KTU), Lithuania. KTU students have been participating in SIMULAB (Internet-based intercultural learning project) activities and in Grundtvig-2 project eCOLE which offers on-line communication and learning activities together with students from five European countries.

Analysis of the innovation and good practice exemplified

The idea of SIMULAB is to involve foreign language learners into real-life situations, simulations that reach beyond national borders. These simulations are run on the Internet within Telsi environment. The SIMULAB concept and Telsi environment are results of international cooperation among European adult

educators. The environment is user-friendly and it does not require any programming knowledge. Telsi platform contains Documents, Mail, Chat, Help folders.

Within this project, KTU students have been communicating on-line and discussing different issues with students from Denmark and Norway.

A further development of the SIMULAB concept is implemented in the Grundtvig-2 eCOLE project (2001-2003), dedicated to collaborative learning in adult education. This project is also run within Telsi environment. It has two models: website story writing (WSS) and cross-curricular problem solving activities (ACROSS). Both in WSS and ACROSS learners by joint efforts have to produce either a fictional text or write a report.

KTU students have participated in the project together with learners from Norway, Sweden, Portugal, Germany and Denmark.

Problems and Issues

The projects have a limited range of topics. However, they can be developed further upon mutual agreement of the international team of educators/coordinators.

Source of information

A.Daubariene, J.Zdanyte (2003) Internet-Based Learning Activities. Sharing *KTU* Experience and Ideas Teaching English with Technology, Vol 3, No 2, April 2003

<http://www.iatefl.org.pl/call/callnl.htm>

Examples of good practice

2) ON-LINE GENERATION OF TEACHER-DEVELOPED PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENT TESTS USING A TEACHER-FRIENDLY INTERFACE

Brief summary of main features

The ELT Division at the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science (FMI), University of Plovdiv, Bulgaria has developed its own online test-generation facility allowing teachers of English (and potentially of other languages, as well) to bridge the ICT gap through tools allowing both teachers and learners to develop web-based test materials as part of the learning process. The project has so far been supported locally in terms of sub-domain name, hosting, MySQL and PHP facilities, etc.

The ADMINISTRATION mode allows adding/deleting an administrator. The TESTING mode allows creating/editing/deleting/browsing tests, as well as setting time/password, etc. options. The RESULTS mode allows review of the scores of past tests by student name, date of administration of the test, etc.

Analysis of the innovation(s) and good practice(s) exemplified

The major points of strengths are:

- 1) the intuitive interface enabling teachers and learners who create tests for the web without any knowledge of web programming;
- 2) the secure transfer & storage of data;
- 3) the data format suitable for processing using statistical methods.

Problems and Issues

A limitation is the side effect of the security policy: in case of power failure the part of the test that has already been done is not recorded, but the test session is cancelled.

Source of information

<http://www.esp.pu.acad.bg/testing> (password to access this part of the site is required)

In the last few years, language learning theory has been marked by a shift towards a socio-constructivist interpretation of learning whereby language is a tool for individual and societal development and for constructing knowledge. Such socio-constructivist approach focuses on the learning process rather than on the knowledge acquired, emphasises meaningful interaction through collaborative learning and problem solving, encourages the development of language learning strategies and autonomous learning, and highlights the creation of online learning communities as a significant component of communication and learning. In addition, it is often argued that because the amount of information is increasing so rapidly, it will not be possible to manage it alone, but rather, networking and collaborating are a necessity.

Examples of good practice

1) LINC - An Interactive Approach to Language and Culture

Brief summary of main features

LINC is an interactive software programme that has been specially developed for everyone who wants to learn a language in a stimulating way. The method consists of: active watching, focused listening, reading authentic texts, doing stimulating exercises, solving tasks, systematically practising pronunciation, and communicating from a distance with native speakers.

LINC is available for 18 languages, most of them LWULT (less widely used, learnt and taught) languages.

Analysis of the innovation(s) and good practice(s) exemplified

Each topic consists of a video extract from a current affairs programme which can be watched and listened to as often as necessary. The transcript of the video extract is also provided and can be read at the click of a button. Socio-cultural footnotes give extra explanations or background information.

Each video extract is the starting point of a series of listening and language exercises.

LINC 1: On this beginners level, you will build up an everyday vocabulary and basic grammar within authentic contexts.

LINC 2: This intermediate level has been developed for people with an elementary knowledge of the language (minimum 1,000 words).

LINC 3: The advanced level is for learners who have a basic knowledge of the language (3,000 words).

If you want to learn in a gradual manner, then you go through the topics from 1 to 10. In each new topic the exercises become increasingly more difficult. If you only want to revise and test your knowledge of the language then you can start with whichever topic you like.

Source of information

<http://www.uia.ac.be/linc/>

Examples of good practice

2) Digitalenklas and Ellips – using virtual learning environments

Brief summary of main features

Digitalenklas ("Digital Language Classroom") is a two-year project funded by four Dutch universities (Utrecht, Leiden, Groningen, Tilburg) and the Dutch HE organization for network services and ICT, SURF. The project aims to further the use of computers in the learning of languages in higher education in the Netherlands. The focus is on the use of VLEs such as Blackboard and WebCT in conjunction with specifically designed software for language learning. The languages involved include English, Spanish, Dutch and Arabic.

Analysis of the innovation(s) and good practice(s) exemplified

One of the key elements of the project is the fact that the universities involved have decided to work together in determining how to employ technology effectively for language learning. The collaboration during the first phase of the project, which set out to design and implement language learning materials for the generic VLE's Blackboard and WebCT, generated many ideas for innovative language teaching methods, several of which (such as the use of webquests) have been implemented in the course of the project. In addition, we have dealt with many practical issues to do with the use of technology, which we feel would have been less successfully dealt with by the universities on their own.

Collaboration is also a distinguishing feature of the web-based language learning program Ellips, which was developed as part of the project. Given the relatively high cost of developing on-line learning materials, we wanted teachers in the universities involved to be able to exchange and re-use materials already available. In the future, we want to involve more teachers in using the materials, as well as students, who should be able to make their own selections of relevant materials.

This calls for a uniform descriptive mechanism, which is transparent to both teachers and students. We turned to the Common European Framework for Language Learning (CEF) for developing the descriptors needed. For this we were able to use the system described above, which was designed by the Language Centre of Ghent University. The use of this system is particularly relevant for our purposes, since Dutch universities have agreed to use the CEF as the basis for describing language proficiency at tertiary level. It is too early to report on the use of this system in actual teaching situations, but we hope that the use of this system and a number of other features of the program will set the stage for larger scale cooperation between universities to develop innovative, technology-enhanced language learning materials.

Source of information

More information about the project can be found at:

<http://www.let.uu.nl/digitalenklas> (in Dutch)

It is essential to ensure that graduates are properly equipped for the future. This focuses on the development of language graduates whose ability to communicate and interact in a foreign language is matched with the ability to do so in a variety of environments and through the intelligent use of a wide range of tools (e.g. authoring tools, computer-aided translation systems, computer and videoconferencing systems, electronic forums, online multilingual management systems, and other communications systems). Non-language graduates must also be equipped so that they have the necessary communication skills for internationalised workplaces. Being competent in English might not be any specific skill in the future, because the more competent graduates there are in this language the less it will be seen as a competitive edge for employment. Thus, ensuring continuity in multiple foreign language learning and the social relevance of the learning contents – which are also important themes for TNP3 – are crucial issues in terms of both employability and the development of life-long learning

skills. Multiple options and diversity of languages are also the direction proposed by European student associations. Graduates should learn how to assess their existing skills and future needs realistically so that they will be able to continue and direct their language and other studies on a life-long basis in line with what their professional and social life requires. NLEs offer a viable and effective means of pursuing these aims particularly if their use is developed through co-operation and dialogue between language specialists and subject specialists.

Example of good practice

JOBLINE LMU – a blended learning environment for teaching job application skills in English

Brief summary of main features

Jobline LMU offers job application training in English and aims to encourage university students to work abroad. The main focus of the environment is to equip students with the necessary research techniques and language skills for a successful job hunt, written applications and job interviews, as well as to raise awareness of intercultural differences. The programme has run successfully for two years at Munich University and other tertiary level institutions and involved a high number of students and teachers.

Analysis of the innovation(s) and good practice(s) exemplified

The website of Jobline LMU provides versatile information and practice for job application procedures. The programme makes extensive use of the Internet and online learning for researching information, learning language skills and comparing and analysing authentic application documents. It can be used for independent study, incorporated as a self-access component to courses and used as a resource and framework for both language and non-language instruction relating to employability and international traineeships.

Problems and Issues

Jobline LMU is aimed at developing the English job application skills of German students and full access is restricted to registered students at German universities. The website, however, gives a good idea of the potential of the design and could be used as a basis for tailoring other similar programmes in other languages.

Source of Information

<http://www.jobline.lmu.de>

The first two recommendations are very closely related to the transversal issues (life-long learning, employability, and the European dimension) between the three TNP 2 subprojects (namely, Curriculum Innovation, New Learning Environments – the European learning space, and Quality Enhancement in Language Studies), as well as to other projects and developments in Europe (e.g. the Tuning project; TNP1). Learner training and development of independent language learning skills, as well as tailored and learner-centred language instruction promote learning skills that are referred to as "enabling skills", "generic competence", "core skills", or "transferable skills", as was stated above in Chapter 2. Multiliteracy and communication skills belong in the same category in that they prepare students to cope with information, with information exchange, and with networking. Higher education has a crucial role in all of these as the last stage of the students' educational careers before employment.

REC 3

Teachers and Students

Systematic debriefing and support of both mobile students and staff and promotion of internationalisation at home (IaH).

Student (and staff) mobility has given rise to the need and desire to study other languages and cultures which were not particularly accessible in the past. It has also produced a perfect space for learning a) through the increased presence of representatives of these languages and cultures in HE institutions, b) with the help of the Internet ('study buddies', tandem learning, discussion groups) and satellite TV programmes, and with c) CD-ROMS and other ICT materials designed for language or culture learning. Although both the real and the virtual NLE potentially broaden the learner's exposure to target cultures and languages, it has been pointed out that working solely in a multimedia centre may present a reduced or biased view when compared with real contact with the culture - traditionally in the form of the teacher - native speaker or not. This risk no longer exists where the programmes include contact hours with teachers and/or other native speakers. Many HE institutions in Europe include such 'contact' time, thus allowing for cultural awareness and understanding to develop in a more structured way.

In the documents written by the laH group of the European Association of International Education, ICT-enhanced approaches are seen as a major factor promoting internationalisation at home in education. This is because ICT is by definition an internationalised tool and its users out of necessity become involved in some internationally defined environment. But again, it is crucial that the users know how to use it for learning and teaching purposes. Thus, the kinds of "blended" approaches described above can be used to complement virtual mobility programmes and to inform the desired internationalisation efforts.

Because of the fact that even in the best of situations, (physical) mobility programmes will affect only a minority of the total student body, the presence of foreign students and staff should be used as an NLE in its own right to foster internationalisation and multilingualism. Furthermore, the experience of students and teachers involved in various exchange programmes abroad has to be used as a feedback device to aid in this process e.g. in terms of acculturation programmes at the home university. Using mobility in a constructive way in education and making efforts towards the social inclusion of the international student body also contribute to promoting, including and acknowledging LWULT languages and cultures in student and staff expertise.

Examples of good practice

1) EUROMOBIL - A multimedia language learning programme on CD-ROM promoting student mobility

Brief summary of main features

EUROMOBIL is a Sokrates/Lingua D supported programme aiming at preparing exchange students for study in Germany, U.K., Hungary and Finland. The CD-ROM includes communicative skills training, information and links on exchange universities, countries and cultures, as well as programme designs based on a needs analysis in the target countries. Participating institutions are the Institute für Interkulturelle Kommunikation e.V., the Department of German at the University of Bristol, the Department of LSP at the University of Pécs, and the Centre for Applied Language Studies at the University of Jyväskylä (coordinator). The 3.5 year project was completed in June 2003 and the CD-ROM will be available in the near future.

Analysis of the innovation(s) and good practice(s) exemplified

The package for each country includes both language practice and assessment (based on the Common European Framework) and versatile information about lifestyle, history, culture and institutions, as well as links that exchange students can use to learn more about how to cope with their study or stay abroad.

Problems and Issues

The price of the CD-ROM is not yet quoted on the project website.

Source of information

<http://www.euro-mobil.org>

Examples of good practice

2) MARCTICA - Virtual Student Exchange for Internationalisation at Home

Brief summary of main features

MARCTICA is a teaching and learning project that has been running for more than 5 years and at present involves students from Gent and Brussels (Belgium), Houston and New Jersey (USA), Buenos Aires (Argentina), Paris and Le Havre (France), Edinburgh (Scotland), and Gijon (Spain). It follows a blended approach (i.e. contact classes + use of new technologies) and aims at increasing ICT skills, communication and negotiation skills, and content knowledge, engaging students to work in international teams and solve real-life problems. The teams then write a paper collaboratively to present findings and to show what they have learned. The MARCTICA project task can be included in many content courses (e.g. global marketing, management of IT, language courses, etc.). Blackboard is used as a class management instrument and electronic learning environment. The project is also flexible in that most work is done asynchronously, which means that students at different localities can work according to their own schedules and semesters. In MARCTICA English is used as the common language, but there is also a Spanish counterpart called GiGa.

Analysis of the innovation(s) and good practice(s) exemplified

The project offers opportunities to become accustomed to authentic online communication in an international team within their regular curriculum. This introduces them to different cultures and working habit and develops their intercultural communication competence. The teachers involved can develop their own project tasks and work on an interdisciplinary basis to analyse and solve problems. Independent learning skills and communication skills can be developed in an authentic situation that has social relevance for both academic and employability purposes.

Problems and Issues

The project task should be complemented with a specific language learning task (e.g. language used in intercultural negotiations, in academic report writing, etc.) to facilitate students' learning and to provide further criteria for assessment. Other electronic platforms can also be used.

Source of information

<http://letna.hogent.belmarctical>

Journal of Studies in International Education, Vol. 7, No 1, Spring 2003

Examples of good practice

3) Welcome and I4LL – Preparing for study abroad

Brief summary of main features

Welcome is the result of a one-year Lingua 2 project that was carried out in 2002, partly as a result of the work done in TNPII. It aimed at the development of five linguistic and cultural preparation courses (EE, ES, FI, NL, PT) for exchange students in higher education. These courses were developed as on-line courses within the electronic learning environment I4LL. The participating institutes were Ghent University (Belgium), Tartu Ülikool (Tartu, Estonia), Universidad Politecnica de Valencia (Valencia, Spain), Helsingin yliopisto (Helsinki, Finland) and Universidade do Porto (Porto, Portugal). The online courses consist of fully interactive learning materials that can be accessed from anywhere at anytime via the Internet. In addition to this, there are modules covering a wide range of cultural topics directly related to the 5 countries. Students communicate with each other through the communication platform provided

within the system.

Analysis of the innovation(s) and good practice(s) exemplified

The language courses were developed according to a language-independent format, which was defined in accordance with the principles of the Common European Framework of Reference for languages proposed by the Council of Europe. This makes it relatively easy to develop additional courses for languages not covered in the project. The units making up the interactive materials were produced with the I4LL Authoring Tool designed by the Language Centre at Ghent.

The development of a complete (and generic) electronic learning environment as well as various learner support tools (a communication forum with workspaces at various levels, hyper-dictionaries and generic hyper-reference tools (e.g. a grammar for each of the languages)) formed an integral part of the project and the overall language independent learning environment.

Problems and Issues

The limited duration of the project made it impossible to reach all of the rather ambitious goals of the project. The distribution of the whole environment to the servers of the various partner turned out to be a problematic because of the time constraints. A lot of technological problems had to be solved. This meant that the content had to be adjusted a number of times, leading to delays..

Source of information

More information can be found at:

Welcome project: http://www.taalnet.ugent.be/Descriptionof_Welcome.pdf

I4LL online learning environment and authoring tool:

http://www.taalnet.unent.belon_line_model.pdf

The WelcomeWeb Course site can be accessed at:

<http://talenc29.UGent.belwelcomeweb/>

To log in use Welcome as the username and Project as the password.

