Languages, Diversity, Citizenship:
Policies for Plurilingualism in Europe

Strasbourg, 13-15 November 2002

CONFERENCE REPORT

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This report as well as both versions of the *Guide for the development of Language Education policies in Europe* (Main Version & Executive Version) and its Reference Studies can be downloaded from the following website www.coe.int/lang (Language Policies)

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THE CONFERENCE AND ITS CONTEXT

From linguistic diversity to plurilingual education
From one Conference to another:
Innsbruck (May 1999) - Strasbourg (November 2002)

In 2002, the *Modern Languages Division* became the *Language Policy Division,* which now operates alongside the European Centre for Modern Languages within the new Department of Language Education and Policy.

This name change has not affected the function of the Division, but simply confirms a de facto situation: one that has led member states first to work together in matters technical (but with major political potential) and later to explore issues of educational language policy, using teaching tools that had been developed jointly. Thanks to the emergence over the years of a shared educational culture, matters relating to the organisation of language teaching can now be addressed in the same spirit and from the same basic principles by States Party to the Council of Europe's Cultural Convention.

As before, the aim of the *Language Policy Division* is to promote a more wide-ranging approach to language teaching in the context of democratic citizenship. It is the job of the Division to foster and support intergovernmental co-operation, so as to identify effective strategies for greater diversification in language education, learning and skills. It has special responsibilities, therefore, as regards education in cultural diversity, equitable access to language teaching and establishing specific requirements for producing and improving the quality of teaching using transparent criteria and mutually compatible ways of assessing and certifying knowledge.

This programme has already been discussed and mapped out at the Innsbruck Conference (10-12 May 199), entitled: "*Linguistic diversity for democratic citizenship in Europe*[1]. This was the first conference held by the Division to focus clearly on how teaching was organised, rather than on pedagogical issues. It looked at the dominance of the teaching of English as a foreign language, but it was chiefly concerned with languages as a whole, and not just so-called foreign languages. The Innsbruck Conference helped to identify the next stages in the process, by underlining the need for joint discussion of the aims of language teaching in the context of democratic citizenship.

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[1] *Linguistic diversity for democratic citizenship in Europe – Proceedings,* 2000, Council of Europe - ISBN: 92-871-4384-6.

Meanwhile, the *European Year of Languages 2001*, implemented by the Division in association with the European Commission, helped give practical expression to this new determination to put diversification in language teaching at the centre of the work. Through the national committees responsible for co-ordinating the activities organised in the course of this Year, the various partners involved in educational language policy, in particular representatives of civil society, were able to forge closer contacts and test the effectiveness of public opinion campaigns aimed at promoting the learning of all languages: national, regional, "foreign" languages, the languages of one's neighbours, of new arrivals or far-off countries, "rare" languages, etc.

In keeping with the undertakings given in Innsbruck, the Division spent this period developing the promised "framework document" in the form of a draft *Guide for the development of language education policies in Europe: from linguistic diversity to plurilingual education*. It was this document that provided the focus for the present intergovernmental conference (13-15 November 2002): *Languages, Diversity, Citizenship: Policies for Plurilingualism in Europe*, which will hopefully allow some initial scrutiny of the new instrument and introduce national delegations to the "*Language Education Policy Profile*". The latter is a self-evaluation process for national policies, which is carried out in association with experts from other member states, an activity that is itself based partly on the *Guide*.

The earlier activities, meanwhile, are still going on and feature in this conference. The widespread adoption of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*[2] is specifically designed to create a wider variety of curricula for language training, while the continuing dissemination of the *European Language Portfolio* (with forty Portfolio models approved to date) is aimed at securing recognition for all forms of language skills and learning. Concern for quality is another prerequisite for diversification in life-long language teaching/learning, as the level of attention given to it by member states shows that diversifying the learning process does not mean third-rate courses and lower standards. Far from it, the *Common European Framework* and the *European Language Portfolio* make it possible in practical terms to run courses that realise the plurilingual potential of all speakers.

Against this background, the Strasbourg Conference aims to assess the possibilities for widening the range of educational provision and for making

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[2] *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: learning, teaching, assessment*: 2001, Council of Europe / Cambridge University Press, ISBN Hardback 0 521 80313 6, paperback: 0 521 00531 0.

the social demand for languages more nuanced and complex: enhancing and developing individuals' linguistic repertoire is ultimately about personal development (and, in particular, access to employment), but plurilingual education is about linguistic civility, respect and tolerance, essential requirements for living together in a democracy.

Note

This Report preserves the oral flavour of some of the contributions, and we trust that this variety and relative spontaneity will not prevent the reader from obtaining a full understanding of the opinions expressed therein.

B. Rugaas, Director General, General Direction IV – Education, Culture and Heritage, Youth and Sport, Council of Europe

I am pleased to welcome you on behalf of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe to this major conference on the theme of 'Languages, Diversity and Citizenship'. This event provides us with an opportunity to examine together, in greater depth, some of the policy issues that we attempted to put firmly on the political agenda during the European Year of Languages in 2001.

Our concern then, as always, is the democratisation of language learning - languages are for ALL and there can be no plurilingual elite; this was a central message of the European Year of Languages. The right to learn the languages of others is not only a necessity, but also a basic human right for active participation in our increasingly interactive Europe.

Our concern is with languages for social inclusion and for full participatory democratic citizenship at both national and European level. The European Year of Languages was a timely reminder also of the key role languages can and must play in bridging linguistic and cultural boundaries, thus strengthening tolerance and peace in our multicultural societies.

There are five or six times more national, regional or minority languages in Europe than there are countries to house them. Moreover, the hundreds of non-European languages, which have accompanied population migration, have complemented our indigenous linguistic diversity. If our linguistic and cultural diversity is to be genuinely protected and actively supported, then we need not only to consider language rights as part of human rights, but also to develop education for linguistic tolerance. This is a necessary basis for policies to promote linguistic diversity in societies and plurilingualism for citizens in Europe.

I note that this Conference adopts a somewhat global approach, in that it deals with both diversity in multilingual contexts and with diversification in language learning, as the basis for the development of plurilingualism among Europeans. I note with interest also the composition of the Round Table, this afternoon, where a holistic policy is adopted, bringing all the languages into the policy debate in an interrelated manner - not only so-called 'foreign' languages, but equally mother tongue, including minority language, and the languages of immigrant minorities.

I welcome the dual focus on language for communication and language for identity. I hope that this Conference will help national authorities to consider policies that treat language education policy as a global concept. This kind of policy takes account both of a country's linguistic heterogeneity and a vision of the state in a European context.

I wish to conclude by recalling the theme of democratisation and stressing the important contribution of politicians. Our parliamentarians play a key role in the policy decisions that can resolve linguistic conflict. Equally, their decisions make possible access to language learning for ALL, so that citizens can participate fully in democratic processes in our societies and can benefit fairly from economic opportunities.

L. M. de Puig, Chairman of the Committee on Culture, Science and Education, Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

The Parliamentary Assembly has noted with interest the Language Policy Division's initiative in organising this conference to follow up European Year of Languages - a campaign in which the Parliamentary Assembly was actively involved. This conference emphasises the importance of linguistic diversity and plurilingualism, as key elements in Council of Europe language policy. As a citizen and a politician I feel particularly concerned by the conference theme.

I am aware that, as Mr Rugaas has said, language is also a political issue. Language is a cultural asset and a means of communication, but language also has a political dimension: languages cannot blossom if they do not benefit from political protection or decisions by policy-makers.

The teaching of languages is no longer a mere 'technical' or pedagogical issue. It is increasingly a political issue because it touches on linguistic rights, participation in democratic life, democratic citizenship in Europe, social cohesion, identity and economic life. Decision-making in the field of language education policy must involve all levels of society, including politicians, administrators, parents, employers and the public at large.

Language education policies are of prime importance because language issues also reflect the conflict between the development of plurilingualism and market forces that lean towards the use of a single language.

Markets push more readily for monolingualism, which prompts us to think that this tendency would be incompatible with policies geared to diversity and

plurilingualism. And in that respect I would draw attention to the Committee of Ministers Declaration on cultural diversity.

I also favour plurilingualism because it is already something of a *de facto* situation in Europe. There are a great many citizens who are not monolingual, and it is a reality that will increasingly take hold. The idea of plurilingualism is realistic. There is also a concept of the plurilingual individual. I have sometimes spoken of the plurilingual condition. The fact is that in situations like mine for example or because of regional or minority languages, or having an English father and an Italian mother while living in France, close to the border with another country, there are opportunities for people to acquire languages and become plurilingual. I believe that efforts are needed to further protect and promote those opportunities, going on the advice of educationalists that language learning in education is limitless.

Children's ability to learn language is formidable. Generally, only one foreign language is learnt at school, but if their work is organised accordingly, our children can learn three or four languages by the time they are eighteen with no extra-special effort required.

The notion of plurilingualism implies a cultural asset: what is in a language, apart from the fact that it is a tool of communication? A wealth of culture of course, but language is also a means of personal fulfilment.

We must foster everyone's "plurilingual potential". Thinking in terms of monolingualism would be a step backwards, which I believe is impossible.

Plurilingualism also means preservation for many languages, particularly those termed as minority or regional languages.

Let us take the example of Catalan. The situation changed enormously in Spain after the dictatorship years, and various languages in Galicia, the Basque country and other areas were legalised. In Catalonia, the children have two official languages and in the education system all the pupils learn Catalan and Castilian Spanish, plus a foreign language, which is usually English. In the area adjacent to France, there is a tradition of speaking French, and Catalan is not very different. So, without any effort, children in Catalonia could be in a position, after upper secondary school, to begin to master four languages. Likewise, there are similarities with both Italian and Portuguese. This broad plurilingualism, and by this I mean language skills at any level, is possible. It is not always easy. Even with its legal status as the first language of Catalonia, Catalan may not necessarily be preserved. Alongside it we have a great language of culture, Spanish, which will always be a drawing force. That is a fact of life.

We on the Parliamentary Assembly Committee fully support your efforts and are looking to this conference to produce some good work and, hopefully, a set of far-reaching discussions and conclusions. I do hope that our Committee and the Parliamentary Assembly can benefit from your conclusions so that we can push ahead and break new ground in our future reports and proposals to governments. It is our job to make those proposals but it is your task, as experts, to help us prepare them. A European currency and a European economy have been built, a European defence is taking shape and a citizens' Europe is also on the agenda.

Building a Europe of languages is a huge challenge, another challenge to which we certainly, but you too, have to provide a joint response.

The challenge of diversification : Round Table – Chair : F. Goullier, Ministry of Education, France

The word "diversity" figures prominently in the title of this conference, and diversity is indeed a key issue in debate on plurilingualism. It is accordingly only logical that we should begin our proceedings with a panel discussion on the very subject of diversification of language learning, a theme on which some introductory words have already been said in the opening speeches.

At first glance respect for linguistic and cultural diversity and diversification of language learning appear to be one and the same idea. However, this is just a first impression. Although the importance of learning languages is a matter of general consensus, the same cannot be said of the importance attached to diversification of such learning. One need but look at the language policies actually implemented and at learners' behaviour and expectations.

This is why it is of interest to address this question at the very start of the conference.

The question of diversification in fact hinges on three main points:

1. We will make no progress in this area until the importance and the role of English teaching and learning have been determined.

2. It is only by discussing the precise purpose of diversification that we can define how far it should preferably go: which languages should be offered and taught and, in particular, what importance should be given to regional languages and the languages of linguistic minorities and migrants?

3. Lastly, this series of questions generates considerable tensions, to which the only answer lies in an explicit language policy which clearly determines the education's responsibility for promoting plurilingualism.

The first issue is addressed in the contribution from Professor Claude Truchot who deals with the question of the actual position and status of English in Europe.

English in Europe

Claude Truchot, Marc Bloch University, Strasbourg

In order to conduct a Europe-wide study of a phenomenon such as the current role and expansion of the English language, it is necessary to have access to data originating from scientific sources, and those data must cover the whole of Europe and the whole range of fields of language use. That is far from being the case at present. There are a fair number of studies meeting scientific criteria which concern areas such as the use of languages in scientific research and linguistic practice in European organisations. However, little is available concerning language use in business circles or the information society. It is paradoxical that use of languages in an occupational context, which is one of the strongest motives for learning English, is on the whole a relatively unknown field.

What is more, these studies predominantly originate from certain western European countries. Few come from central and eastern Europe or southern Europe, and where such studies do exist they are not widely distributed outside the specialist sectors concerned. Other data originate from institutions whose main role is not to monitor language use.

This means that what we have at present are pointers. They show that English indisputably holds sway in a number of fields, and its use is always linked to various forms of internationalisation. It is widespread in a number of countries, particularly in northern Europe.

Elsewhere, English is also equated with the international and the global, but this identification process seems to go well beyond the language's real vehicular function, particularly in countries whose own languages are also widely used. Apart from its effective role as a lingua franca, it is likely that some professed use of English does not reflect the true situation on the ground. The few studies on use of English in business circles have shown that people will readily give English prominence and make much of their proficiency in it, while disregarding their other languages. Some actual usage is probably also not linked to any real need. However, that is more difficult to demonstrate

For lack of appropriate studies, the role of English is frequently perceived as what we believe it to be. English is associated with the dominant values of today's society, where modern obligatorily means international and global. And English is the only language with those connotations, no matter how widespread other languages may be on the international scene. People place a higher value on English and on their own perception of their English skills, on

the use they allege to make of the language or the use they consider it should be given.

This means that what is uppermost in people's minds is not so much the language's utilitarian function as the values and the social role ascribed to it. Research does not yet draw this distinction between the functions of a language which is useful because no other language makes communication possible and its customary use, which has to do with ideological functions. And yet the history of languages shows the relevance of such a distinction.

Nevertheless, the status of English in language education policies, that is to say its role in education systems and the way in which it is taught, is in fact mainly based on incomplete data and the above subjective criteria.

David Graddol, who wrote a report entitled "The Future of English" for The British Council in 1997, expresses the view in a new study (2001) that account must be taken of English's new position as the lingua franca of Europe and that it must be taught as a second language. He criticises the Council of Europe's Common European Framework of Reference for Languages because it treats English as a foreign language. However, the examples he cites as proof of English's new role are derived from studies of situations which, at least for the time being, are not transposable to Europe as a whole, notably studies performed in Denmark and Sweden. We might add that, on account of the political, cultural and social implications, such status cannot be conferred on a language merely by observing how it is positioned.

The draft *Guide* on language education policies suggests that teaching and learning of English must be given special status. However, what is meant by "English"? Should teaching and learning this language be approached in the same way as any other language?

In the following text Professor Seidlhofer discusses the nature of English as an international language and the implications of this for eductation for plurilingualism

Thoughts about formulating a concept of international English and its compatibility with plurilingualism

Barbara Seidlhofer, University of Vienna

The very fact that English constituted a noticeable focus of this conference indicates a general awareness and expectation that the demand for English as a patently useful means of communication will be self-sustaining, at least in the

short and medium term. It seems to me, therefore, that the question to address in relation to diversification and plurilingualism is not "English **or** other/our languages?" but "How to deal with English in relation to language instruction generally?".

It seems to me that the first thing one needs to realize is that language is but an epiphenomenon of general cultural and socio-economic conditions and developments, that is to say, it accompanies these developments. The demand for English is driven by the globalized market economy, so to put it starkly, one could say that we are sold on English in Europe to the extent that we are sold on the global market economy, i.e. a culture of socially and ecologically destructive consumerism, instant gratification and monopolies by multinationals. McDonalds 'restaurants' are mushrooming in Europe and everywhere not because of the spread of English but because of the spread of western materialism. As long as 'the rich' speak English, those who want to get 'rich' quick will want to learn English quick – and their numbers have been rising exponentially.

Decision makers and experts in European language policies and education do not have any direct influence on this extralinguistic state of affairs. But they do on linguistic and educational matters. I should like to summarize the fairly radical proposals I put forward during the conference, one in each of these areas:

a) Linguistic

There is a deep-seated belief or feeling in society at large that the only legitimate, real speakers of a language are its native speakers. This belief also applies to English – witness all the dictionaries, grammars, and language-teaching materials, which are based on descriptions of native-speaker English. However, this is where the problem lies: English as a global language is such a unique phenomenon (ie on such an unprecedented scale) that we need an entirely new concept for what it is linguistically – very different both from English as a native language and also from English as a foreign language (as it has traditionally been taught, like German as a foreign language or Japanese as a foreign language).

So I suggest that we need to *reconceptualize* 'English' as the property of all who use it as a handy instrument, alongside the traditional concept of the property of its native speakers. The latter can stay intact for those who want to take it up, but this will probably be a small minority.

This reconceptualization of English as global rather than local also means, of course, that 'English' has to be uncoupled from the culture(s) of its origins and

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appropriated for the expression of the cultures of its international users. It also means that the British or the Americans no longer regulate the norms governing the use of English as an international language. This is legitimate and indeed logically necessary as soon as 'English' is proclaimed to be a global means of communication of unprecedented proportions.

All this also means that we urgently require a *description* of how users of English as an international language actually talk and write, in order to be able to derive an endonormative concept of EIL from this description. Working out such a description is a huge task, and most of the descriptive work still needs to be done.

b) Educational

I think we need to accept that it is unrealistic to teach diverse languages to a reasonably high level, so instead I suggest that we should invest in teaching for an understanding of diversity. Rather than trying to impart a high competence in several languages during schooling, it would be more productive to adopt an investment principle, that is to say, to prepare students for further learning. This process of further learning is now supported by TV and the internet, exchange programs, etc., which all give access to language outside the school. What can be done in school is to prepare children/learners to exploit the opportunities that arise for themselves, and according to their own needs. In curricular terms, this would mean a radical rethinking, away from trying to teach individual languages. So what would need to be taught above all is *language, not languages*. For some pupils, the language awareness thus fostered will lead to further learning of individual languages. An excellent beginning has been made in the various proposals for language awareness programmes/ éveil aux langues, but this needs to be implemented much more widely. In order to do this, a group of people could be appointed to look into a properly designed subject 'language and culture' which incorporates a general course illustrated with different languages according to the specific setting. Such a course could be a crucial foundation, taught as an absolutely obligatory one to, say, all 12-14 year olds.

I am fully aware that attempts to implement these proposals would be up against considerable institutional resistance. But I do not think that this should make it impossible to consider them seriously. As a first step, a clear distinction should be made between knowledge and beliefs, traditional assumptions and facts, and rational objections and misconceptions. For example, a remark that came up repeatedly during the conference in reaction to what I said at the Round Table was that "it is impossible to teach language without culture". I never suggested it was. What I did say was that if we truly

accept the implications of English being an international language, then it does not make sense to insist on a notion of a particular 'target culture' such as British or American culture. The cultural norms will have to evolve and to be negotiated just like the linguistic norms, and fostering the awareness of this necessity is probably the best thing we can do in education.

Let us now leave behind the most popular language in terms of learner demand (which is sometimes perceived as an obstacle to diversification) and consider another side to the problem.

The second issue introduced above was as follows:

> *It is only by discussing the precise purpose of diversification that we can define how far it should preferably go: which languages should be offered and taught and, in particular, what importance should be given to regional languages and the languages of linguistic minorities.*

In the following contribution, Dónall Ó Riagáin discusses the role and position of lesser used (regional and minority) languages in comparison with English, and with other international languages, emphasising the function of language in identity and history:

National minorities and respect for linguistic diversity

Dónall Ó Riagáin, Dublin, Ireland

Language is a tool for communication. But it is a lot more than that. It is a repository for the collective thoughts and memories of a community. It is the finely honed tool of a people for expressing their most subtle thoughts, their most tender feelings and most brilliant ideas. It is the receptacle in which their literature, their history, their folk memories, their fears, their dreams and hopes are recorded, stored and made available, not only for the living, but for coming generations. A language gives men and women a sense of peoplehood – of a common identity. Each language is a unique window on the world. Our languages have enormous symbolic importance for us.

I therefore would make the case that teaching a child his/her mother tongue or ancestral tongue is of primary importance even if that language is a lesser used [regional or minority] language. Here is where the child is rooted in his/her own communal identity and it is from here that s/he can go on in confidence to develop a strong sense of European identity. In most cases the mother-tongue

will also be the ancestral tongue but in some cases intergenerational transmission of lesser used languages has been undermined. Heroic efforts are being made to reverse such language shift and this is reflected in schools that use the ancestral language as the medium of instruction.

From a pedagogical viewpoint the children who come from lesser used language backgrounds will have learnt not only their own language from a very early age but also the majority language. Many go on to acquire two or more additional languages. In short, far from posing an educational problem, these children are prototypes for the kind of plurilingual ability to which the Council of Europe aspires.

Less than 300 languages are spoken in Europe today and approximately 170 of these come from one state - the Russian Federation. We are talking then of Europe having only 3- 4% of the world's living languages. Some scientists fear that up to 90% of the world's 6,000 languages will be lost during the 21st century. Surely, a heavy moral obligation rests on Europe to conserve its small part of global biolinguistic diversity!

And what of English? My initial reaction is to say, 'Don't wage a war that you cannot win!'. English has an enormous communicative functional value worldwide, and it has become a kind of Esperanto. The problem is that neither English nor any other language can be uncoupled from its attendant culture, but what I fear is not Shakespeare, Milton or Emily Bronte but rather Ron McDonald, Bill Gates and George W. Bush and the value system they portray. Nonehtless, there is little point in advising people not to learn English, because the arguments for doing so are overwhelming. Rather let us endeavour to reduce the cultural impact of English by promoting other languages of international communication.

What I suggest then is to introduce a second L2 at the same time as English is introduced. This might be French, German, Spanish, Russian, Italian or even a non-European language of wider communication such as Japanese or Mandarin Chinese. Another group of languages that should never be overlooked are the languages of our near neighbours. They certainly have a high functional value for us. Let us remember always that a language cannot be effectively taught in a vacuum. Its attendant culture goes with it, as does its functional value for the learner.

There is, in short, a need for a global paradigm or model for linguistic diversity and usage. Languages of wider communication will prevail in most situations of international exchange whether we like it or not. What we must ensure is that our own languages, be they lesser used or used by millions have their own

definite domains reserved for their exclusive use and remain safe in these domains. Such a model would lead to the conservation of linguistic biodiversity and at the same time would ensure cultural stability and linguistic enrichment.

We now turn to the position of other minority languages in Europe, namely those arising from immigration, and in the fourth contribution Guus Extra and his colleague present an analysis of this theme:

Comparative perspectives on immigrant minority languages at home and at school

Guus Extra & Kutlay Yağmur, Babylon, Tilburg University, the Netherlands

As yet, language policy in Europe has largely been considered as a domain which should be developed within the national boundaries of the different EU member states. Proposals for an overarching EU language policy are labouriously achieved and non-committal in character. The most important declarations, recommendations, or directives on language policy, each of which concepts carry a different charge in the EU jargon, concern the recognition of the status of (in the order mentioned):

- national EU languages;
- indigenous or regional/minority (RM) languages;
- non-territorial or immigrant minorities' languages (IM).

On numerous occasions, the EU ministers of education have declared that the EU citizens' knowledge of languages should be promoted. Each EU member state should promote pupils' proficiency in at least two 'foreign' languages, and at least one of these languages should be the official language of one of the EU states. Promoting knowledge of RM and/or IM languages has been left out of consideration in these ministerial statements. The European Parliament, however, accepted various resolutions which recommended the protection and promotion of RM languages and which led to the foundation of the *European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages* in 1982. Another result of the European Parliament resolutions is the foundation of the European MERCATOR Network, aimed at promoting research on the status and use of RM languages. In March 1998, the *European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages* of the Council of Europe came into operation. The Charter is aimed at the protection and promotion of RM languages, and it functions as an international

instrument for the comparison of legal measures and other facilities of the Council of Europe member states in this policy domain.

As yet, no such initiatives have been taken in the policy domain of IM languages. It is a remarkable phenomenon that the teaching of RM languages is generally advocated for reasons of cultural diversity as a matter of course, whereas this is rarely a major argument in favour of teaching IM languages. In various EU countries, the 1977 guideline of the Council of European Communities on education for IM children (Directive 77/486, dated 25 July, 1977) has promoted the legitimization of CLT and occasionally also its legislation, but this guideline is totally outdated. It needs to be put in a new and increasingly multicultural context, it needs also to be extended to pupils originating from non-EU countries, and it needs to be given greater binding force in the EU member states. The increasing internationalization of pupil populations in European schools, finally, requires a language policy for *all* pupils in which the traditional dichotomy between foreign language instruction for indigenous majority pupils and home language instruction for IM pupils is put aside.

There is a great need for educational policies in Europe that take new realities about language(s) into account. Processes of both convergence and divergence should be dealt with. The former relate in particular to the increasing status of English as *lingua franca* for international communication, the latter to the emergence of 'new' minority languages next to 'old' and established ones across Europe. Derived from an overarching conceptual and longitudinal framework, *priority languages* could be specified in terms of both RM and IM languages for the development of curricula, teaching methods, and teaching training programs. Such activities should be part of a common referential framework. Both in Europe and abroad much experience has been gained in specifying language proficiency targets (cf. the Council of Europe *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* for determining different language proficiency levels and the *Curriculum Standard Framework* for LOTE in Victoria/Australia). Underlining the often pronounced plea for the learning of three languages by all EU citizens, we suggest the following principles for the implementation of this plea at primary schools:

1. In the primary school curriculum three languages are introduced for all children:

   - the standard language of the particular nation-state as a major school subject and language of communication across other school subjects;

   - English as *lingua franca* for international communication;

- an additional third language chosen from a variable and varied set of priority languages at the national, regional, and local level of the multicultural society.

