



CC-LANG (97)

# **FINAL CONFERENCE OF THE MODERN LANGUAGES PROJECT**

Strasbourg, 15-18 April 1997

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# I. INTRODUCTION

## 1. The nature, aims and terms of reference of the Conference

The Conference is an inter-governmental conference convened by the Council of Europe and will bring together:

- (i) national delegations: these will consist of a number of delegates nominated by member governments, which will designate one of their nominees as Head of Delegation. In the event of a vote being taken, only Heads of Delegations will be entitled to cast a vote ;
- (ii) representatives of other interested non-member States and international bodies invited to send observers. Observers may participate freely in all discussions, but may not vote.

The Conference will:

- (i) receive and discuss the Final Report on the work of the Project: *Language learning for European Citizenship*, submitted by the Project Group ;
- (ii) take note of the progress made in member states in respect of sectors and themes identified by the Committee for Education as priority concerns of the Project ;
- (iii) take note of the developing co-operation among member States in support of the reorientation and reform of language education, especially in new member States which have acceded to the Convention on Cultural Co-operation since 1988 ;
- (iv) receive and discuss a revised draft proposal for a Common European Framework for language learning and teaching, and a feasibility study on the introduction of a European Language Portfolio ;
- (v) make recommendations to members of the language teaching profession, education authorities and support services on the basis of the work carried out in the Project, for further action to improve the learning, teaching and assessment of modern languages ;
- (vi) advise the CDCC and its Education Committee on the possible content of future programmes in the field of modern language learning, teaching and assessment.

## 2. Background to the Conference.

### 2.1 Earlier measures

Since its inception in 1962, in response to the Recommendations of the Second Session of the Standing Conference of the European Ministers of Education, the CDCC has been continuously concerned with the improvement of modern language learning, teaching and assessment in its member States as an indispensable requirement for communication, co-operation and mutual understanding among the peoples of Europe. In its Recommendation R(82)18, the Committee of Ministers set down the considerations on which its policies were based:

"that the rich heritage of diverse languages and cultures in Europe is a valuable common resource to be protected and developed, and that a major educational effort is needed to convert that diversity from a barrier to communication into a source of mutual enrichment and understanding"

"that it is only through a better knowledge of European, modern languages that it will be possible to facilitate communication and interaction among Europeans of different mother tongues in order to promote European mobility, mutual understanding and co-operation, and overcome prejudice and discrimination"

"that member states, when adopting or developing national policies in the field 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".

The Committee then went on to recommend to the Governments of member States a broad range of measures, both general and specific. Project 12, held between 1982 - 88, then supported the efforts made in member States to implement the Resolution through commissioned studies, the operation of an interaction network and an intensive programme of 37 workshops for teacher trainers. In compulsory lower secondary education (age group 11 - 16), particularly, the 1980s saw all existing member States act energetically to renew curricular guidelines, examination syllabuses, textbooks and other teaching materials, and programmes of initial and in-service teacher training.

## **2.2 Language Learning for European Citizenship**

Following the presentation and discussion of the outcomes and findings of Project 12 to the Intergovernmental Conference: *Language learning in Europe: the challenge of diversity* and in accordance with the conclusions and recommendations of that Conference, the CDCC and its Education Committee launched a further medium-term project: *Language learning for European Citizenship*. This project has promoted, in relation to new priority sectors and themes, the application of the principles and methodology of innovation which had proved successful in promoting the Council's view of education as a continuing, life-long process aimed at the steady development of free, self-aware, self-reliant, socially responsible, articulate individuals as active participants in democratic citizenship.

In pursuing this aim, the Project has continued to promote and co-ordinate free and voluntary co-operation among leading researchers, teachers, experts and administrators in the language field, as well as among the institutions to which they belong, with a view to establishing and strengthening a consensus on basic aims and a common view on what constitutes good practice, with a view to setting out practicable lines of development which can be followed up profitably in member countries on a wider scale.

The new priority **sectors** identified by the Education Committee in the new Project's remit were:

- (i) Primary education** (Since this term has different meanings in different national contexts, it has been interpreted to cover the age group 4 - 11);
- (ii) Upper secondary education** (interpreted as covering the age group 15/16 - 17/18/19, the age of entry into higher education);
- (iii) Vocationally-oriented language learning (VOLL)** in the period of transition from school to work for non-university entrants;

- (iv) **Advanced adult education**, providing a follow-up to earlier successful language learning rather than provision for beginners or false beginners.