REC 4

Teachers and Students

Adoption of the European Language Portfolio (ELP) and other relevant joint European frameworks of reference and assessment to guarantee transparency and reciprocal recognition

Within a European learning space in the field of languages, co-operation among higher education institutions needs a common basis, and coherent, recognised standards for all those involved in the processes of learning, teaching and assessment, and management of languages.

At present, in many institutions of higher education, it is difficult to ascertain students' real language levels, since these are often ill-defined in vague terms with no accurate description of the level, objectives, and content of the courses followed or levels, content and evaluation criteria of examinations passed or of other language achievements gained in different learning contexts. All of this precludes comparison and hinders, if not prevents, academic and professional recognition from one country to another or even one institution to another.

The Council of Europe's Common European Framework of Reference for Languages provides a global reference system applicable to all languages, which can introduce greater transparency and coherence between different institutions and sectors of education and has great potential for encouraging a new approach to teaching and learning. It promotes standards comparable all over Europe which give a common language to all the persons active in the field of languages in order to help them to reflect on their current practice; provides a language- and institution-independent description of six reference levels for describing learners' proficiency related to language in use in that they describe what a learner can do at a given level; fosters a pedagogical approach that bases

language teaching and learning on the learner's needs, motivations, characteristics, and resources; on the analysis of the learning situation; and on the definition of realistic and explicit learning objectives from the perspectives of language in use and the development of plurilingualism, learner autonomy, and life-long language learning.

When higher education institutions describe their programmes, teaching material, attestations, examinations, and other qualifications according to the Council of Europe's common reference levels and descriptions -thus clearly stating objectives, contents, procedures, and criteria - competences become not only transferable from one system to another, but also clear and understandable for all learners, teachers, institutions, and employers. The ECTS system is another way of ensuring this.

In this context, the European Language Portfolio, a practical application of the CEF, plays an important role by, ideally, acquainting every single language learner in Europe with the ideas and standards of the CEF. Similarly, for instance DIALANG could be used as a pre-mobility tool to assess language proficiency levels in the language of instruction or to familiarise students and staff with the language and culture of the host country.

The integration of NLEs and ILL into the educational programmes of non-language students seems in most cases to be more needs-driven than policy-driven, in other words, there is much pressure from the outside world to develop the skills that the students need for mobility and good employability, although the actual curriculum or degree structure in the discipline has not changed. Institutional or departmental policies are most often lacking, as is formal recognition of these specific language studies. However, the introduction of the Common European Reference Framework and/or the European Portfolio, which was mentioned as a clear aim in several National reports, will serve as a good starting-point for creating strategies and policies for incorporating both IT skills and language skills as an integral part of all professional higher education degrees according to the goals of the European Commission's White Paper on education and training (1995).

Examples of goodpractice

1 EUROPEAN LANGUAGE PORTFOLIO (ELP) FOR HIGHER EDUCATION OF THE EUROPEAN LANGUAGE COUNCIL (ELC/CEL)

Brief summary of main features

The European Language Portfolio (ELP) of the ELC is part of the huge ELP-project of the Council of Europe (CoE). Its goals are to:

- promote pluri/multilingualism and dialogue between cultures
- facilitate mobility in Europe
- strengthen and preserve cultural diversity
- foster autonomous learning
- encourage lifelong language learning.

The ELP of the ELC is specifically designed for the higher education sector. It conforms to the common Principles and Guidelines for ELP of the Council of Europe, as do all the ELP versions that have been developed for a variety of target groups and contexts in various countries and languages. It therefore consists of three parts: the Language Passport, the Language Biography and the Dossier. It is at the same time an information tool and a companion to language learning. It enables all language proficiency (acquired within or outside formal educational settings), and intercultural experience to be presented in a comprehensible, complete, and internationally comparable way. It also contains guidelines for reflecting on one's own language learning and for planning and monitoring further learning.

The European Language Portfolio (ELP) for the Higher Education sector of ELC/CEL was validated in November 2002 by the Council of Europe's Validation Committee (accredited model No. 35.2002).

Analysis of the innovation(s) and good practice(s) exemplified

The ELP can be used for all languages and in any institutional environment. It enables learners to record their language skills and to give prominence to their intercultural experiences - and this applies to all

foreign languages learnt.

Thanks to the use of a set of common skill-specific descriptors developed for the Common European Framework of Reference, the ELP provides transparent and internationally comparable information about a learner's proficiency in any number of languages. The CEL/ELC's ELP contains a number of additional descriptors specifically developed for higher education, which can provide guidance for the development of innovative language curricula and other types of language provision.

The Portfolio can play an important role in the creation of a European lifelong learning area in general and of a European higher education area as envisaged in the Bologna Declaration in particular. Moreover, it can facilitate the development and implementation of coherent institutional language policies in the higher education sector.

Problems and Issues

In order to play its role, the ESP should be extensively implemented across Europe. Even though the idea of the Portfolio is beginning to be widely known, implementation is still in its initial stages; in many cases, for implementation to succeed, a change of mentality is necessary; this process is very slow and requires substantial previous teacher training.

Source of information

<http://www.fu-berlin.de/elc/portfolio/index.html>

<http://culture.coe.int/portfolio>

Examples of goodpractice

2) ELP FOR ADULT AND VOCATIONAL LEARNERS

Brief summary of main features

This is a pilot project to introduce the European Language Portfolio in the language instruction of the engineering students of the University of Southampton. The aim is to provide students with a portable qualification that documents their language learning beyond that of learning at university. The ELP will be compiled in electronic format, supported by the resources of a specifically designed Blackboard website and the use of ICT resources in a weekly learning and teaching session that takes place in a dedicated CALL environment known as the SMART classroom. This interactive teaching room enables students to work with multimedia resources. The tutor acts as a designer of activities and a guide to the students in the process of compiling the portfolio.

Analysis of the innovation(s) and good practice(s) exemplified

The language course follows a blended approach with three contact sessions and one SMART session. Ten tasks in 5 skills areas are assessed for documentation in the ELP. The language learning tasks include basic text work, audio and video clips and voice recordings, role plays, grammar tasks and a discussion forum. Students also design materials in small groups for the whole group to use. The electronic portfolio is compiled on a CD. The pilot project is being evaluated both quantitatively and qualitatively.

Source of information:

Paper presented by Kirsten Sontgens (K.Sontgens@soton.ac.uk) at the EUROCALL 2003 conference. The project is in its initial stages and the information is not yet available on the website of the School of Modern Languages at the University of Southampton (www.lang.soton.ac.uk)

Examples of good practice

3) EUROPEAN COMPUTER DRIVING LICENCE (ECDL)

Brief summary of main features

ECDL stands for "European Computer Driving Licence". ECDL is an internationally recognised qualification that enables people to certify their competence in essential computer skills & knowledge. It certifies to a set standard the IT skills people already have or the skills they attain through training.

The aim of this project is to raise the level of knowledge about Information Technology (IT) and increase the level of competence in using personal computers and common computer applications for all the citizens of the world. The project does this by disseminating, promoting and evolving ECDL as a globally accepted IT skills certification programme that prepares all people for participation in the Information Society.

Analysis of the innovation(s) and good practice(s) exemplified

This is a truly international project with localized versions for various countries.

The Foundation is the global governing body of ECDL and ICDL countries. It is a not-for-profit organisation whose role is to promote, develop and certify computer skills and IT knowledge. The Foundation achieves this by the establishment of ECDL and ICDL Licensees around the world who administer the programme through national Operators on a local basis based on a strict set of standards and quality guidelines

To achieve an ECDL or ICDL, the candidate must successfully pass one theoretical and six practical tests. These tests can be attempted in any order and at any time and must be successfully completed within a maximum duration of three years. Each successfully completed test is endorsed on an ECDL or ICDL Skills Card. Only an accredited Test Centre can carry out testing and issue Skills Cards.

When tests for all 7 modules are successfully completed and the Skills Card is endorsed by the Test Centre, it is sent to the National ECDL or ICDL Operator and a personalised Certificate (Licence) is issued.

The seven modules are;

- Basic concepts of IT
- Using the computer and managing files
- Word processing
- Spreadsheets
- Databases
- Presentation
- Information and Communication

ECDL/ICDL is not a training course and the National Operator does not provide training. If training is required, this can be acquired through training providers. Candidates should ensure that the training they receive meets the requirements of the official ECDL/ICDL Syllabus. Training providers do not have to be accredited by the National Operator to deliver training, but they must be accredited.

Source of information

<http://www.ecdl.com/main/about.php>

A similar example, but including training and support, can be found in the Finnish Virtual University (<http://virtuaaliyliopisto.jyu.fi> – information in Finnish) which is also developing an academic teacher portfolio to record in digital format teachers' ICT experience and pedagogical approaches. There is also a national computer driver's licence available for everybody; training is offered in secondary level institutions and adult education centres.

REC 5

Teachers and Students

Acknowledgement of both mother tongue and foreign language studies as an integral part of academic and professional qualifications in all fields, and accreditation and validation of such studies as well as independent language learning achievement.

It is still quite common that there are no specific or obligatory language requirements for students of non-language disciplines in European university degrees, which means that students do not necessarily obtain any credits for their language studies. Due to other demands (study abroad, international work practice, future employment), however, these students are often typical users of the self-access facilities and multimedia labs that are being created everywhere to cater for the need for autonomous language learning. It is also clear that structured independent and co-operative learning has to be taken into consideration when calculating student workload. All too often, especially in the case of students of non-language disciplines, foreign language studies are only considered as an optional add-on. The fact that good communication skills in the mother tongue and in foreign languages are often not seen as an integral part of academic expertise may prevent optimum participation in vertical mobility programmes in the future and affect the quality of learning outcomes in general.

Acknowledging the importance of language learning and cultural awareness within the European context (both of foreign languages and the own mother tongue) is the first step towards creating policies that support the development and integration of new learning environments in higher education. Countries where languages are an accredited part of the degree programmes or where there is a long tradition of multilingualism (e.g. some LWULT language countries) and well-developed technology tend to be much further ahead in implementing NLEs and ILL in language learning and teaching.

Example of good practice

KIELIKOMPASSI (LANGUAGE COMPASS) & PROMOTION OF MULTILINGUALISM AND ILL FOR NON-LANGUAGE STUDENTS

Brief *summary* of main features

Kielikompassi is an innovative electronic space formed to enhance the quality of language learning and teaching and to provide a window on the activities of the Language Centre at the University of Jyväskylä. It is an outcome of ten years of departmental action research aiming at integrating the promotion of learner and teacher autonomy and, more recently, new learning environments into the discipline-specific language teaching of the Centre. Systematic action research has been a departmental policy since 1993, and the Centre has been awarded the annually given Best Teaching Quality Award for its efforts two times, in 1996 and in 2003. In 2003 the Director of the Language Centre was also given the Best Director's award of the year. Language centres at Finnish universities operate separately from the faculties and they are responsible for the professional and discipline-specific language instruction (12 languages taught in contact, further 18 on a guided self-access basis in Jyväskylä) of all non-language students, because language studies in the domestic languages (Finnish and Swedish) + 1-2 foreign languages are compulsory components of all higher education degrees in Finland. Kielikompassi is an ongoing development project and has been supported financially by the Finnish Virtual University and the teaching quality project of the university. Involvement of all staff was made possible through administrative arrangements (reduction in teaching hours, jointly agreed weekly meeting times) and continuous training.

Analysis of the *innovation(s)* and good *practice(s)* exemplified

Kielikompassi is divided into four main sections: Teaching and Learning provides information about language learning options in different languages. *Learner Space* includes a collection of language learning materials and activities, ranging from a learner training module for assessing and developing

independent language learning skills to NETRO and Cinema pages aiming at the development of cultural literacy, multiliteracy and critical reading. Staff Only section, then, is to provide fluent and efficient information flow among staff (70 altogether in 2003). Info section provides information about the electronic space itself, as well as on the Language Centre in general. A student council is also involved in the development. Present focuses are on introducing the ELP and on identifying and describing individualised learner pathways for the implementation of the Bologna process to be finalised by 2005.

Problems and Issues

Engaging in departmental action research in a large multicultural and multilingual department requires strong commitment from all parties and open communication, strategic management, and continuous support. The University of Jyväskylä is also presently writing its language policy and designing an international campus, both of which will be implemented across the university. In addition, a continuous support system has been in existence since the year 2000 for both teacher and learner mobility and for learning and teaching non-language subjects through English.

Source of Information

<http://kielikompassi.iyu.fi/indexeng.htm>

<http://www.iyu.fi/kielikeskus/>

REC 6

Teachers

Identification of core elements constituting the professional profiles of HE language education in general and in terms of NLEs.

It will be clear from what came before in this report that the roles of teachers have been changing rapidly in the last few years. This has involved a repositioning of the teacher, and a reappraisal of the skills necessary to manage this change. Terms such as 'facilitators', 'mentors', 'counsellors', 'advisers', 'helpers', 'learner support officers', 'language consultants' and 'moderators' have appeared to try to characterise this professional change. In some cases, it has meant the emergence of a new professional role which appears to be distinct from the 'teacher', especially in terms of the new computer skills that are needed (e.g. linguistic engineer or language environment system administrator). The importance of professionals who can appropriately use a variety of environments to suit the new learners' profile and needs, as well as to prepare the new generation of graduates has been repeatedly highlighted by the various National reports prepared by the Scientific Committee.

All this will undoubtedly have an impact on new job profiles in the language learning profession. It is no longer sufficient for teachers to transfer existing knowledge or stick to a ready-made textbook, because more and more learner involvement and tailoring are needed in order to offer motivating and relevant language instruction. The professionals of today and tomorrow need to know how online language learning processes develop and can be guided, what principles and practice are embedded in open and distance learning applications and how NLEs are managed, in other words, we need people who are good at languages and at computers at the same time and who can combine the technological innovations with the content-driven needs of teachers and learners, and still arrive at a stable, reliable and pedagogically solid solution. Another major challenge is to include materials development in the tasks of teachers and to train them to become coaches and course designers and administrators, whose professional expertise is updated regularly through reflective practise and research.

see examples in REC 1, 2 and 9.

3b Institutional (and national) requirements and policies – Infrastructural prerequisites

REC 7

Development of national and institutional educational visions, policies, and strategies to recognise and foster the value of multilingualism (along with the maintenance of the own language as a scientific language) and cultural competence, as well as ICT and life-long learning skills, as integral parts of academic and professional competence.

Multilingualism and cultural competence have been brought to the fore by increased internationalisation in universities, particularly staff and student mobility programmes. Together with ICT and life-long learning skills, these can only be made into a lasting phenomenon if embedded in larger national and institutional visions, policies and strategies. To date, national-level policies regarding the use and integration of NLEs, ICT and ILL in education and the development of the knowledge society in general are more common than institutional policies. Institutional policies and strategies should, however, also be developed because they provide a framework for practical-level operations particularly for mobility and IaH programmes and for the maintenance of LWULT languages. Too often, for instance, international students are seen in institutions more as a problem than as a resource, because their education often implies changes in the routines. Instead, strategies to systematically promote virtual mobility as a preparatory phase for physical mobility and as an approach to internationalisation at home, as well as strategies to monitor and enhance the implementation of institutional policies should be continuously updated on the basis of societal developments. The European diversity of languages and cultures should be seen as a particular strength that provides a competitive edge for institutions e.g. in terms of the Erasmus Mundu efforts, and promoted also at the policy level as such. The scales of the CEF and the ELP should be used for structuring HE programmes and provision, for describing learning outcomes and for validating and recognising linguistic skills and competences acquired elsewhere in the European learning space.