2. The teaching of all these languages is part of the regular school curriculum and subject to educational inspection.

3. Regular primary school reports contain information on the children's proficiency in each of these languages.

4. National working programs are established for the priority languages referred to under (1) in order to develop curricula, teaching methods, and teacher training programs.

5. Part of these priority languages may be taught at specialized language schools.

Given the experiences abroad (e.g. the Victorian School of Languages in Melbourne/Australia), language schools can become expertise centers where a variety of languages are taught, if the children's demand is low and/or spread over many schools. The above mentioned principles would recognize plurilingualism in an increasingly multicultural environment as an asset for all children and for society at large.

The third point introduced at the beginning of this panel focused on the school :

> *This series of questions generates considerable tensions, to which the only answer lies in an explicit language policy which clearly determines the education system's responsibility for promoting plurilingualism.*

In the final contribution Daniel Coste discusses the role of schooling in the challenge of diversification and the aim of creating the conditions for plurilingualism.

School and the challenge of diversification

Daniel Coste, Ecole normale supérieure Lettres et Sciences humaines, Lyon

In a Europe which is multilingual and multicultural, and where plurinational entities are emerging and tending to develop, circulation of information, creation and transfer of knowledge, consultation of citizens and mutual understanding between communities are becoming increasingly important for

the future, as is the need to protect the European heritage of languages and cultures and the joint source of enrichment it represents: international, national and regional languages, but also the languages of minorities, of diasporas and of immigrants.

It is clear that no language, no matter how widely used and learned and no matter how dominant in many fields of activity, can serve as the sole vector for addressing these many challenges. Multilingualism within groups and regions now also entails forms of plurilingualism among individuals.

Schools have a key role to play here. That is not to say that the education system alone can satisfy the huge variety of demands, but, if we accept that plurilingualism is now in a way part of human and civil rights, it is for education systems not just to guarantee diversification of the languages offer, but also to ensure that all young people acquire (or retain) an initial plurilingual competence, that is to say knowledge and mastery, to differing degrees, of a number of languages.

English is naturally one of these languages and is today generally regarded as both necessary and not enough. In many places the issue for schools is determining what - non-exclusive - role it should be given and with which organisation of the language curriculum. The answers vary in their logic and will doubtless give rise to some debate in the course of the conference in Strasbourg. In the context of this initial panel discussion, the aim should above all be to recapitulate the main purposes of an education project in the field of languages and suggest some carefully conceived but idealistic means of diversification, expanding upon certain considerations contained in the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*.

A number of possibilities can be envisaged according to the nature of the languages concerned, the regional or national context, the choices and combinations offered by an education system and its surrounding environment, and the desires of parents and young people themselves. The challenge for schools is both to promote genuine diversification, leaving several options open to pupils, and to define end profiles permitting international and intercultural exchanges. Between respect for and assertion of local identity-linked choices, on one hand, and education of the citizens of a changing Europe, on the other hand, it is for schools to develop complementarity, not to exacerbate differences. The task is by no means easy, but it is an important one.

Diversification and English: Summary of Group discussions –
G. Neuner, Gesamthochschule Kassel, Germany

For the group work a number of statements had been prepared and the groups were asked to consider a series of questions concerning curriculum issues of multi- and plurilingualism.

After discussion in the 4 groups the results were presented in the following plenary session by the chairmen/-women.

I would like to sum up a few observations based on impressions in the groups and on the presentation of the groupwork.

1. The concept of developing a language education policy for Europe was new to most of the participants. It is very difficult to deal with a field which is characterised by a rather complex interaction of many factors at various levels (political, social, institutional, etc.). It was obvious that quite often the participants, while they agreed about the basic idea (language education policy for Europe is necessary), were not sure about structures, principles, levels of abstraction of the topic and even proper terminology. The GUIDE makes a clear distinction between multilingualism (variety of languages in a given context) and plurilingualism (the languages of the individual), but quite a few participants were not familiar with this essential distinction.

2. One of the consequences was that in the discussion the participants , instead of discussing e.g. principles of language education policy or ways of implementing them 'resorted to' presenting their own multilingual situation and the difficulties that they had to deal with 'at home'. Obviously, some of the questions that were meant to structure the discussion in the groups (cf. the handouts to the groups) were regarded as 'too difficult to answer'.

3. It seems to me that at the present state of discussion of a European language education policy we must emphasise that it is a 'vision'(a utopian idea: all languages are equal; no language must be suppressed or discriminated against; every European citizen should master 3 languages; etc.) which we hope will become reality some day in the (hopefully, near) future (in a generation?).

4. Such a "vision" is the essential driving force in educational policy. It should be phrased in 'simple terms' so that everyone can understand its essentials.

5. The present foreign language situation in Europe (and worldwide) is marked by the dominance of English. All participants seemed to agree that we cannot do without a language that fulfils its role as a common means of communication. All groups seemed to agree that English serves this purpose quite well, that it should not be reduced to a mere 'lingua franca' detached from its socio-cultural background and that its potential as a "door opener" for the teaching and learning of other languages should be used.

6. A concept of foreign language teaching and learning based on two principles

    a) development of language awareness (experience with languages) and

    b) further development of language learning awareness (experience of learning foreign languages) should be developed.

Definition of the concept of plurilingualism: M. Byram, Programme Adviser to the Language Policy Division

The definition of plurilingualism is presented in the *Common European Framework*[3] as:

> the ability to use languages for the purposes of communication and to take part in intercultural interaction, where a person, viewed as a social agent, has proficiency of varying degrees, in several languages, and experience of several cultures. This is not seen as the superposition or juxtaposition of distinct competences, but rather as the existence of a complex or even composite competence on which the user may draw.

There are three elements in the definition: linguistic/psychological; intercultural; political, and I will deal with these in turn below.

However before doing so let us consider an example of someone who is plurilingual. This is based on a real person but it is important to note that she is described here at one point in her life. Plurilingualism is dynamic and changing and at earlier or later points in her life she would have a different linguistic repertoire. At a later or earlier point in life, there might be different languages and varieties spoken and/or written, as a consequence of further education or experience in the pursuit of leisure or work

Example of plurilingualism:

Linguistic repertoire of an *adult* European with *secondary education* at *one moment* of her life:

- a *'national'* language -- spoken and written according to the standard norms of the country acquired in the education system - the language is Danish

- a *variety/dialect* of the first language -- spoken according to the norms of the region and/or generation to which she belongs - the dialect is Sønderjysk, a variety of Danish spoken in Southern Jutland

- a *regional or minority* language -- which she speaks and/or writes where appropriate as well as the national language - she is a member of the German minority in Denmark and thus speaks German

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[3] Council of Europe, *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.* 2001 p. 168

- one or more *foreign languages* as a *basic user (CEF)* -- understood, but not necessarily spoken, acquired as a consequence of education and/or experience of media and/or tourism - there are two languages here, Swedish and Norwegian, which she can use as a consequence of the inter-comprehension among these languages and Danish

- *another foreign language* as an *independent user (CEF)* -- mastered to a higher level with ability to speak and write, and to understand spoken and written language - this language is English, learnt first at school and then developed as a consequence of living in an English-speaking country for many years.

It is evident from this example that we must not think of plurilingualism as the consequence only of school education. It develops as people change and have different learning experiences both formal and informal, throughout their lives. Plurilingualism is a very good example of 'life-long learning'.

I turn now to the first of the three dimensions of the definition of plurilingualism.

Linguistic/psychological

The important point to note is that plurilingualism is a *composite* competence. It is not made up of separate languages added one on top of another. It is simply 'language' as it is used and experienced by the plurilingual person. In the following example, two people are using their 'language' which may look to the outsider as if it were an aggregation of two languages but is in fact a composite competence, as they talk about food

> But I used to eat the *bofe*, the brain. And then they stopped selling it because **tenian, este, le encontraron que tenia** worms I used to make some *bofe*! *Después yo hacía uno d'esos* concoctions: the garlic *con cebolla, y hacía un mojo, y yo dejaba que se curara eso* for a couple of hours. Then you be drinking and drinking ... Wooh! It's like eating anchovies when you're drinking. Delicious![4]

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[4] Poplack, S. 'Sometimes I'll start a sentence in Spanish y termino en español: towards a typology of code-switching' In Li Wei (ed) *The Bilingualism Reader*. London: Routledge.

These two people are thus sharing the same language. They are not combining two separate languages. We might call this language 'Spanglish' because it seems to be made up from Spanish and English, but we should do so with care as it might be misunderstood as the name for a degraded version of the two languages when in fact it is the most efficient way of communicating for the two people in question.

It is important to note at this point that plurilingualism is not the same as trilingualism, i.e. the learning of the first language/ mother tongue and two other languages at school. Plurilingualism is a more complex concept but one which represents the ways in which people become plurilingual throughout their life, in dynamic and changing ways.

In this example, each person can choose from the language they have according to the interlocutor they are speaking with:

- with a person who speaks 'Spanglish': choose whatever comes quickest and is most effective

- with a person who speaks English: choose only English alternatives even if not as effective

- with a person who speaks Spanish: choose only Spanish alternatives even if not as effective

What is meant here by 'being effective'? There are two elements:

- choosing what best represents what the speaker wants to say

- being able to make conscious choices: sensitivity to language itself; sensitivity to the other person's language

However, it also means accepting we cannot experience everything in all our languages and these people have:

- some experiences in 'English' (with other speakers of English), some in 'Spanish' (with other speakers of Spanish), some in 'Spanglish' (with other speakers of Spanglish)

and - perhaps at a later point in time (because plurilingualism is dynamic) some experiences in language 3 and language 4[5].

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[5] cf Herdina, P and Jessner, U. 2002, *A Dynamic Model of Multilingualism*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters

The plurilingual person thus is someone who has a heightened sensitivity to language, an awareness of language, which can be further enhanced by education. There is a significant role therefore for language education which helps plurilinguals not only to develop their competence but also to become aware of it and better able to use it in complex situations.

Intercultural

The second element we need to consider is the intercultural, and intercultural interaction. There is a sense in which all talk/interaction with people of a different (social) group is intercultural. Consider these examples:

- someone in their role as 'parent' talking with someone in their role as 'teacher' – each with own beliefs values and behaviours (cultures)

- a woman talking in her role as 'mother' talking to another woman in her role as 'doctor'

- a speaker of language X with (some of) the values beliefs and behaviours (culture) shared by speakers of language X talking with a speaker of language Y (with culture of language Y)

It is the third example which is most often thought of as intercultural, especially in the language teaching/learning world. This example highlights how cultures are associated with languages and language teachers often include culture teaching in their work with learners. There are many different ways of doing this which cannot be discussed here but the traditions of language teaching in most countries include at least some information about other countries and at best the development of a complex understanding and skill in intercultural interaction with speakers of other languages.

We must bear in mind however that experience and learning are not only dependent on teaching. Lifelong learning involves informal learning as well as learning in formal educational institutions, and all intercultural experience is valid and should be valued.

Where intercultural learning does take place in a formal educational setting, there is also an extra dimension involved: the responsibility of the teacher as educator to encourage morally appropriate thinking and behaviour. Teaching for intercultural competence involves moral values, since to be interculturally competent is to think and act in morally desirable ways, in particular, to be

willing to engage with other people, to accept and respect difference of all kinds: linguistic, gender, religious, ethnic, social class, etc.[6]

Political

The third element of plurilingualism is the political dimension. This is a dimension which is made most explicit in the *Guide for the Development of Language Education Policies in Europe*, which is presented at this conference.

There are two points to take into consideration. First, plurilingual competence is the basis for participation as a citizen in the life of the societies and groups to which one belongs:

> Plurilingualism allows participation in democratic processes not only in one's own country and language area but in concert with other Europeans in other languages and language areas[7].

The second aspect is directly connected to the question of moral values raised above. Plurilingualism and intercultural competence bring people in close interaction with each other and it is in the acquisition of the sensitivity to languages and cultures of the plurilingual and intercultural person that they become sensitive to and understanding of other people. This is the respect for others which is a fundamental educational purpose for language education, as explained in the *Guide*:

> Secondly, the acquisition of plurilingual competence leads to a greater understanding of the plurilingual repertoires of other citizens and a respect for language rights, (…) those of minorities and national languages less widely spoken and taught (…) and extend beyond languages traditionally considered 'European', to include all languages spoken in Europe today and those of other parts of the world.[8]

Thus education for plurilingualism is a contribution to education for democratic citizenship - the ability to engage with others at local, regional and European levels in political democratic processes e.g. cross-border environmental politics.

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[6] cf Byram, M. (ed) 2003 *Intercultural Competence* Strasbourg: Council of Europe, and Byram, M, Gribkova, B. and Starkey, H. 2002, *Developing the Intercultural Dimension in Language Teaching. A practical Introduction for Teachers.* Strasbourg: Council of Europe

[7] *Guide for the Development of Language Education Policies in Europe* Executive version p. 17

[8] Ibid. 17-18

Education for plurilingualism is also a contribution to human rights education in both its aims and its methods, as explained in one of the reference studies prepared for the *Guide*[9].

Conclusion

It is thus clear that plurilingualism is linguistic, cultural and political. It is not simply a matter of acquiring the skills of communication but of developing as a language person, as a linguistic and cultural human being, eager and able to interact with and show respect for others in the social and political networks which bind all Europeans together at many levels. Plurilingualism is far more than just the acquiring of languages; it is the sense of being and becoming a person who can live in and enjoy the multilingual and multicultural world that Europe and beyond has already become.

It is also clear that the implications of the promotion of plurilingualism for teaching and learning have still to be thoroughly discussed. All that has been said above is an attempt to clarify the concept. The implications for teaching and learning are not considered here. It is not, for example, an implication of what has been said above that teachers should encourage a 'mixing' of languages in the classroom. These and other implications are the subject of the group discussions as is evident from the report from groups below.

The potential of plurilingualism – Summary of Group discussions: M. Byram

This lecture was followed by group discussions based on the following guidelines:

On the basis of the definition of plurilingualism in the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*, groups are asked to consider the ways in which plurilingualism is/can be introduced as an aim of language education policy in two contexts:

i) *in social situations which are multilingual, where there are, for example:*

- *regional minorities*
- *migrant minorities*
- *inhabitants of frontier regions*
- *any other situations of multilingualism*

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[9]   Starkey, H. *Democratic citizenship, languages, diversity and human rights*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe

ii) in social situations which are or are perceived to be 'monolingual', and where the majority population do not become plurilingual except through schools and/or institutions of lifelong learning

In both contexts, the Group is asked to consider how policy can be formulated and implemented in a global and comprehensive way at all levels and in all sectors of education from ministerial level to specific institutional level.

Example:

In our area (a border region with new immigrants) by the end of compulsory schooling, all pupils will have a degree of competence in:

- the official language of schooling (the national language) A
- the (official/national) language of our neighbours B
- one of the languages of new immigrant groups C

Learners of new immigrant origin will have competence in A to level ?, in B to level ?, in C to level ?

Learners from the majority group will have competence in A to level ?, in B to level ?, in C to level ?

AND

In vocational education all learners will develop competence in language D to level ? (but no longer develop language B)

AND

All adults who wish to develop a further language (whether for vocational or recreational purposes) through adult education will receive a grant to pay for tuition

The implementation of this will be through a curriculum in schools where language B is used as the medium of instruction for two subjects ….etc (see *Guide for the Development of Language Education Policies in Europe* Part 3)

We will introduce teaching methods which encourage learners to compare and develop a composite competence in the following ways: ... (see Reference Study by Costanzo[10])

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[10] Costanzo, E. *Language Education in Italy: an experience for Europe*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe

The recruitment of teachers will be pursued by the following ways:…..etc (see Reference Study on teacher education[11])

Report on Groupwork B: *The potential of plurilingualism*

The groups discussed a range of issues arising from the lecture and the suggestions above. The report highlights some of the themes and conclusions which were most prominent.

What can/do educationists do to promote plurilingualism?

First with respect to the bodies which make policy:

- they should not think in terms of whole countries but define and describe policies for specific areas or regions, which might include regions across political international frontiers

Second with respect to the development of curricula:

- we should create curricula which favour partial competences, 'learning to learn' and modular curricula (it must be noted however that there was no unanimity on the notion of partial competences as an *aim* even if they are recognised as a useful outcome

- there needs to be efforts made to spread knowledge of existing good practice in this respect

- among some participants there was a recognition of the need to make 'dramatic changes' in curricula based on an analysis of the needs for plurilingualism

- we should stop considering languages as each being learnt separately in a 'separate box' – there is a recognition of the need for a 'global competence' as one participant said

- there is a need for a different concept of 'error' and an acceptance of different levels of competence and as one participant said 'la perfection grammaticale est réservée pour les plus hauts niveaux'

- there is a need to work transversally across the curriculum, e.g. using languages as media for other subjects and to prepare learners for lifelong learning as language people

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[11] Willems, G. *Language teacher education policy promoting linguistic diversity and intercultural communication.* Strasbourg: Council of Europe

Teachers and teacher education

- it was recognise that some teachers will resist plurilingualism as a concept and an aim and it is therefore necessary to 're-former les enseignants pour une meilleure éducation à la tolérance', to quote one participant.

- There is a need for transversal approaches: teachers need to train to teach more than one language, they need to use the same methods in all languages, they need to create connections for their learners among languages

Working with others

- partners outside education are crucial to our endeavour as language teachers and policy makers for example in the media, in business, among parents, and in local government

- we have to exploit the resources around us for methodological matters

- we have to influence the demand for languages , to influence the perceptions and social representations learners and others hold of languages to counter-act some of the stereotypes and other negative influences

There were also some *general remarks*:

- there is a possible problem and fear that plurilingualism will be acquired only by learners with strong parental support, with strong cultural capital, and therefore plurilingualism may be a force for social reproduction through education. This may be particularly the case in countries where illiteracy is still a major issue which needs to be addressed before learners can become plurilingual

on the other hand the view was expressed that plurilingualism is 'positive in the sense that it contributes to a new European civilisation.

From linguistic diversity to plurilingual education: the *Guide for the Development of Language Education Policies in Europe* - J.C. Beacco, Programme Adviser to the Language Policy Division

The purpose of this paper is to present the *Guide for the Development of Language Education Policies,* a new instrument drawn up in the framework of the Language Policy Division of the Council of Europe. The document is currently in its provisional version, which will be submitted to member states for consultation and finalised in 2005.

The document was devised by a Scientific Committee whose composition is described at the beginning of the text. The present version is the result of successive rewritings by Mr Byram and myself, in cooperation with the Division Secretariat.

There is a full version of the *Guide* and a summarised (executive) version of some 40 pages, and a two- or three-page version is also being planned. It is supplemented by about 20 *Reference Studies* (published separately), some of which address themes of the *Guide* which could not be discussed in detail in a document of this type (for example, language education, new minorities in Europe, the social representations of languages), while others (the studies by Breidbach, Seidlhofer, Truchot and others) deal with the "question" of English in education in response to the request made at the Innsbruck Conference (1999).

The purpose of the *Guide* is to promote reflection on language policies and language teaching. It is designed for all decision-makers in this field, from head teachers to members of parliament and ministers, as well as everyone to whom languages are of concern: learners, teachers, employers, etc. It is not prescriptive in that it does not describe "solutions" that should be adopted, but rather tries to bring out principles which could serve as a common starting-point and make it possible to respond to comparable problems in the framework of intergovernmental co-operation.

Its content is not fundamentally original since such perspectives have already been developed in some member States and are also present in the academic and scientific literature, and in some cases they have been for many years.

It is based on certain principles and goes on to consider their implementation:

- It identifies and sets out the values and purposes that together might constitute the guiding principle for language teaching, in the framework of the Council of Europe (Part I)

- It lists the methods for conducting such policies (Part II)

- It sets out the practical means of setting up teaching based on this principle, bearing in mind the diversity of national and regional situations (Part III).

The role of the *Guide* in the Language Policy Division

The *Guide* is part of the Division's ongoing work but represents a change of direction symbolised by the new name of the Division, which is now the Language Policy Division, rather than the Modern Languages Division.

Continuity

The policy emphases adopted by the Council of Europe were born of didactic and methodological concerns which later became political and educational. With hindsight, it might be considered that they went through three distinct but consecutive phases, in which the successive goals were the following:

- the facilitation of European mobility through communication in "foreign languages".

- a degree of harmonisation of education systems with respect to language teaching.

- a desire to bring about linguistic diversification and plurilingualism with a view to constructing democratic European citizenship.

In the 1970s, Council of Europe projects focused on teaching issues and aimed to construct a unit credit system in the languages field to fit in with the diversity of educational situations in member states. This resulted in the development of reference tools (which were given the general title *Threshold Levels*) whose objective was to give users the wherewithal to build up comparable but differentiated syllabuses for each language. The indirect outcome of the work was to promote the communicative approach to the teaching of foreign languages.

As the culture of the *Threshold Levels* spread, the Council of Europe developed another tool which made it possible, not to design syllabuses on the basis of graded resources, but to compare language syllabuses and link up national educational cultures. This tool began to take shape in the early 1990s, its concrete expression being the publication in 2001 of the final version under the title, *A Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: learning, teaching, assessment* (Cambridge University Press)[12].

The *Framework* has a clear institutional aim: it offers typological inventories of the skills that make up "knowledge" of a language and defines levels of proficiency in those skills valid for all languages. It enables there to be strong convergences between education systems, which can construct their language courses in modular form on the basis of comparable elements. The skill levels enable linguistic skills to be identified, standardised and introduced gradually in six levels (A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2). They are defined on the basis of descriptions which are as precise as possible. The *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* is a reference system which has already been widely disseminated and responds to the need for international continuity in national education systems.

A change of paradigm; from "foreign languages" to plurilingual competence

The Division has focused on plurilingualism as an educational and political project at the service of democratic citizenship in Europe. It has done so because social demand seems to be ever more strongly tending towards the almost exclusive learning of English. National education authorities need to take proactive responsibility for this social demand, which can only be changed if the public is informed as to the real issues at stake in command of languages and the different possible ways of teaching them. In this particular context there was therefore a need to examine what pluralist language policies might be and the concept of plurilingualism.

The concept of plurilingualism as a value and goal was explored as early as 1997 as part of the analysis preparatory to the *Framework* by D. Coste, D. Moore and G. Zarate (*Compétence plurilingue et pluculturelle*) and defined as a competence that is multiple, transversal, changing and composite, bringing into play languages of every status, and yet concerning the same skill (knowing the language) and the same individual. This view is present in the *Framework* (cf Chapter 8) and to a great extent prefigures the *Guide*. The

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[12] Council of Europe / CUP : ISBN 0521803136 (hardback), 0521005310 (paperback)

political dimensions of diversification of languages and curricula were examined at the Innsbruck Conference, *Linguistic Diversity for Democratic Citizenship in Europe: Towards a framework for language education policies* (10-12 May 1999), which announced that the *Guide* was forthcoming and the *Proceedings* of which were published in 2000 (edited by C. Truchot).

The widespread adoption of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* makes it possible to apply plurilingual education, as does the very wide dissemination of the *European Language Portfolio* which enables self-assessment of language skills and heightens the status of all forms of knowledge and learning of languages.

It is on the basis of this action, spanning 25 years, that the *Guide* sets out the relationship between languages and democratic citizenship, identifies the information useful for the co-ordinated development of language policies in education and enumerates the technical means available for increasing the diversification of the social supply of and demand for languages. We have moved from technical and didactic examination of the form of the possible objectives for syllabuses (*Framework*) to the goals they set out to achieve (*Guide*), a fundamentally political perspective.

The *Guide* and plurilingualism as the goal of language education policies

Establishing common European goals for language education means considering that what is crucial is not so much languages as the people who speak them, not so much the diversity of languages within a given area (then described as *multilingual*) as the diversification of the languages used by individuals, in other words the diversity of the language repertories used by individuals, whatever the status or function of those languages (therefore including the *mother tongue*).

The components of plurilingualism

The goal of the policy put forward by the Council of Europe is to raise the status of and develop individuals' plurilingual competence, since plurilingualism is a concept with psycho-cognitive and didactic, political and educational dimensions, all of which, together or separately, could be common goals for language education policies complying with the values jointly defined by member states:

i. All individuals are potentially or actually plurilingual and have plurilingual competence: such competence is the manifestation of the

capacity for language genetically present in every human being which may be invested in several languages. It is the job of schools to ensure the harmonious development of everyone's plurilingual competence, just as it is to do the same for their physical, cognitive and creative capacities. This competence is at present divided among different subjects which are usually compartmentalised: the links between the teaching of different types of languages (national, foreign, classical, the mother tongue, etc) need to be re-established, in parallel and as they succeed each other, and the development of this capacity should become an integral part of a coherent linguistic education.

ii. The plurilingual repertoire of each individual includes different languages (the language learned in early childhood, learned later, through education, autonomously, etc) in which he or she has acquired different skills (conversation, reading, listening, etc) to degrees of proficiency which themselves differ. The languages in the repertory may have different functions: communicating within the family, socialising with neighbours, used at work, expressing the individual's belonging to a group, and so on. While all plurilingual repertories are different, it may be considered that certain groups have a repertory that is to some extent identically structured. In any particular political and social entity all languages do not enjoy the same status or recognition: some are official languages, languages used at school, languages of recognised minorities or of groups that are not recognised; some are sought after and sources of prestige, others are regarded as being of little value, a handicap to their speakers and a factor in exclusion, and so on. It is the state's responsibility democratically to ensure the balances between the plurilingual repertories of groups and between the languages that the national, regional, federal, etc community uses for its various purposes (relations with border regions, integration in the regional and European space, international exchanges, etc). The major task of language policies is thus balanced management of plurilingual repertories, the languages of different status used in the country and collective needs in order to ensure social cohesion, if necessary through explicit recognition of everyone's linguistic rights and duties.

iii. The development of plurilingual competence is an integral part of the European outlook since its goal is:

- to avoid the heavy economic losses and the cultural catastrophe represented by the disappearance of speakers of a language whose transmission the community has failed to assist effectively. This is

particularly the case with respect to the languages of populations recently settled in Europe.