Within these sectors, but also with respect to lower secondary and non-advanced adult education, the Project was asked to develop a number of themes considered to be of growing importance:

- (i) the enrichment of the model used for the specification of communicative **objectives**, particularly in respect of the **socio-cultural component**;
- (ii) the use of new development in **communications** and **information technologies** in language learning and teaching;
- (iii) **bilingual education**, both in the sense of
  - (a) the teaching of children in more than one of the languages in use in bilingual environments, and
  - (b) in 'mainstream' education, the use of a foreign language as the medium of instruction in one or more curricular subjects other than the foreign language itself;
- (iv) the place of international **links, visits and exchanges** in school curricula, *pédagogie des échanges*;
- (v) **learning to learn**, the systematic encouragement of more efficient learning and the progressive transfer of responsibility from teachers to students (student autonomy);
- (vi) improved methods for the **testing and assessment** of both the language proficiency of learners and the effectiveness of teaching, as a means of providing information useful to all interested parties.

It was agreed that the dimension of **teacher training**, both initial and in-service, should be regarded as central to the implementation of innovation in respect of all priority themes in all the educational sectors concerned.

### 2.3 "New-style" workshops

To deal with this very broad remit, a Symposium held in Sintra, Portugal in 1989 recommended that a series of "new-style" workshops be conducted. Each workshop would be organised by two member governments, one hosting an initial ("A") workshop to survey need and provision in a given area and to set up a 2-year programme of projects, the second hosting a follow-up ("B") seminar to present and discuss the results of the programme and make recommendations for further action. Thirteen such "new-style" workshops, involving twenty-six individual workshops and thirteen inter-workshop action programmes, have been held 1990 -96. Between them, they cover all priority sectors and themes. Reports have been issued or are in preparation for all 'A' and 'B' workshops, and selected recommendations agreed by 'B' workshops have been incorporated into the Final Report of the Project.

### 2.4 New member States.

Over the period 1988-96 the number of States acceding to the Convention on Cultural Co-operation has risen from 25 to 44. In addition, Canada and the USA enjoy permanent observer status, while Israel has been granted observer status to the CDCC. There has been a strong demand from new member States, especially those in Central and Eastern Europe, for support in their national programmes for the reform and reorientation of modern language teaching with particular emphasis on curricular development, textbook renewal, assessment and teacher training. The measures taken to meet this



demand, which was not foreseen in the original remit of the Project, are detailed in Chapter 5 of the Final Report.

## 2.5 A Common European Framework and Portfolio.

On the initiative of the Swiss government, a Symposium: *Transparency and coherence in language learning in Europe* was held in Rüschtikon, Switzerland in November 1991 to consider:

- a) the introduction of a comprehensive and transparent **Common European Framework** for the description of objectives and methods for language learning and teaching, curriculum and course design, materials production and language testing and assessment, and
- b) the introduction of a **European Language Portfolio**, in which individual learners could record not only institutional courses attended and qualifications gained, but also less formal experiences with respect to as wide a range of European languages and cultures as possible.

The Symposium agreed that a Common European Framework should be **comprehensive**, able to accommodate the widest variety of objectives and methods, **transparent**, allowing practitioners to give full information in intelligible language, and **coherent**, free from internal contradictions. It should be useful both as a common basis for the exchange of information among practitioners and as a basis for critical reflection by practitioners on their current practice and the options open to them. On the recommendation of the Symposium steps have been taken, as reported in Chapter 4 of the Final Report, to produce a Draft Framework, which following an extensive field consultation has been substantially amended. This Second Draft, together with the Report of a working group on the feasibility and possible formats for a European Language Portfolio, will be submitted to the Conference for its consideration, along with a series of *User guides*. These have a dual function: to deal with aspects of provision specific to a particular class of user, and to assist such users to make effective use of the framework in their particular sphere of activity.

## 2.6 The specification of language learning objectives

The Council of Europe has attached central importance to a clear specification of language learning objectives, which should be not only **desirable** in terms of the needs of learners and of society, but also (as with the methods and materials employed) **appropriate** to learners in the light of their characteristics and experiences, and **feasible** in the light of the material and human resources which can be brought to bear. Chapter 6 of the Final Report shows how, in accordance with the CDCC remit, the Project has carried this work further, by:

- (i) enriching the previous *Threshold Level* model in the publications *Waystage 1990* and *Threshold Level 1990*;
- (ii) applying the enriched model to ten further languages: Galician, Catalan, Welsh, Russian, Maltese, Lithuanian, Latvian, Estonian, Irish and Greek, bringing the number of languages for which such specifications are available to 21;
- (iii) developing a further level in the series for English *Vantage Level*, using the same basic model, to encourage further learning by learners who reach Threshold Level;
- (iv) commissioning a study: *Multilingual and multicultural competence* considering objectives appropriate to learners concerned with developing partial competence on a modular basis in the interests of the intercultural development of the learner;

- (v) constructing a Common European Framework (see 2.5 above) within which objectives of the widest variety can be stated.

## 2.7 The dissemination of information

Steps have been taken to publicise the work of the Council of Europe in the field of modern languages:

- (i) through the multiplying activity of workshop participants;
- (ii) by the publication of reports and studies;
- (iii) by presentations to congresses, seminars, etc.