<p><i>Examples of good practice</i></p> <p>7) BEST PRACTICE – BEST LANGUAGE TEACHING METHODS</p>
<p><i>Brief summary of main features</i></p> <p>The Best Practice – Best Language Teaching Methods project (Leonardo II) aims at demonstrating five of the best language teaching methods for teaching some less taught European languages (LWULT languages). Ready to use – and free – teaching materials will be produced for each method in Danish, German, English, Spanish, Basque, Gaelic, Dutch and Romanian. The rationale for the project is derived from a survey done in the EU countries in 2000, indicating that teachers of less taught languages often lack pedagogical and methodological training and that course materials for these languages are rarely communicative in nature. The main target group for the project is teachers of less taught languages in technical colleges.</p>
<p><i>Analysis of the innovation(s) and good practice(s) exemplified</i></p> <p>The methods exemplified in the project products include computer-assisted language learning in context, task-based learning, tandem learning, simulations and PhyEmoC (physical, emotional and cultural approach). The products include a video library, a manual with method descriptions, instructions and materials and a website with newsletters, materials, and discussion areas for teachers to share. All materials will be available for downloading from the website.</p>
<p><i>Source of Information</i></p> <p>http://www.languages.dk/methods</p> <p>See also examples for REC 2, 4 and 5.</p>

REC 8

Embedding of the use of NLEs for language learning in the general institutional policy and effort, including systematic promotion of virtual mobility.

Although more and more institutions are today developing strategies for using NLEs in general, actual policies regarding their use in language learning and teaching are still relatively vague or lacking even in countries where strong national policies exist. Often NLEs are not integrated in the curricula of language teaching in HE institutes: they are neither an objective nor a means or a strategy. If some guidelines or recommendations of language instruction are given, they are usually included as part of the general information strategy or internationalisation strategy of the institution and not as separate documents underpinning learning ethos. Thus, many universities which emulate networked learning and the development of virtual campuses often end up trying to reproduce real university learning environments based on very traditional models of knowledge transmission. Disseminating local examples of good practice and networking nationally, as is also proposed by the report presented by the International Certificate Conference, should be arranged because national solutions are often more applicable than pan-European ones in the local contexts.

The same applies to language education. Proponents of online learning have been attributing to the computer the role of promoting student-centred communication, collaboration, social interaction and a sense of community. Yet, many pedagogical frameworks currently practised are often narrowly addressing these themes, and attempt to transfer to the technology the power to transform. Many such frameworks are often driven by institutional accountability, which demands proof that the high investment in equipment (in this case sophisticated digital technology) really works. However, as in the case of autonomous learning and the establishment of self-access centres, and CALL software, the computer is not a methodology, and its effects cannot be researched independently of the particular context and way in which the technology is implemented (e.g. the broad socio-cultural variables, such as the role of universities as an instrument of social control and sorting, the general culture of teaching, and the individual and shared beliefs of teachers and learners). As a result, new media are often introduced in a top-down fashion, and computers have frequently been confined to transmission models of learning, focusing on drill-and-practice activities, self-testing tasks, requiring low level cognitive skills of rote memory and knowledge transmission platforms. It is crucial that the true value and potential of ICT-enhanced environments is recognised and promoted also at the policy level and staff development arranged accordingly.

Example of good practice <i>The INGENIO On-line Authoring Shell, Content Manager and Learning Environment</i>
Brief summary of main features Proyecto INGENIO is an R+D project, entirely funded by the Universidad Politecnica de Valencia, which has been designed and developed by the CAMILLE Research Group led by Ana Gimeno. The project has two basic practical aims. On the one hand, to create a language independent, on-line multimedia CALL authoring shell, and on the other, an on-line learning environment offering courseware designed and created with the INGENIO authoring tool.
Analysis of the <i>innovation(s)</i> and good <i>practice(s)</i> exemplified The authoring shell, which is open to registered users completely free of charge, enables teachers to create entirely new language courses or to build upon existing materials contained within the system's database. The materials embedded in the system comprise the INGENIO database and are hosted on a central server. When registered, teachers may access the database and feed their own newly created courseware with materials taken from the archive. The materials can be accessed as isolated multimedia components (video, audio or image files) or as readymade exercises or reference materials. Courseware-design is based on the template approach to CALL authoring. At the moment 14 exercise templates are available, as well as templates to design reference materials such as grammar, use of language or culture notes, in addition to bi- or monolingual dictionaries.

Registered learners of the courses created with the *IN6ENIO* authoring shell have access to the entire on-line learning environment. Currently two courses are available: an intermediate level course for learners of Valencian (*Valencià Interactiu Grau Mitjà*) and an intermediate English course called *Intermediate Online English*.

Within the courses, in addition to receiving appropriate feedback, learners can call up progress reports to monitor their work at any point during the learning process since the relevant data is automatically transferred to the server while the materials are in use.

The *IN6ENIO* multimedia CALL authoring shell and on-line learning environment are unique in the sense that all the components are managed via the web. The system is completely machine independent, allowing teachers to work from any computer at hand. It is an extremely versatile and flexible open system that can be constantly updated and improved.

Source of information

<http://www.upv.eslcamille> (in Spanish)

REC 9

Establishment of an adequate technical infrastructure accompanied with tailored and continuous technical support

This is perhaps the most obvious recommendation, although not as straightforward as it might appear, because "adequate" is also a relative concept from the pedagogical point of view, in other words, ICT-enhanced approaches can be pedagogically solid even when the most sophisticated technology is not available. Yet, in order to fully incorporate learner autonomy into the pedagogical approaches, a variety of measures need to be taken. One of them concerns the adaptation of the infrastructure. Large investments are necessary in order to ensure the use of new media and new learning approaches in teaching. The facilities which promote independent learning include networked multimedia language centres/labs and typically provide, for instance, access to the Internet, online courses and reference materials, digitised teaching and learning materials, video-conferencing and interactive communication opportunities, satellite TV, VHS recorders, CD Rom/DVD players. Even though policy makers are often more inclined to provide funding for equipment than for user support (even in institutions with a good infrastructure), the technical infrastructure is not everywhere equally reliable and stable, and often concrete and ready available technical support is missing.

Examples of good practice

VIRTUAL COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE IN SWITZERLAND: FORUM NEW LEARNING

Brief summary of main features:

The 'Forum New Learning' is a 3-year Virtual Campus Project conceived for teachers in Swiss Virtual Universities. Its main aim is to foster methodological competence in New Learning Technology. This is accomplished through exchange and collaboration; a shared communication and information platform; shared knowledge management; training courses; basic support; and counselling for research projects. All of these features have converged to the establishment of a learning community focused on New Learning Technologies. Current membership stands at 340 French and German speaking teachers, with more than 500 documents (Learning Objects) in the database that include as appropriate, details of the institution(s) concerned; funding, timeframe, and main features or activities: enough to convey a clear idea of what is involved.

Analysis of the *innovation(s)* and *good practice(s)* exemplified:

With minimal means a virtual community has been created in a short time, using a learning platform as its portal. The results are mixed. There is active exchange and quite a lot of sharing takes place, but intensive coaching and guidance is constantly needed.

The outstanding feature is that even if this domain is still under development, which means that relevant information is still sometimes difficult to find, the people looking for solutions to problems immediately get the newest results from the people creating the new knowledge - the experimenting and sharing teachers. The community does enable teachers to learn what they need, when they need it and from people who have the practical experience - their peers.

Problems and Issues:

This mutual training initiative is saving money where it replaces scores of training workshops and courses. On the other hand, the whole project is still quite expensive to run. Although it is relatively easy to provide the necessary knowledge and support for beginners in the area, it is more difficult to provide the answers to all the different needs generated by advanced teachers using the new technology.

Technical problems still weigh heavily on the development any initiative in the field, and the necessary pedagogical competencies are rarely sought after actively. This means that moderation and conciliating needs is a rather delicate process where the authorities funding the community often do not have the same interests as the participating teachers or the community members.

Source of *information*:

Andreas Rollinghoff, FNL-moderator, rollinghoff@icsa.ch

<http://www.fnl.ch>

Similar examples also exist in other countries.

REC 10

Adequate funding for staff permanence and development and for academisation of the higher education language teaching profession.

One of the drawbacks of modern technology is that the pace of evolution is so high. People barely have time to adjust to a given piece of software before they have to change over to a completely new version. New commercial virtual learning environments such as Blackboard, WebCT and Merlin take considerable effort to get to know but are in some ways limited in their possibilities. Added to this is the fact that long-term planning is often difficult because of the temporary status of particularly those language teachers who are not dealing with language as a discipline but mostly with the use of language for academic and professional purposes. Successful integration of NLEs, however, requires time and effort as well as joint actions for the teaching staff of an institution, which is why equal partnership and mutual respect for expertise are very important.

There seems to be much more willingness in the institutions to invest in technical infrastructures than in ensuring that there is enough qualified personnel to maintain and support full use of the installations. The pedagogical aspects have been largely neglected particularly if language teaching carries little weight in the university context, and the excellent facilities are often only offered as extracurricular opportunities where the students are left alone to do their language learning activities in any way they wish. It is difficult for the staff to be committed to the development of new pedagogical approaches in a situation such as this, and it is equally difficult for students to engage in independent language learning without proper learner training or guidance. Without investing in the pedagogical side of ICT enhanced language teaching and ILL, however, even excellent facilities and equipment will remain in mechanical use only. In addition, developing pedagogical applications requires staff permanence and opportunities to do research and action research, which is often impossible because of the low status and temporary positions of HE language teachers.

The changes in the attitudes, initiative, and approaches required from both learners and teachers in order to manage knowledge and skill construction together in a reciprocal partnership while using new learning environments in a flexible way are substantial in nature and can only be implemented over a considerable time period. Continuous professional development is therefore a prerequisite for the successful implementation of NLEs.

REC 11

Identification of reference points for the assessment of NLEs implemented, for improved (interdisciplinary) co-operation and collaboration, and for continuous quality enhancement.

The use of NLEs should not be a departmental, institutional or even national phenomenon. Experiences in the use of NLEs and the design of learning materials for them should be pooled. Cooperation and collaboration are crucial both in technical, pedagogical and strategic terms. In order to do this, common reference points for the assessment of NLEs have to be established. Joint evaluation of effectiveness based on common criteria is a necessity.

3c. European level requirements and action

REC 12

Creation of a European Information Centre/clearing house /virtual language centre for learning and teaching in the area of languages with the task of collecting and disseminating the following:

- ***database for existing software platforms in Europe and a database of E-learning materials and tasks;***
- ***examples of good practice, case studies and guidelines for the development of learning environments and learning materials;***
- ***research findings in areas relevant to the use of NLEs.***
- ***quality assessment and enhancement guidelines in the field***

Apart from training, the most commonly cited problem in the National reports was the lack of adequate information on NLEs. Dissemination of information on successful initiatives is necessary. This will promote co-operation between different institutions with the aim to improve the quality of research, development and practice and avoid the costly duplication of efforts. Interdisciplinary professional co-operation is also necessary, for instance, between language and content teachers and software and hardware designers in order to arrive at suitable applications and solutions for piloting.

Suggestions were presented in the National reports, as well as the International Certificate Conference, for resources for online learning opportunities of all European languages through a joint European web portal which would bring together all existing activities and organisations of European higher education institutions and serve as a main port of call for coordination and dissemination of information and experience. This kind of an aim, however, also presupposes design of and commitment to national visions, policies and strategies regarding multilingualism, as well as acknowledgement of language studies as an integral part of future professionalism in all disciplines.

The centre should be established as a permanent information service and disseminate through e.g. the following channels: the web site itself, a discussion forum (online), workshops, staff development initiatives, online publications, etc ...

The overall aim has to be to inform and enhance the quality of learning and teaching in languages throughout Europe, more particularly with respect to e-learning.

Related examples in REC 1 & 9.

REC M

Design and implementation of postgraduate and professional development programmes and modules for HE language teacher and non-language teachers teaching in mobility-related contexts.

As mentioned before, staff training and professional development are crucial for the successful implementation of NLEs. More and more often, however, both offline and online teacher development courses, seminars and workshops are being run, as well as modular diploma courses in language teaching technology, network moderating and advising, and designing materials for ICT enhanced environments. This process has to be stimulated. Staff training courses should include specific modules/subjects to train teachers in the use and integration of ICT in the language curriculum. This should be carried out from a critical point of view giving teachers a basis on which to perform a sound evaluation of the resources available. An in-depth knowledge of the various tools available is crucial since teachers will be unable to motivate their students unless they themselves are fully acquainted with the range of learning environments that can co-exist with a more traditional learning environment. These modules/subjects need to contemplate the existence of new learning environments with and without the support of ICT, and the added value related to their introduction in practice, in order to avoid a situation where it is the equipment which provides the direction for language learning and teaching and not the pedagogically sound principles.

Training courses like the ones mentioned above should be combined into postgraduate and professional programmes whose validation can be recognised by European institutions and be included in universities' career structures. Several relevant professional development programmes are already in existence in Europe (e.g. ICT4LT, TALLENT, programmes in language learning and technology and in language advising), but such efforts have not been coordinated or networked yet.

PROJECT PROPOSAL

Construction of a European Virtual Language Centre which will create pathways in four to five languages at three levels. They will be based around the ELP and create self-study plans and learning circles. The latter will take place face to face through the OLC/Language Centres of the countries involved and also online through the creation of online study groups. Further to that, the needs of the tutors will also be addressed and training for e-tutoring and learning *support* will be provided online and through the creation of a professional online support group. A special EAP area will be designed to cater for the need of staff in all disciplines who are now asked to deliver their courses in English to multilingual and multicultural student groups.

REC 14

Development of a digital teacher portfolio

In parallel to the European Language Portfolio for learners (described above in REC 4), a digital teacher portfolio should be worked out. This portfolio could be used both at the pre-service and in-service levels. In the portfolio, a teacher could show evidence of pedagogical expertise, knowledge and skills related to design, development and

the implementation of New Learning Environments and other innovations. One of the problems concerning the relatively low status of language teachers in Higher Education is the fact the academic recruiting is not usually done on the basis of pedagogical expertise but on the basis of scientific research merits. Exceptions to this, however, also exist and e.g. in Denmark and Finland a pedagogical portfolio is already a compulsory part of the application documents and selection criteria for any teaching position in Higher Education.

PROJECT PROPOSAL

Design of a European Teacher Portfolio for Higher Education language teachers to record in digital format their academic achievement and linguistic and pedagogical experience, experimentation, training, etc., as well as their development and use of NLEs, approaches for ILL and life-long language learning and other innovations in their teaching. Modular professional development programme arranged on a network basis and in the target languages of the teachers by various European universities on the basis of their particular strengths and orientations in the field. Programmes would also include training to use ELP and other standardised frameworks for offline and online language instruction at the HE level, as well as action research related to REC 16 below.

REC 15

Establishment of common, more standardized and flexible learning platforms and spaces to ensure easy access of resources and expertise.

The concept of learner autonomy seems to be completely foreign in some countries with advanced technology. Could this be due to the constraints from adopting platforms that are too inflexible to allow real learner choice? The market is dominated by commercial programs such as Blackboard and WebCT, which are not perfectly suited for language learning and cannot be modified in ways that might be more amenable to language learning. Often they do not allow opening up course materials to the outside community (because of strict registration policies), thereby making community learning or reaching out to native speakers virtually impossible. In view of this, a strong case was made in the subgroup for open source software which can be modified by the language teaching community in linguistically relevant ways and which does not have the restrictions associated with the major commercial platforms.

One of the problems with existing ICT learning materials is the transferability across systems. Organisations such as the IMS Global Learning consortium endeavour to promote the widespread adoption of specifications that will allow distributed learning environments and content from multiple authors to be compatible (compare in this respect the RTF file format for text processing). The technological codes that describe these specifications have been worked out by IMS and now enjoy wide acceptance, but in terms of content specifications too, standards have to be worked out by the various disciplines. Within Europe, the most widely accepted reference for language learning at present is the CEF. This document provides a practical tool for setting clear standards to be attained at successive stages of learning and for evaluating outcomes in an internationally comparable manner. There is a definite need for the standardization of such content coding systems for language learning materials and has already been adapted for use as a coding system for e-learning materials.

REC 16

Access to funding for networked research projects, including longitudinal research on NLE-assisted language learning.