- to enable every European to act effectively as a citizen within a national and transnational public arena.

- to make Europe more present to everyone, since it is not simply an administrative and economic entity. Europe is a multicultural, multilingual area, wherever one is, and the feeling of belonging to that area depends, among other things, on the ability to recognise the richness of linguistic repertories and recognise oneself collectively and affectively in that plurality. Civility and linguistic benevolence towards others could provide the basis for a feeling of belonging to Europe rooted, not in the increased prestige of one particular language, but in respect for the diversity of European citizens' plurilingual repertories as a pluralistic expression of their identity/ies.

- to become one of the foundation stones of democratic living together. If one recognises the diversity of languages in one's own repertoire and the diversity of their functions and values, that awareness of the diversity one carries within one is such as to foster a positive perception of other people's languages. Enhancing the status of plurilingualism is thus the basis of education for linguistic tolerance as intercultural education. Education, especially the teaching of the most sought-after languages, should lead learners/users to regard the development of their plurilingual competence both as a personal goal and the fulfilment of their responsibilities as democratic citizens.

The *Guide* proposes reformulating the question of language teaching in Europe as follows: it is not so much a question of deciding together what (and how many) foreign languages should be taught in education systems as of guiding the goals of language education towards raising the status and developing the plurilingual competence of every individual, which includes the mother tongue, national language(s), regional languages, European and non-European languages, etc.

The obstacles

The *Guide* points out that language education policies should be related to the values on which they are based, but that not all the values to which one might adhere with respect to languages are necessarily diversity-focused.

i)   Languages and economy: it might be considered that the "simplest" solution would be to use a common "language of communication". Such economy of verbal exchange would seem to be required by the existence of fluid, open economic markets. The process of standardisation of goods which enables them to circulate and production costs to be cut may also lead to a reduction in the number of instrumental languages, which are especially useful for economic exchange and in working life. Social demand seems to favour the learning of such languages. In such circumstances, linguistic diversity may be seen as an obstacle, whatever the cultural and historical value of languages other than such instrumental ones. An education system may therefore confine itself to satisfying this demand for "useful" languages.

ii)   Languages and "national" identity: This question would not arise if languages were used only to communicate, but they are also a form of belonging to a particular human community. Along with other "components", such as dietary habits, shared beliefs and collective memory, they are an essential element of identification.   This form of belonging may be institutionalised in the context of nation-states, with one or more national or official languages, which are used in the relations between state and citizens and serve as languages of instruction in schools. Ultimately, they define national belonging other than on a legal basis (that of nationality): a person who speaks this/one of these language(s) will easily be accepted as a "national".   In the end, national language and mother tongue may even be confused.

While the economy of languages tends towards simplification, the diversity and multiplicity of forms of belonging (an individual may simultaneously belong to different communities: regional, religious, professional, ideological, etc) tends to raise the value of diversity of languages, whatever their usefulness. Education systems have to manage such potential tension between the needs of communication and respect for forms of belonging.

iii)   The "question" of English: The question of education taking responsibility for linguistic diversity is itself made more complex by the current pre-eminence of English, which is unlikely to disappear in the immediate future. English is widely used as the language of international communication, but what is new is that this language of international communication has become globalised, even though it is limited to certain sectors (the financial and economic sectors and show business). Mobility within Europe in the form of study and training visits has certainly enriched the cultural and professional experience of those involved, but it is not certain that it has contributed to the diversification of language skills, since the

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language of communication (and even of instruction) is often a *lingua franca* such as English.

The use of English is not only a function of the needs of communication. As we know, knowledge of English may be sought as a key to success, well-being or modernity and this increases its symbolic value. Its use is so widespread that in some countries (whose national language is spoken by what is considered a limited number of speakers), the common use of this "parallel language" in the territory is giving rise to fears for the future of the national language.[13] The accepted value of English may, therefore, tend to make any action to diversify more difficult, since it may not directly reflect social demand, the demand of parents and learners.

iv) <u>Conventional perceptions of language learning:</u> Other, less 'ideological' factors – namely, the opinions on languages and language learning currently in circulation - make the diversification of language education more complex, or even challenge the validity of such a goal. For example, many people consider 'mistakes' made in the use of languages unacceptable and that one needs to have as perfect a command of languages as possible: incomplete or limited command of a language is often thought to be inadequate and may lead to inhibition. Furthermore, the model of mastery to aim for seems to be that of the native speaker, an ideal which is obviously out of reach, especially since it is not clear who that native speaker is. Such perceptions frequently result in learning a language being perceived as a necessarily long haul which is therefore time-consuming (and may also be costly in financial terms). These costs lead to access to a limited number of languages being favoured, especially since the skills of polyglots are regarded as exceptional: it is often said that you have to be 'gifted' to learn more than one language, no account being taken of the fact that the linguistic faculty is genetically inherent to the species.

Social perceptions of languages influence the choice of languages. That choice is usually left to parents or learners/users, particularly since language courses are generally options or optional (one is free to decide whether or not to follow them), or compulsory, but with the possibility of choice. Often, however, schools do not inform those choices, so they are made on the basis of considerations whose reliability varies widely or on prevailing, but unconfirmed, social perceptions. This leaves room for considerable social

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[13]   See, for example, Committee for Swedish Language: *Speech, draft action programme for the Swedish language*, SOU 2002:27;
http://www.sou.gouv.se/svenskan/betankande.htm

differentiations which work to the advantage of those who have the social capital needed to identify the languages, subjects and establishments that will be more profitable than others in the medium term.

<u>Organising education for plurilingualism</u>

Despite these obstacles, it is perfectly possible to diversify language education and knowledge of languages. Plurilingualism is a well-known educational issue and, while it is not a dominant linguistic ideology, there is no shortage of teaching methods for putting it into practice.

Raising the status of and promoting the "plurilingual concept": a proactive choice

The obstacles to introducing language courses organised from a plurilingual perspective are not technical, but stem from the dominant perceptions of languages. It is therefore appropriate to take into account the knowledge produced in the fields of the linguistic sciences and language teaching methodology so as to avoid individual and collective choices on language policy being made solely on the basis of "common sense" considerations or conventional, stereotyped arguments.

These resistances stem from a misunderstanding of what plurilingual education means: education authorities and citizens need to see that there is greater understanding of what plurilingual competence is and of the issues facing everyone that it seeks to tackle. In this respect, the *Guide* points out that action could take the following forms:

  i. information campaigns (nationally and in schools) similar to those devised and organised in the framework of the European Day of Languages, which might be a source of "best practices"

  ii. increased presence of languages in the media (programmes, subtitled films in the original language, on television) and in public places so as to increase actual contact with the diversity of languages

  iii. campaigns to raise the awareness of parents (and pupils) when choices are being made so that they have a more accurate perception of the options and their respective benefits and costs, now and over time

  iv. providing head teachers with training in plurilingualism and the educational issues it involves so that they do not give precedence only to teaching the languages for which there is most demand, and so that

they may pool technical resources in order to ensure a diversified supply of languages at the lowest possible cost

v.   practical ways of encouraging diversified teaching (for example, positive discrimination in public financing)

vi.   recognising the value of all linguistic skills acquired by including them in institutional teaching in order to take such assets into account whatever their level (even "beginner's levels" are of value in the work environment) and however they have been acquired (individual, outside school, as a result of visits abroad, by watching foreign television channels, and so on). The *European Language Portfolio* is a means of enhancing the status of the various skills acquired and the methods adopted in acquiring them.

Implementing plurilingual education

Part III of the *Guide* stresses the fact that organising language teaching from a European perspective means seeing it as contributing to democratic citizenship. From this perspective, it will be necessary:

i.   to explain the goals of language education policies: politicians have a responsibility to explain the goals that language teaching is designed to achieve. They should place those goals in the context of constructing a culture of peace, tolerance and education for democratic citizenship, principles to which member states have subscribed. No European social policy seeking to reduce poverty, inequality and marginalisation is conceivable without national or "foreign" languages. The general focus of such policies is a matter for public debate with civil society and cannot be reduced to "applications" of pedagogical or didactic knowledge, which are simply instruments.

ii.   to work out a "comprehensive concept" for languages: language education policies should set out a coherent approach to enhance the status of and develop citizens' plurilingual repertoires. This means co-ordinating teaching over time and space (it often falls into the remit of different ministries, departments or local administrations) in such a way as to create diversified educational paths, pool available teaching resources (at national, regional or municipal, voluntary sector level, etc) and build bridges between the languages taught (national language and foreign languages, national language and mother tongue, between foreign languages, and so forth).

iii.   to set out forward-looking goals: it is important to set comprehensive, forward-looking goals on the basis of anticipated economic and demographic change. Society, the linguistic choices of which are made on the basis of individual or group expectations or strategies, should be informed about such changes and future collective linguistic needs and should not confine itself to received ideas about the presumed value of languages, which is the value they have today, not necessarily the one they will have in the future.

iv.   to organise the life-long development of plurilingual competence. Languages might no longer be perceived as competing (lack of time to teach them) or incompatible with each other, if it were accepted that they can be learned at any age, do not necessarily require particular intellectual skills, that one can learn them partially or for specific purposes and that therefore it does not take a lifetime to acquire them. What is essential is not that they are learned at a very early age, before or for a longer time than others, but that every individual acquires - at school, in the working environment or in a personal capacity - the languages he or she wants to acquire, to the level he or she wants and for the uses he or she wants to make of them.

v.   to provide education for plurilingualism in the framework of a pluricultural education. Development of the plurilingual repertoire (learning more languages and/or learning them to a higher level) can be assisted by an awareness that results in respect for the languages of others, an effort being made to learn and use, if only partially, the languages of one's neighbours or partners, whoever they are. Such education may be indirect or take particular forms, such as language awareness. It may take place autonomously, outside language courses (as part of courses or activities geared towards education for citizenship). In schools, it is necessarily the responsibility of the most taught or most sought-after languages (the national language or English, for example) since the status they have as "legitimate" languages makes the democratic values of linguistic tolerance and linguistic and cultural diversity all the more acceptable and credible.

In practical terms, this implies:

a.   making room in language courses for learners to learn to become autonomous. It is this fundamental ability (learning on one's own) which will ensure that the plurilingual repertoire of every individual can develop and be adapted to new personal requirements.

b. varying teaching methods: there is no one way of teaching a single content (*a language*), since knowing a language is the result of gradual, varied and specific acquisitions producing different types of knowledge and know-how, all of which are legitimate, so long as they enable each learner to do what he or she is aiming for. Such variety in language teaching is based on the possibility of analysing knowledge of a language according to skills and the target level in each of those skills. It is this that enables the supply of languages to be diversified.

c. varying the goals of language teaching: for example, according to national or individual linguistic needs, learners'/users' expectations and requirements, the role expected of language teaching in relation to the teaching of other subjects (for example, teaching to read, which is common to all "linguistic" subjects).

d. decompartmentalising language courses. This does not mean eliminating current subjects to make way for new, rather vague, verbal communication courses. All that is being recommended is harmonising and integrating these courses with each other and with non-language courses.

Implementing plurilingual education as a common denominator of European language education policies is not a matter of introducing "revolutionary" measures, but of adjusting existing courses. Adjusting existing curricula in order to arrive at forms of language education that integrate language teaching and diversify languages throughout the whole learning process requires radical action to be taken with respect to the social perceptions of users and decision-makers in pursuance of a value that has already been accepted, namely, the relationship between knowledge and recognition of languages and democratic citizenship.

Language Education Policy Country Profiles : Introduction and Case Study (Hungary)

Presentation: J. Sheils

Approach

The Language Policy Division is offering member States who so wish expert assistance with carrying out a self-evaluation of their policy. This is **not** a form of external evaluation but an offer to act as a catalyst in a process of analytical reflection and planning for the future. The aim is to facilitate analysis of current policy and to develop together proposals for possible future action. The

resulting 'Profile' represents a joint country/Council of Europe perspective that is essentially forward-looking. The activity also provides an opportunity for dialogue on policy between all the main partners both in government and civil society. It may contribute to planned policy initiatives or strategic planning within the country, or it can act as a stimulus for new developments. The activity addresses in particular the priorities identified by the authorities and may relate to policy development at national or sub-national level, including cities.

Process

The process has three main stages:

a) The authorities prepare/commission a **Country Report** (about 50 pages) describing current policy as suggested in the Guidelines and Procedures [(DG IV/EDU/LANG (2002) 1 Rev]. This starts from the countries' priorities and normally would include a factual overview of the organisation of language education for **all** languages in the curriculum (first and second languages, foreign languages,sign languages). Data or detailed information is necessary only for the priority areas established by the country. The Report may, if so wished, examine current practice in the light of Council of Europe principles and policy concering plurilingualism, diversity and democratic citizenship. It would identify what the authorities see as the main policy challenges for the country. The draft 'Guide for Language Education Policies in Europe' will be helpful in this process.

b) A Council of Europe expert group composed of senior policy makers and policy specialists, including a representative of the host country, studies the Country Report and visits for about one week to discuss the Country Report and key issues with the authorities (Ministry of Education and Higher Education, curriculum and examination bodies, other appropriate ministries and governments departments), authors of the Country Report, representatives of civil society (e.g. teacher' associations, school principals, vocational, higher and further education, parents, employers, minorities, media etc.. The aim is to gain a deeper understanding of the main issues and to gather any further information required for the preparation of an Experts' Report after the visit. The **Experts' Report** is then prepared which takes further specific issues introduced initially in the Country Report and also introduces new elements that have been identified as a result of the visit. The authorities are kept fully informed and may interact in this process.

c) The authorities disseminate the Experts' Report to all the parties involved or whom it is appropriate to consult. The main parties are invited to a national Round Table or seminar to take further the discussion on the issues raised in the Country Report and the Experts' Report. Following upon this event the Council of Europe experts and the authorities, with the authors of the Country Report (where different), interact to jointly produce a final agreed report entitled '**Language Education Policy Profile'**. This would normally address three main areas: the current situation in language education in the country and in particular the national priorities; a shared vision of the challenges to be addressed in the future; proposals for future action. Relevant data and other information can be added in the appendices. The document is disseminated in the national language(s) and the official languages of the Council of Europe. It can then serve as a basis for further debate and policy development within the country and may also offer examples of good practice in dealing with issues that are of interest to other member States.

Conclusion

The activity provides added value as a stimulus for national dialogue and synergy and offers a European perspective in addressing key policy issues, including the promotion of plurilingualism and diversity in education systems. The Language Policy Division invites member States to avail of this offer and wishes to thank the Hungarian authorities for the successful piloting of this new activity.

Case study: Hungary – G. Boldiszár, Ministry of Education

Hungary was the first State to avail of this new initiative, as soon as it was launched by the Language Policy Division.

The pilot project had several objectives:

- to devise a new strategy corresponding to the needs of Hungarian society and European priorities, with the help of the *Profile activity*;

- to make policy-makers and civil society aware of the situation in Hungary and of European guidelines;

- to carry out – for the very first time - a comprehensive evaluation of language teaching (mother tongue, minority languages and foreign languages);

- to take advantage of a Council of Europe evaluation, which would, among other things, act as a catalyst.

<u>Reasons for Hungary's application for this "assisted self-assessment"</u>

Current situation in Hungary

Since 1990, several reforms have been carried out in education and language teaching but almost all of them have failed, some because of changes in government, others because of a lack of financial resources, among other things.

One of the aims of the programme run by the government elected in May 2002 is to bring the level of language skills of the Hungarian population closer to the European average (only 16-18% of Hungarian adults currently claim to know a foreign language).

The results of the PISA survey show that policy-makers must revise existing curricula. Hungarian society poses problems, such as the choice between minority languages and languages with a market value. It is a dilemma for families belonging to minorities to choose between their mother tongue and a foreign language. This concerns children whose mother tongue is a Roma language (should they learn a modern language as a specialist subject or try to master one of the Roma languages and Hungarian, or should they opt for a mixture of the two?)

The teaching of languages has never been given the place it deserves in the national core curriculum, the framework curriculum and local programmes. Languages continue to be one subject among many others. However, while the general context has not changed, parents and society now have higher expectations and they expect schools to provide language teaching which will enable their children to pass a state-approved examination.

The trend in the choice of languages is hardly surprising and the decline of Russian – as in other countries where it was compulsory – has given rise to many problems, for example the need to retrain Russian teachers.

<u>The importance of Council of Europe assistance as a catalyst</u>

A few months before its accession to the EU, Hungary is seeking "European" solutions to its problems. The Council of Europe's expertise in this field is well known and recognised in Hungary, where international initiatives are more popular than national initiatives.

The aim is not, however, to import a solution devised in another country but to choose the best solution to the problems from among the options proposed. A significant number of Hungarian experts received their training at the various seminars, conferences and workshops run by the Council of Europe (by the Language Policy Division in Strasbourg and the European Centre for Modern Languages in Graz). In practice, however, they are not sufficiently recognised in Hungary.

Outside help is therefore necessary to influence decision-makers.

Process leading to the preparation of Profile

Preparation of the National Report

It was decided to entrust the drafting of this report to a team rather than to a single expert, for the following reasons:

- the way the ministry is organised and its level of responsibility: school heads and national authorities often have recourse to advisors and the ministry administrators do not have enough freedom and, in particular, enough time;

- the advantages offered by a team of independent experts and the experts' qualifications.

A number of independent experts who were both familiar with the Council of Europe's work and able to provide an objective analysis and make bold proposals were therefore appointed.

Current situation

Following a preparatory visit four months ago, the national report was drafted and subsequently approved by the national authorities (Deputy State Secretary responsible for language teaching) before being forwarded to the Council of Europe for examination by the Group of Experts.

During their recent visit to Budapest the Group of Experts had the opportunity to meet the authors of the report and representatives of the education sector and civil society and to visit schools and learn more about current initiatives and new developments .

At the same time and at the Minister's request, another team from the Ministry has been asked to study the matter and devise a new strategy for the teaching of modern languages. We trust that the results will not be contradictory.

Next steps

The *Experts' Report* will be drawn up in the wake of this visit. At the same time, the authorities will redraft the second and third parts of the *National Report.* The Group of Experts will then take part in a Round Table in Hungary, involving representatives of the authorities and civil society partners, to discuss the revised *National Report*. A number of specific aspects will be discussed with those responsible for the report.

The last stage will concern the preparation of the *Profile* by the Council of Europe and the Hungarian authorities, including a number of proposals. The *Profile* will be published by the Council of Europe and then translated into Hungarian and published in Hungary.

Expected consequences of the *Profile* for Hungary

The decisions concerning the implementation of proposals will have to be discussed first by the Education Committee of the Hungarian National Assembly, then by the National State Education Council – a body that advises the Minister and has the right of veto – and finally by the minister.

The first policy decision will concern the adaptation of the *Profile*, and will be followed by a discussion in which the public at large will be able to take part on the Internet.

Lessons for other countries

As Hungary is the first country to take part in this scheme, the team responsible for this initiative would like to point out to other countries which also intend to take part that the national experts should be chosen with care.

The cost obviously depends on needs (the number of people involved, the need for translation, etc.): in the case of Hungary, it amounted to 10,000 € in 2002 (experts' contract , translations, etc) and 10,000 € in 2003 (revision of the National Report, debate on the Internet, publication etc.).

Although the process has not yet been completed, other countries are encouraged to take part in this initiative, which is very beneficial for the purposes of reforming or fine-tuning language education policies.

We should like to express our gratitude to the Council of Europe for its expert assistance.

Implementation in national, regional and local contexts

Introduction

It was anticipated that the participants in these working groups would begin to think about the way in which the *Guide* and *Profiles* could be used to complement or promote initiatives relating to the organisation of language teaching, especially those initiatives whose ultimate goal is to diversify the range of languages on offer (at a given point in and/or throughout the curriculum) or provide a more integrated approach to the teaching of languages (be they official, 'native', regional, foreign, etc.).

These discussions, set up to elicit initial reactions to these two new instruments from the Division, could only take place in specific contexts. Therefore, the discussions were introduced by brief but thought-provoking presentations that viewed the relevance of the *Guide*'s proposals, and the possible strategic role of self-evaluation through the use of the *Profiles*, in the context of the typical features of the situations arising, such as tried and tested forms of plurilingualism that have already been developed, the salient points regarding language policy, possible factors working against policies for of plurilingualism, etc., or with more technical aspects, such as central and local education management and its influence on language teaching, the range of languages available, conditions governing language choice, etc. These situations had been selected so as to give a wide-ranging sample of the types of context in which language education policy is applied, e.g. federal contexts, national contexts (countries differ in demographic weight, and their national languages may or may not enjoy an international audience), regional contexts or the context of a large urban area.

The presentations are reproduced below.

Summary of presentations

Switzerland (a Federal context): G. Lüdi, Basel University

How to improve language education policy making in Switzerland?

1.   Council of Europe initiatives in the field of language education policy, in particular the *Guide for the elaboration of language education policies in Europe* and the procedure for evaluating the language policies implemented ("Country Profile" process), also represent an important asset from the standpoint of a country with a substantial tradition of linguistic diversity and education in plurilingualism. These instruments should in fact make it possible

to devise new plurilingual education models and, most importantly, to evaluate the measures resolved upon — and to analyse the setbacks encountered in implementing them.

2. In Switzerland, a country which has been officially trilingual since the 19th century and quadrilingual from the 20th century onwards, language learning and of course teaching have a long tradition. Indeed, as the majority of Swiss are monolingual, the school first and foremost is expected to instil the basics for building the skills in other languages that are needed for communication between the Swiss linguistic regions as well as externally. Yet the Federal Government has no language education policy remit, vocational training excepted. Federalism means in fact that each canton decides with complete autonomy on all educational policy matters. Consequently, Switzerland has 26 different education systems. Failing a central Ministry of Education, the Cantonal Directors of State Education together make up the CDIP (Conference of Cantonal Directors of State Education), responsible for the co-ordination of school instruction. Although it has no direct legislative power, its "Recommendations" usually gain the assent of the cantonal parliaments (though often with a lag of some years). A 1975 recommendation, for instance, envisages mandatory teaching of a second language as from the 4th or 5th grade of compulsory education. At present, alls cantons but one have fulfilled this recommendation.

3. Being dissatisfied with the language proficiency of young people, and faced with the challenge of English growing in stature as an international vehicular language, the CDIP in 1997 decreed a *General concept of language teaching in compulsory education*. The outcome of the proceedings of a group of experts was made public and submitted to consultation in June 1998.[14] Significantly, the *Concept* envisaged an earlier start with learning of a "first second language" (from 2nd grade onwards) and to make a third language obligatory: the national language spoken locally (taught as the mother tongue or as a second language), a second national language, and English. Control was to be exercised via specified objectives which, formulated in the terms of the *Common European Framework*, were ambitious. The proposals relating to the languages to be taught (including the languages of migration) had an accompanying "teaching methodology toolbox" containing suggestions on the means to attain these objectives, ranging from bilingual teaching to systematic use of the *European Language Portfolio* with an integrated educational approach to all the languages (mother tongue included) based on the principle of language discovery. These proposals were founded on an analysis of

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[14] For a complete version, consult http://www.romsem.unibasch/sprachenkonzept.

linguistic practices in the family and working environments as well as research into linguistic economics and, most of all, on many research workers' expertise and the advances in educational sciences and applied linguistics. The recommendations were supplemented by logistic considerations: initial and in-service teacher training, design of suitable teaching materials, etc. We may venture to assert that the *General concept of language teaching in compulsory education* represents an anticipatory application of many recommendations contained in the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* and in the *Guide for the elaboration of language education policies in Europe.*

4. But at present the process is stalled, since the "Recommendations" deriving from the *General concept*[15] did not gain a clear majority in the CDIP in the summer of 2001 after much discussion in political as well as educational circles on the respective roles of national languages and English, the effects of the school population's linguistic non-uniformity (up to 90% of pupils in towns are alloglots) and the expediency and feasibility (for financial reasons among others, and not exclusively) of a major boost to the teaching of languages. True, some cantons have decided to implement a whole range of proposals from the *Concept.* For instance, the Swiss of the *European Language Portfolio* has been officially adopted by the CDIP, the cantons of Eastern Switzerland are preparing for the teaching of English as from the initial years of primary school, bilingual classes are on the increase, the French-speaking parts of Switzerland have officially decided to apply the principle of awakening to languages, etc. In addition, the scales of proficiency (A1 – C2) drawn up under the aegis of the Council of Europe, are ever more widely used at all levels. However, national co-ordination is lacking; one can only hope that it will find its due place in the structure of the *HarmoS* project aimed at wider harmonisation of educational objectives in Swiss schools.[16]

5. Why all these difficulties? The main cause is probably at the procedural level or even on the political plane. Indeed, while the fundamental ideas set out

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[15] The « *Recommandations relatives à la coordination de l'enseignement des langues au niveau de la scolarité obligatoire »* (draft of 1 June 2001) may be downloaded from the CDIP website (http://www.cdip.ch/PDF_Downloads/Sprachen_Entwurf/EmpfSpra_f. pdf). They have not been formally adopted by the CDIP, although in essence their content was not challenged by the cantonal directors of state education (press release of 11 June 2001). The cantons were to comply as far as possible with the principles stated therein.