## 2.8 Other associated developments

The Project: *Language learning for European citizenship* has not, of course, operated in a vacuum. It will, indeed, become increasingly necessary for further Projects to seek to co-ordinate their efforts with other interests in the field on a basis of complementarity and co-operation. These interests include:

- (a) the European Union, with its *Socrates* and *Leonardo* Programmes and its broader educational remit following the Maastricht Treaty provisions;
- (b) other European and World organisations, such as UNESCO, OECD, OSCE, the World Bank, etc.
- (c) national cultural agencies, such as Goethe-Institut, British Council, Alliance Française, the Cervantes Institute, Dante Alighieri, etc.
- (d) national, European and world NGOs in the language teaching fields, such as Association Internationale de linguistique appliquée (AILA), Fédération Internationale des Professeurs de Langues Vivantes (FIPLV), European Association for Quality Language Services (EAQUALS), AIPF (Association Internationale des Professeurs de Français), Eurocentres, etc.

Of particular importance has been the institution under a Council of Europe Enlarged Partial Agreement, the **European Centre for Modern Languages** situated in Graz, Austria. The Centre organises a substantial number of workshops and seminars each year and has great potential as an information centre and 'think-tank'. It will be essential for close co-operation to develop between the Centre and any new language Project of the Education Committee with a clear differentiation of function.

## 3. Final Report

An account of the work of the Project: *Language learning for European citizenship* is found in the Final Report, which will be sent to participants together with other relevant documentation as the basic reference document for the Conference. The Report contains chapters giving the background, aims, objectives and expected results of the project. It then summarises activities undertaken, including those outlined in Section 2 above, and reviews briefly reports on the impact of the Project in member States. It concludes with chapters containing the general conclusions and recommendations of the Project Group, with some options for future action by the CDCC.

## 4. Title of the Conference

The title of the Conference draws the attention of participants, when considering the learning and teaching of modern languages in Europe, to the new situation in the Continent as it approaches the new millennium. This situation is very different from that in which the Council of Europe was founded in 1949 and again from that in 1988 when the last major Intergovernmental Conference: *Language learning in Europe; the challenge of diversity* was held and the Project: *Language learning for European citizenship* was planned. New perspectives have been opened up for international co-operation which were previously unthinkable.

What are the implications for national language teaching policies, especially to young people, who will spend their adult lives for which they are now being prepared under changed conditions in a new century? Are new aims and objectives needed, or is it rather that the steady continuity of purpose that has brought past successes has justified itself, is still relevant and can now be even more effectively pursued? Do the new technologies and their rapidly increasing availability to all for immediate long-distance communication demand a radical rethinking of methodologies, or does the received pattern of teacher - student relations in the classroom still hold? These are just some of the questions which the Conference will have to address if it is to give a lead to the language teaching profession as it faces the many challenges of a new generation in a new Europe in the new century.

## 5. Expected results

The deliberations of the Conference should result in:

- (i) general orientations for the teaching, learning and assessment of modern languages which may influence developments in the field, with recommendations addressed to the language teaching profession and policy makers;
- (ii) recommendations addressed to the CDCC concerning:
  - the use and future development of the Common European Framework
  - the feasibility of the finalisation and introduction of the European Language Portfolio
  - other future activities in the field of modern language learning, teaching and assessment
- (iii) the dissemination and exploitation of the results of the Project: *Language learning for European citizenship* at all levels.

## 6. Work of the Conference

After the opening formalities, the Final Report on the Project and its findings will be presented, followed by brief **presentations** of the **themes** to be considered by the Conference:

1. objectives and assessment
2. information and communication technologies,
3. bilingual education,
4. learning to learn,
5. educational links and exchanges
6. teacher education and training

The major part of the work of the Conference will be conducted in **Commissions**. Each Commission will be concerned with an educational **sector**:

Commission A Pre-primary and primary education (i.e. young learners to the age of 10/11)

Commission B Lower secondary education (i.e. 10/11 - 15/16)

Commission C Upper secondary education (i.e. 15/16 - 17/19)

Commission D Vocationally-oriented language learning (VOLL) and adult education.

Each Commission will have a Chairperson and a Co-ordinator/Rapporteur, who will briefly introduce each phase of work and present the consolidated Report of the Commission on each phase. The working groups will be constituted according to the working languages of the Conference, i.e. English or French. Bilingual groups may also be constituted, with or without simultaneous interpretation. Each working group will have a chairperson and an animator/rapporteur.

In the **first phase** of the Conference, **Stocktaking**, each Commission will be asked to consider the educational sector with which it is concerned, with special reference to the **priority themes** remitted to the Project. In the light of the aims of the Conference and its expected outcomes, this first phase of work of the Commissions should prepare the way for the Conference to arrive at some general orientations in the form of conclusions and recommendations concerning the learning, teaching and assessment of modern languages corresponding to national situations and needs. In view of the short time available for discussion, Commissions may agree to distribute among their working groups the themes on which they will concentrate their attention.