The increased use of information and communication technologies has raised new research questions whose investigation will allow a better understanding of the inter-relation between technological development, language and culture learning. The findings of this exploration will affect the way in which teachers design courses, interpret new learning spaces, interact as professionals and deal with the meaning and construction of knowledge and skill. They will also necessitate closer co-operation, for instance, in the case of expanding the opportunities of

learning a less widely spoken and used language electronically. It is in this way that true multilingualism can be promoted more systematically. There is therefore an important role to be played by research in informing and forming new learning and teaching paradigms. To date, there has been relatively little published research that explores the relationship between the use of computer networks, language learning and social implications. Much of the published literature consists of anecdotal teacher reports with a small number of systematic studies examining narrow slices of data, such as the outcome of particular class sessions, students' use of particular discourse features, rather than provide a longitudinal, and contextualised account of the overall implementation of the online activities and their broader impact on the students' learning experiences on and offline. Most of this research is also limited to the English language. The nature of research should therefore attempt to mirror the variety of languages and cultures, which Internet use supports.

4. Summary of Recommendations and Primary Parties of Implementation

for the integration of New Learning Environments into Higher Education language learning and teaching and the promotion of multilingualism, multiculturalism, life-long learning skills and employability

Nr. RECOMMENDATION	PRIMARY PARTIES INVOLVED S/T=students & teachers; INST = institutions; NAT/EUR =national/European
1 Systematic learner development for independent language learning and use of ICT-enhanced NLEs and their support systems Continuous pedagogical and technical training and support for teachers to guide and support the learning outcomes and core competences pursued by students.	SIT T/INST
2 Systematic and structured use of NLEs for life-long learning and employability (tailored language programmes for academic and professional purposes). Identifying communicative prerequisites implied by job descriptions in real life and designing socially relevant learning tasks, materials and programmes for them.	SIT SITIINST
3 Systematic debriefing and support of both mobile students and staff and for internationalisation at home (IaH).	SIT, INST
4 Adoption of the European Language Portfolio (ELP) and other relevant joint European frameworks of reference and assessment to guarantee transparency and reciprocal recognition.	SIT, INST, NAT
5 Acknowledgement of both mother tongue and foreign language studies as an integral part of academic and professional qualifications in all fields, and accreditation and validation of such studies as well as independent language learning achievement.	SIT, INST/NAT
6 Identification of core elements constituting the professional profiles of HE language education in general and in terms of NLEs.	SIT, INST
7 Development of institutional and national educational visions, policies and strategies to recognise and foster the value of multilingualism (along with the maintenance of own language as a scientific language) and cultural competence, as well as ICT and life-long learning skills, as integral parts of academic and professional competence.	INST/NAT
8 Embedding of the use of NLEs for language learning in the general institutional policy and effort, including systematic promotion of virtual mobility	INST

Nr.	RECOMMENDATION	PRIMARY PARTIES INVOLVED S/T=students & teachers; INST = institutions; NAT/EUR =national/European
9	Establishment of an adequate technical infrastructure accompanied with tailored and continuous technical support.	INST
10	Adequate funding for staff permanence and development and academisation of the higher education language teaching profession	INST/NAT
11	Identification of reference points for the assessment of NLEs implemented and for improved (interdisciplinary) co-operation and collaboration, and for continuous quality enhancement.	INST, NAT
12	Creation of a European Information Centre ■ Clearing House/ Virtual Language Centre for learning and teaching in the area of languages with the task of collecting and disseminating the following: a) a database for existing software platforms in Europe; b) a database of learning materials and tasks; c) examples of good practice, case studies and guidelines for the development of learning environments and materials; d) research findings in areas relevant to the use of NLEs e) quality assessment and enhancement guidelines in the field.	EUR
13	Design and implementation of postgraduate and professional development programmes and modules for HE language teachers and non-language teachers teaching in mobility-related contexts	EUR, NAT
14	Development of a digital teacher portfolio.	EUR, NAT
15	Establishment of common, more standardised and flexible learning platforms and spaces to ensure easy access of resources and expertise.	EUR, NAT
16	Access to funding for networked research projects, including longitudinal research on NLE-assisted language learning.	EUR, NAT

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Part III: Report on Quality Enhancement in Higher Education
Language Studies

1. Introduction

1.1 Quality in Higher Education

In a society where knowledge plays a fundamental role, education is a crucial factor. This is particularly true of tertiary education, which prepares students directly for their entry into professional life and offers them access to the most advanced levels of knowledge and competence. It is therefore essential to guarantee that Higher Education programmes integrate students into this social and economic environment in an informed and purposeful manner. The key role of Higher Education institutions (HEIs) in the area of research and exploitation of research results depends crucially on the production of new knowledge at the highest qualitative level of expertise. It is only through excellence in research and education that the European Union's status as the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world can be reached.

It is necessary in this situation for European HEIs to undertake a critical evaluation of their current practices and develop innovative and proactive strategies for the future. This takes place at a time when international competition is increasing, and when severe restrictions are being imposed on available resources, so that institutions are being called upon to be accountable for the use they make of resources. HEIs have therefore had to assume a responsibility to be socially accountable and cost-effective with regard both to the content of the programmes that they offer and to the manner these programmes are organised. Furthermore, high levels of quality are also an essential condition for increased attractiveness of the European higher education system.

Concerns of the above nature are highlighted in the Bologna process. Quality is one of the linch pins of this process, because many of its aims and objectives, such as comparability and transferability of degrees, presuppose high levels of quality in terms of the relevance of programme content and learning outcomes. Without an emphasis on quality, objectives of a European dimension such as transnational employability and mobility will not be readily adopted by the member states.

Attempts at monitoring and assuring quality in HE have given rise to a number of initiatives at both national and international levels, and there is clear evidence that quality has assumed a significant status in the agendas of universities across Europe. The United Kingdom and the Netherlands, for instance, have set up national systems of quality control and assurance, and a number of other countries have been developing similar systems. In some countries, like Finland, the HEIs themselves have been made responsible for the evaluation of their practices, possibly in collaboration with national evaluation agencies. At European level, the European Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) has worked to establish, through comparable methodologies and criteria, a level of consistency that would ensure evaluation mechanisms which can be acknowledged across European borders. The Tuning Project initiated by a number of universities in the wake of the Bologna process has made an attempt to systematize the drafting of educational structures and content of studies in terms of generalized and subject-specific competences. Moreover, the adoption of the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) is also of particular relevance in this context. The extensive handbook of quality assurance that has been produced by the organisation of the national student unions in Europe (ESIB) highlights a large number of issues pertinent to a successful outcome of quality work in higher education.

A number of rather convincing arguments have been presented to the effect that some type of quality assurance infrastructure will be needed in Europe. The discussion centres primarily round the problem of accreditation of HEIs, and alternative solutions on a European or a national basis are being considered. Some member states have already established organisations of their own.

The present document will provide for a comprehensive framework to account for the main features necessary for the establishment of high quality language education at European institutions of higher education. It seeks to offer a framework for quality-oriented strategies by identifying a number of key reference points in the organisation and delivery of language programmes in higher education. These are meant to help institutions to evaluate their current practice, its relevance and effectiveness, and its adequacy with respect to both current and future needs.

The document is largely derived from a survey and analysis of national reports written in connection with the Thematic Network Project in the Area of Languages II and will complement the other documents produced in the Project by focusing specifically on various quality issues relevant for quality assurance and quality enhancement. The document is expected to be of use for all levels of staff in the area of language education from persons responsible for educational management and planning to practitioners in the classroom. It is obvious, however, that a framework of this kind alone cannot be expected to result in an enhancement of language education in institutions. What is needed in addition is a comprehensive trans-European project to trial practices that will boost quality education in the future.

1.2 Quality Enhancement

Most quality initiatives in Europe seem to relate to quality control or assurance. This is a necessary stage in the broader concern with quality in that it involves the development of instruments and procedures for the evaluation of current practices in an objective, critical, and transparent manner. Quality enhancement, however, takes the process further and aims at the establishment of guidelines for improved practice in response to the evolving demands of society in a dynamic and proactive manner.

Quality assurance involves the auditing of existing practice against targeted standards, while quality enhancement is concerned with the fostering of true improvement in teaching and learning. In other words, quality assurance relates to evaluation and assessment, whereas quality enhancement deals with improvement and innovation: It is thus policy and strategy driven. Quality assurance means measurement, quality enhancement involves experimentation, benchmarking, and establishment of good practice. Quality assurance is one stage in the pursuit of quality, but in a rapidly evolving social and economic context the evaluation of current practice is insufficient. What is needed is a process-oriented and proactive strategy geared to the improvement of current practice in response to the needs of society.

1.3 Quality Enhancement and Languages in Higher Education

Quality initiatives undertaken to date have been concerned with university programmes across a wide range of disciplines. To a degree they have also touched upon the role of languages in higher education, especially with respect to language specialist programmes such as the training of translators and interpreters.

The important role of languages in the changing practices of HEIs across Europe is not normally acknowledged to the degree it deserves. The socialization of students into professions necessarily also involves acquisition of relevant language and communication skills and of pertinent practices in the mother tongue and in one or more non-native languages. Multiple literacy, which means socially oriented and functionally diversified plurilingual language competence plus operative familiarisation with modern facilities of communication, is an integral element in professional competence: Professional competence in all fields nowadays presupposes such language and communication competences. Higher Education as such, advanced research and also the networking of professionals across borders all require good working knowledge of languages other than the mother tongue.

Languages play a key role in the creation of an economically effective and socially cohesive European area and should therefore figure large in any discussion of quality in European Higher Education. Languages are no longer the reserve of the specialist few, and therefore high quality language education should be available at all levels of the education system. There are a number of very obvious reasons for this, all of them figuring high among the major objectives of the European Union. The most prominent of them are employability, mobility, and the European dimension, which includes European citizenship.

One of the most important goals of education is the human and intellectual development of the individual. The goal of Higher Education is to equip students with the knowledge, skills, and competences which will allow them to find appropriate and rewarding employment on graduation. In the current economic and social environment, language skills are a crucial constituent of employability. Knowledge of languages other than one's own offers graduates access to employment possibilities which would otherwise not exist. Targeted language skills provide for a proactive and forward-looking potential both for individuals and for employers.

In our increasingly global society, mobility is becoming a standard feature of professional and academic life. The creation of a coherent and integrated European economy calls for increased professional mobility, and languages are an essential enabling condition for this. The development of language skills and also of positive attitudes to language learning is crucial to the development of a dynamic and flexible European economy.

The strength of the European Union depends ultimately on the feeling of shared citizenship that develops across national boundaries. Learning languages of the others is one of the best means of coming to understand them in their own terms and of discovering what makes each people unique as well as what unites us in terms of values, concerns, and aspirations. Widespread language learning is thus a cornerstone of the development of a shared European citizenship.

A comprehensive analysis of quality issues in the area of languages is particularly relevant for the reason that language programmes, both specialist ones (perhaps with the exception of those for translation and interpreting) and those for non-specialists, are among the most neglected among humanities-based programmes. The important role of languages in the modern world is not normally acknowledged by either by educational authorities or by universities, or even by specialist language departments themselves. Specialist programmes offered tend to concentrate on issues past rather than present or future, and in many cases their relevance in the present educational context seems to be problematic, which has resulted in dropping admission numbers. Specialist language programmes are particularly important for quality training of expert language teachers, and there are many other areas of expertise where advanced knowledge of languages and about language is needed, such as translation and interpreting, localisation of texts, digital media, human information technology, and information and communication studies.

More attention also needs to be given to non-specialist programmes for non-language majors for reasons relating to advanced professional competence in quality terms.

The revision of degree and examinations structures resulting from the Bologna process will provide for an excellent framework for the renovation of language education programmes throughout the European community. This is an opportunity for innovation which will not be repeated in the foreseeable future.

1.4 A Framework for Quality Enhancement in University Language Education

To be effective, quality enhancement needs to work with relevant, transparent, and readable reference points in order to be able to answer the question of what is innovative and progressive in each developing situation. This allows for two key phases of the quality enhancement process to be undertaken: the first involves the evaluation of current practice and is thus close to quality control; the second comprises the development of strategies geared to effecting improvement in specific aspects of existing practice.

The strategies for improvement have to manifest three key characteristics: they are flexible, so as to be relevant to different institutions operating in different contexts and facing different quality challenges; they are dynamic, in that they indicate clear directions for action and innovation; they are proactive, in that they look beyond current practices and current needs to prepare for future requirements and future challenges.

This document looks at the area of quality enhancement in HE language studies from four main angles, which correspond to the four following chapters. Chapter 2 focuses on the fundamental question of learning outcomes, ie. the language skills and competences which are pivotal to students' academic and / or professional profile and which they need to acquire either during their HE programme or by graduation. Certain factors require particular attention under this heading. One is the importance of defining relevant learning outcomes and of gearing language courses around these outcomes; another the need for joint action among HEIs to better define the goals of language learning both in different academic and professional domains and across borders so as to enhance the relevance of language learning outcomes in the context of a widening European Union.

Chapter 3 focuses on the process of teaching and learning. In part, this relates to the need to ensure that teaching and learning procedures are appropriate to the attainment of the relevant learning outcomes in terms of language skills and competences. Equally, however, consideration has to be given to the need to rethink the nature of HE language education, with emphasis being placed on the move from teaching to learning and the

development of independent learning skills. This calls for the development of what could be described as a methodology of empowerment which can equip students for the demands of a rapidly evolving social and economic environment.

Chapter 4 is concerned with the organisation, monitoring and management of teaching and learning. It is obvious that the ultimate quality criterion is the final outcome and attainment of student learning. The quality of teaching and learning will inevitably be dependent on the nature of the organisation, monitoring and management at institutional level. Various issues are raised relating to qualifications, management and leadership, communication, resources, curriculum planning, and workload as well as measures targeted to facilitation of student learning.

Chapter 5 focuses on teacher skills and therefore on the importance of teacher training in the broader context of quality enhancement. Attention is given to both the content and the practical organisation of teacher training programmes, the integration into teachers' careers of ongoing professional development, and also the need to build up a cadre of experienced and committed teacher trainers. These factors play a crucial role in ensuring the real effectiveness of innovation in HE language teaching and should be approached by means of coordinated European projects relating in the first instance to a definition of the competences required by HE language teachers.

2. Learning outcomes

2.1. Introduction

The definition of learning outcomes is an essential pre-requisite for achieving quality in the teaching and learning process. Much progress has been made in primary and secondary education over the past fifty years in defining such outcomes in terms of both knowledge and skills. This has been particularly true in the area of languages, where detailed learning outcomes have been defined for different types of learners at different stages in the educational system. A particular role has been played in this process by the language competence scales developed by the Council of Europe, and in particular by the approach to the definition of language competence on the basis of "can-do" statements. These scales are now increasingly being accepted as the basis for defining the outcomes of language teaching and learning in schools throughout Europe.

Defining and implementing clear learning outcomes in HE language programmes should therefore be seen as of fundamental importance in achieving quality and quality enhancement in this area. However, progress has been slower at this stage of the education system, for a number of reasons related both to the nature and to the organisation of HE, and to deep-rooted attitudes towards language learning at this level.

The discrepancy between advances in language learning in secondary and higher education may first of all be explained by the very nature of HE, which has traditionally focused on the production and dissemination of *knowledge*, rather than *skills and know-how*. Language degree courses have therefore traditionally defined course content in terms of knowledge *relating to* the language and to the countries and peoples using the language, rather than general or specific communicative skills in the language itself. Conversely, there has been a tendency to consider language courses for non language specialists as merely an extension of secondary school language learning and designed at best simply to maintain a given level of general language competence until the learner could go out into the wider world. In neither case is the situation satisfactory. In the case of language degree courses, the result has often been programmes which lack focus and which do not prepare students meaningfully for employability. In the case of language courses for non language specialists, teaching content has often not been integrated into the broader academic and professional training of the students concerned.

As a result, languages have traditionally fared badly when competing for resources with the "hard" sciences or the social sciences, and have rarely been considered a key area of university policy, either in terms of curriculum development or in terms of research. Significantly, the Tuning Project, which set out to define and implement

common learning objectives and outcomes in seven key disciplines throughout Europe did not cover foreign languages as a subject area. The project did however show significant differences in the assessment of the importance of foreign language competence in the countries involved: when respondents were asked to rate general competences by order of importance, language skills and intercultural skills came out in the lower part of the scale in a number of countries (notably Britain and Ireland), but were given a more positive rating in others.

The situation does now appear to be changing in some HE systems, as a result of a number of developments over the past 10 years.