[16] The CDIP scheme *Harmonisation de la scolarité obligatoire- harmonisation of compulsory education* (Harmos) makes provision for setting the standards of proficiency required in the principal school subjects. For particulars, please consult the CDIP website http://www.cdip.ch/f/CDIP/Geschaefte/framesets/mainSprachen_f.html.

in the *Guide for the elaboration of language education policies in Europe* have tangibly been put into practice by the experts who drew up the *Concept*, the political class, the teaching profession and the general public are most diffident about following the trend. In particular, the discussion is biased by stereotypes as to educational goals (partial proficiency is accepted in practice but not in principle), the importance of English (overestimated by some), the difficulty of learning German and French (languages considered harder than English), etc.

To be more specific, the difficulties encountered concern several of the forces in Swiss society, in relation to various aspects of content:

- Lack of consensus on the first foreign language to be taught has delayed or even obstructed a reform that was nevertheless well in hand. It is in fact the sole point of real contention within the CDIP between the cantons which prioritise the second national language and the cantons which give preference to English.

- Teachers and their unions object to the introduction of earlier foreign language instruction, to new methods (eg immersion) and more generally to education for plurilingualism. They are no doubt sincere and advance reasons of educational desirability (too much strain on some pupils) and timetabling (saying that the school is already overstretched by too many tasks), but also and most importantly the absence of systematic preparation for these reforms and the inadequacy of training opportunities for the teachers concerned (see next paragraph).

- Political office-bearers repeatedly invoke shortage of resources for commencing these reforms at a time of budgetary deficits and escalating costs in the educational systems (vocational training, school integration of alloglots, academic training and research, etc.).

- Many are sceptical about the feasibility of plurilingual education for all — and at the same time, invoking equal opportunity, will not let it be made accessible just to an elite: "If everyone cannot take advantage of such education, nobody should be able to!" On the other hand, they close their eyes to the fact that some private schools — which hitherto have been very marginally involved as competitors of free state education in Switzerland — offer bilingual education packages to people able to afford them, with considerable success.

6. Nonetheless, guarded optimism about developments in the years ahead is permissible, and founded on a series of facilitating elements:

- Foreign language teaching's long tradition and excellent quality in Switzerland.

- A goodly level of plurilingualism, particularly among political and economic decision-makers themselves.

- Political consensus that plurilingualism, despite the presence of English, forms part of the national identity, that proficiency in a second national language is to be preserved and developed, not in competition with the international *lingua franca* but as an additional asset and that further efforts in the field of language learning are needed.

- A tradition of direct democracy which means that new ideas often require more time to be accepted by the political decision-makers (often the citizens as a whole) than in other countries, but that once accepted they are subsequently implemented in a tenacious and conscientious fashion.

7. In this context, the *Guide for the elaboration of language education policies in Europe* can play an important part – if only because it obviates making substantive recommendations which would probably be viewed disapprovingly by the forces in society, mindful of their autonomy, and instead concentrates on the processes of decision. The chief concern will be to answer the question how to persuade the decision-makers and their partners in civil society not to frame language education policy (choice of languages to be taught; learning methods and goals) on the basis of stereotypes and "naive" representations but as the outcome of rigorous needs analysis for the entire country and its linguistic regions and possibly for different groups in the population. It may be added that properly assessed "examples of good practice" can have a major place in this context. Obviously enough (although that too should be analysed and assessed), the course embarked upon by the Swiss education systems leads in the right direction. In that respect, the procedure for evaluating language policies applied by the Council of Europe should additionally and especially bear on procedures and any procedural errors made, on the reasons for the divide between experts and decision-makers, on the approach for framing a language education policy in unison with all social forces (which are more closely involved in political decisions in Switzerland than in other countries). For obvious reasons, our own evaluation conducted by specialists closely acquainted with Swiss decision-making processes will be vital, but an outside view will be most useful as a catalyst in this operation.

<u>United Kingdom (a national context): L. King, Centre for Information
on Language Teaching and Research (CILT)</u>

1. What are the language education policy issues in your context which a Country Profile process (as will be presented for Hungary) might help you to evaluate?
   - Issues of dominant ideology – views and attitudes of key players ("authorities and civil society")
   - Issues relating to the purposes of language education
   - Issues of curricular continuity from 5 to Adult
   - Learner motivation in particular aged 14-19

2. What are the impediments to the development of language education policy for plurilingualism in your context?
   - Attitudinal issues as above
   - The devolved nature of education in the UK – there can be no single policy
   - The dominant role of English and its effect on both objective need and subjective perceptions
   - National accreditation systems

3. What are the facilitative factors?
   - Political commitments to a strategic role for languages in all parts of the UK
   - Productive ambiguity in dominant ideologies
   - A public and political commitment to an inclusive society (aspects of citizenship education)
   - The perceived "international" role of the UK – questions of war and peace.
   - European programmes encouraging mobility and economic competitiveness
   - Public and press interest in and support for language capability (Nuffield, European Year of Languages)
   - Strong support networks for language teaching, learning and research

4. What are the possibilities to take action from the perspective you describe?
   - Continuing public debate on languages and global society (Strategy framework)
   - Implementing policies to introduce languages into primary education

- Developing Links between languages and literacy, languages and cultural awareness
- Introducing new accreditation and recognition systems (linked to European Language Portfolio)

<u>France (a national context): F. Goullier, Ministry of Education</u>

1. The situation in France, and input from the Council of Europe

Language education policy is viewed in France as a constituent of education policy as a whole; it is meant to further the related individual training goals of general education and preparation for occupational integration.

It has two salient characteristics:

a) it is conceived primarily in view of the goals of personal and cultural training and **not explicitly** in relation to the country's economic or political needs;

b) choice of the languages studied is one of the only areas of "freedom" of choice available to families at primary and lower secondary school, though without provision of systematic information.

- In the same way as the subject "History", in France language leaning performs a function of social cohesion and assists in defining the national identity (enshrinement of the French language in the Constitution).

- This partly accounts for the fact that France generally entertains the illusion of being a monolingual country (in contradiction to the studies made during the population census).

A distribution of linguistic roles may be outlined: French within the borders and foreign languages for international relations.

- There is real social support for the conviction that "the Republican school" performs its appointed role of social cohesion and individual advancement:
  - through the national syllabi
  - through the national qualifications
  - through a sameness of educational approaches, identical throughout the territory (egalitarianism)

As a result, there is no major conceptual obstacle to:

- use of French alone as the language of instruction,
- choice of the same foreign languages by virtually all pupils,
- migrant populations' knowledge of ancestral languages being placed more in the private sphere, even though school can perform a logistic function (little social pressure to study these languages in the framework of the education system).

In this context, the contribution of the Council of Europe and of the *Guide for the elaboration of language education policies* is obvious. It clearly states that:

- the situation and needs of the country or region must be analysed before defining the terms of the language education policy pursued;

- the parameters that should enter into this analysis are not purely technical but essentially political: enquiry into objectives and the question of the languages to be taught;

- the decisive factors are not exclusively bound up with the education system.

2. *Obstacles to promotion of plurilingualism:*

a) Failure to understand the term "plurilingualism": the requirement to learn two modern languages other than the national language currently results in juxtaposition of these learning processes and effective regression in diversification of the languages studied.

b) The French educational tradition leaves very little room for the concept of partial proficiency and for optimisation of intermediate language skills, even if the explicit mention made in official texts of the scale of levels of language skill defined by the *Common European Framework of Reference* holds out hope of progress in this respect.

c) Public opinion does not wholeheartedly support the objective of more than one foreign language being learned by all pupils; the misconception of English being the *lingua franca* has consequences in seeking the highest possible standard in that language alone and making the study of other languages unattractive.

d) The highly developed skill of language teachers in one modern language, as their training takes no account of plurilingualism, generates a corresponding representation of language learning processes.

3. *Facilitating elements towards the development of plurilingualism:*

- Political will in favour of everyone learning several languages is manifest.

- There is still a strong perception that the place of French in Europe and worldwide determines provision for learning of other languages in France. Plurilingualism is the established framework for promoting French (though in a different sense than is defined in the *Common European Framework of Reference*).

Poland (a national context): H. Komorowska, Warsaw University

The present paper aims at the presentation of the role of the Country Profile and the *Guide for the Development of Language Education Policies in Europe* in the Polish context.

In order to do so, the basic characteristics of this context will first be briefly presented.

1. *Background information on the Polish national context*

Poland is now undergoing an important educational reform, launched in 1999 and introducing modifications of three crucial aspects of our education: its structure, its curricula and its assessment procedures.

The present structure of the school system is the following:

- a 6-year primary school (3-year elementary education stage and 3-year systematic education stage)
- a 3-year lower-secondary *gimnazjum* for all
- a 3-year upper- secondary *liceum* or
- a 2-year vocational school with a 2 year follow-up leading to final examinations and giving the right to enter universities.

The first foreign language enters the curriculum in grade 4 of the primary school for children aged 10, i.e. a year earlier than in the former system. Foreign language teaching from grade 4 is financed by the Ministry of Education. Primary schools are, however, encouraged to start language teaching earlier and to introduce two foreign languages whenever possible. A second foreign language is introduced from the beginning of the *gimnazjum*, i.e. for learners aged 13. Schools having problems with providing qualified teachers can offer a second foreign language later, i.e. in the lycee.

This in fact means the promotion of 2-3 foreign languages in the school system., as full general secondary education has now grown from 14% in the 80s to about 70%.

Although ethnic minorities do not exceed 2% of the population, a full system of teaching those languages has been introduced. Overall figures for minority language teaching institutions are the following:

Institutions with mother tongue as a language of instruction:

- 16 primary schools attended by 2505 pupils
- 6 secondary schools attended by 1066 pupils

Schools with mother tongue as the language of instruction teach history and geography of native countries. Mother tongue instruction applies to all subjects expect Polish language, literature and history. Certificates issued are bilingual.

Institutions with mother tongue as an additional subject are the following:

- 373 primary schools attended by 27251 pupils
- 5 secondary schools attended by 1066 pupils

Schools with additional minority language teaching may provide history and geography courses with elements of history and geography of native countries.

Inter-school mother tongue teaching centers

- 26 attended by 788 pupils

There are 690 teachers employed in minority language teaching institutions.

2. *Issues in the national language policy which a Country Profile might help evaluate*

In presenting the language policy issues which a country profile might help to evaluate the following aspects seem of crucial importance

- the starting point for languages
- bilingual education
- language teaching formats and
- examinations and certification

Careful investigation should be undertaken of educational expenditure needed to lower the starting point for languages (now placed at the age of 10 in mass education) against possible gains in language skills and competences, considering teacher shortage, possibilities of bad practice in lower primary

teaching done by unqualified teachers and continuity problems on the one hand and all the advantages of an earlier start on the other.

The value of bilingual education not only for Western language but also for less widely used languages or ethnic minorities language should also be considered.

The County Profile could also help with the evaluation of particular language teaching formats, as Poland tends not to make full use of a variety of curriculum scenarios, nor does it promote forms of teaching other than a set number of hours per week.

Examinations and certification need evaluation because procedures promoting objectivity are not always congruent with the promotion of the communicative approach, so advantages and disadvantages of particular modifications should be carefully analyzed.

The factors listed above form the most important, but by no means all of the issues which could be investigated with the help of a Country Profile.

3. *Impediments to the development of language education policy in the national context*

While reflecting on impediments to the development of language education policy in the Polish context, the following issues become conspicuous

- budgetary constraints
- traditional approaches to curriculum scenarios
- "accuracy over fluency" approaches
- lack of awareness of extended language and CILT programs vis a vis bilingual education programs

Budgetary constraints do not need commenting on, the situation being self-explanatory.

Traditional approaches to curriculum scenarios are here considered to function as impediments, as both the organization of school language teaching and the system of calculating teaching loads and teachers' salaries might stop or at least hinder possible modifications.

Accuracy over fluency approaches in language teaching methodology might on the other hand ruin the modification effort even if it is eventually undertaken in the field of curriculum scenarios.

Difficulties could also be faced because, so far, the label of bilingual language programs is given to programs which in fact are extended or based on CILT. This confusion can make the introduction of actual bilingual programs more difficult.

There definitely are more factors in this group, the above – however, seem to be the most important.

4.   *Facilitative factors in the development of language education policy*

In the analysis of facilitative factors in the development of language education policy – the following are worth mentioning

- promotion of general secondary education and higher education
- the success of the foreign language teaching reform of 1990
- changes in pre- and in-service teacher education
- examples and models coming from other educational systems
- public awareness of the value of language learning demonstrated in parental pressure
- to introduce more languages and more intensive language programs
- diversification of primary and secondary schools in Poland

As at least 2, and often 3 foreign languages are now part of full general secondary education, therefore, the promotion of secondary education that is taking place in the course of the new educational reform of 1999 seems to be an extremely facilitative factor in the development of the educational policy.

This is a step which was made possible by the earlier reform of language teaching in 1990, the success of which is still visible in the promotion of 4 languages in the primary and of 6 languages in the secondary education, alongside with the full provision of ethnic minorities' languages.

What facilitates the introduction of new language policies is also the whole set of changes in pre- and in-service teacher education visible in the provision of teachers and in the quality of language education - an obvious outcome of the new system of training language teachers.

With teachers' exchange visits many examples of good practice enter the educational landscape of our country and contribute to facilitating educational policies.

Mobility makes parents aware of the value of language education and in consequence many of them become valuable allies in the endeavor to find better ways of language teaching.

Finally, a huge number of school types – private, state, community, integrated, religious, etc schools broaden the offer of language teaching formats, curriculum scenarios and teaching methods facilitating the way to introduce and promote new policies.

5. *Possibilities to take action using the* Guide for the Development of Language Education Policies in Europe

In the overview of possibilities to take action using the *Guide,* the following fields can be identified

- awareness raising through teacher education related to

    a) ensuring that teachers understand the concept of intercultural competence

    b) changing perceptions of what is required of the learner for success

    c) correcting assumptions that languages necessarily interfere with each other

    d) assumptions that languages need to be learnt "in entirety"

- modifying curriculum scenarios
- modifying methods of assessment

The three areas above lend themselves relatively easily to immediate modification and will pave way for the introduction of those language policies which might require more time and effort to make their implementation effective.

Finland (a national context): M. L. Karppinen, National Board of Education – Helsinki

Comments on the Guide

The *Guide for development of language education policies in Europe* is a valuable document and instrument, not only for a language expert who always has a need to find innovations and new approaches in his or her work, but also for national education and language policy makers.

The following language promotion elements of the *Guide* could be of importance in the present Finnish language policy context:

Since the late 70's Finland has had a separate national foreign language program for its education and training system (cf Foreign Language committee 1978). During three decades and in many revised versions it has been essential in guiding FL teaching and learning in Finland. Since the 70's Finnish administration has become more decentralized. The municipalities have responsibility for providing localized language programmes for schools. European language co-operation has provided important, innovative inputs to national Finnish development work for foreign language teaching and learning. Referring to the important roles played by mother tongue teaching, minority, regional and immigrant languages in the European framework it is very important to launch a general discussion with a wider view on language policies and the concept "plurilingualism" in Finland and how minority and immigrant languages could get the best possible support.

Traditionally only Finnish and Swedish languages, in their roles as national languages, have been contained in the Finnish concept of national identity. Many immigrant languages have become more and more important in the country. For instance, the Russian language, which has been a minority language since 19th century in Finland and has a quite low status, has become the language of many immigrants to Finland. Since the 90's Finnish enterprises have also made many direct contacts with Russian companies. The importance of Russian language skills has become greater and greater for Finnish working life, tourism, industry, trade, etc. Multicultural and plurilingual competences of active European citizens seem to be becoming the most important aspects.

The two national languages and FL teaching have established certain traditions and structures in the Finnish education system. New flexible structures and language learning approaches described in the *Guide*, e.g. the fostering of bilingualism, differences in language learning achievements, and a higher profile for minority languages, are needed.

Some language-teaching formats that are especially relevant to the Finnish context are such as the transfer from separate language learning towards the teaching of other subjects in foreign languages (CLIL, blocks, etc) and language teaching through media and ICT.

Issues which could be promoted in Finland by Country Profile Process

A Country Profile process could in Finland have an effect on

- sensitization and engagement of authorities in plurilingualism.

  The valuable work done in the late 70's and its results can be evaluated during the country profile process. The process can be a promising starting point for launching the new concept "plurilingualism".

- position of minority and immigrant languages

  The process context gives new ideas and possibilities to strengthen teaching and learning of less widely spoken minority and immigrant languages in Finland. It is very useful to compile national guidelines, measures and best practices for minority and immigrant languages, and expose them to general discussion.

- evaluation of Finnish foreign language program (legislation, results, etc.)

  In practice, the present foreign language program has mainly favoured studies of English and Swedish languages. Nationally there has been a vast pilot program for diversifying the languages choices of pupils, but mainly for economical reasons the results have not been as good as expected. It would be important to learn to know which political decisions, revisions or local circumstances perhaps have given the results found in Finland.

- solid basis of life long learning in language learning

  Foreign language skills are crucial for Finland. Nowadays every pupil in Finland learns two foreign languages. It is almost impossible to demand obligatory studies in a third or a fourth foreign language during the normal school years. Additional languages and language studies in greater depth seem to be an essential part of adult life. However it would be of importance to discuss and reorganize language learning structures and approaches in early school years according to the best LLL practices and principles.

- European input in Finnish language teacher training (initial and in-service)

  European innovations are generally needed as enriching elements in teacher training.

- better cost-efficiency

  Languages form a major part of the Finnish curriculum at the school level. Views concerning money and time invested in language studies compared with results could be aired in the country profile context.

Suggestions for further development of the Guide

1. A shorter summary (2-3 pages) for education and language policy makers and their political assistants could be useful. The policy makers very seldom know language teaching, procedures, methods in depth.

2. The *Guide* could perhaps have annexes with examples of best practices (national, regional processes and, specifically, plurilingualism approaches).

3. For evaluation of language learning

    -   indicators for language learning

    -   European Language Portfolio as a possible instrument for external evaluation of learning to learn.

Malta (a 'small country' context): A. Camilleri Grima, University of Malta

Issues in language education policy in Malta

The Maltese people are generally described as bilingual in Maltese and English. The Constitution of the Republic of Malta declares Maltese as the national language and gives it official status alongside English. Table 1 illustrates knowledge of languages spoken by the Maltese people as reported in the National Population Census (Central Office of Statistics, 1998).

Table 1

Languages	Population 324,386	% of total
Maltese	317, 311	97.82
English	246,157	75.88
Italian	118,213	36.44
French	31,945	9.85
German	6,807	2.10
Arabic	5,955	1.84
Other	5,769	1.78

The last seven years have been a very exciting time for Malta in terms of language and education. We have witnessed the creation of a policy for the Maltese language (Bord ghall-Ilsien Malti, 2001); the establishment of a new national curriculum (Ministry of Education, 1999; Ministry of Education,

2001); and some changes in the pre-service teacher education programme. Of relevance is the fact that English is recommended in the national curriculum as medium of instruction for most subjects, and that secondary school teachers now have the possibility of studying the content and pedagogy of two languages.

Some of the problems still remaining are that: languages continue to be studied as separate subjects competing for time and resources both in schools and at university; little to no provision is made in teacher training for examining the issue of 'language across the curriculum' even in a completely bilingual system like that of Malta (cf. Camilleri 1995); the status of Maltese as national and official language continues to be viewed as detrimental to proficiency in the English language.

The media is another important variable. The public is constantly bombarded by beliefs, attitudes, and ideas, about languages and their values, from people who are not at all expert in the area. For instance, an article on the 'problems' related to bilingualism carried the title "Bilingual and hating it" on the front page of *The Circle (The Sunday Times of Malta Magazine)* (6 October 2002), the most popular and respected Sunday paper. In this same article an argument against plurilingualism was put forward:

> "*Another issue is whether schools should cut down on the study of French and Italian and instead concentrate on our two main languages. After all, if you want to learn to express yourself properly, it is better to concentrate efforts on your native tongue/s.*" (p. 108)

The impediments to the development of language education policy for plurilingualism are:

1. The totally absorbing worry with competence in English. The Maltese media is constantly discussing the English language competence of the Maltese people, especially that of students, and most of the time the belief that is being imparted is that more English needs to be spoken in schools by teachers; that Maltese is detrimental to proficiency in English; that students needs to study more English.

2. The incongruence between what policy makers actually do all the time, e.g. code-switch between Maltese and English, and what they recommend to others to do, e.g. teachers are to stick to a one language policy. Even if the policy makers are plurilingual, this does not automatically imply that they will pave the way for others to become plurilingual, or that they know how best to do it (cf. Camilleri Grima, 2002). I am afraid we would be mistaken if we assume that our vision, very lucidly expressed in the

Guide is shared by the majority, especially by those who have an important function in institutionalizing it.

3. The gap between what policy documents state and what happens in reality. We also need to be aware of the distinction between what policy and other documents describe as 'facts', and what takes place in the day to day life in schools.

The facilitative factors are:

1. The process leading to the publication of Malta's national curriculum for schools (1999) was very democratic and involved all social partners and the public at large. One of the most encouraging outcomes of this is the fact that the Maltese are now more aware than ever before of their responsibility to take an interest in, and to contribute to policy making. People are beginning to find it easier to air their opinions on radio and television programmes. This should ascertain more democratic processes in future policy making.

2. The Maltese people in general appreciate the importance of foreign language learning. There is a well established history of foreign language teaching and learning. It is normal for students to learn at least one, but often two foreign languages in addition to English and Maltese at school (cf. Camilleri Grima 2001).

3. Tourism is the main industry in Malta, and foreign languages are appreciated for their economic as well as social value. In this sense I do not think it would be a great problem to convince the public at large about the necessity to learn foreign languages.

4. Another facilitative factor is that there are no internal divisions nationally on a linguistic basis. And there are no minority groups or minority languages to complicate the scene.

Some possibilities for action include the following:

1. To start with, one could look at the recent history of language policy making. For instance, White et al. (1991: 182) provide a useful model of innovation and an item on their list of antecedents is the experiences of previous reformers. This aspect could be usefully looked into when the Country Report is being drawn up and discussed. The consideration of such antecedent factors could help to stimulate local discussion, and it would be beneficial to listen to the experiences of previous reformers – both of the successful and unsuccessful ones!

2. As I see it, the first step needs to be that of educating and convincing: the creation of awareness-raising instruments and techniques for use in the different countries among all parties concerned, including the media. The obsession with good competence in English is skewing perceptions, attitudes, and completely blocking people's creative capacities for solutions. The whole point is that more attention and emphasis need to be given to the change of mentality/culture. "…*Innovations don't just happen; they are – or should be – planned*" (White et al. 1991: 189). Just as no two readers will bring the same interpretation to a text, it would be scarcely surprising if the perceptions of the innovation by the change agent and the receiver did not differ. ECML activities could possibly be useful in this regard "*so that the people adopting the innovation can come to terms with it, they will almost always need retraining and this will require them not only to work with the innovation, but also to reflect upon the experience of attempting to apply it*" (White et al. 1991: 180).

3. An institionalized management mechanism, such as the creation of a liaising person between the Ministry of Education, the Council of Europe Language Policy Division and the European Center for Modern Languages, and also the EU language related programmes. In a small country context like Malta, normally each government employee has to work on several areas and projects at the same time. Unless one person is given direct responsibility for such a major innovation in the area of languages, no one will find the space, the time and the enthusiasm to follow it up. What will be needed in transition management for the implementation of innovation is a management structure which has the authority to mobilize and direct people and resources, the communication skills needed to persuade changers to adopt the innovation, and time to plan and act. I would like to highlight a comment in this direction that "*the post of a national coordinator for language policy might be created at the highest level*" (Main version of the *Guide* p. 80).

4. One practical suggestion could be that a country could first prepare a pilot study. This would allow for a 'safe' trial, in that not the whole country has to be mobilized at once, and successes could then be presented as a realistic example of change management. As Fanselow (1997:167) says, "*Each of us* yearns *to create and recreate for ourselves what has already been created by others for themselves*". A successful pilot study in a credible context would certainly help to convince and to convert. It would have a positive ripple effect.

Conclusion

To conclude very briefly I would like to borrow Kenneth Clark's (1969:17) words:

> "What is civilization? I don't know. I can't define it in abstract terms – yet. But I think I can recognize it when I see it; and I am looking at it now"

Baden-Württemberg (a *Land*-context): H. Ebke, Staatliches Seminar für Schulpädagogik, Tübingen, Germany

Our Land Baden-Württemberg has nearly 11 million inhabitants and just from its size could outnumber quite a lot of the member states of the European Union. On the other hand, we are just one partner in a set of 16 "Länder" within Germany which have to cooperate with the help of the "Standing Conference of Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder in the Federal Republic of Germany".

- Language education policy issues which a Country Profile process might help to evaluate:

It is within this difficult framework of responsibilities and the demand for unanimous votes in cooperating bodies between the Länder that the following question has to be addressed: Which are the policy issues which a Country Profile process might help to evaluate? In the 1990s the European Commission issued a recommendation that all school leavers should have some competence in both the mother tongue and two community languages. These are convincing educational goals but the question of identifying an appropriate 'platform for delivery' has remained largely unsolved. The reason for this is not a lack of knowledge of what could be done, but rather the inability to visualize how it could best be achieved.

- Early language learning and its consequences on the secondary level:

In the last twenty years increasing attention has been given to early foreign language learning in some states. When teaching children of 5-10 years, the methods used generally reflect those typical of primary education. Let me give you just one example from Baden-Württemberg: This year about 10% of our primary schools teach English or French throughout the first four years. From 2004 onwards foreign language teaching from class 1 to 4 will be compulsory for all the pupils. An additional two periods per week will be given to language tuition and it will be on the basis of a detailed syllabus that concentrates on

oral performance in everyday situations adequately addressing young learners' needs with the help of songs, rhymes, plays etc.