In the **second phase** of the Conference, following brief plenary presentations, Commissions will be asked to consider:

- a) the Second Draft of the proposed **Common European Framework** for Modern language learning, teaching and assessment, together with relevant **User Guides** and
- b) the feasibility study and possible formats for a **European Language Portfolio**, as they might be used in the sector with which the Commission is concerned. In addition to global evaluation, detailed comments can still be taken into account in the final revision of the documents if they are concrete and precise.

In the **third phase** of the Conference, Commissions will be asked to consider possible options for **future action** by the CDCC in the modern languages field, more particularly but not necessarily exclusively with regard to the sector with which the Commission is concerned, and bearing in mind the need for co-ordination and co-operation with other bodies in the field.

Following the conclusion of the third phase, the Chairpersons of Plenary Sessions, the Rapporteur General, the Co-Chairmen of the Project, the Chairpersons and Co-ordinators /Rapporteurs of Commissions, the Chairpersons and Animators/Rapporteurs of Working Groups together with the Heads of National Delegations will meet to agree the content of the Resolutions of the Conference. Their detailed formulation will be entrusted to a small preparatory group, which will produce parallel versions in English and French for submission to the Conference on the final morning.

The Reports and Recommendations of Commissions and of working groups will be reproduced in the Conference Report, since they may contain specific features too detailed for the overall conclusions and recommendations of the Conference but worthy of being made available to specialists.

## **7. Exhibition**

An exhibition will be organised of materials, printed and audio-visual, produced in connection with the Project, many resulting from the output of new-style workshops.

## **8. Working languages**

The working languages of the Conference will be the two official languages of the Council of Europe: English and French. Simultaneous interpretation between these two languages will be provided for plenary sessions and some working groups. Essential documentation, including the Final Report of the Project and the Conclusions and Recommendations of the Conference will be made available in both languages.

## **II. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Conference, having examined the Final Report of the Project "Language Learning for European Citizenship" (1989-1996) and having discussed, in commissions and working groups, the General Conclusions and Recommendations and Options for future action, adopted the following Conclusions.

The Conference: "Language learning for a new Europe" recognises the enormous changes which have occurred in Europe over recent years, the challenges such changes have presented and the central role of language teaching and learning in facing and overcoming these challenges.

The changes result first and foremost from:

- the enlargement of the membership of the Council of Europe to cover the whole of the Continent;
- the unprecedented and accelerating development of communication and information technologies;
- the increasingly international organisation of trade, industry, commerce, finance, defence, science, medicine and entertainment, as well as the growth of tourism as a major industry;
- the lowering of political barriers to the free movement of goods, capital, people and information.

The new situation resulting from the operation of such powerful forces brings with it great opportunities for Europeans well equipped to seize them, but also increasing disadvantages for those who are not. The need to communicate across language barriers is felt by all sectors of the populations of member States. Those lacking communication skills risk marginalisation and feel threatened by the competition European mobility produces. Such feelings are only too easily exploited by narrow nationalisms, with the danger of xenophobic backlash. There are also legitimate anxieties concerning the vitality and even the viability of smaller languages and cultures and their continuing contribution to the richness and creative diversity of European cultural life.

Thus it is that, so far from being an area of purely technical interest, language learning engages those fundamental values around which a human community is ordered and which are at the heart of the Council of Europe.

Recommendation N° R (82) 18 of the Committee of Ministers considered "that the rich heritage of diverse languages and cultures in Europe is a valuable common resource to be protected and developed, and that a major educational effort is needed to convert that diversity from a barrier to communication into a source of mutual enrichment and understanding and that it is only through a better knowledge of European modern languages that it will be possible to facilitate communication and interaction among Europeans of different mother tongues in order to promote European mobility, mutual understanding and co-operation, and overcome prejudice and discrimination".

These principles are if anything more relevant and more important today than they were in 1982.

Against this background, the Conference considers that European education policies in the modern languages field should aim:

- to facilitate the free movement of people and ideas across Europe;
- to increase mutual knowledge and understanding among all European peoples;
- to raise the level of European co-operation in quantity and quality;
- to combat, or preferably preclude, prejudice and intolerance towards peoples of different language and culture;
- to strengthen democratic structures and practices.

It further recommends that these aims be pursued by :

- providing facilities for all Europeans to acquire the ability to communicate with other Europeans with a different mother tongue;
- affording young people opportunities to learn about the other countries and their ways of life, particularly through direct links, personal experience of exchanges, and access to authentic texts;
- giving learners skills and experience in using another language for managing co-operative action;
- increasing learners' critical awareness of their own language and culture in relation to those of other Europeans and promoting the development of intercultural, attitudinal and personality development;
- developing the international component in the curricula, staffing and student composition of educational institutions;
- employing methods of teaching which progressively promote young persons' independence of thought and action, increase their ability to steer, manage and evaluate their own learning and develop their sense and exercise of social responsibility.