In many countries, it is now an accepted fact that communicative skills in at least one foreign language (and preferably two) are increasingly important, both as a means of accessing vital information and as a means of enhancing career prospects in a highly competitive international environment. This provides added incentive for non-language specialists to maintain and develop language skills acquired in prior stages of their education, or to acquire new skills in other languages. These changes in attitude have been helped by the greater emphasis now being placed on individual needs and achievements in the acquisition of non-native language competence. It is now recognised that different types of language skills can be learned and brought to bear in different ways according to the learner's specific abilities and needs. This principle was recognised in the Council of Europe's Common European *Framework of Reference for Languages*, which has gained increasingly widespread recognition as a European benchmark for language skills and competence and now underpins most international language certification tests. This provides a basis for developing a more learner-centred and outcomes-oriented approach to the definition of the goals of HE language programmes.

At the institutional level, European mobility programmes, the ECTS system, and the Bologna process have provided a new impetus for language learning as a means of taking full advantage of Europe-wide mobility opportunities. Furthermore, an increasing number of universities are recognising the need to design and implement institutional language policies. Such policies involve focused reflection on the role of languages in students' academic and professional training, and have the goal of developing coherent policies for extending the provision of language teaching to a wider range of students, and for defining relevant learning outcomes in the area of languages.

Language teaching specialists across Europe are now facing a number of clear challenges in the attempt to build on these advances so as to anchor language teaching in HE programmes in a focused and relevant manner. These challenges include: demonstrating the relevance of language learning outcomes within the wider process of higher education; fostering the convergence of language learning outcomes in terms of knowledge, competence and skills, and enhancing the social and economic relevance of language learning outcomes within the context of a widening EU.

2.2. Demonstrating the relevance of language learning outcomes

In defining learning outcomes for the subject areas covered in the project, Tuning made a distinction between "generic" and "subject-specific" competences (defined as "a dynamic combination of attributes - with respect to knowledge and its application, to attitudes and responsibilities - that describe the learning outcomes of an educational programme, or how learners are able to perform at the end of an educational process").³ One step towards establishing meaningful learning outcomes in the area of languages therefore involves defining the types of competences which language programmes may need to target. This can help institutions formulate learning outcome profiles which are both meaningful and relevant to students' present or future needs.

³ Tuning Educational Structures in Europe: Final Report Report Phase One, ed. by Julia Gonzalez and Robert Wagenaar. University of Deusto and University of Groningen, 2003, p.255

2.2.1 Categories of language competence

Six main areas of language or of language-related competences merit particular attention.

1. Generic personal competences, required of all undergraduate and graduate students: the capacity to acquire, digest and organise information, to make decisions, to present information both orally and in writing in a coherent and persuasive manner, to work within a group, to manage projects, etc.
2. Generic language learning competences: the ability to apprehend and understand basic differences in language structures; the ability to hear and to reproduce unfamiliar sound patterns; the ability to use dictionaries, etc.
3. Language-specific communicative competences, i.e. those defined in the "can do" statements of the Common European framework (which could of course be defined as generic communicative competences applied through the medium of a given language).
4. Language-specific cognitive competences: the ability to understand cultural references in the language, the ability to relate the historical evolution of a language to its present state and usage; the ability to analyse and explain language-specific structural patterns ; the ability to understand and interpret creative works written in the language, etc.
5. Profession-specific communicative competences for professionals in non-language specialist fields: those required of an international lawyer, a research scientist, a journalist, a lorry-driver, a policeman, etc.
6. Profession-specific competences for language professionals: those required of a language teacher, a translator, a conference interpreter, a community interpreter, a reviser, a multilingual content manager, a multilingual website designer, a trilingual export assistant, etc.

Such a distinction between different types and categories of language learning outcomes makes it possible a) to show that language learning mobilises a whole range of competences and skills, including those generally considered central to the higher educational process, and b) to define meaningful learning outcome "packages" for different categories of learners, by combining several of the competence categories listed above.

2.2.2 Differentiating learning outcomes

A categorisation of this nature makes it possible to define with greater precision the specific goals to be pursued by the different language courses and components. The first cycle language specialist, for instance, may need to acquire varying degrees of competence from the first three categories listed above, while the second cycle student following a language specialist programme may need to focus primarily on competences from categories four and six. In the case of courses designed for first cycle non-language specialists, students would normally focus on categories two and three above; at more advanced levels and with certain categories of student, however, courses might also include skills listed under category four (such as the ability to understand implicit meaning). Furthermore, language courses aimed at professionals (or future professionals) may also need to focus on category five - understanding cultural references and implied meaning are crucial competences in a variety of professional domains such as marketing, international relations, the law, development economics, and medicine.

A further differentiation of learning outcome combinations may be necessary with respect to age and experience, within the context of life-long learning. For instance, the needs of a second year undergraduate studying a language he or she has recently studied at secondary school will obviously differ from those of a 40 year-old who has been using a language in a professional capacity and who now wants to acquire a specialised second cycle language qualification.

Analysing the specifics of the language competences which students need to develop at different stages of their educational career and with respect to their future academic or professional goals thus constitutes an important first step towards the development of relevant learning outcomes.

- Despite the growing awareness of the importance of languages in HE, advocacy is still needed to underline the role of language skills in the academic and professional development of HE students. In this respect, it is important to highlight the role of languages both in terms of employability and with respect to their contribution to students' broader intellectual training and development.
- Further research is needed to identify the specific language competences required in different professional fields. Such research should focus on the concept of professional literacies in both the first and in other languages.

2.3. Fostering the convergence of language learning outcomes

One of the central problems addressed by the Tuning project is that of how to describe learning outcomes for a given subject area in a European perspective. The study revealed some widely differing definitions of both subject areas and competences, but also highlighted convergence in a number of core areas. A similar observation may be made with respect to the area of languages in that the definition of language learning outcomes has both a local and a European dimension. On the one hand, each institution (and indeed each department responsible for a given programme) has to consider the specific needs of its students – which languages need to be studied, and which competences need to be developed in these languages. On the other hand, it would clearly be unproductive for each institution to work in isolation, as many needs are likely to be common to students in different countries working within the same field of specialisation, even if certain differences may exist between one national setting and another.

2.3.1 Towards a shared framework of goals

One field in which progress has already been made toward defining clear learning outcomes is in the area of functional language competence. As already mentioned, the Council of Europe's "Common European framework of reference" is now widely recognised as a description of different levels of general competence in the five core language skills applicable to any European language. In addition, a lot of work has gone into language-specific "benchmarking", either as part of quality assurance procedures (as in the British QAA "benchmark papers") or in language certification exams. Further progress should be forthcoming in this area as a result of the Commission's recently published Action Plan for Language Learning and Linguistic Diversity, 2004-2006, which aims to encourage convergence in the use of language competence assessment and certification at the European level.

Progress has also been made towards the definition of core learning outcomes in certain profession-specific or domain-specific areas - translation and interpreting, for example. In certain domain-specific areas of language, such as economics, attempts have been made at national or international level to define common learning outcomes. However, further joint work is required at the European level to identify and describe learning outcomes for other professional fields or special domains, building on the work already undertaken at the national level by professional bodies, applied language teaching associations or individuals. These outcomes should of course be defined not only in terms of the acquisition of the specialised terminology and phraseology required within specific professional contexts, but should highlight the particular language competences essential for professional practice in the area in question (e.g. particular types of listening or communication skills).

Added impetus has been given to this endeavour by the Bologna process. This process requires institutions to define the intended learning outcomes of the programmes they offer, which implies specific consideration of the role of language skills within these programmes. For example, what role do languages play in the education and professional readiness of students of business, engineering, or medicine? Which languages do students need and at which stage in their education, and which skills do they need in these languages?

These are not simple questions; nor do they lend themselves to simple answers. In certain cases, it may be possible to identify with a fair degree of precision the specific language skills which will be needed in certain language-related fields, either during their academic programme or on graduation with a view to employability. In

other cases, the most effective option is to focus on broader skill categories, ie. groupings of language skills which students entering a given professional domain are likely to need, either immediately or proactively, as enabling skills for future professional development. Then again, there is the question of students' ability and willingness to adapt to new needs and situations: In this respect, the objective of language teaching is to equip students for further learning in the context of a rapidly evolving social and professional environment within the framework of life long learning (cf. Chapter 3). This is an area which calls for further research and reflection by HE institutions and other concerned stakeholders.

2.3.2 Questioning current practice

According an enhanced role to languages within non language-specialist programmes and redefining the goals of language teaching around relevant learning outcomes may make it necessary to question current practice and assumptions. A potentially significant obstacle in this area is the influence of national traditions, regulations or systems. To take one case in point, the French national competitive exams for access to the teaching profession (secondary education level) provide an annual content-based "programme" of literary works and themes of "civilisation", set by the national authorities, which candidates and their academic tutors must comply with. One may question whether the type of competences tested in the written part of such exams (the ability to write formal "dissertations" and to do "literary" translations in a set time) is relevant to the tasks which candidates will have to undertake in their professional lives.

Attempts to arrive at common definitions with respect to the language competences required in different fields of activity may thus have to overcome both ideological and terminological hurdles, as they may question current assumptions about the nature of professional practice in different fields. Further challenges arise with respect to the nature of education and the learning process. While some countries have long since tackled and resolved the "teacher-centred" or "learner-centred" issue, others have not and continue to see the teacher primarily as a vector of "knowledge", at least in the latter stages of the education system. Indeed, the term "learning outcomes" itself is seen by some to pre-suppose a utilitarian and efficiency-driven approach to education which is still resisted by some sections of the teaching profession in certain countries.

- A range of projects have been undertaken at both national and European levels to identify and define the language competences required in various professional fields. Efforts should be undertaken to make the results of this work more widely available to interested parties and to undertake a critical evaluation of what has been achieved.
- The Council of Europe's Common European Framework for Languages has provided a valuable tool for the definition of learning outcomes in the field of languages. Nevertheless, this framework was developed for a wide range of language users. Research is needed to complement the framework with a closer definition of the language requirements of HE students, as regards the role of language competences in students' general intellectual development and also with respect to their professional needs.

2.4. Enhancing the social and economic relevance of language learning outcomes

A key issue as regards the definition of commonly accepted language learning outcomes is the enhancement of employability. Enhancing the relevance of HE language programmes with respect to students' employability calls for:

- a clear understanding on the part of all stakeholders of the linguistic and language-related needs arising from European integration and global co-operation both in HE itself and in the various non-academic professional environments in which graduates will be working;
- a willingness on the part of HE institutions to gear learning outcomes, content and quantity of provision to the needs identified.

Identifying and defining common language-learning outcomes which are relevant and meaningful in social and economic terms requires concerted action with employers and other stakeholders at both national and European levels.

2.4.1 Exploring the terrain

The first step in identifying employment related language needs clearly involves researching what these needs actually are. Despite a number of developments alluded to above, it has to be acknowledged that a considerable amount of work remains to be done in this area. Which *languages* and which *language skills* does an engineer, a business person, a doctor or a social worker need? To what degree do these needs vary from one country to another? And can we identify certain needs which are common to a given profession across countries? These are all fundamental questions in the search for a coherent and focused strategy of language teaching at European level. Answering them calls for the creation of a profile of language use in different professional fields.

Such information does exist for certain language-related professions, where accurate information is usually available at first hand through the close contacts maintained between the official European language services and a European network of partner universities. The type and level of competences required, for instance, for conference interpreters or translators working for JICS or the official translation services can readily be identified and taken on board as learning outcomes in the definition of courses preparing students for such careers. Regrettably, the same is not true for many other professions where language skills play a significant role but are not the primary focus of teaching or professional activity: Accurate and up to date information relating to these non language-related professions is often difficult to obtain at European and sometimes even at national level.

In part, this may be due to the fact that statistical definitions vary across Europe (for instance, "language teachers" in primary education may not be identified as such, or in secondary education may be required to teach another subject) or because no accurate statistics are available (it is for example virtually impossible to quantify the number of practising translators in Europe, other than by extrapolation and guesswork, simply because many countries have no procedures for controlling access to or monitoring the profession). Furthermore, when information is available (e.g. university career offices or government publications) it is sometimes out of touch with current trends and professional practices. Eliciting exploitable answers from businesses regarding the level and type of language competence required for particular business contexts is often difficult, because of the diversity of situations and types of business. As for professional organisations, they may only reflect the views and practices of well established practitioners and may not therefore supply a full and accurate picture of the current market situation.

New pathways must therefore be explored in seeking information about professional practice and language needs. For instance, in countries and courses where student work placements are mandatory or widespread, these can become a valuable source of up-to-date information on current work practices and needs, through student reports and interviews, as well as being a way of establishing permanent contacts between those responsible for course design and the future employers of students on these courses. Research in this area is crucial to the goal of defining relevant learning outcomes for language programmes.

2.4.2 Preparing the future

This process cannot, however, be restricted simply to the passive identification of current needs: it must also be a pro-active process designed to foster awareness of the future needs of an increasingly mobile workforce within a multilingual Europe. Language learning outcomes must therefore be designed to anticipate these future needs, in particular by suggesting realistic targets for the acquisition of skills in less widely used languages and within the context of non academic learning environments (as in the case of life-long learning).

HE institutions cannot achieve this goal in isolation. They therefore need to establish a dialogue with stakeholders in various domains of activity so as to develop a forum for the exchange of insights into the needs of graduates working in these domains. (The support given by the European language services to HE establishments in candidate countries to help in the definition and implementation of translator and interpreter training programmes is an example of fruitful collaboration between employers and HE providers.) Furthermore, it would be

unproductive for HE institutions to do this on a purely individual basis. Groupings of institutions at regional level can develop an understanding of the specific language needs in a given geographical area, while broader groupings can then pool these insights at the European level. In this way it would be possible to create a shared understanding among HE institutions of their students' language needs, and also to engage an ongoing dialogue with stakeholders from the professional world.

Ultimately, of course, the integration of socially and economically relevant language learning outcomes into curricular content must be done in a way that fosters synergies between knowledge, know-how and personal and interpersonal skills. The identification of needs in terms of language competence can only be meaningful if a holistic approach to academic and professional training is adopted: ***the strict separation of knowledge, know-how and the development of personal skills which still prevails in some academic circles can only reduce the effectiveness of clearly defined language learning outcomes.*** It is therefore important to identify and disseminate examples of good practice in the implementation of such holistic approaches, both in programmes designed for language professionals and in to date neglected area of language programmes for non-language specialists.

- The establishment of fora for the gathering and pooling of information on professional language use both among HE institutions and between HE institutions and other stakeholders is of crucial importance to definition of relevant learning outcomes and thus to the enhancement of the quality of HE language teaching.
- Consortia of HE institutions should be set up to pool their experience and to share good practice with respect to the identification of learning outcomes in different professional domains.
- Networks of former graduates in employment should be set up or activated in order to gather up-to-date information on the uses of language competence in the workplace.
- A Europe-wide "observatory" of language use in work environments should be established with EU support to gather and disseminate information acquired at the local or national levels.
- HE institutions should exploit their contacts with the professional world to gather information on the language needs in various profesional domains; institutional support should be provided for the regular consultation of professionals in various domains and the direct observation of foreign language use in different types of business environments.

3. Teaching and learning

3.1. introduction

Chapter 2 underscored the importance of designing language courses around relevant learning outcomes. This is the most fundamental quality criterion of all as no language programme may be considered to be effective unless it equips students with the language skills and competences which they actually need, either within the framework of their study programme itself or with respect to their future professional needs. Achieving quality in this respect therefore involves the accurate identification of relevant learning outcomes. It also, of course, entails close evaluation of the teaching and learning procedures in place to ensure that they are appropriate to help students achieve the relevant learning outcomes. For this reason alone, concern with quality in HE language teaching inevitably involves consideration of teaching and learning procedures.

In addition to this, however, the current social and economic context sets goals for language teaching which include but also go beyond the development of specific pragmatic skills and competences. These goals relate to the quality of students' involvement in the learning process and pursue the objective of learner empowerment within the framework of life long learning. This constitutes a process agenda, ie. an agenda relating to the quality of students' interaction with their language learning, which runs in parallel with the product agenda relating to the

specific functional competences they need to acquire within the framework of their professional training. The importance of pursuing these two agendas in parallel arises out of the rapidly evolving nature of our societies. On the one hand, students need to acquire specific competences in one or more foreign languages during or by the end of their study programme, as was pointed out in Chapter 2. On the other hand, students will almost certainly need to take their language learning further in the course of their professional lives, by learning an already known language to a higher degree or with respect to the requirements of specific professional situations, or by learning another language. HE programmes clearly need to prepare and equip students to respond to these challenges in an informed and self-directive manner.