In order to do this it is necessary to monitor the individual development and performance of each pupil on a constant basis and assess these factors comprehensively. In the first two years of primary school this assessment takes the form of a report at the end of the school year describing in detail a pupil's progress, strengths and weaknesses in the various fields of learning. At the end of the third and fourth class pupils start to receive their reports at the end of each half of the school year with marks. The decision whether or not to move a pupil to the next class is based on the marks achieved in the pupil's school report at the end of the school year. The performance in English or French will be assessed, but not taken into account when the question comes up whether a pupil moves up or not.

You see that there are many questions worth considering in a Country Profile process:

- Start of language tuition: Should we start in class 1 or in class 3 as in some other Länder?

- Amount of input: Are 2 periods per week enough?

- Integrated or non-integrated concept: Should we teach 20 minutes per day or two full periods per week?

- CLIL[17]: How could it work on primary level?

- Teacher training: What should be the requirements and the profile of language teachers in primary schools?

- Assessment: Should the marks in English or French be included in the decision at the end of class 4 whether a pupil may go on Grammar School or not?

- Integrating different mother tongues: Which ways to go?

• Language teaching formats:

Decision has been taken that the first foreign language in primary school, be it French or English, will be offered from class 5 (for the 11 years old pupils) in all types of schools. So we have to decide whether it is still desirable to offer long courses which would last 12 years (4 + 8) up to the end of grammar schools from 2007 onwards.

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[17] CLIL : Content and Language Integrated Learning

In addition to that it has been decided that the start of the second foreign language will be in class 5 as well. So we might have another long course of 8 years in Grammar Schools.

We already have a well-established successful model in Grammar Schools (Gymnasium) at the moment. Traditional Grammar Schools which only offered Latin as first language now face a boom after they were allowed to offer Latin and English together from the very start in class 5.

From 2004 onwards the number of years a pupil spends in Grammar Schools will be reduced to 8 (pupils at the age of 14). The consequence will be an earlier start for the third foreign language in class 8. The third foreign language is not obligatory. It depends on the profile (science, music, sports, or languages) which a school offers. New concepts of promoting plurilingualism have to be developped. It should be a reasonable goal "if it is accepted that plurilingual repertoires[…] can be diverse, that the languages (…) do not all have to be mastered to the same level and that language education takes place throughout life and not exclusively during school years" (Council of Europe's *Guide for the Development of Language Education Policies in Europe,* 2002, p. 41).

Possible questions to tackle in a Country Profile process could be:

- Amount of periods for the teaching of modern languages: What should be the effective minimum per week at different age levels?

- Language teaching formats: The overall amount of periods for the teaching of modern languages is being reduced. In order to invest the remaining amount as sensibly as possible: Should a pupil be allowed to drop his or her first language to learn a new one? (e.g. take Spanish and drop Latin or French) After how many years of learning should this be allowed?

- What kind of didactic approach should be taken in order to successfully teach a third or even fourth language at certain age levels in different types of schools?

- How can we best make use of synergetic effects in language learning of more than one language?

- What should be the level of competence in modern languages for the various types of school-leaving certificates? (in terms of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*: B1, B2 or C1?)

- How could life-long learning best be promoted?

- CLIL-concepts in schools and teacher training

There is a broad consensus that a delivery gap often exists between what is provided as foreign language education, in terms of curricular investment and optimum goals, and outcomes in terms of learner attainment. New approaches are evidently necessary, one of which is CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning).

David Marsh from the University of Jyväskylä in Finland puts it this way: „Some learners clearly respond well to formal language instruction where, often because of time constraints, the focus is generally on form. But there are others in the broader school population who can benefit from the same type of approach as used in primary level, where form and function are integrated and learners use language to learn and learn to use language."

In Baden-Württemberg we promote the following concept for "bilingual departments" at Grammar Schools (Gymnasien):

- classes 5 + 6: two additional periods per year for the first foreign language;

- classes 7 – 11: history, geography and civic education are increasingly taught in the first foreign language with an extra period per week (if it is English, biology will be included in class 11 as well);

- classes 12 + 13: The organisation into classes is given up. Pupils choose courses within a specific framework of accepted combinations of subjects. That is why only the first foreign language + one of the above mentioned subjects are taught in the first foreign language;

- final exams: the pupil will additionally be examined in one of the above mentioned subject in the first foreign language.

Apart from this basic concept there is a broad variety of CLIL-projects and concepts in all types of schools, from primary to vocational education. One in French is even more intense and leads to the "double délivrance du bac et de l'Abitur". It is based on a mutual agreement between France and Germany Every year examination teams are exchanged to gain official approval.

In addition to that you can find a variety of projects lasting from a few weeks to a whole year or even more without central guidance or approval. Teachers who feel fit to offer CILT get the consent of the headmaster and parents and just start.

The most obvious reason for the CLIL-concept is - according to David Marsh – "that exposure to the language can be provided without allocation of extra time within the curriculum. To learn a language and subject simultaneously provides an extra means of educational delivery which offers a range of benefits relating to both learning of the language, and also learning of the non-language subject matter. In addition there are social, psychological and economic benefits that suit political policies and goals. Thus there is a need to consider CLIL in terms of language policy, planning, and politics".

Possible questions to be addressed in a Country Profile process could be:
- What are the best concepts for effective CLIL?
  o with regard to the type of school
  o with regard to the age group
  o with regard to the pupils' level of competence
  o with regard to minimum requirements for CLIL-teachers
  o with regard to pupils' and parents' interests
  o with regard to the demands of business and society
- Are additional periods needed, if so, how many per week per subject?
- How can CLIL best be implemented into school programs?
- How can the cooperation between university programs (1st phase) and teacher training institutes (2nd phase) be improved on the basis of existing legislation?
- What kind of motivation/attraction/advantages can universities in the countries of the target language offer to certified CLIL-students?

• Impediments to the development of language education policy for plurilingualism:

As the questions before have already shown, impediments to the development of language education policy for plurilingualism are abundant. In very few cases can we speak of a lack of knowledge or competence on the side of the experts involved.

• National coordination procedures:

Whenever new initiatives are presented to the coordinating body, the Standing Conference of Ministers for Education and Cultural Affairs, they are thoroughly scrutinized with regard to their possible effects on the equilibrum of the status quo in cultural politics. Harmonisation, comparable living and

learning conditions in all the "Länder" of Germany are a constant demand laid down in our Basic Law. After the reunifaction of Germany the focus has been on the integration of the new eastern Länder helping them to achieve comparable standards in schooling and exams.

Many compromises had to be made, different systems had to be accepted, and there has been and still is the unanimous view that the common goals matter more than the individual ways to reach it.

- Mutual acceptance of exams:

That is why we are in a process of defining standards for the performance of all our school leavers in all types of schools. Every school leaving certificate has to be accepted by each Land, regardless of how much better they value their own standards. The PISA-study has shown that there are remarkable differences when you compare the German Länder. You may note that the PISA-study, especially Germany's overall performance being rather mediocre, has contributed a great deal to the development of new concepts and new ideas. Unfortunately, cultural policy makers tend to concentrate on how to improve reading competencies in primary schools, on enlarging the amount of school hours in the field of sciences, and on ways to improve mathematical skills of our 15-year-olds. Modern language teaching is not much in focus at the moment.

- Budgetary reasons

But policy makers have to serve a wider group of sometimes opposing interests. Especially the representatives of our industry keep telling them that science education needs improvement (that is more hours). If it comes to the worst, and this is more and more the case, the Minister of Finance dominates cultural politics by simply cutting the budget.

- Facilitative factors:
- Pressure by supra-national surveys (e.g. PISA)

It is always sensible to improve one's own situation by looking at what our neighbours can do better. The PISA-study has shown that there is quite a lot to learn. But we should keep in mind that it is one thing to watch a successful concept at work and a completely different thing to implement such a concept successfully in one's own country. Anyway, such international studies like PISA or DESI are an excellent means for any initiative to improve language education policy. Education has become an issue, is impotant to politicians and parents alike: for politicians, who want to be re-elected, and for parents who

want to select the best possible school for their child. We as experts and policy advisers should take the chance and try to put the issue of plurilingualism on the national and local agenda.

- Good examples in other European countries

Examples of good practise in other countries might help a lot. A special interest goes to multilingual countries and their strategies to improve plurilingual competencies. We should make good use of all the opportunities offered by international organisations like the Council of Europe to learn from each other. Conferences and publications address our minds, experiencing good practise in various countries addresses our hearts as well. Let's open our tool boxes and let's learn from each other.

- Change in status of teachers

Some pressure groups demand the abolition of the civil servant status of teachers in Germany. "Throw out the lazy ones and pay the good ones decent wages, the best ones a little more on top." This is supposed to be a good means to motivate our teachers. I personally know the one or other teacher in the system who would do better elsewhere, but I do not think this would be a decisive step towards a new quality in teaching. As head of theTeacher Training Institute in Tübingen I meet enthusiastic trainee teachers every day, who work constantly overtime and would not be able to do more for more money. Most of them love their subjects, their profession and their pupils, which I feel are all essential prerequisites for their success. But schools in Germany will have to face evaluation by experts – this is new to them.

- Possibilities to take action (issues of relevance)

If it is not the change in the status of teachers, what could then be done to take action, to prepare the grounds for a better and convincing education system for plurilingualism?

- Preparing the education system for plurilingualism: awareness raising

We should start to do this on all possible levels: pupils, parents, society and policy makers.

Pupils should be made aware of the nature of their linguistic and cultural repertoire, which is different from one person to the other, which may even attribute an especially high level to the often looked-down upon migrants.

Parents should be made aware that they are constantly setting examples for their own children. We have to make them aware of the means of developing their own repertoire e.g. through autonomous acquisition.

Society should be made aware of its rich and enriching cultural and linguistic heritage which enables every member to feel at ease in his or her own "basic linguistic variety" and at the same time respect the varieties and languages of others.

Policy makers should be made aware of the fact that plurilingualism is not just teaching several languages at school for the gifted few. "Plurilingualism is ordinary and, in a sense, is already there, since all speakers have experience of different linguistic varieties to differing degrees." (Council of Europe's *Guide for the Development of Language Education Policies in Europe*, 2002, p. 37) We can build on a broad basis and develop it further for all our pupils and fellow-citizens.

- Modulating teaching formats

It will become necessary to define the goals for each language at school. The competencies to be acquired in the first foreign language will have to be a lot different from the third or even fourth in a row. Speaking and writing, reading and listening comprehension will certainly not all be on the same level. We should even allow the individual to concentrate on the one or other competence depending on his or her specific purposes - of course beyond the common basics. When learning Italian, a future scientist will have different needs than a future opera singer.

- Adopting the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages(CEF)*

PISA has shown and DESI will show again next year the desire of politicians and society alike to assess our pupils' performance. As a solid and trustworthy basis for any comparison in the field of language competence is essential, the *Common European Framework of Reference* hould be widely promoted. It has already become the basis for the curriculum work in our Land and in most Länder in Germany.

- Starting a Country Profile Process

Policy advisers have to convince the politicians that a view on the educational system from external experts might initiate a substantial discussion on how to improve standards in teaching foreign languages and in developing cultural competence on a European level at the same time. That is why open

consultation processes should be started, which contribute to a qualified process of a better understanding, respect and finally unification in Europe.

<u>Hamburg (a city context): I. Gogolin, Hamburg University, Germany</u>

The *Guide for development of language education policies in Europe* is a very impressive document, promoting lots of desirable attitudes towards language practise and a definitely innovative perspective for language education (to which I totally agree and hopefully contributed a bit by my own work). The promising and innovative perspective of the *Guide* is not least due to the fact that it is (as far as I can think of) the first political document of European origin which takes the actual language situation in Europe into account – that is to say: which considers and reacts to the full range of language diversity we actually face in this part of the world. In that sense the document is indeed a milestone. It could help to change the "linguistic identity" which was developed in most European countries over the last 200 years – which I once called a monolingual habitus. By that term I refer to the specific European way to connect language, culture and nation. Unlike other areas of the world European nation states traditionally consider themselves as "normally monolingual" – with exceptions: Some states consider themselves as bi-, tri- or – at the most - quadrilingual, if their area is divided into territories with different main languages; some accept linguistic minorities in defined areas. But in none of the European countries we find anything like the formula "multilingual" to describe the linguistic identity of the state. Due to specific historical circumstances, Europe deeply believes in the homogeneity of language, culture and nation.

The *Guide* goes far beyond the usual connotations of language diversity in Europe. I would be very glad if at least parts of the vision presented to us in this remarkable drawing up could be put into practise. And from my point of view, the struggle for legitimacy and acceptance of the existing language diversity in Europe is the essential condition for the realization of "policies of plurilingualism" in Europe.

1. What are the language education policy issues in your context which a Country profile process might help to evaluate?

We must at first admit that we will face an enormous resistance towards the assumption that a European nation state or even region could have a multilingual identity. This resistance can be found in nearly every layer of society – in the political sphere as well as in public opinion or on the individual level. Have a look at the example of Hamburg.

Hamburg is a special example in some respects, an ordinary one in others. The speciality is that Hamburg is one of the 16 German federal states, the "Länder". Due to this the city has much more legislative competences than an average municipality would have, especially in respect of educational politics (which is, as you might know, in the sovereignty of the Länder in Germany). On the other hand, Hamburg is an ordinary example in that it fully represents the linguistic and cultural normality of today's German urban areas (at least this applies for the Western part of Germany). Let me present a few indicators for this statement:

- 17% of the inhabitants of Hamburg own no German but a foreign passport; Hamburg is the German "Land" with the largest number of foreign inhabitants (Ausländer);
- the owners of foreign passports represent roughly 100 different nationalities;
- 20% of the school children have passports other than German.

If we don't look for passport but for other indicators, we find the following:

- 1/3 of the schoolchildren in Hamburg have at least one parent with an immigrant background;
- more than 80% of these children are born or grew up in Germany;
- more than 1/3 of school children speak one or more language(s) next to German in their family;
- it is estimated that at least 100 languages next to German are spoken by school children in Hamburg.

How did the educational policy of the land react on this situation (which developed over the past 40 years)?

Let's look at the example of immigrant minority languages teaching.

Hamburg traditionally placed this teaching in the hands of the countries of origin. These were responsible for financing and recruitment of teachers, but could receive a small subsidy by the Hamburg authority. In 1996, 104 classes for +mother tongue-teaching* of this type existed; 87 teachers appointed by their Consulates taught there.

This policy was established in 1976 and since then intensely criticised. But not before 1997, an amendment of the general school legislation took place, in which some of the major critical arguments were taken into consideration.

In its preamble the new school law said: `Children […] whose first language is not German, under consideration of their ethnic and cultural identity, have to

be supported in such a way that they can develop their bilingualism and that they can actively take part in instruction as well as in school lifeA (Hamburger Schulgesetz vom 10. April 1997, '3, Abs. 3; Translation I.G.). A new action-programme was established, consisting of measures like the following:

- Immigrant minority languages teaching in primary schools could be integrated in the regular school day;
- The number of languages taught was to be extended.
- The Land established an in-service-training course for the teachers (most of them were native speakers of the resp. languages, but not necessarily qualified as teachers).
- The development of syllabuses and teaching material for the teaching of immigrant minority languages in multilingual contexts begun.
- In a few primary schools, bilingual classes were established (all in all 7 until today).

Isn't that a promising starting point for the implementation of a language education policy as promoted in the *Guide*?

Yes and no.

On one hand the development can be considered a remarkable opening to the fact that immigrant minority languages exist in Hamburg.

On the other hand, this was never accepted as a regular condition, be it of schooling or of social life in the city. The teaching of immigrant minority languages was only opened for children with an immigrant background, not for the whole school population. In this way, it kept the scent of a measure for "children with special needs" – that is to say: a negative connotation.

As opposed to this, English was introduced a few years ago as the "regular" first foreign language for all children in class 3 of primary school.

In the case of Hamburg, a Country Profile process could support the notion of actual language diversity in Hamburg not only as a special (and probably obstructive) living condition for the immigrant part of the population, but as a relevant resource for the city and all its inhabitants.

2. What are the impediments to the development of language education policy for plurilingualism in you context?

The main impediment in the case of Hamburg may be that the tide has turned recently.

Due to a change of government after elections in September 2001, a new school legislation will be implemented soon. The new legislation does not mention bilingualism in any other way than as handicap for learning German.

The teaching of immigrant minority languages in the Land's own responsibility is challenged by the new government, which denies its responsibility for anything but success in German. Not only is bilingualism now again regarded as impediment for the learning of German, but moreover as an obstacle for integration in a broader sense. To the new Hamburg government, a 'democratic public sphere' and multilingualism is a contradiction in itself.

The Hamburg example teaches us much about the delicacy of the actual language situation in Europe. On one hand, the massive linguistic changes can no longer be ignored – not least due to developments as the internationalisation or globalisation of the economical and political sphere. This lead to a kind of readiness for the acceptance of language diversity, at least on the level of public rhetoric.

On the other hand, the readiness for a change of the common language identity is extremely fragile. Huge differences in language prestige continue to be spread in public opinion; campaigns against immigrant languages teaching are supposed to win votes in elections. The idea of a multilingual Hamburg or Germany is not prevailing, neither in political thinking nor in the public opinion.

We should therefore try to develop strategies which allow to initiate processes like the "Country Profile" also in situations where we can expect massive resistance and opposition by the responsible political actors.

3. What are the facilitative factors?

I am afraid that there are hardly any. The immigrant groups themselves play an ambivalent role. They create their own private strategies for language maintenance of their children, as they are well aware of their marginalized position in the German society. Thus, they do not publicly defend their language resources with confidence, and they refrain from demanding home language instruction in the public school system.

But they develop other strategies to transmit their languages to their children. This again plays an ambivalent role for the development of a plurilingual public sphere: on one hand, the modesty of immigrant minorities spares the majority from incisive reactions on actual multilingualism. On the other hand,

these practices could support the idea of plurilingual education, as they contribute to the vitality of immigrant minority languages.

Thus, the facilitative factors could be to approach immigrant minority groups and other parts of the public who might act as allies in the promotion of Policies for Plurilingualism.

4. Possibilities to take action

From my experience, the further development of the *Guide* should primarily take the fragility of the situation into account:

- On one hand the existing potential of changes of the common language identity must be strengthened.

- On the other hand the massive opposition and resistance to change must be taken into consideration.

Strategies of addressing allies (Verbündete) and strengthening their position should be either integrated in the *Guide* or produced as accompanying material. These allies will not necessarily be people from the political sphere, but representatives of other fields, e.g.:

- employers who might be interested in a broad range of language abilities of their future employees

- parents from immigrant minorities who long for a possibility of minority language teaching for their children without negative consequences for their school careers

- other relevant and responsive actors, e.g. religious unions, trade unions or artists etc. who are probably open for the human rights aspect of the whole problem.

In order to address publics like these, the "Guide" might need (partial) "translation" into other "jargons". This may include other languages, e.g. the languages of minority groups; or this may include other approaches than text, e.g. accompanying material like videos or CD-ROMs which present the arguments of the *Guide*. From my point of view, special efforts should be made to strengthen the self-confidence of immigrant minority parents, as their language education practises are very often rattled by members of the majorities.

The Council of Europe could be very helpful in that it would initiate or back up initiatives of regional "round tables" or similar groups who could discover

and activate local crowd-pullers for a change of public resistance against multilingualism and for the promotion of "Policies for Pluralism".

Summary of Group discussions

Brief summary of the results of the Group work on "Promoting Change"[18]

Many comments were made during the discussions; this summary can only take account of a small number of these:

Firstly, it should be noted that discussion was not restricted to the subject of the Council of Europe's new instruments, presented at the Conference. The extreme pertinence of the introductory presentations – in particular, the fact that they dealt with a variety of real educational situations – provoked exchanges of a new tone almost immediately, with discussions on language policy taking place: mutual curiosity regarding the general situation of languages in a given context, and about the solutions developed or proposed, was the starting point for discussions of realistic objectives and strategies that would allow for the diversification or harmonisation of language education. This interest confirms the degree to which – as Mr Rugaas and Mr de Puig pointed out in their opening speeches – the issues surrounding languages are not exclusively didactic or technical.

In actual fact, it was not so much the *Guide* itself which gave rise to discussions as the issue of plurilingual education that it seeks to clarify and promote. It was stressed that certain aspects of the document should be taken further; in particular to reinforce the arguments surrounding questions such as:

- Why should national education systems be made responsible for teaching the mother languages of new immigrant groups in Europe?

- How can we ensure that plurilingualism is not de facto perceived as an elitist form of education?

- How can we convince people that learning several languages (partially or otherwise) within the education system is not an additional hurdle facing pupils? "Doesn't teaching more languages just give those learning them more opportunities to fail?", asked one participant, echoing the possible fears of others.

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[18] The rapporteur of Group C most sincerely thanks the sub-group rapporteurs: A. Baeyen, A. Dobson, C. Markou, C. Truchot and Z. Poor; who provided most of the comments which follow.

- How does this fit in with the 'unofficial' teaching of (regional or native) languages that takes place within the family, at 'Sunday classes' or within associations? Where does 'learning to learn' fit in?

- How are we to explain that this concept of *plurilingualism* is not just a distant and unrealistic ideal, but a means of developing everyone's plurilingual potential?

- How can we adapt the training and practices of teachers (a strategic element in any pedagogical innovation): how are we to foster in them the skills and mindset of a plurilingual speaker? How can we persuade them to view languages as something other than academic subjects? How can we develop their metalinguistic reflexes? How are we to make them more responsible for raising intercultural awareness of linguistic diversity and tolerance? How can we ensure that the teachers of the most 'popular' languages also give time to others which are less in demand? How do we train teachers who will teach more than one language?

A wish was expressed for more discussion points of this nature to be included in the *Guide*, whose relevance, it was pointed out, varies according to the circumstances. In fact, the 'ideas' in the *Guide* are not new, at least for those who co-operate with and through the Council of Europe: it has already been possible to implement them in various contexts, but they can seem quite strange in places where all that matters is 'learning English properly' in order to improve job prospects. The success of this instrument therefore depends on the culture of plurilingualism that exists in each State.

Finally, it was stressed that the *Guide* could only be the exponent of a 'languages philosophy for Europe', for which it outlines certain options for implementation and proposes arguments, not standard solutions.

With regard to the *Profiles*, it was noted:

- that they allowed us, to a certain extent, to repeat the experience of the European Year of Languages, in terms of putting social players (e.g. businesses, parents of pupils, students, language professionals, elected representatives, linguistic groups, etc.) in contact with each other to discuss the role and place of languages and language teaching in European society and within the context of Europe

- that they provide an opportunity to identify examples of 'best practice'

- that their organisational structure (linking 'national' experts and experts from other member States) ensured that ideas and experiences were passed on

- that they were particularly well-suited to adaptation at regional level (e.g. in border regions, regions that have certain languages and problems in common, etc.).

These two instruments should, in the view of participants, allow co-operation to be built on the basis of common thinking about the forms and significance of plurilingual education for the future of Europe.

POLICY DIMENSIONS OF COUNCIL OF EUROPE INSTRUMENTS: MEETING THE CHALLENGE OF EUROPEAN STANDARDS AND QUALITY

Introduction: R. Schärer, General Rapporteur (ELP)

Quality much like beauty is in the eye of the beholder.

Quality always relates to collective or personal visions and values.

Quality always relates to purpose and objectives.

Quality always has a time dimension.

The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe in the Preamble to Recommendation R (82) 18 express their vision:

The rich heritage of diverse languages and cultures in Europe is a valuable resource to be protected and developed.

A major educational effort is needed to convert that diversity from a barrier to communication into a source of mutual enrichment and understanding.

Member states, when adopting or developing national policies in the filed of modern language learning and teaching, may achieve greater convergence at the European level by means of appropriate arrangements for ongoing co-operation and co-ordination of policies.

Recommendation R (98) 6 concerning Modern Languages outlines among other points:

- the need to promote widespread plurilingualism;

- the need to diversify languages on offer in a life-long perspective;

- the need to develop realistic and valid learning objectives.

These declarations, in a nutshell, present a shared European vision, indicate broad criteria to reflect on operational objectives, desirable standards and on quality issues of processes and products.

The Language Policy Division of the Council of Europe in close cooperation with the Member States developed over the years a number of tools to facilitate the implementation of language policies based on shared principles and guidelines.

Our Round table today will focus on two of these tools:

- *the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: learning, teaching, assessment* and

- the European Language Portfolio.

Three introductory statements reflecting on the policy dimensions of these tools or instruments will be followed by a plenum discussion.

Dr. Pavel Cink from the Czech Ministry of Education will, from a national policy perspective, outline some of the challenges faced with and reflect on how the *Framework* and Language Portfolio might be useful in addressing them.

Professor David Little, from the Trinity College Dublin, Ireland, will look at the interrelationship of standards and quality. He will outline how the *Framework* can support quality assurance of educational systems and how the Language Portfolio enhances the quality of language learning on an individual level.

Mr. Frank Heyworth, an independent consultant, will look at quality assurance in practice. How can these European instruments help us to know if we are "doing the right things" and whether we are "doing things right"?

Let me finish this introduction by reminding us of a few common principles:

The *Framework* and the ELP are mere tools. They do not prescribe or impose anything – it is for the different partners in the learning and teaching process to decide on priorities, objectives, desirable learning processes and methods.

The *Framework* is based on two key principles: transparency and coherence.