The Conference considers that the requirements of mobility and mutual understanding in a multilingual and multicultural Europe can only be met through the promotion of large-scale plurilingualism. All Europeans should therefore be encouraged to develop a degree of communicative ability in a number of languages. This aim implies:

- diversification of the languages on offer in schools;
- the availability of more than one modern language to pupils during compulsory education;
- the setting of appropriate objectives for each language in the curriculum;
- recognition in school-leaving qualifications for the achievement of language proficiency at various levels and for 'partial competences' (for example reading and/or listening abilities);
- emphasis on the progressive development of enabling skills ('learning to learn');
- continuing encouragement and provision of adequately resourced facilities for language learning throughout adult life.

The Conference approves the Final Report of the Project *Language Learning for European Citizenship*. With regard to the priority sectors and themes of the Project, the Conference therefore recommends:

## 1. Early language learning (up to the age of 11)

- that this learning should be an integral part of children's education and that it should also reflect Europe's linguistic diversity;
- that, despite the inevitable diversity of educational provision resulting from different national situations and priorities, a plurilingual and intercultural dimension should be present **throughout** the education of young people;
- that, in ways appropriate to national and local situations, educational authorities should encourage and promote the learning of modern languages as part of the school curriculum for all children at the earliest age, provided that circumstances make it possible;
- that the choice of languages should be made according to local and national circumstances, as should the methodology employed, bearing also in mind the need for methods and materials to be well attuned to the stage of cognitive, affective and sensory development reached by the child, and that the following criteria should be taken into consideration wherever possible:
  - neighbourhood language,
  - political, historical and local dimensions;
- that steps should be taken to sensitise children to other European languages and cultures through play activities, songs, rhymes, etc. from the earliest age of socialisation. The transition from sensitisation to language learning should be made when the child is judged to be ready for it;
- that all teachers should participate as partners in a whole-school programme of language development and cultural awareness for international communication, in a manner and to an extent appropriate to national structures of primary education as well as local opportunities and constraints;
- that an effective, integrated programme of initial and in-service training for language teaching to young learners be available in all member States as appropriate to national policies and structures, that specialised training in the methodology of teaching languages to young learners be combined with steps to ensure that teachers have the specialised language competence necessary to teach effectively using the language according to the methods being used in the school, that continuing staff development also be provided for, including facilities for the promotion of teacher co-operation and networking across disciplinary boundaries;
- that appropriate forms of evaluation and recognition of early language learning be developed and generalised;
- that steps be taken to ensure that the pupils' development in modern languages enjoys a systematic continuity of learning experiences building cumulatively on their achievements and in particular assuring an efficient and stress-free transition from primary to secondary education, that steps be taken to this end in order to promote communication and a sense of partnership amongst teachers and school authorities across sector boundaries;
- that steps be taken to monitor, analyse and compare the results of modern language development programmes for young learners locally, nationally and internationally so as to provide a sound foundation for policy and methodology.

## 2. Lower secondary education (c.11 - 16)<sup>1</sup>

Having ensured that at least one European Modern Language is taught to all pupils through the 'first cycle of secondary education (c. 11-16) in such a way as to enable them to use the language effectively for communication with other speakers of that language, in transacting the business of everyday living, in building social and personal relations and in learning to understand and respect the cultures and practices of other Europeans in an intercultural perspective, competent authorities should now pursue active policies to

- raise further the quality of communication pupils are expected and enabled to achieve by implementing wherever applicable the general and theme-related recommendations of this Conference;
- diversify language learning, so that all pupils may have, in accordance with national and regional circumstances, the opportunity to learn more than one modern language in school;
- valorise in their qualification systems a wider range of languages and kinds and levels of learning;
- motivate and equip young people leaving school for lifelong language learning in accordance with their developing practical and cultural needs.

## 3. Upper secondary education

- that national curricula should make provision for all students studying in schools beyond the age of compulsory education (or the age of 16 where compulsory education extends beyond that age) to continue modern language learning;

-that modern language programmes in upper secondary education should enable students to improve the quality of their use of the languages learned in lower secondary education and to enrich their cultural component;

-that schools should offer diversified provision so as to enable students:

- to relate new language learning to specialised fields of study (LSP) or employment (VOLL);
- to take up accelerated learning of new European or other languages;

-that particular importance should be attached to developing students' independence of thought and action combined with social responsibility (autonomy) by involving them in decision making and in the planning and implementation of co-operative projects (especially those involving international links and exchanges) as well as in the planning and method of their own individualised learning activity;

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<sup>1</sup>**NB.** Following the success of Project 12 (1983-88) in supporting the measures taken by member States to implement Resolution (82) 18 of the Committee of Ministers, above all in lower secondary education, this sector was not specified as such among the priority sectors for the Project: *Language learning for European Citizenship*. However, it remains central to language teaching in member States and has been a focus of attention in the experimentation carried out with regard to the priority themes of the Project and also in the support for new member States in the process of curricular renewal. It was, therefore, identified as the basis for one of the four Commissions of the Conference, upon the deliberations of which the Recommendations shown are based.