A number of criteria need to be taken into account in evaluating and enhancing the quality of HE language programmes from this point of view – the creation of a culture of language learning, the development of what could be described as a "methodology of empowerment", and the establishment of relevant enabling conditions.

3.2. Creating a culture of language learning

Within the intensely multilingual context of the European Union, language learning is no longer the reserve of the specialist few, but a basic condition for employability and for both academic and professional mobility; it is also an essential component of European citizenship and a means of personal development. This needs to be reflected in the role which languages play not just in students' specific academic programme, but also in the broader context of HE. A number of practical measures can be taken to contribute to the creation of such a culture.

One of the most obvious is the encouragement of participation in mobility programmes. This encourages students to learn languages while also giving them the opportunity to live out a part of their HE programme in another linguistic, cultural and academic environment. In turn, the promotion of mobility programmes calls for consideration of a number of factors. These include the place which such programmes have in students' overall programme (eg. do students receive full academic recognition for the period spent away from their home institution?), and the linguistic and cultural preparation and support provided to students in advance of their departure.

Another consideration in the creation of a culture of language learning relates to the place which language learning plays within students' overall HE programme. On the one hand, an increasing number of study orientations will be including a language component relating to the professional needs of their students (cf. Chapter 2). On the other hand, there is the question of how to extend language learning to include potentially all students involved in HE. In certain countries, measures have been taken to make the study of at least one foreign language obligatory for all students. (All HE programmes in France, for example, must include tuition and learning in at least one foreign language, and similar measures have been taken in a number of other countries; at the Université Rennes 1 proven foreign language competence has been made a pre-requisite for obtaining the new "Master" degrees now being introduced as a result of the Bologna process in the "hard" sciences, medicine, law, and economics.) It is not easy to decide whether across-the-board obligation is necessarily the most effective option. It is, however, crucial that all HE students should have access to language learning facilities within their broader study programme. Institutions can pursue this goal by making language courses and independent language learning facilities available to all students (via a self-access centre, tandem learning with exchange students, foreign language discussion groups, etc), and also by recognising achievement in language learning in students' final diploma (eg. allocating a credit weighting to language courses or adding a diploma supplement acknowledging language skills).

It is also important to broaden the understanding of what language teaching and learning actually entail. The traditional 90 minute teacher-centred and content-oriented language class should not be taken as the norm, or even the unmarked option. Language learning for the 21st century should be fully integrated into students' academic and professional development. This can involve content courses being taught in other languages, promoting the use of source materials in various languages, work placements in other countries, and so on. Such measures help students to acquire the habit of conducting information searches and achieving real-world goals in and via other languages; they also help them to develop language skills and language-related problem solving strategies which will be invaluable to them in their professional life.

Finally, consideration should also be given to the acknowledgement (e.g. by means of credits or exemptions) of language skills acquired outside of HE per se, either by means of an instrument such as the European Language Portfolio, or on the basis of internationally recognised certificates.

These and other measures can help to make languages and language learning something that students take to be normal, an integral part of HE. They also help students to integrate into their language learning in HE attitudes and strategies which they will subsequently be able to exploit in their professional life and use to underpin further learning. In this way, language learning becomes a process which equips students not just with specific functional skills, but also with the potential for autonomous action in the field of languages.

Which measures are currently being taken to foster the learning of languages at your institution (presence of a self-access language learning centre, promotion of optional language courses, creditation of independent language learning, encouragement of participation in mobility programmes, work placements in a foreign language setting, etc)? In which ways could such measures be reinforced or made more effective?

Other than students following language specialist degrees, what percentage of students at your institution are involved in studying another language, either as part of their academic programme or independently? Is this figure satisfactory? If not, in which ways could it be improved?

3.3. A methodology of empowerment: From teaching to learning

In order to prepare students for the demands of a rapidly evolving social and professional environment and for the objective of life long learning, HE institutions need to help students develop independent learning skills. This imperative relates to all domains of HE, and therefore also to language teaching. Indeed, this goal is fundamental to the process agenda of HE language education. It is not sufficient to equip students only with a discrete package of functional language skills: The demands of their future professional life are likely to require students to develop their skills in a given language further or to learn other languages, and HE language programmes should prepare students for these challenges.

This having been said, developing students' ability to interact with language and language learning in an informed and self-directive manner has to be the object of well developed and focused pedagogical decisions. The main objective is to help students develop the skills and awareness which are specific to language learning in HE and professional contexts. (To take just one example, student who has learned Italian should be given the opportunity to explore how far he or she can use this knowledge as a basis for learning a related language such as Spanish or Portuguese, even if only in terms of consulting written documentation in this language.) In part, however, and especially in the early stages of HE, it may be necessary to overcome negative expectations and habits derived from students' prior language learning experience.

Pursuing this process agenda calls for a variety of pedagogical strategies.

3.3.1 Transparency

In the first place, HE institutions should share their decisions with their students in a clear and transparent manner. Institutions make choices with respect to students' overall curriculum, the balance of different subjects, the range of options available, modes of teaching and evaluation, etc. These choices reflect their HE institution's vision of the programme which students have elected to follow, and making them available to students is the very first step in aiding them to engage in their study programme in an informed manner. This relates to the overall structure of the programme students have elected to follow and the role which languages play within this programme; it also relates to the more detailed level of individual courses – the objectives pursued by the course, the tasks students will have to undertake and their rationale, recommendations for private study, the assessment criteria used, etc. (The Centre for Language Study of the University of Southampton, for example, provides detailed overviews of all the language courses it offers. The information provided includes entry requirements, the credit rating of the course, anticipated learning outcomes, methods of assessment, teaching and learning

methods, and course materials. The overviews are available on the University's website: www.lang.soton.ac.uk/cls/stages/html)

3.3.2 Learner training

As suggested above, the goal of learner empowerment needs to be pursued in a focused and progressive manner. HE institutions need therefore to provide students with clear guidance and help them develop practically relevant learning strategies. What is language? What is language learning? What can I do to improve my knowledge of the TL? These are all questions which students will, more or less consciously, be asking themselves, and HE institutions should help them formulate practically relevant and useable responses. This gives rise to a detailed process agenda which needs to be pursued systematically during students' HE career. Areas to be addressed include:

- Attitudes to the learning of foreign languages, including encouragement of a constructive "can-do" attitude to language learning;
- Strategies for accessing information and learning resources in the target language(s);
- Means of accumulating information and resolving ambiguities in a foreign language;
- Micro-strategies for dealing with language problems and for monitoring progress;
- Global strategies for recognising and exploiting different learning opportunities.

The development of such strategies may well benefit from the inclusion in students' curriculum of an explicit learner training or "Introduction to language learning" module. It should also be integrated into students' ongoing learning activities within the framework both of the various language courses they follow and of any other contacts they have with the TL such as mobility programmes or work placements.

One practical means of working towards this goal is to require students to prepare a learner diary either as part of their ongoing language study or during a work placement or their student mobility programme. (In the latter case, the diary should receive a specific ECTS weighting, as is already the case in a number of HE institutions. The University of Exeter, for example, allocates 15 ECTS to the preparation by students of a learner diary during the mobility year which they spend in another HE institution.) This helps students to trace their learning in both linguistic and cultural terms, and also to develop a personalised awareness of their interaction with the learning process. It is difficult to overestimate the gain which such an activity can offer to students with respect to their future contact with different linguistic and cultural environments during their professional life. Another valuable initiative can be the use of the European Language Portfolio as a means tool for helping students to better understand and to evaluate their various learning experiences in an informed and self-directive manner. (The European Language Portfolio is being used within the framework of the University of Lausanne's project "Life-long Learning et E-learning" as a means of helping students to develop independent learning skills in an e-learning environment.)

3.3.3 From training to involvement

For students to become active and reflective actors in their own learning, they need to be given the practical, hands-on opportunity to develop the relevant language skills and learning competences: In other words, they must be active participants in the teaching-learning process. In the traditional knowledge transmission view of learning, students' role is defined in terms of the assimilation of knowledge discovered and structured by others. In a view of learning as discovery and empowerment, students play an active role in their learning – individually, with the teacher, and also with fellow students. This enhances the quality of learning per se (in-depth learning), and it also prepares the students for further learning by helping them to develop information gathering and problem solving skills in the relevant skill area. The general trend is therefore from teaching to learning, from instruction to discovery, and from training to empowerment.

Pursuing this goal involves the adoption of a range of pedagogical strategies designed to help students develop their personal initiative and to develop focused, self-directive learning skills in the language field. Discovery-based

learning is one, and can operate from the level of basic grammatical instruction to large scale investigation and research of a given aspect of language use in a professional field. Task- and project-based learning activities which involve students achieving specific outcomes on the basis of the analysis of relevant TL material and the production of the necessary documents are another. Yet another is the encouragement of collaborative *forms* of learning, in which students work with other students, with the teacher or with individuals from outside of the academic environment on a shared project. This fosters the development of team working skills, helps students broaden their perspective on language learning, and prepares them for real-world information search and synthesis tasks.

Furthermore, HE institutions should develop procedures for validating learning experiences acquired outside of the traditional HE framework. In the language field, this may relate to periods of time (study or work) spent in TL countries or environments, the obtaining of internationally recognised certificates, etc. Such measures make HE study more inclusive and also both reward and encourage personal initiative.

3.3.4 Assessment

An outcomes-based approach to goal setting calls for an outcomes-oriented mode of assessment (Ch2). Equally, an empowerment-oriented approach to teaching and learning calls for a consonant strategy of assessment. HE institutions therefore need to cast a critical eye on their assessment procedures in order to ensure that they both reflect and contribute to the goal of learner empowerment. A number of points merit consideration in this respect.

The first relates to the transparency of the assessment procedures and criteria which are used. Specifically, students need to be clearly informed of the goals they are expected to achieve and of the criteria against which they will be assessed. This allows them to gear their learning activities towards the achievement of the relevant goals and to evaluate their performance in an informed manner. This makes assessment formative and not simply evaluative. Transparency also relates to the readability of students' achievements in the language. For example, use of the Council of Europe scales allows students to evaluate their achievements in different languages against internationally recognised benchmarks and thus to construct their own language profile. (It may also be relevant to encourage students to aim for specific internationally validated examinations.)

It is also important that assessment be an integral component of ongoing learning activities. The traditional once-off end-of-year examination hardly encourages students to view assessment (or learning) as ongoing processes. Assessment should therefore be a regular activity linked in to the accomplishment of specific tasks or projects - task-based continuous assessment. Requiring students to constitute *portfolios* on relevant language-related topics is another valuable activity in terms of both learning and assessment in that it engages students in independent information gathering and organisation in and through the TL.

Self-assessment also plays an important role in developing students' self-directive skills. Indeed, students can only be considered to be empowered if they are able to evaluate their abilities independently and to make informed judgements of what they know or can do, and thus of what they still need to learn. Gradual involvement of students in the evaluation and assessment of their own work is thus an integral component of a methodology of empowerment. Similar remarks apply to shared and peer assessment.

It is also relevant to plan for a further level of student involvement in their learning programme, namely student input and feedback on the programme itself. Clearly, this goes beyond the specific objectives pursued by a given course. It does, however, contribute to the development of a dialogue between students as involved actors on the one hand, and the teacher or institution on the other hand, and thus helps students to develop a broadly reflective approach to their learning. Furthermore, it provides a valuable channel of information which institutions can use to monitor the effectiveness of their decisions with respect to the nature of the learning outcomes set (cf. Chapter 2) as well as various aspects of pedagogy. In this way, student participation can serve to enhance the quality of student learning while also operating as an invaluable management tool (cf. Chapter 4). Student involvement of this nature can operate via feedback questionnaires, course assessment groups, department committees, or other forms of student participation in programme evaluation and planning.

- To what degree and in which ways does the philosophy of teaching and learning of your institution address the goals of learner empowerment and preparation for life long language learning outlined above?
- Which measures are taken to ensure transparency with regard to course content and objectives, the work required of students, and assessment criteria? Are these adequate to ensure an informed involvement of students in the teaching-learning process?
- In which ways does your institution cater for learner training in the area of language learning?
- What role do task- or project-based activities (including learner diaries and portfolio preparation) play in teaching and assessment? Has your institution developed an explicit policy regarding the progressive involvement of students in the planning and realisation of language learning tasks so as to support the move from teaching to learning?

3.4. Enabling conditions for quality teaching and learning

Pursuing a process agenda in HE language teaching and learning calls for a substantial change in the knowledge-transmission based approach to teaching which has dominated in many HE institutions. Furthermore, the change in pedagogical strategies which is required to address this agenda effectively requires support and acknowledgement at institutional level. Three points merit particular attention in this respect.

The first relates to the implications of ECTS in calculating programme load. The introduction of ECTS requires HE institutions to focus on the work that students have to undertake rather than on what the teacher does in terms of contact hours. In this way, it is a learner- and a learning-centred system as opposed to teacher- and teaching-centred one. This has at least two main implications. One is that traditional means of calculating the work load of HE teachers needs to be rethought around the tasks and activities in which students will engage. The other is that learning activities undertaken outside of the classroom need to be given full recognition in students' programme of study. This provides for much greater degree of flexibility in pedagogical terms. Portfolio development, information gathering tasks and project work, to mention just a few, help students develop independent language learning skills and should therefore be an integral part of an empowerment oriented pedagogy. Much of this learning, however, will take place outside of the traditional classroom setting. ECTS makes it possible to integrate learning activities of this nature fully into students' overall academic programme. A coherent application of ECTS should therefore logically contribute to the move from teaching to learning outlined above.

The second point follows on logically from the first and relates to the definition of teachers' working loads. Traditionally, HE institutions have defined teachers' tasks in terms of contact hours in the classroom. This approach focuses on teaching (and in simplistically quantitative terms, too) rather than on learning, and is thus in conflict with the vision of HE which underpins the ECTS. If HE institutions wish to make the goal of learner empowerment a reality, they also need to find procedures for defining teachers' tasks around student learning. For example, a language project undertaken by a group of students can involve a range of different activities (information search and sifting, conceptual organisation of a written report, rehearsal and language preparation for an oral presentation, preparation and correction of written reports or illustrative material, etc). Each of these stages may call for guidance and input from the teacher (advice on potentially relevant information sources, periodic consultation on the organisation or presentation of the project, correction of drafts, etc), but not necessarily in the traditional classroom teaching mode: Consultation via email, ongoing input and discussion in small project groups, individualised feedback and guidance either face-to-face or via email are all pedagogical strategies which are consonant with a learning-centred approach to HE language study. At the same time, non-traditional modes of pedagogical intervention of this nature must receive official acknowledgement at institutional level: Otherwise there will be a serious disincentive for teachers to move away from the traditional approach based on teaching hours to a more a learning-oriented mode of instruction. In other words, a learning-centred approach to teaching calls for a learning-sensitive calculation of teachers' tasks and workload.

A third point relates to teachers' preparedness for the demands of a process oriented approach to teaching and learning. As already pointed out, the goal of learner empowerment calls for a change both in pedagogical strategies and in assessment procedures. To take just one example, the "can-do" statements of the Council of Europe provide a valuable tool for achieving transparency in terms of both objectives and assessment. Nevertheless, to be used effectively, these scales have to be rendered operational with respect to the specifics of each language and transformed into assessment instruments which are comprehensible to and useable by both teachers and students. This is just one of the many pedagogical challenges which the move from teaching to learning outlined above sets for teachers. Teacher training is thus a basic enabling condition for the successful implementation of this change in HE practice.

In which ways has the introduction of ECTS influenced the manner in which course content is defined and student work organised at your institution?

- On which basis does your institution calculate student workloads in courses with respect to different types of learning activity?
- On which basis does your institution calculate teachers' workload, and do these procedures take into account non-traditional modes of pedagogical action? Is the current situation satisfactory, and in which ways could it be improved so as to support the move from teaching to learning?