The key principles of the Language Portfolio are:
- Owner is the learner;
- All learning all competence is valued in a positive way;
- Language learning is viewed as a lifelong process;
- It is based on the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: learning, teaching assessment.*

Quality and standards – a Ministry of Education Perspective: P. Cink, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, Czech Republic

Looking back at the discussion concerning education policies in Europe in general over the past ten years, we find that the prevailing, indeed dominant, theme is that of quality. Educationalists and education policy makers claim to strive to maintain high quality education, improve education, raise educational standards, offer high quality in education, etc. This approach can be explained and understood as a reaction to and a reflection on the highly complex and comprehensive social and political processes which have been taking place

within European societies since the mid seventies, when the principle of *equal access to education* was politically widely accepted, leading to the unprecedented democratisation in education. Furthermore, since the economic success of the European Continent, in the context of global economic competition, is seen as a prerequisite for the maintenance and improvement of social cohesion in the European societies, the role and value of education in the thinking of European politicians has been significantly emphasised in the recent statements of Prime Ministers Schröder, Chirac and Tony Blair.

This aspect has been reflected especially in the situation within the European Union. Let me remind you of the modest role which education plays in the Maastricht Treaty on European Union, (Treaty of Amsterdam) compared to its prominent position within the Lisbon process. The same applies to the OECD, where a new Education Directorate within the OECD Secretariat has recently been created, and for UNESCO, which through its 'Education for All' programme seeks, in an active and positive way, to influence education globally. And, last but not least, education has always also been reflected in the work of the biggest multilateral pan-European organisation – the Council of Europe.

The fundamental principle underlying any educational policy should be, of course, to strive for the highest quality in education. To measure and compare educational achievements and the performance of education systems, an array of indicators is being developed and the idea of benchmarking has been actively and continuously discussed for many years.

The findings of international surveys, which provide collections of comparative data on the quality of learning outcomes - known as TIMSS and PISA, have brought new incentives into the discussions on quality in education.

Individual Ministries of Education, being responsible for the performance of education systems in their respective countries, are, as a rule, guided in their political decisions not only by the political vision of high quality education but, unfortunately, also by what is feasible within their budget. Policy without a vision of quality education is like a meadow without flowers, but in the end it comes down to finance, although more money does not necessarily always imply higher quality of education.

It is therefore no surprise that any Ministry of Education in any country will welcome whatever assistance can be provided to help to make the political decision making process more transparent and more coherent, thus leading to the improvement of language education and to more effective exploitation of

available resources. Within the context of its language policy, and to facilitate the development of plurilingualism of Europeans, the Council of Europe developed, in the nineties, several instruments specifically designed to make strategic language planning transparent, instruments that enable rational standardisation of curricular outcomes and language examinations (*Common European Framework of Reference*) and which provide for the description, monitoring, self-reflection and self-evaluation of each person's individual language learning process (European Language Portfolio). Both these instruments, together with the *Guide for the elaboration of language education policies in Europe*, presented for the first time at this conference, have significant potential as far as standard setting and thus further improvement of language education in the European school systems are concerned.

In my opinion, the quality of language teaching has two dimensions: a horizontal one and a vertical one. The former, being rather political, could be evaluated and measured according to the range of foreign language learning opportunities offered by both school systems as well as by the programme of lifelong learning which goes beyond the school system. The Country Language Policy Profile is yet another Council of Europe instrument providing those member states that wish and are interested to do so, with a chance to reflect on their language education in the context of the Council of Europe's concepts of plurilingualism and multilingualism.

The vertical dimension of quality in language education is closely connected with the levels of foreign language competences achieved at various stages of the education system. These levels can vary from A1 to C2 language proficiency levels, as defined by the CEFR. In this context, it may be interesting to mention that the attempts made over the past fifteen years to measure this dimension of language education quality have, so far, not been successful. The desired objectives have not been achieved either by IEA (International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievements), which in the mid nineties tried to conduct a comparative review of foreign language learning results in more than 30 countries worldwide, or by the discussion conducted within the OECD on how to include the assessment of the quality of learning outcomes in at least one foreign language into the PISA programme. Both these attempts having failed so far, mean that we still do not have the required information, which will be extremely interesting both for countries with stabilised language education as well as for countries in transition and in which foreign language education has gone through dramatic change over the past ten years.

The Ministry of Education of the Czech Republic is very well aware that in order to reach, maintain and improve certain quality requirements, harmonisation with internationally acknowledged standards is a necessary prerequisite. Therefore the Czech Republic has made serious efforts to base its language education policy on the maximum use of the whole range of instruments developed by the Council of Europe. As for CEFR, the Czech Republic belongs to those countries which can already provide its official translation into the Czech language. The CEFR potential has been used and referred to in the discussions on a comprehensive reform of the Maturita – an upper secondary school-leaving examination. These discussions have revealed an interesting problem. One possible way of employing the CEFR is to use it to justify the status quo of the language curriculum, or the language examinations, thus preserving the current situation. Of course, if the target level defined in the curriculum or in the corresponding language exam is primarily based on the status quo, it may give rise to questions concerning the effectiveness of foreign language teaching. This will certainly be the case whenever a relatively low target level contrasts with a relatively high number of lessons allocated for language education.

The other way is to build upon the CEFR principles and scales and project the desired future situation into the requirements definition which may result in a demand for an immediate curriculum and language exam reform and a review of pre-service as well as in-service teacher training programmes.

Another possible impact of the CEFR on language examinations in school systems concerns their format. Ideally, the format of the examination should include all five communicative competences defined by the CEFR and used for the specification of the overall language proficiency level. In examination practice, however, certain modifications – depending on concrete organisational and financial conditions – may occur.

There are some other examples or projects on how to use the standard setting potential of the CEFR in my country.

- language exams for civil servants
- the intention to develop a complex system of 'Czech as a foreign language' examinations which are intended to be used by the state administration whenever evidence of the command of Czech is required by law

In countries which are linguistically more diversified than the Czech Republic, the CEFR could be used - provided the authorities of such countries wish to do

so, based on political consensus and respecting the internationally acknowledged language rights of minorities – as an effective instrument for the development and formulation of linguistic policy applied to minorities.

As for the the European Language Portfolio, the Czech Republic was fortunate to be one of the countries piloting the project in the mid nineties. Of course, this facilitated the decision to implement the Portfolio in foreign language teaching in schools. Currently in the Czech Republic there are three officially validated European Language Portfolios available, covering language learning in primary, lower secondary and upper secondary general education schools. Looking back, we can say that the development and implementation of the European Language Portfolio in the country benefited from the increased awareness of languages during the European Year of Languages 2001, which sensitised the wider public to language learning issues, thus making it easier for the Ministry of Education to find the resources to buy several tens of thousands of Portfolios and to deliver them to schools completely free of charge. Although this centrally organised purchase and supply was an exception, the interest of publishers in producing further copies of the ELP is still relatively high.

The crucial problem over the next couple of years would appear to be the effective use of the ELP in everyday school practice, whether we will manage to make the ELP an integral part of language teacher pre-service training and also a theme of language teacher in-service training and further education. Assessment of the results of the ELP use so far, identification of other areas of improvement in order to make use of the ELP's full potential for the benefit of language learning, will be equally important. The Czech Republic believes that the Council of Europe Language Policy Division and the European Validation Committee will play an important role as initiator and catalyst in this process.

Standards, quality and the impact of Council of Europe instruments on policy and practice: D. Little, Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland

Standards and quality are two sides of the same coin: we set standards in order to achieve quality, and we measure quality by reference to standards. This truism is increasingly important for educational systems everywhere. Governments want to know what kind of return they are getting on their educational spending, but they also want to know how the education they provide compares with that of their neighbours. Within the European Union policy for future economic growth assigns a key role to education, which

means that educational comparisons between member states are set to become more formal and more searching. What is more, the multilingual character of the EU ensures that foreign language learning will always receive special attention: "Better foreign language teaching is essential if Europe is to achieve its potential – whether this is its economic potential, its cultural or its social potential" (Commission of the European Communities 2001[19], p.11). The same conviction has motivated the Council of Europe's modern languages projects for the past thirty years. Standards and quality are no less important to the individual citizen than they are to national governments and the European Union. With increasing internationalization each of us is under pressure to know what his/her educational experience and qualifications are worth abroad as well as at home. All of this implies a need for standards that are recognized and applied locally, nationally and internationally. This paper argues that as far as language education is concerned, the Common European Framework (CEF) and the European Language Portfolio (ELP) enable us to set standards and pursue quality in a uniquely comprehensive way.

It is important to begin by recognizing that the CEF is itself a quality document in the sense that it meets fundamental standards of empirical research (see, for example, North 2000[20], Schneider and North 2000a[21], 2000b[22]). In other words, the standards of second/foreign language proficiency that the CEF defines have been rigorously tested against the reality of second/foreign language learning and teaching. Those standards, the so-called Common Reference Levels, are elaborated in two dimensions. Vertically they specify proficiency in relation to five communicative skills or activities – listening, reading, spoken interaction, spoken production, writing; horizontally they specify proficiency at six levels – A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2. Thus the Common Reference Levels are summarized in the form of a grid (the so-called

[19] Commission of the European Communities, 2001: *The concrete future objectives of education systems*. COM(2001) 59 final. www.info-europe.fr/doc02/233/g000e372.pdf

[20] North, B., 2000: *The development of a Common Framework scale of language proficiency*. New York: Lang. (Theoretical Studies in Second Language Acquisition 8)

[21] Schneider, G., and B. North, 2000a: «Dans d'autres langues, je suis capable de ...» Échelles pour la description, l'évaluation et l'auto-évaluation des compétences en langues étrangères. Rapport de valorisation. Berne and Aarau : Centre suisse de coordination pour la recherche en éducation (CSRE)

[22] Schneider, G., and B. North, 2000b: *Fremdsprachen können – was heisst das? Skalen zur Beschreibung, Beurteilung und Selbsteinschätzung der fremdsprachlichen Kommunikationsfähigkeit*. Chur and Zurich: Rüegger.

self-assessment grid of the CEF and ELP; see Council of Europe 2001, pp.26f.).

Their two-dimensional character allows the Common Reference Levels to be used with a great deal of flexibility and precision. They easily accommodate the fact that language learning rarely results in the development of the same level of proficiency in all skills; they can be used to identify and define partial competences; and they can also be used to compare any language curriculum, learning programme or language test with any other (the Council of Europe has recently established an authoring group to write a guide to help test providers to relate their tests to the CEF). The CEF thus offers a ready means of establishing the standards (or 'indicators') in second/foreign language learning that are central to the educational agenda of the OECD and the EU.

Because the Common Reference Levels consist of descriptors cast in the form of "can do" statements, they can be used at once to specify learning targets, select learning activities, and evaluate learning outcomes. In other words, the same standards can be applied without strain to the development of curricula, the design and implementation of courses, and the assessment of learner proficiency. This is an innovation whose importance cannot be overestimated, for it allows everyone involved in the complex processes of language education – teachers and learners in classrooms no less than curriculum designers, textbook authors and examination boards – to pursue quality outcomes according to the same set of standards. The ELP is the practical tool designed to convert this potential into reality.

The ELP has two complementary functions: to make the language learning process more transparent to the individual learner and to report language learning achievement in an internationally transparent manner. Thus it is equally concerned with the quality of the learning experience and the standards that are achieved. The pedagogical and reporting functions of the ELP depend on one and the same feature: all statements of proficiency – the self-assessment grid that is an obligatory element of the language passport and the checklists that help learners to plan and evaluate their learning – must follow the Common Reference Levels of the CEF. Thus the Common Reference Levels provide the framework within which the ELP owner gradually builds up an image of him/herself as language learner and user; but they are also the key that enables the teacher, examiner, placement officer or potential employer to interpret the image and compare it with the self-image of other ELP owners.

The *Principles and Guidelines*[23] that govern the design of ELP models reflect key elements in the Council of Europe's language policy; in particular they emphasize the importance of plurilingual and intercultural competence. But in their insistence that the ELP should be a means of promoting learner autonomy they also reflect the Council of Europe's concern with education for democratic citizenship and lifelong learning. When the ELP's pedagogical function is fulfilled according to the intentions of the *Principles and Guidelines* (see Little and Perclová 2001[24]), ownership of the ELP rests with the individual language learner not just in the obvious material sense. Through the reflective processes of planning, monitoring and evaluating language learning, the ELP user comes into conscious ownership of his/her evolving plurilingual identity. This is what makes the ELP a means of developing learner self-awareness and learner responsibility and thus of contributing to the process of education for democratic citizenship.

In keeping with the Council of Europe's policy of plurilingualism, the ELP is concerned with all the second/foreign languages that the owner knows, whether they are learnt inside or outside formal education. As a general concept the ELP is also age-independent. Among the 38 ELPs validated to date there are models for learners in all domains of formal education: primary, lower secondary, upper secondary, vocational, university, adult. In a few countries there are already families of ELPs designed to accompany language learning from primary through to upper secondary. In principle, therefore, the ELP is a means of supporting and recording plurilingual development as a lifelong process.

Taken together the CEF and the ELP offer a uniquely powerful means of establishing standards and pursuing quality in language teaching, learning and assessment. For the same criteria serve on the one hand to shape curriculum, course design and tests/examinations, and on the other to give meaning and coherence to the individual's experience of learning and using second/foreign languages. As a consequence, the ongoing process of self-assessment that is fundamental to effective ELP use and the tests/examinations that the learner sits at important junctures in the learning process complement one another in the fullest sense. If the CEF provides us with the means to determine standards

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[23]   Council of Europe, 2000, European Language Portfolio. Principles and Guidelines. Doc.DG IV/EDU/LANG(2000)33. www.coe.int/portfolio - Documentation.

[24]   Little, D., and R. Perclová, 2001: *European Language Portfolio: a guide for teachers and teacher trainers*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

and enhance quality in curriculum design, teaching and assessment, the ELP is a quality management system for the individual language learner. The importance of this complementarity cannot easily be exaggerated. It lies at the heart of effective quality management in any domain and is surely one of the essential preconditions for establishing the culture of lifelong language learning that the Council of Europe and the European Union have identified as an essential part of Europe's future.

Quality assurance in practice: F. Heyworth, EAQUALS[25]

How can quality assurance be applied in language education? What instruments do we have to enable us to know if we are (a) "doing the right things" and (b) "doing things right".

Practical applications of quality assurance, like the CEF and the European Language Portfolio, are based on principles of transparency and coherence; successful learning requires a transparent relationship between learner and teacher and groups of learners and teaching institutions; efficient delivery of language courses involves a coherent description of the processes and procedures to be carried out.

"Doing the right things" implies decisions on objectives and curriculum at national and regional level. Implementation of a more diversified approach to language education, which is the main theme of the conference, will involve:

- coherent allocation of resources to achieve the desired diversification of language education on offer;
- co-ordination among departments which at present teach individual languages;
- providing links between language learning inside and outside institutions;
- improved synergy between primary, secondary and adult education provision and approaches.

Innovations of such a radical nature will require the setting of appropriate quality criteria and standards and approaches to putting them into practice. The Common Scale of Reference and its use in European Language Portfolios provides a set of standards for setting learning objectives and for measuring and certifying achievement; it facilitates comparability between different approaches and is applicable across national boundaries and throughout the

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[25] European Association for Quality Language Services

different steps of lifelong learning, and is thus one of the key elements of the implementation of quality processes.

In adult education in both public and private sectors, systems for quality assurance and quality control have been developed and put into practice. They typically comprise:

- An approach to the learner as "client" with needs and expectations to be satisfied. The institution produces guarantees or charters which describe the standard of services it undertakes to provide and sets up systems for checking that the promises are kept.

- A comprehensive analysis of the processes and procedures required for course delivery. This includes a clear statement of curriculum which can generate syllabi and schemes of work; systems for placing learners in appropriate classes, for measuring progress and assessing achievement. There are measures to check on quality, through regular observation of classes and through getting feedback from learners.

- Setting objectives and benchmarks for learner achievement, analysing results and comparing them with relevant similar learning environments.

The effective application of these approaches is best done through a "quality continuum". This begins with the individual (learner or teacher) and involves frameworks for self-assessment and reflection; this provides a basis for internal quality assurance by the institution, with regular self-assessment exercises, a range of approaches to observation, systems for linking staff development to an awareness of quality issues. External quality control completes the process with "audits" or "inspections" which assess how far the institution keeps the promises it makes to its clients and examine the coherence and comprehensiveness of the course organisation. These typically award a quality label or certificate which provides a public guarantee of standards.

The external quality inspections are at present mainly undertaken voluntarily and are mostly in the adult sector. Do they have relevance for the state sector and for mainstream education of young learners? The principles behind quality assurance are general ones – schools serve their stakeholders and are accountable to them, so clear standards for what they promise to deliver are good practice; internal quality assurance procedures such as regular observation of classes, organised self-assessment as part of staff development is already standard practice in some countries; the development of external audits mirrors the ways in which state inspection practices in many areas have become more concerned with improving practice than with fault-finding. The

development of transparent standards known to all stakeholders, and procedures for helping schools to achieve quality standards are achievable and useful goals.

It is suggested in the *Guide* that one of the possible aims of plurilingual education is to generate a renewed feeling of belonging to Europe, but that, as far as languages are concerned, this can only be based on enhancement of the value of the individual's plurilingualism, whatever the languages used. While enhancing the value of plurilingual competences may lead to a shared form of linguistic affiliation, it should on no account mean adopting an inward-looking attitude and rejecting the diversity of others; on the contrary, it should mean opening up to the intrinsic plurality of the world's cultures.

This is why it was considered useful, in the hope of learning from their rich experience, to turn our attention to other parts of the world (South Africa and Canada in this instance) which also have to manage the co-existence of languages and the diversity of language repertoires in order to maintain social cohesion and constantly recreate the fundamental values of democratic life.

Wider Perspectives

Neville Alexander, University of Cape Town, South Africa

It's very important to understand that what is happening in Europe with regard to language policy, is taking place in a global context, which, from the point of view of the African continent, is extremely significant, and important in terms of whether or not our societies are going to be democratized, whether or not our societies are going to be modernised, and so forth.

The colonial legacy which still wounds Africa as a whole and South Africa in particular, the colonial legacy, the legacy of racism, is one which is going to be with us for decades to come. And I make this point simply to stress that some of the things that you've been discussing, particularly about the status of English in the European context not only ring a bell with us in South Africa or in the African continent as a whole, but they actually have the same source both in terms of British conquest of the non European world very much earlier on and American hegemony today. I want to stress that because I think, unless one is clear about the politics of language, in a sense you're just wasting your time.

So, in coming here my fundamental interest was to find out how the European Union, European societies, the Council of Europe specifically, of course, are trying to promote what we call multilingualism at the society level and what you call plurilingualism at the individual level, how the European societies are

trying to promote this, with a view to us learning from this, because the threat of English (and I don't mean this in an anti-English sense at all) is much much greater on the African continent and particularly in those countries that were under the British rule, is much much greater than it is in a place like the European Continent.

From the point of view of biocultural diversity and the sustainable environment we wish to learn from that point of view alone what is being done in Europe with regard to promoting and sustaining multilingualism at a society level and individual plurilingualism is, from our point of view, an essential thing to understand, as it is essential that we become part and parcel of that global process. Another thing you have is this intersection of the contradictory movement between the global hegemony of English on the one hand, and the promotion of multilingualism, which at the moment is very strongly being pushed forward by the European countries, and specifically by the European Union.

What I would like to say then is that some kind of tacit alliance at this stage, inarticulate alliance, between Europe and Africa, between Europe and other multilingual societies in the world, seems to me to be an essential part of a global strategy to maintain the biocultural diversity of the world.

On the African continent at the moment, we are busy establishing an African Union in imitation of the European Union, and one of the dimensions of that process is the idea of establishing an Academy or a Commission on African languages, which is to become a specialized agency of the African Union, and that is the real reason why I came here - to find out, to look at instruments, such as the ones that we discussed at the last session, to look at those more carefully, to hear you discuss those and what your point of view is and I'm very pleased to hear that these are documents in process, that even the Common Framework is a document in process, that people are being consulted etc.

And, of course, we will observe and accompany that process with a vested interest since we think we can learn very much from Europe's example. Very briefly, I want to just focus on two or three simple issues as I see them.

The first one is the question of political will. This seems to me to be the most important of all the elements in whether or not we are able to implement a strategy of promoting multilingualism and plurilingualism. And in a workshop yesterday, I made the point that, fundamentally in language issues, you can't get away from mobilisation. Political mobilisation of the speakers of these languages is not something that you can impose and certainly you shouldn't

impose it, but we shouldn't close our eyes to that fact. Without that mobilisation the pressure in democratic societies on the political leadership is simply not there. Our own experience with Afrikaans, specifically, white Afrikaans-speaking people in South Africa is a very good example of how this works. In my study[26] you can read up some of the implications of what I'm saying. This issue of political will is one of which it seems to me we need to be much clearer about.

Secondly, the issue of functional multilingualism or plurilingualism at the individual level. First of all it seems to me that it's important to clarify the concept, so that one is completely clear from the point of view of making policy and from the point of view of standards, determining standards, judging and assessing quality etc. That one is completely clear about whether what you wish to have done is in fact happening. In that regard it's quite clear to me that the European societies are strides ahead of where we are and that, even though the conditions in a country like South Africa may be more favourable at some levels and we can catch up very quickly, nonetheless, we have a lot to learn from the European Language Portfolio, the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* and so on.

The fundamental thrust of what needs to be done is clearly to move from a monolingual habitus to a multilingual habitus. And this is common to all our societies. In South Africa, as you'll see from my study, people are so much in the throw of English as a language, that for us to move from that monolingual habitus to a genuine multilingual habitus, real respect, real mutuality in language issues, is something that is going to take decades. And it needs a lot of extramural planning and activity, it's not enough to depend on the schools. That is quite clear.

And the last point I want to stress is that what I've learned here, once again, and what we are very clear about is that we shouldn't allow the national and the indigenous languages, be they national, regional or immigrant languages to be weakened as languages of science, languages of higher education, languages of power. In other words, that somehow we have got to find the mechanisms by which it is possible in a bilingual educational paradigm on the one hand to be international, global, use English and on the other hand to continue to be able to use our own languages in those high status functions. We've got to do this and I think the tendency which I've even noticed in this august conference, the tendency to succumb to the strength of English is

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[26] Alexander, N. *Language education policy, national and subnational identities in South Africa*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe

something that needs to be resisted, not in the sense that it is wrong that the market and the objective development of English is something that is wrong, in some sort of moral sense, not at all, not in that sense, but from the point of view of both biocultural diversity and the importance of identity. And generally we need to prevent this erosion of the domains in which our own languages function effectively.

To conclude, I want to say that in South Africa today in spite of all the negative media images that are projected on televisions screens and so on, and in spite of all the serious mistakes that the political leadership and cultural leadership have been making in my country, and on the African continent more generally, in spite of all this, when it comes to language policy, language issues generally, we are extremely optimistic. Partly, because there is an objective, historical movement, that no subject of intentions on the part of the any specific leaders or elite strata can prevent. The need of ordinary people to use their languages, to be empowered to become part and parcel of a democratic citizenship - that need is so strong and it is linked to economic as well as cultural desiderata that there's no way that anybody can stop that process. And this is the real source of our optimism.

We and South Africa today, as you will see from my text, have established a range of language planning agencies, language implementation mechanisms and these are most highly developed in the province where I live, in the Western Cape Province around Capetown, where in fact we are now in a position actually to implement and to get Government financial support for implementing what we call mother tongue-based bilingual education and for most of you this might sound like a very mundane sort of achievement.

But on the African continent this is in fact a revolutionary step and once the spin-offs from that particular step become obvious to ordinary people, I think that you are going to find that the language issue on the African continent is going to start rolling, right back in to Europe. So, I think it is quite important to be aware of some of these processes. We are still at the beginning but you know things are going to develop very quickly.

I'd like to end off by saying that (in my study itself) I have stressed the issue of identity because that was my brief. I haven't really looked at pedagogical issues at all, but these are very much to the fore in our own discussions in South Africa and I'd like to stress also that we are very aware of what is going on in Europe and we'd love to continue being part and parcel of that process, and I've already discussed with some of the officials, some of the people behind this conference, the ways and means of us to be able to do so.

Let me just end off by saying that it's clear to me that the language issue is beginning to be taken very seriously. It has been taken very seriously for many years already in Europe, but it is becoming an extremely important issue today, and I'm hoping that this particular conference will lead not only to cooperation between ourselves but also with other parts of the world. I've just been to India and I know there are many people in Asia, in India specifically, who would have loved to be here, who would really want to know more about what is going on at this level.

Stacy Churchill, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto, Canada

Reflections on Education Policy Change: Guiding European Education to Plurilingualism

Introduction

The Council of Europe initiative to create a *Guide for the Development of Language Education Policies in Europe* reached its fruition at a meeting called in Strasbourg in November 2002. The meeting gathered representatives of Council of Europe member countries, a broad variety of educationalists and experts, and observers from non-member countries. Their discussion launched the process that will lead to publication of a revised *Guide*.

As a participant from Canada[27], I was asked to join N. Alexander, of South Africa, in speaking at a plenary on the last day of the conference. As visitors from other continents, our task was to contribute reflections on the conference as a whole in a broader context. Mr. Alexander anchored his discussion in a presentation of language education focused against the backdrop of South Africa's recent experience and current revolutionary remaking of its society. While grounded in Canadian policy experience[28] – particularly its policies of official French-English bilingualism – my own perspective was, at least in part, that of an "insider" who, at various times over more than three decades, had lived, studied and worked in several European countries as well as directed research on European language policies. The following discussion touches and

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[27] I participated as a contributor of a reference Study in the Project. Canada was officially represented by M. Hilaire Lemoine, Director General, Official Languages, Department of Canadian Heritage.

[28] *Language Education, Canadian Civic Identity and the Identities of Canadians.* Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

expands on several points made in the presentation, parts of which were delivered in French.