- that full account should be taken in the methodology of modern language teaching at upper secondary level of the rapidly expanding cognitive skills and cultural interests of students, but also of personal and emotional aspects of late adolescence, especially in relation to communicative aspects of the building of social and personal relations;
- that students should be encouraged to give thought to the learning methods they have used and to the development of their capacities as learners;
- that the learning of a new language may be envisaged at this level, including learning with a view to the development of partial competences, which should then be assessed and valorised;
- that bilingual teaching (the teaching of non-language subjects in a foreign language) be continued or started at this level, even if to a limited extent, and without being restricted to the first modern language learned.

#### **4. Vocationally-oriented language learning (VOLL)**

- that in the period of transition from full-time education to full-time employment, language courses should be provided at all levels and stages of vocational preparation and training, so as to equip young people in all types and levels of employment to co-operate in international projects and to enjoy vocational mobility;
- that vocationally-oriented language courses at all levels should combine vocational and general educational components so as to achieve a balanced vocational, cultural and personal development;
- that appropriate materials, methods and forms of assessment should be developed and employed, taking into account the specific needs and learning styles of adult learners, and that effective structures be developed for the exchange of ideas and practices;
- that on the basis of a common core of vocationally-oriented knowledge and skills, students should be trained and guided to develop independently the specialised language specific to their individual responsibilities and career prospects in their own sphere of employment;
- that vocationally-oriented language learning should not be confined to vocational education, but should also figure as appropriate in general education from the age of about 14 years, so as to sensitise students to the role of languages in the world of work and to prepare them for future professional contacts in their chosen field. For similar reasons adult education, wherever appropriate, should integrate some VOLL elements;
- that facilities should be made available in adult and further education for employees, especially in small and medium-sized enterprises, which cannot organise in-house language training systems, to acquire further language skills required for their present jobs as well as for vocational and social mobility;
- that training schemes for the young unemployed should contain a foreign language component in order to increase their employability and vocational mobility;
- that adequate provision be made for learning a range of languages for both occupational and general purposes and for the maintenance and consolidation of language learning throughout life, and that the changing nature and increasing diversity of adult language learning be taken into account in this process;

## **5. Adult education**

- that institutions of adult education should provide facilities for the continuation or resumption of language learning by adults, as well as for the maintenance and consolidation of language skills previously acquired. Attention should be focused upon personal development through language learning, encouraging intercultural understanding, ensuring language provision appropriate to their specialised fields of employment, in order to facilitate professional and personal mobility and international co-operation at all levels;
- that particular attention be given by institutions for distance education to the development of materials, methods, facilities and structures to enable adults to acquire diversified advanced communicative competences and skills, fully exploiting their professional and personal knowledge, skills and sources of information, and integrating such materials into an overall pedagogic design linking autonomous learning with institutional learning;
- that local and regional authorities should encourage all involved in town-twinning arrangements to create and fully exploit opportunities for developing bilingual contacts between 'opposite numbers' in the communities concerned.
- that adequate provision be made for learning a range of languages for both occupational and general purposes and that the changing nature and increasing diversity of adult language learning be taken into account in this process;

## **6. The specification of objectives**

- that particular attention be paid to the definition of objectives corresponding to partial competences (for instance concerning the ability to understand), especially in cases in which the development of a plurilingual competence is desired;
- that, in the interests of international coherence and co-ordination of language learning for communication in everyday life, member States should set up, or give full support to, competent institutions in setting up working groups to develop specifications for language learning objectives corresponding to up-to-date models for Waystage, Threshold and Vantage levels in respect of all European national and regional languages;
- that those concerned with the organisation of language learning should give priority to the setting of desirable, appropriate and feasible objectives for their target audiences. In doing so they should consider the full range of options available in order to optimise the return for the effort and resources invested, taking into consideration the parameters, categories and level descriptors contained in the Common European Framework. They should also consider whether global objectives, partial competences or specialised modules are best suited to the needs, characteristics and resources of the learners concerned.