4. Management of Teaching and Learning

4.1. Introduction: Management of Languages in a Quality Context

The curriculum followed by students of language and the learning activities which they undertake inevitably exist within a system of organisation and management. Today there is increasing awareness of the need to ensure quality in the structures and processes of institutions so that teachers are properly supported and learners may draw full benefit from their studies. Measures set in place to monitor and evaluate Higher Education act as an assurance, not only to governments who fund education but also to the other stakeholders in education, employers, prospective students and society as a whole, that what is offered is of an appropriate standard and quality.

The concern with quality may be seen at different levels, from central government to university management and individual departments.

In line with their responsibilities for ensuring that courses and subjects taken by students are set at appropriate levels and that provision is regularly updated and improved, central governments through ministries of education, or their agencies, are responding to the quality agenda by establishing systems of evaluation, review, and enhancement. Within particular countries, there may also be guidelines or benchmarks covering the delivery of programmes in particular subject areas with a view to ensuring that key elements are covered and there is general understanding of the nature of study in these areas.

Traditionally, certain national administrations have allowed greater or lesser degrees of autonomy to individual institutions but, whatever the process, there is a clear trend towards the establishment of systems that oblige universities to effect regular evaluation of their work. At the level of the Higher Education Institution, there are, therefore, increasingly likely to be a range of measures with which languages will, in common with other subject areas, have to comply.

Units managing languages will thus interact with their universities and, through them, with national administrations and their accreditation and evaluation bodies as well as with other appropriate stakeholders.

Despite differences of detail, certain broad trends emerge.

- Accreditation of new programmes. In some cases, new programmes will be accredited directly by national administrations or their agents, while in others, this accreditation may be undertaken by the HEIs themselves, but with external input.
- Evaluation at national level to ensure that the quality in existing provision is maintained. There may be regular evaluations of HEIs or of specific areas of provision as a whole by the government concerned or its agencies. In the best instances, such reviews will both offer assurance and promote enhancement.
- Evaluation of Quality undertaken by *HEIs*. Units of language management may have to make a report to, or be assessed by, a higher level or committee of the institution at regular intervals. Such reports enable those directly concerned with language teaching to consider their practice and potential areas for enhancement as well as offering assurance to the institution of the quality and good functioning of the provision.
- Promotion of quality within the subject field by guidelines or benchmarks. Frequently, there will be national guidelines or benchmarks regulating the content for particular areas of study against which provision has to be weighed. These may be more or less detailed but, in general, some latitude is likely to be allowed, so that curricula may be drawn up in line with local profiles and requirements. In the UK, for instance, there are now general subject guidelines for most areas of study which offer a broad framework for the subject but leave scope for individual syllabuses.
- Employment needs. In instances of best practice, accreditation, evaluation, and enhancement processes focus not only on the HEI and the teaching it provides but also take into account the needs of employers and the career outlets for graduates. Depending on the system, the channels through which the unit gathers this information may also be scrutinised. Indeed, in some member states, such material is mandatory prior to the acceptance or renewal of a particular programme or set of courses. (See also 4.3.3.) It may well be that the regular evaluations undertaken by departments themselves at periodic intervals might also benefit from input by non-academic stakeholders such as employers or potential employers of language graduates.
- Peer expertise. The actual process of evaluation and, sometimes, accreditation that takes place to validate and monitor language education habitually draws on expertise provided by academic peers, whether national, European, or beyond. In addition to the aspect of validation and evaluation, such interaction facilitates the spread of knowledge and practice across different institutions in a country or, indeed, across countries.

4.2. Institutional organisation and promotion of language education

Within institutions, there are a range of practices which contribute to a coherent university framework that is supportive of language teaching:

- The higher education institution has a university language policy or strategy that covers all language education within the institution. The policy guarantees that learning of languages is encouraged across disciplines and properly resourced. Such a policy may also enhance language awareness and offer positive support to learners.
- The institution has clearly specified the units within the institution that are responsible for the management and development of language education, both for language specialists and for other interest groups.
- Within the university as a whole, there must be effective systems of internal communication, peer support, and mechanisms to promote improvement in the teaching and learning environment.

- There are arrangements for students to take a language or languages in addition to their main area of study and for this to be clearly structured, assessed, and certified. This implies that the institution's degree structure allows for the inclusion of language credits in degrees throughout the institution.
- The processes for the appointment and employment of staff enable language teaching units to take on staff that fit with the real needs of the unit. In seeking language teachers, the unit should not be restricted to staff from the home country.
- Structures are in place to enable regular interaction with both university and external stakeholders to permit an assessment of the relevance of the curriculum. (See also 4.1.)
- The university recognizes its role as a learning organisation and has a policy to support programme development and innovation and manage change. This presupposes an efficient staff development programme and a working structure to regularly evaluate its implementation (see also 4.1).

4.3. Managing teaching and language curricula

While systems to ensure quality exist at national and institutional levels, it is crucial for those managing language provision to set in place measures to ensure quality that are focused on language learning and take account of the specific needs of the learners in a particular area or institution.

Language teaching is delivered in many different types of unit but there are certain common factors that condition quality, effectiveness, and good management within them.

4.3.1 Motivating leadership

It is essential that both those who lead language units as well as the teaching staff should have a clear understanding of contemporary realities.

- The student learning experience has to be promoted in a situation where higher education increasingly caters for a wider variety of students. Account has to be taken too of the needs and constraints that university graduates face in today's labour market.
- The support and motivation of staff in the delivery of language education is a key factor in ensuring the quality of what the students learn.
- Those responsible for management and leadership need appropriate training in the area of human resources and finance, as well as in teaching and learning approaches and practices.

4.3.2 Personnel and Resources

Units responsible for language education should have the necessary independence to make decisions concerning the type of staff and resources that they need.

- The unit managing languages should have a determining voice in indicating the type and profile of staff that are required and in the recruitment of these staff.
- The resources available to the unit should be appropriate for the work undertaken in it. They should include facilities for autonomous learning such as a learning centre incorporating modern technology and media.
- Managers of units should be empowered to acquire the facilities necessary for language teaching and should have access to adequate financial resources.

4.3.3 Managerial structures

Managerial structures are an important prerequisite for the success of quality enhancement.

- Within any given institution there should be a unified management system for languages, so that coherent policies and forms of organisation for languages can be evolved for the institution as a whole. This might well imply that there should be an overall head of language provision with an overview of the full range of language provision.
- The languages unit should be structured in such a way as to incorporate regular opportunities for consultation and interaction between staff in scheduled meetings. This will facilitate the design and delivery of the curriculum as well as ensuring a more coherent approach and exchange of good practice. Such practices are, for instance, a regular feature of work in the United Kingdom and would be checked on audit.
- Where languages are taught in different departments or faculties within the HEI, there may be interdepartmental or interfaculty committees to consider the language provision.
- Responsibilities should be clearly defined, and students should understand the functions within the unit concerned (e.g. in Ireland and the UK there may be course directors, responsible for a programme of study; subject heads, responsible for a subject within a larger department; or year tutors, responsible for all the students in a particular year of study).
- There should be mechanisms for calculating staff workloads so that teaching staff have time for the necessary preparation and assessment as well the up-dating of their knowledge (which is a prescribed practice, for instance, in the Nordic Countries). The ancillary tasks undertaken in the languages area that are so crucial to the student experience must also have time allocated to them (e.g. advising students on their performance and language learning needs; setting up and organising periods of study abroad).
- There should also be regular review and monitoring of the curriculum to ensure that it remains current and in line with workplace needs and the requirements of a diverse student population from a range of departments. In Denmark, for instance, it is the responsibility of the individual institutions to carry out needs analysis, establish focus groups, alumni groups, and panels of future employers to assure the influence of the professional environment on the design of individual programmes. In Ireland, programmes submitted to the Higher Education and Training Awards Council are expected to include market analysis and interaction with business. Where languages represent a sizeable component, needs analysis must include the language.
- The work of the languages unit should include opportunities for interaction with a range of other bodies both to publicise and inform the language provision. This might take the form of participation in careers exhibitions and language fairs both inside and outside institutions. Opportunities for consultation and work with other sectors of educational provision (schools, institutions of further or technical education, lifelong learning provision) should also help to create a more widely-based understanding of the role of languages.

4.3.4 Organisation of student learning

Language courses should be appropriately tailored to student needs, in the light of their entry levels and prior knowledge.

- It should be possible to offer credit to people for language learning undertaken outside HEI (prior to entry, or in the course of life experience or careers).
- There should be a means of taking account of language learning by HEI students in settings outside the formal curriculum during their studies, such as time spent in target linguistic communities.

4.4. Facilitating and supporting learners

Effective management of language study implies that there will be measures in place to support learners and help them make the most of their learning experience. Full and transparent information will be available about the various aspects of their language studies.

- Before they enrol in language courses, learners should receive detailed information about the programmes, modules of study, and expected learning outcomes, so that they are able to choose their studies with a clear understanding of what is involved.
- Open days which give potential applicants the opportunity to visit a department, view the facilities, and meet staff and current students serve to increase understanding of language study and clarify the content and approach of particular programmes. Such open days for school pupils are organised on a regular basis in countries such as Austria, Ireland, and the UK.
- A properly planned learning experience presupposes that once enrolled students receive clear outlines of course content, the scheduling of study, and the assessment envisaged. They also need to have information about the proportion of working time allocated to particular elements and about the relative weighting of class-based instruction, group or individual projects, and independent study. Credit-based systems of organising and describing learning (ECTS or equivalent) allow for such information to be given and for workloads for units to be calculated and compared.
- The web may be used as an effective means of delivering information about programmes and units of study at different stages of the student experience, facilitating access not only within the country and university but also internationally. The web may be helpful too in supporting a range of course work and learning activities
- HEIs and departments should keep records of student enrolments, progress, and results which are accessible to those concerned with the learning process. Such records permit closer monitoring of the overall progress of individual students, supplying the necessary background material for the counselling and advice that are essential if students are to draw maximum profit from language learning. Good records are also essential to the production of clear and comparable transcripts of study, something which is crucial to movement and employment within the European Union. Specialised administrative staff are needed to set up and hold such records in institutions.
- During their programme of study, students of a language or languages habitually spend time outside their institution in an area where their language is spoken, practising the language and learning at first hand about the country concerned. Such periods of time in target linguistic communities must be efficiently managed within a clear and transparent structure, so that students are supported in the processes of application and in the period in the host country.
- Interaction between European partners and student and staff mobility are often facilitated by an International Office, or a similar body, which offers a range of administrative and informational support to staff and students engaged in international activities, both incoming and outgoing.

4.5. Feedback, evaluation and enhancement

Within the administrative unit responsible for language education, a regular review of particular courses allows those concerned to achieve a fuller understanding of their work as a whole, its plus and minus points. Information obtained from a variety of sources also helps managers and staff to gauge the effectiveness of particular courses and of the teaching given and to see where improvements need to be made.

4.5.1 Student feedback

For student learning in languages to be optimised, it is essential that the learner should be placed at the centre of provision. In this learner centred vision of language education, good management will imply discussing their experience with students and taking note of their comments.

- Units will also wish to consider the performance and results of their students as indicators of the success of their learning experience. In this way, the curriculum may be improved in line with pre-existing student competences and attainment, course experience, and perceived needs.
- Consultation with students may take a variety of forms. Student representation on course committees, subject or study boards, or special student staff liaison committees allows matters to be raised as teaching progresses and adjustments made. This is common practice in the UK and is checked when institutions are audited. In Finland and Lithuania, students are members of Departmental and Faculty Boards and participate in discussion of issues. In the Netherlands, each programme of study has a programme committee with legal status which plays an important role in relation to the internal assessment of the curriculum as well as in curriculum innovation.
- Questionnaires (which may focus on the module of study or programme as a whole or the teaching of a member of staff) are usually administered towards the end of a period of study and have been a regular feature in many institutions. They provide an opportunity for anonymous student input. While not without its critics, such evaluation at periodic intervals is now a regular feature in many European countries, including, among others, the Netherlands, where systematic course evaluation has been in place for many years or Lithuania where it has been more recently introduced. In Austria students must by law undertake an evaluation of their teachers at least once every four semesters.
- Discussion of the course experience with students in a course or module forum or in small focus groups can allow more extensive and qualitative comments to be made. In Norway an evaluation session (fagdag or subject day) enables staff and students to come together to discuss courses and curriculum.

4.5.2 Staff consideration of provision

It is standard, within certain institutions, for there to be regular assessment and discussion amongst teachers of the year's or semester's work and consideration of changes that would be helpful for the next session.

- Such discussions should take account of the various indicators of student reaction (their views as expressed in a range of ways, see 4.5.1) as well as the evidence of performance statistics (failure and progression rates, profiles of achievement, see 4.5.1). The existence of regular meetings of this type enables staff to take ownership of their work and to evaluate their practice on an on-going basis.

4.5.3 Networking on a European Level: Further Action in the Quality Area

European teachers and departments of languages have much to learn from one another and can benefit from a sharing of subject expertise and teaching and learning approaches. While the need for networks of departments and staff to exchange ideas is particularly evident in rapidly changing fields such as ICT, where it is difficult for any one department to remain abreast of all developments, such networks are also crucial in other areas. There should be networks for the promotion of staff interaction and discussion of educational practice in the area of language learning. The organisation of inter-country courses and collaborative learning projects through target languages in different discipline fields should also be facilitated.

Impetus for inter-European cooperation between departments of languages might usefully come through a system launched by the European centre. This might provide funding for inter-departmental networks for which co-operating universities could apply. Networks of this type would be particularly beneficial in promoting developments in areas such as staff interaction; inter-country courses and collaborative learning projects.

Area for further work

- Establish a Higher Education European Project with representatives from language programmes in different member states to develop criteria for the evaluation of language learning in non-formal situations outside Higher Education, whether prior to Higher Education or undertaken during the study period.

5. Teacher training

5.1. Introduction

Previous chapters have highlighted a number of key criteria with respect to the enhancement of quality in HE language studies. One relates to the identification of relevant learning outcomes, such that HE language courses prepare students meaningfully for the language-related demands they will encounter both during their academic programme and in their professional life (Chapter 2). Another relates to the move from teaching to learning, and thus to the goal of learner empowerment within the context of life long learning (Chapter 3). Both of these criteria are linked to the demands of the current social and economic environment, in which languages are playing an increasing role in both academic and professional life, and in which students will be required to pursue their language learning further either to acquire new skills in known languages or to learn new languages. These objectives require HE institutions and language teachers to move beyond the traditional knowledge transmission based view of language teaching. For such a change to be effective, it needs to be supported and fostered by appropriate measures in terms of the management of teaching and learning (Chapter 4). It also calls for systematic attention to be given to the training and professional development of HE language teachers.

The need for teacher training within a quality enhancement perspective may be seen from two angles. In the first instance, the re-orientation of the goals of HE language teaching calls for what may be a substantial change in pedagogical practice for a considerable number of language teachers: It is thus necessary to set up structures which can help teachers to adapt to this change. Secondly, and more fundamentally, an outcomes- and empowerment-oriented pedagogy makes a number of specific demands on teachers' pedagogical skills, and these need to be developed in a focused manner. In this respect it has to be borne in mind that it is language teachers who are most directly responsible for realising the changes outlined above in terms of course design, materials development, and direct teaching. The success of changes in the overall policy of language teaching at institutional level thus depends crucially on the pedagogical awareness and skills of the teachers who will be called upon to realise these changes at classroom level. Teacher training is thus an essential component of a coherent policy of quality enhancement in HE language teaching.

Four main areas need to be addressed with respect to the development of a focused strategy of teacher training at HE level - the content of teacher training programmes, the practical organisation of such programmes, the manner in which training and ongoing professional development are integrated into teachers' careers, and the training of teacher trainers.

5.2. The content of HE teacher training

The skills and competences which HE language teachers need to acquire arise out of the objectives they are required to pursue with their students. It is therefore necessary to look in detail at the demands generated by the changes described in previous chapters make on teachers.