The Strasbourg meeting constitutes an important milestone in the evolution of thinking in Europe regarding the role of languages in education. I should like to begin by showing to what extent the *Guide* marks a major historical departure in Europe by contrasting the current moment with one, over 17 years ago, when I published the synthesis of an OECD-wide study of policies for education of linguistic and cultural minorities. After discussing some of the contrasts, I will offer a brief interpretation of the nature of the policy evolution achieved, arguing that we are reaching a major historical turning point in relation to policies on language and education. Finally the bulk of my remarks will centre on some of the practical issues of how the *Guide* relates to policy realities of an expanding Europe as seen by an observer from North America. The remarks in the last section derive as much from experience in the field of educational policy as in language policy and planning.

Policy change over three decades

In the OECD program on "Finance, Organisation and Governance of Education for Special Populations" almost all of the then member countries of the organization contributed to a large array of policy papers and studies that were published and circulated in the early 1980's. My review of this unique data base of sources related to minorities was perhaps the first major attempt to synthesize policy issues as viewed by the national authorities of Western Europe, the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand.[29] The era of policy evolution covered was approximately from the mid 1960's up to the early 1980's. Without summarizing that earlier study, I would like to use it to formulate a few tendencies that differentiate that historical moment from the present.

Perhaps the most obvious contrast is that the national policy studies of the early 1980's revealed *almost no impact of supranational organizations* and their resolutions on the formulation of national education policies for linguistic and cultural minorities.[30] The Council of Europe had not yet moved strongly

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[29] Stacy Churchill. *The Education of Linguistic and Cultural Minorities in the OECD Countries.* Avon: Multilingual Matters, 1986 (pp. 184). For a review of the project including special populations other than linguistic and cultural minorities, see: Centre for Educational Research and Innovation, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. *The Education of minority groups: an enquiry into problems and practices of fifteen countries.* Aldershot, Hamps.: Gower, 1983.

[30] Stacy Churchill. Policy Development and Education in Multicultural Societies:

into the line of discussions that led, a decade later, to the 1992 European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages. National education policies, particularly for primary and secondary schooling, remained a domain of exclusive national or – in federated countries – provincial or state decision making with almost no concern for events in other countries. The only overt references to influences from other countries came in national studies from countries such as the Federal Republic of Germany, which were pursuing bilateral talks with immigrant source countries to devise better teaching strategies in immigrant children's family languages and sometimes to recruit appropriate teaching staff.

In spite of the absence of accepted European points of reference for minority education policy, the study revealed an intriguing, almost *unexpected convergence of policy principles* throughout most of western Europe. The over-all trend of policy was to accord a greater recognition to minority children's family cultural background and, in some cases, to increase the space for use of their languages in support of schooling. Countries such as Belgium, Finland and Switzerland with old and influential established minorities retained, of course, their internal constitutional and legal bases for dealing with official linguistic minorities on a mainly territorial basis, and Spain was engrossed in a total transformation of its constitutional arrangements regarding language relationships in its component regions.

Faced with internal migration related to European economic integration (or Scandinavian cooperation as regards the Finnish minority in Sweden) or with immigration from other continents in the case of major industrial nations, most jurisdictions were actively working on some aspect of minority education, whether for established national minorities or those derived from recent migration or immigration. Portugal and Italy were exceptions, focusing their efforts on assisting other European countries to meet linguistic and educational needs of Italian and Portuguese families living abroad. In almost all countries, very old traditions of uncompromising assimilation of immigrants had begun to show evolution. Even when schooling assumptions remained rooted in the assumed objective of linguistic assimilation, steps had been taken to make changes to curriculum favouring the development of "multicultural" or

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Trends and Processes in the OECD Countries. in Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI). *Multicultural Education.* Paris: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 1987, pp. 64-99.

"intercultural" education. The underlying trend was towards a greater measure of social justice for previously excluded or ignored groups.[31]

Two decades later, on issues relating to language and education, Council of Europe member countries have all accepted certain fundamental principles of action which, however weakly implemented in some cases, are a point of reference for policy makers and political leaders. In addition, the Council of Europe resolutions have begun to have a direct influence on former soviet bloc states of Eastern Europe and CIS countries of the former Soviet Union. Only two months after the Strasbourg conference, I attended a sub-regional conference at Mukachevo, on the education of minorities; our Ukrainian hosts explicitly referred to the desire to comply with Council of Europe policy guidelines as a motive for their efforts to push forward policy in this area. The same theme was echoed by representatives from other states in the region.

A new era has clearly begun. The comparison over a period of 20 years shows the influence of Council of Europe resolutions and decisions has not only grown but appears to have an accelerating impact on language and education policy evolution with the passage of time. All of Europe is currently witnessing the growth of extranational influences on non-economic spheres of activity like public education and post-secondary institutions. The policy map has changed both figuratively and geographically. There are multiple "Europes", stacked up towards the east from the old centres of interstate organizational gravity, each layer representing a different evolution in terms of east-west relationships, Cold War allegiances, and length of democratic institutional life in the "western liberal" tradition.

The emphasis on technocratic, rational economic integration that has been criticised as being intrinsic to the "European model" at a time of economic globalisation, has been confronted with the realities of emerging democracies, where it is perilous to focus solely on the economy while ignoring broader social and ideological issues. Many of the underlying assumptions of economic integration were so deeply rooted in common western European history since 1945 that they were often taken for granted and overlooked. But the expansion of the European concept to the east has made it obvious that many aspects of the economic model function optimally in a more open, democratic model of society. The hard reality of economic efficiency has given an unexpectedly greater prominence to interstate organizations like the Council of Europe and

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[31] David Corson. Social Justice and Minority Language Policy. *Educational Theory.* v 42 (Spring 1992), 188-200.

UNESCO, operating as promoters of dialogue to foster the emergence and maintenance of open social and institutional arrangements.

A turning point in policy evolution

As a result of this evolution, I believe that the nature of policy making is fundamentally changing, even in the tightly-controlled spheres of national policy making on cultural issues such as education. The full implications of this change will only be evident over the coming years and decades, but a major historical breakthrough has come in European history that transcends the economic and penetrates to the depths of popular emotion and political conviction. The *Guide for the development of language education policies in Europe: from linguistic diversity to plurilingual education*, as we shall see, symbolizes the type of change that is underway.

These assertions depend upon giving a relatively "strong" interpretation of the course of events in Europe, particularly as they affect the role of the nation-state. The nation-state represents one of the greatest and most useful inventions of the Modern era; because of its utility, the nation-state has become almost universal as the main building-block for social organization above the level of family or clan/tribe. However, in my view, the traditional nation-state has become anachronistic and ill-suited to many of its current roles, not only in Europe but throughout the world. I have presented some of the bases for this assertion in a tightly-argued article published a few years ago in the International Review of Education.[32] The article argues, in particular, for using the now anachronistic nation-state as a bulwark for defending diversity and protecting both national minorities and majorities against the incursions of cultural globalization arriving in the wake of economic globalization. Such a new role requires recognition of fundamental changes in the way different peoples assume the world "should" work.

To borrow a phrase formulated by MacLachlan, an historian of Latin America, I believe that a new "philosophical matrix" is emerging that represents a near-overthrow of the assumptions that have been the underpinning of the nation-state system for two centuries. "Philosophical matrix" is defined as being the set of assumptions that, in a given historical period, are generally accepted by a society about how it should operate. The nation-state concept that emerged from the 19th century romantic era in Europe had at its foundation the belief that the "Nation" is "made up of the 'People', consisting of citizens who share

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[32] Stacy Churchill, "The Decline of the Nation-State and the Education of National Minorities," *International Review of Education 42* (4): 265-290, 1996.

(or submit to) a common accepted culture, derived from a common historical heritage, which includes one official language (exceptionally two or three) and a common accepted set of behaviours useful for participating in a modern society."[33]

European economic and social integration has progressed very rapidly in a direction that undermines the assumptions inherited from the nineteenth century. Because attitudes in large populations evolve very slowly, most European countries have internal national political institutions and ideologies that are only gradually beginning to shift towards an acceptance of a wider boundary of solidarity than the nation-state. Decision making on matters of language and education is still universally inward looking, and the emergence of transnational ideals through institutions such as the Council of Europe runs head on into the reality of popular opinion firmly anchored in antiquated conceptions about national unity.

Against this background of hard political reality, many of the accomplishments of the Council of Europe in terms of agreement on broad principles of diversity are little short of miraculous. The gradual emergence of an international consensus on issues such as protection of minority linguistic rights – at least for long-established minorities – represents a shift of thought analogous to the movement of tectonic plates. The bedrock of assumptions is in motion under pressures that are little understood but whose implications are enormous. Thus, when I speak of the Strasbourg conference as a "founding" event and the moment as one of massive historical potential, my intention is not to indulge in extravagant hyperbole. Simply put, we appear to be at a turning point in a long-term historical process whose implications are only gradually being realised even by those who are in the forefront of change. Nothing is irreversible, as Bosnia and Kosovo have taught us, but the current trends are leading in one direction, a shift in the philosophical matrix that negates the underlying linguistic and cultural assumptions of the 19th century romantic nation state.

Let us now turn to the implications of the *Guide* in terms of policy realities in a period where decision makers are primarily elected by internal public opinion rooted in 19th century ideals but are obliged to confront an international world operating on a new and very different set of principles.

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[33] Churchill, Decline, p. 271.

The *Guide* and policy change

Canadian policy background

My remarks on likely policy change processes in Europe grow, at least in part, from my having been a participant observer in the implementation of Canada's official language policies and, in particular, the long process of changing education to foster the survival of French speaking Canadians living in English majority provinces (i.e. outside Quebec). Readers interested in the actual details of policy changes in Canada can consult the sources mentioned in my paper cited earlier[34] that the Council of Europe published as one of the reference studies for the Strasbourg conference as well as a book available on the Government of Canada website.[35]

A few tentative conclusions from the Canadian experience may be relevant to the European situation. The Canadian changes – widely regarded as highly successful – occurred in a very democratic, open policy process. Since the first Official Languages Act was adopted in 1969, more than three decades have passed; in spite of the progress, I consider that the definitive institutionalisation of the policies will require one more generation, or about 25 years, of sustained effort. Changing the relative status of languages in Canadian society implied significant modifications to the power relationships between different social groups to favour a minority. In a democratic environment, such a transformation could only be realised by building and maintaining a consensus of citizens of the majority group – in this case, English-speaking Canadians. Concerns for national unity, particularly ensuring that Quebec Francophones participated on a more equitable footing in all aspects of national life, have always been at the forefront of considerations in the political arena. In other words, at the political level there is a strong awareness of broad power issues extending beyond the area of language or language and education.

Observers of the political process have tended to emphasize the issue of power relationships and to underestimate the importance of underlying ethical purposes as a basis for consensus about policy changes affecting language and education. Among average citizens who are little informed of broader power issues and whose personal attitudes on social relations are not easily modified

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[34] See Footnote 28.

[35] S. Churchill. *Official Languages in Canada: Changing the Language Landscape.* Ottawa: Department of Canadian Heritage (1998): http://www.pch.gc.ca/OFF LANGOFF/ perspectives/english/languages/index.html

by appeals from political leaders,[36] the most important factor in swaying opinions has been regular appeal to principles of social justice that aim at reducing social inequalities and eliminating exclusions. The defence of official language policies has been carried out through propagating the idea that official language "duality" between English and French is aimed at ensuring equality of rights between citizens of different groups. A strong popular consensus exists that French minorities in English-dominant provinces and the English minority in Quebec should enjoy fundamental services in their own language as a basic right.

It is important to recognise how difficult it is to modify in any fundamental way the operations of national public education systems. Even with a strong public consensus favouring minority educational rights, more than three decades have been required to reach a point where French minorities outside Quebec are beginning to enjoy full educational rights in primary and secondary schooling, though many problems remain. Similarly as demographic shifts have weakened their community, English-speaking citizens living in Quebec are confronting new unmet needs for public policy support that will require considerable time to identify and resolve. In the case of both official linguistic minorities, education is a contested political area where each stage of policy definition and implementation can generate debate. The Canadian constitutional arrangement ensures total control by provincial authorities over their public schooling systems and provides Quebec authorities, in particular, with the means to avoid external meddling in an area of great cultural and linguistic symbolism for French speakers. At the same time, in many provinces a tradition of local control of schooling by elected representatives (either of the public or of parents) has meant that many politically difficult issues were decentralized to municipal or regional levels. In the 1970's and early 1980's, local authorities – particularly where English majorities were responsible for running French schools – often proved an obstacle to promotion of minority schooling. The creation in 1982 of a constitutional right for official linguistic minorities to control their own schooling establishments was followed by a long period of implementation punctuated by numerous references to the judicial system for conflict resolution. Today in most provinces, direct

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[36] The rejection of a major set of constitutional changes in the early 1990's (the Meech Lake Accords) was the direct result of a failure to bridge the gap between "average" citizens and so-called political "élites" who had negotiated the changes. The consensus reached between most provincial and federal political actors was broad but, in the event, too shallow to carry the day.

intergroup disagreements at the local level are becoming a thing of the past.[37] Minority control over their schooling establishments has removed many issues from the realm of political debate and generally simplified most aspects of routine decision making.

The success of promoting official language policies has gradually revealed an area of weakness described in my background paper. In an age of the "politics of recognition," the emphasis of federal and provincial/ territorial authorities on implementing policies based on two languages leaves room for complaint from groups whose languages are perceived as neglected or unrecognised. Major steps – major at least in principle though not always in applied policies – have been taken to move toward greater roles for Indigenous Amerindian and Innu language varieties in the administration and school systems of territories (Yukon and Northwest Territories and the recently created Nunavut). In the context of need for greater recognition of many other languages, the principle of plurilingualism promoted in the Council of Europe *Guide* represents an interesting alternative and, in my opinion, should be studied by Canadian policy makers for its potential application in developing new means of extending the current structure of official languages. The goal of such an extension would be to conserve the clarity of purpose required to maintain the official languages structure while adding to it elements that foster greater recognition of other languages and cultures as part of identities of citizens from many different sociocultural and – as regards immigrants – national origins. Conversely, some of the principles derived from Canadian experience are relevant to the problems of promoting plurilingual education in national education systems of Europe.

Technocratic change mechanisms

Upon hearing that the Council of Europe was preparing a *Guide to the Development of Language Education Policies in Europe,* my first reaction was a combination of perplexity and admiration. Admiration for the boldness of such a design and perplexity at the apparent contradiction between the aims and the means. The contradiction resided in the decision to use a technocratic device – a manual created through committees and consultation, then published and disseminated by an international organisation – to accomplish change in an area where passions are easily aroused and which always has the

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[37] School authorities under control of minorities now lobby for their needs directly with provincial/ territorial ministries on administrative grounds; where serious disagreements arise, the court system may still be used as an arbiter to ensure respect of constitutionally guaranteed rights.

potential for creating political difficulties. Anyone who has read public discussion in European media about the education of immigrant or migrant children knows the type of dangers that lurk for the unwary politician who is careless in wording a declaration about what is "best" or "right" in schooling. In dealing with sensitive topics, the usual instincts of politicians are to maintain tight personal control of events, trusting personal judgment of political situations over technical advice.

Careful consideration of the draft *Guide* has, however, convinced me of the project's practicality. At issue is whether educational policy is permeable to fundamental change that challenges the assumptions underlying the traditional structure of curricula, the conceptualisation of how languages fit into such structures, and the very nature of the type of language learning that schooling imparts. Clearly, the authors and promoters of the *Guide* show in their writing a strong awareness of the political nature of the task, so that my initial reaction should not be construed as suggesting the text or approach were unsuitable to the purpose. My question was whether such an approach would be effective as a means to a major transformation of how education – both in school and out – is conceived.

Strengths of the Guide *and its feasibility*

Several positive elements argue for the feasibility of the project. First of all, decision makers in most of western Europe are already accustomed to the type of methodology used, and *a strong track record of achievement* adds to the credibility of the enterprise. The European integration model of the last four decades has developed a very useful modus operandi that specifically promotes the use of technical bureaucratic means as a means of depoliticising issues. The *Guide* itself outlines the Council of Europe's record of accomplishment in moving forward issues related to language teaching and learning, all of which add credibility and momentum to the current enterprise.

The second argument for feasibility is that the *Guide* makes a serious and largely successful attempt to define the policy agenda in a very new way. *Redefining policy problems* is a very powerful tool for change. To return briefly to the OECD study mentioned earlier, a key finding was that policy evolution on minority education occurred when key opinion leaders reached consensus on defining educational problems in a new way. Once the definition was admitted, the normal technical processes of writing regulations, passing laws, and implementing policy took over. The *Guide* espouses a definition of plurilingualism both as a means of recognizing the value of citizens' linguistic skills and as a goal to be fostered through educational and other means. The definition has the advantage of being very much outside the usual framework

of debate that has guided national policies on language teaching of all kinds and on education of linguistic and cultural minorities. Its very newness is so radical, compared to the usual framework of debate on language learning and teaching, that it avoids being an easy target in a continuation of debates from earlier eras.

The third major strength of the *Guide* is the linkage it establishes between language competency and the *principles of citizenship and citizenship participation*. In spite of the variety of national traditions in Europe regarding the dimensions of citizenship at the national level, there are few precedents for something as broad as European citizenship. Again, by re-situating the framework of discourse, the *Guide* attempts to move discussion of policy outside the historical pattern of debate in the member countries.

Both the authors of the *Guide* and the attendees at the Strasbourg Conference demonstrated great sensitivity to the potential for disagreement that is inherent in any attempt to change language relationships and their role in schooling. The three key strengths of the approach increase the likelihood of success but cannot insulate the push for plurilingualism from opposition. Nor can one expect to avoid contamination by discourses drawn from past debates about what is important to teach children and youth so that they will become loyal citizens to their nation-state. Significant changes in most countries will encounter strong resistance from at least some of those who have a stake in maintaining the status quo of traditional educational curricula as a basis for national citizenship.

Strengthening the *Guide* for the policy arena

Changing language relationships means changing both real and symbolic power in society, not an easy task even in the most favourable circumstances.[38] The question arises: what more can be done to ensure survival of the core concepts of the plurilingualism vision during the coming years and decades of implementation? No one knows the exact answer. Let me set forth a few propositions about what might be done to strengthen the durability of the drive for plurilingualism. Though they are phrased directly, I treat the propositions merely as hypotheses for discussion.

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[38] Raymond Breton. The Production and Allocation of Symbolic Resources: An Analysis of the Linguistic and Ethnocultural Fields in Canada. *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology*, v. 21 (1984): 123-44.

1. Recognising the role of non-expert opinion

The importance of generating support for plurilingualism among the general public cannot be exaggerated. The *Guide* and the related proposals will have to survive in the *mêlée* of partisan politics in each and every country where it is to have an impact. Indeed it is important that language-related changes should occur through open debate that gives opposing viewpoints the opportunity to be voiced and be met with contrary arguments until sufficient basis exists for policy action. Because language change involves all sectors of society, very large numbers of persons need to be convinced of the value of what is proposed, not least the teaching profession and (for primary and secondary schooling) parents, rather than just higher-level educational authorities.

2. Giving priority to communicating widely the objectives

During the Strasbourg proceedings, it was apparent that several native English speakers hesitated in pronouncing the words *plurilingual* and *plurilingualism*. With reference to getting national authorities to endorse policies of plurilingualism, I commented: "If politicians can't pronounce it, they can't sell it to the public or to other decision makers." My reference to pronunciation was a metaphor for a serious social problem, the danger of taking an elitist approach to a topic such as language, which is inherently understandable by every citizen and capable of arousing strong passions. In the English-speaking world, it is axiomatic that words with Latin and Greek origins – words like *plurilingualism* – tend to be most familiar to the better educated and, in school settings, are best understood by children from high social status families with high levels of parental education.[39] Upon first encounter, the word "plurilingualism" does not flow easily from the tongue of many a highly educated English native speaker. I do not propose abandoning the term but would like to emphasize that the next phase of work on plurilingualism will have to make a major effort to ensure that the term and its implications are widely understood outside expert circles. A well-tailored "message" needs to be developed that can be easily understood by the general public – not just in English but in the multitude of target languages in the European continent. Benefits of plurilingualism need to be spelled out in everyday terms that speak to citizens' concerns. I would give priority to this aspect of communications in the next phases of consultation and discussion of the *Guide*. And, of course, the message must be in terms that political and policy leadership can adopt as their own.

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[39]   David Corson. *Using English Words.* Dordrecht: Kluwer,1995.

3. Moving from _language education_ to _languages in education_

The _Guide_ refers mainly to "language education policy" as being the target of necessary changes to foster plurilingualism. For most readers, this turn of phrase suggests changes to the curriculum of languages as it is currently understood in schooling, particularly "foreign" or "second" languages. In the light of what I understand to be the implications of plurilingualism in education, the impression emerges that the policy focus is too circumscribed. Chapter 6, "Organising Plurilingual Education," is an exciting presentation of possibilities – many of which go beyond minor tinkering with the curriculum – but it seems the full extent and scope of the implications of plurilingualism are underplayed. In particular, the inventories of options devote little or no time to the main modes of bilingual education – minority language schools, language immersion schools, and various models of schooling through the medium of a second language that were, and still are, common throughout the former Soviet Union and many of the former soviet bloc countries.

Policy making for promoting plurilingualism implies more than changing _language education_, narrowly defined as learning a language variety. Recognising plurilingualism as a valid goal of education implies a change in the way schooling deals with the language "resources" of individual learners, ranging from preschool through all levels of education, including adult education. Languages are resources at the level of individuals[40] and the primary cognitive resource of almost all younger children is the mother tongue. Teachers need to build upon the existing knowledge bases of learners. When learners do not have mastery of the language variety of the school, accepting and valuing their existing knowledge can provide the basis for pedagogies that will expand their language repertoire rather than attempt to suppress it.[41] In a word, it is important that the _Guide_ should premise discussions of educational methods on the importance of the development and maintenance of children's mother tongue and on the likely negative consequences that flow from mother tongue loss.

From this premise, it follows that plurilingualism as an objective implies rethinking the entire curriculum of schooling, not solely the programs of study for specific languages. For example, if a child enters preschool or primary

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[40] R. Ruiz Orientations in language planning. In S. L. McKay & S. C. Wong (Eds.), _Language diversity: Problem or resource?_ New York: Newbury House, 1988.

[41] Jim Cummins _Negotiating identities: Education for empowerment in a diverse society._ 2nd Edition. Los Angeles: California Association for Bilingual Education (2001).

schooling with poor or inadequate knowledge of the official language used as a medium of instruction, most countries' policies are designed to acculturate the child into the language of the school as a priority which takes precedence over the child's mother tongue/ home language. This is what is usually called "common sense". The result of such common sense for most "average" children placed in these situations is threefold:

(a) The children have difficulties in reaching standards of achievement expected in different classes of school, usually resulting in a gradual widening of the gap in-school achievement between such children and the expected norms for their age group, more frequent class repetition, decline in "academic self-concept" (the child's belief that he or she is more or less able to achieve well in school), followed in adolescence by alienation, rebellion, and rejection of schooling.

(b) The children's mother tongue is progressively replaced and often eradicated by the school language, usually with the child's achieving the higher-level cognitive-academic competencies in the school language (as compared to native speakers in the same type of schooling) necessary for school success.

(c) Loss of facility in the home language aggravates within-family communication difficulties and tends to reduce the effectiveness of parental authority in adolescence and early adulthood.

In other words, the schooling experience tends to destroy the child's own language resources available at the time of entry and replaces them by another, frequently inadequate language repertoire that becomes a lifelong handicap.

The example, we should remember, refers to "average" children, not to the children of highly motivated, supportive parents who work closely with the child and school to foster acquisition of the school language and who themselves know that language well enough to help the children develop the academic repertory of competencies required for successful schooling. It is just this parental variable that is the primary factor that explains the success of children who are placed in unfamiliar linguistic environments for schooling.

The present writing of the *Guide* deals mainly with teaching languages rather than the role of language as the principal medium of school instruction. Even if Chapter 6 does touch upon forms of bilingual education, the discussion is not explicitly linked to the issues of how best to manage language competency as part of over-all strategies for reducing disparities in school achievement among children from multilingual home settings. Plurilingualism as a goal for Europe

requires in the long term a revolutionary redefinition not only of language goals but of the goals of schooling itself.

I believe plurilingualism requires a shift of perspective to consider the whole panorama of languages and their roles in education. Rather than viewing the change process as one of modifying the teaching of languages, we should consider it as reshaping the foundational principles on which teaching of all subjects is based. Languages and their role as media in schooling directly affect general educational outcomes, not just learners' acquisition of languages and linguistic knowledge.

If this line of reasoning is accepted as having some elements of plausibility, then we must posit a corollary. The vision of promoting plurilingualism should be broadened from changing policies of language teaching – or l**anguage education policies** – to changing **policies about languages in education**, i.e. the education policies that govern the role of languages in all aspects of education. Modest incremental curriculum adjustments to the way second languages are taught may perhaps be the best way to get the process of change moving in many situations, but the implications of plurilingualism require rethinking key tenets of schooling as it is currently designed to serve the interests of unitary nation-states. Population movement patterns and the declining demographic vitality of most of the European continent mean that plurilingualism is a long-term necessity and that profound change is required if we are to avoid the enormous social costs of policies posited on treating second languages as an add-on to a unilingual curriculum.

4. Emphasising social equity as a goal of plurilingualism

Appeals to the general concept of European citizenship are necessary but, in my view, are not a sufficient basis for causing most people to accept changes to cherished institutions and language customs. I believe that much of the consensus about official languages in Canada[42] – particularly the improvement of the status of French and of French speakers in our society – can be traced to a double message that was adopted and communicated by opinion leaders. The message components were national unity and greater equity. For some citizens, particularly those who follow political events closely, talking about the value of official languages for national unity was a powerful argument. But for great

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[42] Consensus sufficient to ensure effective policy adoption and implementation does not imply unanimity; in Canada rapid progress has been made while, at the same time, strong criticism has been directed towards the policies and their foundations. Democratic consensus implies living with dissent and, where appropriate, using it as a constructive force for improvement.

masses of Canadians, the main argument that has been the bedrock of their willingness to promote linguistic dualism has been the message of social justice. In simple terms, they support the objectives of promoting the status of the French language and overcoming the social and educational inequality that afflicted French-speaking Canadians in the 1950's and 1960's.