## **7. Bilingual education**

that in bilingual areas steps should be taken as appropriate to ensure:

- that the provisions of the Council of Europe Charter for Regional or Minority Languages and the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities are observed and made increasingly effective;

- that there is parity of esteem between the languages and cultures involved and that children of both communities should be enabled to understand the language and culture of the other community;
- that education should not be communally segregated, in order that all children may have direct experience of working together with members of the other community, so as to preclude or overcome negative stereotyping, prejudice, intolerance and the growth, or continuation, of inter-communal suspicion, misunderstanding, distrust, antipathy and hostility;
- that an integrated bilingual and bicultural education, in a form appropriate to local circumstances, continues from school entry to school leaving, so as to provide a truly intercultural formation that strengthens the concept of languages in partnership;
- that where circumstances (for example numbers) allow, similar provisions should apply to host languages and languages of origin in areas of immigrant settlement;
- that the provision of bilingual education in this sense should not be used to deprive young people of the learning of at least one more language for the purposes of international communication;
- that in formulating and implementing bilingual policies, partnerships should be formed at every level between: local interests, political bodies, administrative authorities, parents, teachers and learners;
- that research, including classroom based research, should be intensified, so that the results of decision-making at different levels, in respect of such common problems areas as curriculum design, effective methodology, appropriate materials, suitable teacher training, as well as attitudes, administrative support systems and the optimal employment of scarce human material resources, can be monitored, analysed, assessed and evaluated, and information made available to decision-makers and the wider public concerning the possibilities inherent in bilingual education in and for democratic societies;

that in 'mainstream' education, both general and vocational,

- steps should be taken to encourage the use of more than one language in the teaching of curricular subjects other than modern languages, which means that:
  - models already in use (for example bilingual sections, foreign language modules, etc.) be further developed and information about them more widely disseminated;
  - use of the foreign language as a teaching medium be considered not only for the first foreign language but also, where possible in the interest of plurilingualism for young people, for the second and even third languages;
  - the use of a foreign language as a teaching medium to be developed through lower to upper secondary and into higher education, but that experiments be also carried out in primary education on a wider scale;
  - special provision be made in initial educational training for the dual qualification of future teachers intending to specialise in language teaching employing the language as a teaching medium for other curricular subjects;
  - in-service training modules be developed and made available to teachers wishing to employ a foreign language as the teaching medium in non-language subjects;
  - bilateral and multilateral co-operation be encouraged in the initial and in-service education and

training of teachers for foreign language medium teaching, such as :

- the further development of joint programmes of teaching and qualifying examinations to facilitate co-operation and exchange of teachers and students;
  - further development of, and better publicity for, the Council of Europe Bursary Scheme;
- the exchange of experience, ideas and materials concerning foreign language medium subject teaching be facilitated;
  - networks be set up to facilitate the co-operation of pupils and teachers in international joint projects;
  - the integration of native-speaking teachers able to teach curricular subjects into national education systems be facilitated;
  - the implementation of bilingual education be supported through the establishment and maintenance of networks of teachers and administrators;
  - provision be made to facilitate the mobility of teachers of all subjects in bilingual schools;

## **8. The use of information and communication technologies**

- that the use of information and communication technologies and their multimedia applications should be integrated into all modern languages curricula and steps taken to allow their great potential to be fully exploited. All schools should be equipped accordingly and teachers of modern languages given the necessary access to the equipment as well as funding for essential software;
- that telecommunication and multimedia technologies, like other computer applications, should be embedded in a principled and harmonious approach to language learning and teaching. The design of multimedia applications specifically for language learning should be based on sound pedagogical and methodological principles rather than on predominantly technological considerations. In particular, the interests and learning styles of young people of various ages should be taken as the point of departure and the potential of media for promoting learner independence and co-operation should be thought through and effectively realised;
- that, as soon as is practicable, all educational establishments should have properly budgeted access to an international telecommunications network, so that schools may gain access to information databases in and about other countries in other languages and also establish, maintain and develop relations with teachers and learners in other countries, especially within ongoing multilingual networks;
- that the use of information and communication technologies for distance learning, at national and international level, should be promoted in order to make educational provision more flexible and accessible to a wide range of users especially in continuing education, thus contributing to the development of plurilingualism in permanent education;
- that ways of using information and communication technologies to make information and learning materials widely available for all European national and regional languages should be actively pursued;
- that information about appropriate uses of modern technologies, as well as the necessary technical equipment and access to technical support, should be made available to practising teachers of

modern languages. Technical standards and user-friendly interfaces should be developed in order that special technical training in the use of multimedia and telecommunications technologies by existing staff can be minimised. In addition, teaching interfaces for generally available multimedia resources and databases should be developed;

-that initial and in-service education and training for all modern language teachers should include information about and training in the appropriate use of modern technologies, including the evaluation and selection of available software and the use of authoring programmes, as well as experience in the handling of the necessary technical equipment. In these ways teachers should be given the competence and confidence to integrate such media flexibly into their daily classroom practice and professional life.