Firstly, the growth in the demand for language learning, especially in the case of students of other disciplines, is leading to the creation of an increasingly wide range of language programmes with objectives different from those of the traditional philologically based model. Furthermore, in many cases, language teachers are being asked to develop programmes which are geared to the professional needs of students in a variety of different study orientations. Responding to these demands requires teachers to explore the linguistic and functional

characteristics of potentially unfamiliar academic and professional domains, and to develop relevant outcomes-oriented learning programmes. This calls for familiarity with at least the basic principles of needs analysis, the ability to formulate relevant and attainable learning objectives, to create coherent outcomes-oriented course structures and to devise appropriate assessment procedures.

Secondly, preparing students for life long learning calls for a range of educationally oriented pedagogical skills which go beyond the simple transmission of factual information about the TL or the development of discrete transactional skills. This calls for a familiarity with aspects of the learning process in both attitudinal and psychological terms. It also requires teachers to develop specific pedagogical techniques for helping students to acquire the strategies they need in order to initiate an independent and self-directive approach to their language learning. (This includes an understanding of the change in teacher-student roles in a learner-centred approach to teaching.) HE institutions are also being called upon to expand the scope of their activities to cater for continuing education geared to the needs of persons already engaged in professional life. Responding to this challenge calls for an exploration of the goals, expectations and learning habits of a student population potentially different from that with which most HE language teachers are familiar, and the development of appropriate pedagogical strategies.

Thirdly, technological developments are opening up new teaching-learning possibilities. Translating these possibilities into pedagogical practice requires teachers to acquire new skills, not only in terms of the manipulation of the technologies themselves, but also with respect to the integration of these technologies into a coherent framework of relevant pedagogical objectives.

Finally, budgetary constraints often make it necessary to cater for additional language teaching in innovative ways. For this reason, language teachers find themselves being asked to do more with the same resources, which places additional demands on their pedagogical creativity and flexibility.

These new demands make it necessary for teachers to acquire new skills or to upgrade their existing pedagogical repertoire in a number of areas, which include the following:

- Need analysis procedures, including information gathering techniques and strategies for consulting specialist informants.
- Outcomes oriented course design and development in both product (Chapter 2) and process (Chapter 3) terms.
- Learner-centred pedagogy, including the change in teacher-student roles, learner training, the pedagogical management of project and portfolio work, and self-assessment.
- Materials development and adaptation, including the ability to adapt existing pedagogical materials to specific needs.
- Outcomes oriented assessment procedures in both product and process terms – creation of outcomes-oriented assessment techniques, adaptation of existing instruments, trialling and validation of assessment criteria with colleagues, etc.
- The integration of ICT into language pedagogy, and in particular as regards the potential contribution of ICT to the development of learner autonomy and self-directiveness.

- A research project conducted by Mike Grenfell of the University of Southampton (www.lang.ltsn.ac.uk/ttfl) has analysed the skills required by foreign language teachers in Europe at secondary level with a view to developing a profile of "the European language teacher". A similar project should be undertaken to investigate the skills and competences required of HE language teachers in Europe. This is fundamental to the design of focused and relevant teacher training programmes for HE language teachers at European level.
- A practically relevant and user-friendly data base of recent methodological developments and instances of good practice in the field of HE language pedagogy should be developed and made widely available to both language teachers and teacher trainers.

5.3. Strategies for teacher training

In view of the rapidly evolving role of languages in HE and therefore the evolving demands being made of HE language teachers, teacher training has to be an integral component of teachers' careers. This calls for consideration of the practical options which exist with respect to the organisation of teacher training programmes, and also for concerted action by political and institutional actors to make teacher training a reality. A number of factors need to be taken into account in developing a coherent strategy for HE language teacher training.

5.3.1 Pre- vs in-service teacher training

Most countries in Europe have a pre-service teacher training diploma for secondary teachers, and this is often a precondition for employment. An equivalent qualification does not exist at HE level. This may result from a neglect of the pedagogical skills of HE teachers (primary importance having traditionally been accorded to excellence in research at the expense of pedagogy), the cost of setting up such programmes, or the wish not delay the entry of HE teachers into professional life. Indeed, most initiatives relating to the training of HE teachers involve in-service training, even if this varies significantly across countries. In the United Kingdom, for example, new teaching staff (all disciplines) are required to complete a pedagogical diploma within a set number of years subsequent to appointment; in Hungary, all HE teachers have to participate in in-service training on a regular basis, which is operationalised as 120 hours on an accredited teacher training course every 7 years; in Denmark, the government places an obligation on HE institutions to organise in-service training for their staff, the training programmes themselves being the responsibility of the individual institution. At the current point in time, then, the trend is to approach the training of HE teachers, including language teachers, by means of various forms of in-service training. This option has a certain logic: Given the evolving nature of the demands made on HE teachers, regular in-service training would in any event be needed to help teachers update and upgrade their pedagogical awareness and skills.

Another question which arises is whether in-service training should relate to general pedagogic skills or whether it should be subject-specific. The first strategy has attractions for institutions in that it is cheaper and easier to organise. The national reports on which this document is based, however, argue unequivocally for a subject-specific approach as being both more effective and more motivating for the teachers involved. The goal should therefore be to set up language teaching specific in-service teacher training.

5.3.2 Recruitment and support for new staff

Given the current absence of a pre-experience pedagogical qualification for HE teachers, as well as the clear preference for in-service training, questions arise with respect to both the recruitment and the support of new staff.

In terms of recruitment, the situation is varied and often ad hoc. Criteria used include possession of a degree in the relevant field, of a secondary school teaching diploma or another pedagogical qualification (MA in TEFL, for example), a period of study or residence in the target language country, or prior teaching experience. Finland offers an interesting example of good practice in this field. Candidates for HE teaching posts have to submit a pedagogical portfolio including examples of course outlines and teaching materials which they have developed,

as well as a characterisation of their teaching philosophy: Clearly, this initiative allows for a qualitative assessment of candidates' pedagogical skills prior to employment, and also encourages future teachers to initiate a critical evaluation of their current pedagogical practice.

With respect to new staff, pedagogical support in the first years of teaching is crucial, as these years have a strongly formative influence on teachers' subsequent careers. (This is made all the more important in the absence of pre-experience pedagogical qualification.) Here too, the current situation varies considerably from one country to another. Belgium offers two interesting examples of good practice in this respect. Certain Belgian universities (*Université Catholique de Louvain*, *Katholieke Universiteit Leuven*) have systems of "fostering" whereby new teachers are shadowed by an experienced teacher, each observing the other's classes as a basis for a shared reflection on pedagogical choices. In the French-speaking Community of Belgium, a pedagogical qualification (the *Capaes*) has to be completed by non-university HE teachers within 6 years of employment. Two aspects of this qualification merit particular attention. The first is the system of *accompagnement pédagogique*, whereby one or more senior colleagues (the *équipe d'accompagnement*) observe the new teacher's classes over a period of time and prepare a consultative report on the teacher's pedagogical performance; the second is the preparation by each candidate of an individual pedagogical portfolio containing examples of the teaching materials they have produced and of other pedagogical initiatives.

5.3.3 The organisation of in-service teacher training

Teacher training contributes significantly to the effectiveness of language programmes and needs therefore to be incorporated into quality enhancement strategies at both national and institutional levels. Furthermore, such training should be made obligatory for all teachers and fully integrated into their professional responsibilities on a contractual level. Various options exist with respect to the practical organisation of in-service training – seminars organised at institutional level, refresher courses organised nationally or via cultural agencies, study leave, on-line study, the use of pedagogical projects as a springboard for focused professional development, etc. Two initiatives merit consideration with respect to the content of in-service HE language teacher training. One is the on-line language teacher training course DELPHI, organised by the University of Birmingham (www.delphi.bham.ac.uk/whatisdelphi.htm): This course provides teachers with a thorough and broadly based introduction to various aspects of pedagogy relevant to HE language teaching, and in particular materials development and adaptation. Another is the TALLENT course offered by, among others, the Universities of Birmingham and of Limerick: This course provides teachers with focused training in the use of new technologies as means of enhancing language learning, as well as an introduction to various forms of independent learning.

The practical organisation of in-service teacher training also raises questions of an administrative or institutional nature. Specifically, which institutional structures are best suited to support focused in-service training in the various forms it can assume? The concentration of teaching in a language centre, for example, can facilitate the organisation of shared pedagogical projects incorporating ongoing professional development; it can also contribute to the creation of a critical mass which facilitates the organisation of focused and subject-specific teacher training courses. In Switzerland, for example, all teachers working at university language centres have a contractual obligation to follow in-service training in language teaching methodology. This integrates teacher training into teachers' professional commitments and also allows for focused training in the teachers' own subject area. Considerations of this nature relate in part to practical organisational factors; they also influence the role which professional training and development play in teachers' self-perceptions in professional terms.

- Which measures are undertaken in your country with respect to in-service teacher training? Are these measures adequate? In which ways could improvements be made and / or appropriate measures set in place?
- Is participation in teacher training obligatory for **HE** language teachers?
- How adequate are the criteria upon which **HE** language teachers are recruited in your institution or country? Are they sufficient to ensure the recruitment of appropriately qualified and motivated staff?
- If not, in which way could they be improved?
- Which support structures are made available to new staff in your institution or country? Are they adequate, and in which ways could they be improved?

5.4. Integration of training into teachers' careers

The nature and goals of **HE** institutions are evolving rapidly and the pedagogical qualities of teaching staff are assuming equal importance to their research abilities: Both are prerequisites for quality education. In this context, training and ongoing professional development with respect to day-to-day pedagogical practice are integral components of the career of **HE** teachers. This places on teachers the explicit obligation to participate in ongoing professional development programmes, while it also requires employing institutions to set up conditions which make it possible for teachers to participate in such programmes. Indeed, if teachers are to foster life-long learning among their students, they too need to be engaged in the same dynamic.

In this light, it is necessary to evaluate the role which training and professional development play in **HE** teachers' careers, and also the role which this activity should receive in programme planning and development.

5.4.1 The career structure of **HE** language teachers

At this point, it needs to be recalled that a variety of different categories of **HE** teachers are, in one way or another, involved in the teaching of language or of language-related subjects. Some work on programmes which prepare students for language-specialist professional domains (most obviously, translation and interpreting); others work on Modern Language degrees, and others are involved in teaching language to students of other disciplines. The imperatives outlined in Chapters 2 and 3 are equally applicable to all three categories of **HE** teachers, and so too is the need for ongoing professional development in the areas outlined in section 1 above. It is, however, helpful to distinguish between the different categories of **HE** language teacher with respect to the implications which the need for quality teaching and thus for ongoing pedagogical development have for different categories of **HE** language teachers in career terms.

Traditionally, the career path of **HE** teachers, including those involved in the field of languages, has depended largely on completion of a doctoral degree, research and publication. The move to an outcomes oriented approach to course design, and the concern with learner empowerment within the context of life long learning call for new initiatives and a re-evaluation of accepted pedagogical practice. These developments place greater demands on **HE** teachers on the pedagogical level, and this clearly needs to be taken into account in terms of teacher evaluation and with respect to promotion criteria. It would indeed be unreasonable to expect teachers to invest heavily in their teaching activities and in developing their pedagogical skills and expertise if this fails to receive formal acknowledgement at institutional level. **HE** institutions therefore need to develop procedures which are able to evaluate pedagogical performance in a relevant and transparent manner; they also need to draw up career paths which integrate the evaluation of teachers' pedagogical performance together with their performance in the research field. These considerations are most directly relevant to **HE** teachers teaching on language-specialist and Modern Language programmes.

Teachers involved in the teaching of language to students of other disciplines form another category of **HE** language teachers which merits separate consideration. These teachers often have a career profile and professional interests which are primarily pedagogical in nature. They may not have opted for the traditional path

of thesis and publication, which means that they often have a somewhat marginal status in HE institutions. Furthermore, many of these teachers work in language centres, and significant numbers are employed on a part-time basis: Both of these factors exacerbate their marginalisation in institutional terms. At a time when the demand for the teaching of languages to students of other disciplines is increasing substantially, the institutional status and career path of the persons involved in providing this teaching clearly need to be addressed in any coherent quality enhancement strategy for HE language teaching. A number of constructive initiatives have been made with respect to this category of HE language teachers. In Finnish university language centres, for example, teachers are under no obligation to undertake academic research: This measure encourages them to invest in their teaching and in more applied forms of pedagogical research. In Belgium, the *Universite Catholique de Louvain* and the *Université Libre de Bruxelles* have both created the post of *maître de langue*, a status which is specific to language teachers. This post offers a career path which reflects the specificities of HE language teaching, and in which promotion is based on pedagogical achievement rather than the traditional criteria of thesis and publication.

5.4.2 Integration of teacher training into programme development

Teachers' pedagogical skills and awareness are an integral component of quality in language teaching and learning. For this reason, they require focused attention within any coherent strategy of quality enhancement at institutional level. They should also be integrated into the planning and budgeting of specific programme development projects so as to ensure that teachers have the skills they need to meet the demands made upon them by the revision of existing programmes, the design of new programmes, or the attempt to set up new modes of teaching and learning. To give one example, the setting up of a self-access centre as a focal point for an extension in the provision of learning possibilities should logically include an explicit budget allocation designed help teachers to develop the pedagogical insights, organisational skills and the technical know-how they need in order to exploit (and thus help students to benefit from) the specificities and potentialities of such a centre. Teacher training should therefore be an integral part of the working life of HE language teachers in at least two ways. On one level, it should be an ongoing aspect of their professional life; on another, it should occur in a targeted and goal-oriented manner in support of the realisation of specific pedagogical projects at institutional level.

- Do HE language teachers in your country or institution enjoy a status and conditions of employment which are conducive to pedagogical innovation and to investment in quality of teaching? Are there any obstacles which serve as a block or disincentive to such investment? Which measures (promotion criteria, status, conditions of employment, etc) could be taken to improve the situation?
- To what degree does your institution provide for teacher training within the framework of the revision or design of language programmes or in the setting up of pedagogical initiatives (eg. the creation of a self-access centre or the introduction of new modes of teaching and learning)? Are such measures adequate? In which way could teacher training be integrated more fully into programme design projects?
- Assess which organisational structures are most conducive to the creation of a focused and coherent strategy of language teacher training in your institution. Do any obstacles stand in the way of setting up such structures, and which measures could be taken to overcome them?

5.5. Training the trainers

The training and ongoing professional development of teachers is fundamental to the enhancement of the quality of HE language teaching and learning. As indicated above, catering for effective teacher training calls for consideration of a number of factors relating both to the content and to the practical organisation of training and professional development programmes. Another factor, of course, relates to the skills and expertise of the persons who will be responsible for administering and teaching such programmes. Despite a number of constructive initiatives, some of which have been mentioned above, it has to be acknowledged that the whole

area of teacher training for HE teachers, including that of language teachers, is still seriously underdeveloped in many European countries. The same is true with respect to the selection, preparation and training of future teacher trainers.

In part, this needs to be addressed at institutional level: Each HE institution should therefore identify experienced and pedagogically competent teachers who will be able to initiate and monitor teacher training within their own institution. (Such individuals should of course be given support in this task, eg. by being funded to follow advanced teaching or teaching training courses.) It would, however, be unproductive for HE institutions to approach this task in isolation. Many if not most of the challenges which institutions are facing are common to other institutions across Europe. It would therefore be most productive to approach the training of HE language teacher trainers at a European level within the framework of a cross-national project. It is also necessary to develop a quality control and enhancement framework for HE language teacher training which will allow institutions to evaluate the effectiveness of teacher training courses provided.

In conclusion, the ultimate goal of quality enhancement in HE language studies is to be sought in the relevance and quality of student learning. This, however, depends on the quality of the teaching which students receive, which in turn depends on the pedagogical awareness and skills of the teachers who are responsible for designing and delivering teaching-learning programmes. This, too, is dependent upon the opportunities which teachers have for renewing and upgrading their professional awareness and pedagogical skills. Teacher training is thus a key component of the "quality circle" in HE language studies.

- A European project should be launched to draw up a profile of the skills and competences required of HE language teacher trainers across Europe. This project should be integrated with the project designed to identify the skills and competences required by HE language teachers themselves. In combination, the two initiatives should be seen as the core for a sharing of insights and the development of practical teacher training initiatives across borders within the goal of enhancing the quality of HE language teaching in Europe.