If we transpose this line of argument to European problems of social justice, all observers can see the clear correlation between use of language varieties and social inequality. Vast quantities of research can be marshalled in western European countries to show that the social inequality of language varieties directly correlates with inequality of schooling outcomes in almost every country and situation. When we study the statistics of educational success – or lack of success, to be more precise – the bottom of the heap is shared by a wide variety of groups. But much of the discussion about languages tends to focus on minority issues rather than children who belong to the *majority population* in each country. I refer to children of labourers and lower working class families that are native-born in any given country: the overwhelming evidence is that children from families where parents speak a working class variety of the dominant language fare poorly in schooling that emphasizes only the formal version of the standard dialect most familiar to middle and upper class children.[43]

If recognition of plurilingual abilities is accepted as including non-standard varieties of the main language(s) of schooling, the resulting awareness helps to break down the *we: they* barriers of understanding. Many linguistic majority children share educational difficulties with the children usually labelled minorities: children of migrants from other European countries, from rural situations where traditional employment and use of a local *patois* are common, from regional minorities and from groups such as Roma who are regularly the object of severe discrimination, as well as children who have arrived from outside the European area.

The social equity dimensions here are twofold: (a) non-dominant or minority persons are disadvantaged educationally by failure to recognise, develop, and build further learning on their knowledge of non-mainstream linguistic varieties and (b) many persons belonging to the recognised national mainstream of each country are disadvantaged by non-recognition of educational problems resulting from the difference between their home language and the language of schooling.

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[43] See Note 39, for relevant literature.

In blunt terms, altruism for minorities can be advanced by awareness that the approaches benefit majorities too. Let me emphasize this point: *Plurilingualism as a goal can be equated with making changes to schooling that will help ALL the most disadvantaged groups in the society of every European country*. Politicians often debate about the means of helping the disadvantaged, about the degree of priority for allocating resources, and about the urgency of immediate measures rather than "further study", but few are prepared to reject outright the concept of helping the weak. Social justice, frankly, sells. And it sells to all levels of society, including those who do not clearly understand the nuances of a definition of plurilingual competence.

5. Developing economic and utilitarian rationales for plurilingualism

All significant educational reforms have costs, both financial costs and what economists call "opportunity costs". A standard part of any review of a proposed educational policy change is the calculation of direct financial costs incurred by the state to carry out the change and maintain it. In my experience, the assessment of such new costs is usually the only data of a financial or economic nature easily available for examination during the policy process. The costs to individuals and societies of *not changing current policies and practices* is almost never available, nor is any consideration given to the costs borne by students and their families as a result of retaining the status quo or changing it. Decision making is often reduced to examining a proposed change with a clearly established financial cost and comparing it to a set of hypothetical benefits that are rarely presented in financial or economic terms. Changing policies and educational systems to foster plurilingualism will certainly incur costs, but it is also a form of change that is likely to have major economic and social benefits.

For the utilitarian minded, the underachievement of certain groups can easily be converted into raw statistics about the economic benefits of greater levels of education for those who speak other linguistic varieties. In my home province of Ontario, we have an excellent example of such change. The introduction of French-language high schools and French-language options in "mixed" English-French high schools in 1967 resulted in a massive change to the retention rate for French-speaking students. Before the reforms, the average French-speaking high school student dropped out after completing class 10; five years later, more than 90 per cent of students continued an additional two years into class 12, most of them earning a basic high school diploma; in addition, the percentage of French speakers completing class 13 for a higher

level diploma permitting entry to university was multiplied by six in the French-medium schools.[44] The economic benefits of such changes in terms of greater lifetime earnings, greater tax revenues from employed citizens, reduced unemployment rates, and reduced dependency upon tax-supported social services dwarf the costs of the original reforms.

In the case of plurilingualism for European countries, changes can be shown to have great economic potential in two directions: (a) reducing inequality for groups speaking non-mainstream non-standard language varieties and (b) increasing the opportunities of all groups for greater productivity through better ability to live and work in the multilingual environment of an emerging Europe. Although many of the variables remain to be verified empirically, the construction of economic and other models opens a way for presenting a well-grounded case for direct financial and economic benefits of changes to promote plurilingualism.

The Council of Europe has published as one of the Reference Papers for the Strasbourg conference an excellent study by François Grin[45] that provides a brief outline of historical patterns in research on the economics of language and suggests directions for further development. His analysis places greatest emphasis on the economic returns from usage and acquisition of varied languages, including knowledge of minority languages. My experience leads me to support continuing to pursue the lines of research presented by Grin. But I think one should add to them a dimension that is part of education economics – the returns to individuals and society resulting from educational reforms that radically shift the over-all effectiveness of the schooling experience for disadvantaged groups. The models of returns in such models are based not upon the benefits from lifetime use of linguistic knowledge per se but upon the massive increment in school success that is possible by adapting school language policies and practices to build upon the linguistic resources of students whose family linguistic variety is different from the main language of schooling. This perspective is complementary to the approaches described by Grin, not contradictory.

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[44] S. Churchill., N. Frenette, and S. Quazi. *Éducation et Besoins des Franco-Ontariens. Le diagnostic d'un système d'éducation. Vol. 1: Problèmes de l'ensemble du système. L'élémentaire et le secondaire.* Toronto: Conseil de l'éducation franco-ontarienne / Ministère de l'éducation, 1985.

[45] François Grin. *Using language economics and education economics in language education policy.* Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 2002.

The importance of economic reasoning to decision makers suggests that priority should be given to establishing a long-term cooperative program to develop models of economic benefits for different modes of promoting plurilingualism.

6. *Promoting and documenting the results of experimentation with new modes of organising the curriculum for plurilingualism, particularly "bilingual education" models*

The expansion of European institutions offers an extraordinary opportunity for comparative research and experimentation on promoting forms of language instruction and models of structuring use of language within curricula. The *Guide* provides in Chapter 6 an inventory of many dimensions of possible experimentation[46] that have usually been pursued within very narrow parameters. Some of these models have limited impact outside narrow geographical confines, as in the case of some promising experiments along border areas inhabited by populations that have partially overlapping linguistic varieties spoken in the home. It would be extremely important to use auspices such as the Council of Europe to promote larger-scale experimentation involving, if possible, multiple countries.

At the same time as experiments are conducted, it would also be important to use "normal" methods of comparative research to evaluate the relative effectiveness of different models. The research needs to include the two dimensions of (a) language acquisition under different pedagogical conditions and (b) long-term impact of in-school language arrangements on key variables of educational success – achievement in the various subjects, persistence/ retention of students in school, implications for streaming/ tracking of students in the light of social and linguistic origin. Such comparative work can also be the source of data and ideas for the type of economic modelling proposed above.

7. *Undertaking immediate initiatives to work with national authorities in former Soviet bloc countries and the CIS in evaluating the effects of varied existing modes of bilingual education*

Viewed from afar, much of the *Guide* appears written to address the concerns of policy makers who are used to the model of a unilingual school curriculum in which teaching languages other than the school language is a matter of providing simple add-ons. On the other hand, the emerging democracies of

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[46] Though perhaps with too little emphasis on modes of bilingual education, as noted earlier.

eastern Europe, particularly the CIS countries, are heirs to a variety of models of bilingual education and minority language education. Their perspective is very different, and some of their policy concerns are about how much to conserve of the variety that already exists.

It would appear to be a matter of great urgency to promote dialogue about the effectiveness of the existing bilingual and minority language education structures in the light of broader European objectives of plurilingualism. The rejection of earlier power relationships – particularly between Russian and other languages – combined with the powerful attraction of English as *lingua franca*, has the potential for suppressing on a continental scale existing modes of schooling in multiple languages. While imperfect, the existing models have great promise as a basis for promoting plurilingualism. In a number of countries, narrower short-term objectives of nation-building seriously endanger the survival of models that have great long-term promise, well after current political worries have disappeared.

The continuing consultations on the *Guide* offer the Council of Europe opportunities to engage in dialogue about the modes of bilingual education that currently exist. To the extent that interest can be developed among policy makers and researchers, the examination of the strengths and weaknesses of such bilingual schooling models would be a fruitful endeavour that could enlist efforts of researchers from a broad variety of countries. The results would be of particular interest in refining the understanding of educational structures where the family/mother tongue of minority/non-dominant children is the principal medium of instruction. In turn, such research could be important in the economic model building referred to above.

A final area of practical collaborative research has to do with the relationship between language of schooling and other variables in the education of groups that, in the phrasing of John Ogbu, are caste-like. The Roma and certain other groups within the CIS states fall into this category, and the variety of schooling options in terms of instructional languages offers a fertile terrain for exploring the interactions of changes that affect language and other variables of the educational experience.

The political situation for change

The success of the *Guide* in its initial phases will be very dependent upon the specific political circumstances of different countries. With the exception of Spain, most western European countries have shown little evidence of willingness to engage in major reconsideration of aspects of education related to language. Opinion leaders in comfortable consumer societies have little

reason to question the status quo. Despite the fact that social inequality and exclusion is a widely recognised problem, existing political and social structures are very rigid and have grown out of centuries of nation-state development. By contrast, the emerging democracies of the East have had to confront wrenching social upheaval in the period following *perestroika*. For most of them, the tendency after the fall of the soviet bloc has been to develop states in the idealized western European model with its reliance upon unified national cultural symbols embedded in a common culture and usually only one or two officially recognised languages.

I am convinced that the *Guide* is a powerful and useful tool already in its existing versions. With some adjustments and skilful communication of objectives to multiple publics, the *Guide* seems destined to become a milestone in the development of European education.

The role of the ECML in implementing policy: J. Huber, Acting Executive Director and Head of Programme

I am pleased to greet you on behalf of the European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML). For the past two days, we have been examining language education policy and I believe that it is a good time to look together at the policies that we actually have in our countries. Even if we do not have a specific, explicit written language education policy, we still have the practice which effectively corresponds to a policy. It helps to see whether what we have corresponds to what we want to have and whether this corresponds to what we need or what we think we might need in the future. We have also heard suggestions put forward by the Language Policy Division, for supporting the member states in doing so and this has been very interesting and exciting. Changes in policy and in practice take time, sometimes a long time, but it is a good moment, at the end of this Conference, to look at implementation once the policy decisions have been taken.

I know that most of you are not just concerned with advising and shaping language education policy but also concerned with making it happen – actually putting the policy decisions into practice. That is more concretely what the European Centre for Modern Languages is concerned about. The member states of the ECML, currently 32 but soon to be 33 as Ireland is in the process of acceding to the Partial Agreement, created this Centre to offer them support in implementation, making things happen. Support for implementation is needed on various levels. Sometimes it is simply necessary to raise awareness as to why certain decisions made are better in practice. If we want

people to change their practice, they often need to be shown the benefit. Sometimes training of the key players in the process is needed. Sometimes research and development is needed in looking more closely at certain sub-aspects. Accordingly, there is a wide range of activities that the ECML provides as a service to its member states. On the one hand it is a question of a concentration of resources and on the other it is a matter of setting off a cascading process of training and awareness raising.

In your dossiers, you will have found a document prepared by the Centre which outlines what we are doing now and how we are going to plan our programme for the next four years. I will not go into too much detail. The umbrella title that we gave to our new programme of activities and for which we will be seeking concrete proposals from experts in our member states, fits well with everything that has been said at this Conference. "Languages for social cohesion – Language Education in a multilingual and multicultural Europe" - in which way do we have to organise language teaching and learning so it has a direct contribution to better understanding among people living in the same social and political context.

Before concluding I would like to take advantage of this opportunity to introduce the new Executive Director of the European Centre for Modern Languages who is here as an observer, Adrian Butler. He will take up his work in Graz from January 1st and I am looking forward to our collaboration, which indeed has already started.

Conclusions and next steps: J. Sheils

This Conference, in taking further the major themes of the European Year of Languages, highlights the broad consensus on the pressing need to intensify our efforts to develop practical measures to promote linguistic diversity in society and plurilingualism for individuals in the context of full active democratic citizenship. In particular the need to review or 'self-evaluate' language education policies with a view to promoting more diversified language learning has been stressed once again.

The conference has attempted to raise awareness of the complexity of the problems – made even more complex by the diversity of education systems and cultures in the forty-five countries represented here. We bring varying views and experiences to this topic, and our challenge is to develop a shared understanding of the policy issues and goals, and to adopt common guiding principles in the search for common solutions. We are not seeking quick solutions to what are essentially long-term goals but are attempting to develop

the debate on key concepts and processes related to education for plurilingualism and for plurilingual awareness.

The conference, in examining policies for diversification of the languages offered in curricula, began by addressing the issue of English:

- What data do we need to have a real perspective on the need for English in education system?

- What does teaching English mean?

- Can English, as a lingua franca, be divorced from cultural context?

- Should education systems respond to social demand for English or how can they influence demand?

In considering diversification, we have once again questioned the importance to economic factors alone in setting the goals of language education policy. We have argued for a more comprehensive approach that takes account of social, cultural, political and human rights factors in the broad context of democratic citizenship with active participation in national and European social and political life.

In examining the issue of greater diversification, the Council of Europe is not attempting to oppose powerful social forces but, as in this conference, wishes to facilitate policy makers in considering reasons and possible ways for acting on social demand and perceptions of different languages. In that respect our role is that of a catalyst for debate on how some measure of diversification can be achieved, and, inevitably, the role or roles of English have to be analysed in that context. We have been reminded also that when we speak of diversification we are thinking of the possibility of both European and any other (''non-European'') languages in an individual's plurilingual repertoire.

The conference discussed the concept of 'plurilingual repertoire' consisting of languages and language varieties with competences of different kinds and levels as a composite integrated concept. A real life illustration led to a challenging and passionate debate both in plenary and in groups.

In this respect the conference has drawn attention to the need for education systems:

- to examine what plurilingualism may mean in practice in both compulsory and non-compulsory contexts (lifelong learning) and to formulate clear objectives on what kinds of plurilingualism to be aimed at in specific national or local contexts

- to review the traditional vision of the curriculum organised in separate language compartments; education for plurilingualism as a competence requires the development of language policies and forms of organisations of language learning which promote an integrated competence with transversal skills – *une compétence intégrée et intégrante*

- to develop education for plurilingual awareness through raising learners' consciousness of linguistic diversity and of their own existing repertoires, and through education for linguistic tolerance

- to prepare learners to make use of their potential to develop and adapt their plurilingual repertoires to changing circumstances throughout life

- to show recognition for all learners' efforts to broaden their repertoire at whatever level, and for competences acquired outside formal education contexts.

The conference has noted the particular contribution of Council of Europe instruments in this process; existing tools i.e. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* and European Language Portfolio; new initiatives – the *Guide for Language Education Policies in Europe* which will be the subject of a consultation process and the Language Education Policy Profile - an offer to assist member States who so wish in a policy review which adopts a non-judgemental forward looking approach.

Next steps

This conference, itself linked to the Innsbruck event in 1999 and the follow-up to the European Year of Languages, will lead to a number of actions:

- a consultation process on the *Guide for Language Education Policy in Europe*, and its experimental application in practice. We invite member states and NGOs to join in this process and we will be in further contact on this matter early in 2003 when a form will be provided for feedback

- further Reference Studies will be elaborated as the need arises

- the Country Profile activity will be extended and countries, neighbouring regions or cities are invited to apply in the light of their specific priorities; during the course of this conference six countries have already indicated strong interest and the proposal for a 'regional' profile is also welcome

- a thematic approach will be adopted for an in-depth analysis of current issues, including mother tongue; sign language has been identified as

another pressing issue and the Division is happy to discuss co-operation on different priority policy themes and activities with national authorities.

- current activities on language education policy and minorities will be extended
- a Council of Europe Policy Paper will be elaborated in the framework of the 50th anniversary of the European Cultural Convention in 2004.

To summarise our future work, the Language Policy Division continues to move towards what are more exclusively *policy development and analysis* activities, focusing on plurilingualism and diversification. It is significant that many of these activities have a strong political dimension, whether concerned with the languages of minorities, official/state languages or 'foreign' languages – and in respect of which we propose a 'global approach' towards plurilingual education whenever possible and appropriate.

Of course the *development* of policies must be accompanied by quality in *implementation*. The modes of implementation are best understood through observing and sharing good practice in curriculum design, in teaching methods, in learning materials (including for cross-curricular approaches or teaching through a foreign language). Innovation without teacher training may simply result in innovation without change. The European Centre for Modern Languages in Graz has a special role to play in acting as a platform for developing and disseminating innovation and good practice in language pedagogy.

The Language Policy Division and the ECML will continue to work together to create the synergies that are necessary for policy development and implementation and this process is already under way in relation to the preparation of its new Medium-Term Programme outlined by Josef Huber. Each instance has a specific mission as well as areas of collaboration where policy development meets implementation, particularly with regard to the Common European Framework and the portfolio at this time.

We look forward to your co-operation in the next phase of our programmes in Strasbourg and Graz. Thank you for your active participation and have a good journey home.

APPENDIX 1: Programme

Wednesday 13 November

12.00 – 14.00 *Registration: Entrance Hall*

14.00 **Official opening** *(Room 5)*
B. Rugaas, Director General, Directorate General IV - Education, Culture and Heritage, Youth and Sport
L. M. de Puig, Chairman of the Committee on Culture, Science and Education, Parliamentary Assembly, Council of Europe

The Council of Europe and Language Education Policy
J. Sheils, Language Policy Division

Introduction to the aims and working methods of the Conference
Ph. Thalgott, Language Policy Division

14.45 Round Table *"The challenge of diversification"*
Chair: F. Goullier, Ministry of Education, France

English in Europe: C. Truchot, Marc Bloch University, Strasbourg

A concept of international English: B. Seidlhofer, University of Vienna

National minorities and respect for linguistic diversity: D. O'Riagáin, Independent Consultant, Dublin, Ireland

Language diversity in multicultural Europe- Comparative perspectives on immigrant minority languages at home and at school: G. Extra, Tilburg University, The Netherlands

The challenge of diversification for schools: D. Coste, ENS Lettres et Sciences Humaines, Lyon, France

Discussion

Introduction to Groupwork [F. Goullier]

16.15 Break

16.45- 18.15 Groupwork A: **"Diversification and English"**

The following statements are offered as starting points for discussion:

- If diversification is to succeed, the teaching of English should be considered as a separate question. Once the position of English has been determined, the diversification of the curriculum for other languages can be addressed more successfully.
- If democratic citizenship in Europe is to be internationally based, it is crucial to ensure diversification in language learning so that citizens in Europe can interact in their own languages, rather than through English as a lingua franca.
- The fundamental principle for diversification is that learners should acquire one language well and others to varying degrees as their needs arise.
- Diversification in language learning is a fundamental component of the 'European dimension' in all education but needs to be linked to other components such as the teaching of history, geography, social studies.
- The key to diversification is the introduction of language learning as early as possible in schooling, preferably in pre-school education.
- Diversification should ensure that a wide range of languages is taught, not just European langues or languages widely spoken in Europe.

Thursday 14 November

09.00   Plenary: **Reports from groups** and discussion *(Room 5)*
             Chair: G. Neuner, Gesamthochschule Kassel, Germany

09.30   **Defining the concept of plurilingualism**: M. Byram, University of Durham, United Kingdom (Special Adviser)

Plurilingualism:

In the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*, plurilingualism is defined as:*

the ability to use languages for the purposes of communication and to take part in intercultural interaction, where a person, viewed as a social agent, has proficiency of varying degrees, in several languages, and experience of several cultures. This is not seen as the superposition or juxtaposition of distinct competences, but rather as the existence of a complex or even composite competence on which the user may draw. (Council of Europe, 2001: 168)

Introduction to groupwork [M. Byram]

10.15   Break

10.45   *Groupwork B:* **The potential of plurilingualism**

On the basis of the definition of plurilingualism in the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*, groups are asked to consider the ways in which plurilingualism is/can be introduced as an aim of language education policy in two contexts:

i.   in social situations which are multilingual, where there are, for example:

- *regional minorities*

- *migrant minorities*

- *inhabitants of frontier regions*

- *any other situations of multilingualism*

ii. in social situations which are or are perceived to be 'monolingual', and where the majority population do not become plurilingual except through schools and/or institutions of lifelong learning

In both contexts, the Group is asked to consider how policy can be formulated and implemented in a global and comprehensive way at all levels and in all sectors of education from ministerial level to specific institutional level.

12.15   Lunch

14.15   Plenary : **Responding to the challenge of plurilingualism in national language education policies** *(Room 5)*
Chair: J. Panthier

-      ***Guide for the development of language education policies in Europe: from linguistic diversity to plurilingual education***
J.C. Beacco, Université de Paris III, Sorbonne Nouvelle, Paris, France (Special Adviser)

Language Education Country Profiles*:*

- Introduction : **J. Sheils**

- Case study in progress – Hungary: G. Boldizsár, Department of Co-operation and international Development, Ministry of Education, Hungary

Questions for clarification

Introduction to groupwork [J.C. Beacco]

15.30	Break

16.00 -18.00   Groupwork C: **Parallel Discussion Groups – Promoting change** *(Rooms 5, 14, 15, 16)*

Groups are asked to consider:

*How the **Guide for the development of language education policies in Europe: from linguistic diversity to plurilingual education** can be used to promote change in different education contexts and at different levels, including for self-evaluation of policy*
- How can the Council of Europe help in your context with self-evaluation either through Language Education Country Profiles or other mechanisms?
- How might the Guide be used and further developed?

Group 1

- o Federal context (Switzerland): G. Lüdi, Bâle University
- o National context (France): F. Goullier, Ministry of Education

Group 2

- o 'Small country' context (Malta): A. Camilleri, University of Malta
- o National context (Finland): M.L. Karppinen, Education Counsellor, Ministry of Education, Finland

Group 3

- o *Land* context (Baden-Württemberg): H. Ebke, Staatliches Seminar für Schulpädogik, Tübingen, Germany
- o National context (United Kingdom): L. King, Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research (CILT)

Group 4

- o City context (Hamburg): I. Gogolin, Hamburg University, Germany
- o National context (Poland) H. Komorowska, University of Warsaw

Friday 15 November

09.00   Plenary – **Reports from Groupwork B and C** *(Room 5)*
Chair: Ph. Thalgott
- - *Synthesis of group discussions on the Potential of Plurilingualism* -M. Byram
- - *Synthesis of reports from parallel discussion groups on Promoting Change* – J.C. Beacco

09.30 **"Meeting the challenge of European standards and quality -
Policy Dimensions of Council of Europe Instruments"**
Chair: R. Schärer, General Rapporteur (ELP)
- *Quality and Standards - a Ministry of Education Perspective*:
- P. Cink, Director, Department for International Relations and
European Integration, Czech Republic
- *Standards, quality and the impact of Council of Europe
instruments on policy and practice (Common European
Framework of Reference; European Language Portfolio):* D.
Little, Director, CLCS, Trinity College, Dublin (ELP seminars Co-
ordinator)
- *Quality assurance in practice*: F. Heyworth, EAQUALS

Questions

10.30 Break

11.00 **Wider perspectives: Reflections on the Conference and beyond**
(Room 5) - Chair: Ph. Thalgott
- S. Churchill, Canada
- N. Alexander, South Africa

11.45 **The future role of the Council of Europe in assisting Member States
and other entities in developing and implementing language policy**
- *J. Huber, European Centre for Modern Languages*
- *J. Sheils, Language Policy Division*

Discussion: further proposals from participants on future needs

Close of Conference

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APPENDIX 3 : List of recent publications distributed at the Conference
on line on www.coe.int/lang

Guide for the development of Language Education Policies in Europe

- *Main Version*, 2003 (Project 1 rev.) Jean-Claude Beacco & Michael Byram
- *Executive Version*, 2003, (Project 1 rev.) 2003, Michael Byram & Jean-Claude Beacco

Reference Studies

Reference Studies on specific language policy issues

Social representations of languages and teaching : Castelloti Véronique & Moore Danièle

Language education in Italy: an experience for Europe? : Costanzo Edvige

Linguistic diversity and new minorities in Europe : Gogolin Ingrid

Using language economics and education economics in language education policy: Grin François

Tools for planning language training : Huhta Marjatta

Addressing 'the age factor': some implications for languages policy : Johnstone Richard

The consequences of demographic trends for language learning and diversity: Ó Riagáin Pádraig

Teaching and learning less widely spoken languages in other countries: Piri Riita

Europe, frontiers and languages: Raasch Albert

Why should linguistic diversity be maintained and supported in Europe? Some arguments: Skutnabb-Kangas Tove

Democratic Citizenship, Languages, Diversity and Human Rights: Starkey Hugh

Language teacher education policy promoting linguistic diversity and intercultural communication: Willems Gerard

Studies on English and diversification in Europe

Plurilingualism, Democratic Citizenship in Europe and the Role of English: Breidbach Stephan

Policy approaches to English: Neuner Gerd

A concept of international English and related issues: from `real English' to `realistic English'?: Seidlhofer Barbara

Key aspects of the use of English in Europe: Truchot Claude

Studies on diversification elsewhere in the world

Language education policy, national and sub-national identities in South Africa: Alexander Neville

Language Education, Canadian Civic Identity and the Identities of Canadians: Churchill Stacy

A site for debate, negotiation and contest of national identity: Language Policy in Australia: Lo Bianco Joseph