## **9. 'Learning to learn' and the promotion of learner autonomy**

-that the 'learning to learn' dimension should be integrated into the whole curriculum, and that this dimension should constitute an important component of initial and in-service teacher training;

-that one objective of courses in modern languages should be to develop the students' ability to learn more efficiently and to develop independent management of their own learning, so that by end of institutionalised education students have the motivation, competence and confidence to face real-life communication using the languages they have already learnt and to tackle the new language learning necessary to cope with new challenges;

-that school programmes should promote student self-direction in learning by:

- encouraging the use and development of strategies, including their reflective skills;
- developing specific strategy areas such as self and peer evaluation, collaboration skills and compensation strategies, as well as differentiated reading and writing strategies;
- the development of negotiation skills, especially for the conduct of negotiations in the target language;
- the development of study skills through different kinds of materials and tools such as literature, special study tasks, telematics and satellite TV;
- the development of heuristic and inferencing skills for understanding newly encountered authentic texts and the application of both inductive and deductive logical principles and processes in building up knowledge of a language and using that knowledge when dealing with the production and reception of texts;
- the enhancement of self-esteem and self-confidence for dealing with new situations requiring social and communication skills.

## **10. "Pédagogie des échanges": the role of educational links and exchanges**

- that competent authorities in member States encourage and facilitate the participation of all young people in school links and exchanges at all educational levels as an essential element in preparing them, through direct experience of language used in its natural setting, for life in a democratic, multilingual and multicultural Europe;

- that all steps be taken to ensure the full effectiveness of exchanges by:

- involving all educational partners: political and educational authorities, parents, teachers, specialised agencies and non-governmental organisations;
- thoroughly preparing, carefully supervising, following up and rigorously evaluating each visit as a whole-school responsibility;
- integrating exchanges into the school ethos, culture and curriculum;
- setting clear educational objectives, covering knowledge of the region and its history, growth of social and communication skills and promotion of open mindedness, tolerance and respect for the culture and lifestyle of another people, and ensuring that these objectives are known and accepted by all staff and pupils involved;
- planning cultural and communicative tasks and activities involving the learning and use of the host language, even where it is not one taught in the school;
- developing a cross-curricular team working within a whole-school strategy;
- that all those involved in the planning and conduct of school exchanges should receive training (including linguistic training at a 'survival' level), support and legal advice in respect of the responsibilities they assume;
- that international staff exchanges should be facilitated and that the host institutions should make adequate provision for the social integration of the guest teachers, and that arrangements should be made to cope with the social problems in the home country which may arise out of medium-term exchanges.

## **11. Testing and assessment**

- that in the interests of greater European educational and vocational mobility as well as in the interests of candidates and their teachers, all institutions engaged in testing, assessment and examinations, especially those which award recognised qualifications, should make their objectives, criteria and procedures coherent, transparent and publicly available;
- that partial competences should be able to lead to recognition and to specific assessment wherever desirable;
- that particular attention should be paid to methods which would make it possible to appraise and to recognise intercultural and sociocultural competences;
- that institutions should use the Common European Framework together with the relevant associated User Guides as a basic point of reference both for reviewing their existing practice in the light of available options and for making their decisions in respect of objectives, criteria and procedures publicly available in appropriate detail;
- that the steps taken by a number of the major examining bodies to co-operate and co-ordinate their activities should be extended to cover all member countries of the CDCC, thus promoting the free and open interchange of experience and expertise;
- that in view of the great variety of learner needs and characteristics, a corresponding variety of forms of assessment should be made available;

- that competent academic and professional institutions should conduct and report carefully monitored and evaluated experimentation on such issues as:
  - learner self-assessment
  - item banking
  - modular testing
  - the objectivisation of criteria
  - portfolio assessment
- that the initial training of modern language teachers should include an introduction to the principles and practice of language testing and assessment and that in-service courses for practising teachers should be made available to enable them a) to design, set, administer, mark and evaluate in-school tests, b) to facilitate learner self-assessment.

## **12. Teacher training**

In addition to the recommendations regarding teacher training in the points above, the Conference recommends:

- that, before achieving qualified status, all entrants to the modern language teaching profession should receive adequate and appropriate education and training which, whilst variously organised in accordance with national systems and practices, should be properly balanced between subject disciplines and professional preparation;
- that, in order to make the best use of available resources (especially time), authorities and institutions responsible for curriculum development in teacher education and training should seek to establish and prioritise precise and coherent objectives of teacher education and training; these should be clarified in the form of a set of core competences set in a common framework of reference against which programmes, curricula, syllabuses, materials and outcomes could be evaluated. Core competences should include linguistic, intercultural, educational and psychological components;
- that the role, form and content of subject disciplines (for example linguistics, cultural and regional studies, literature) in the initial education of future teachers should be critically examined and where necessary updated in the light of changing priorities in the needs of individuals and of society. This re-examination is required whether teacher education and professional training take an integrated or successive form. The needs of future teachers call for special attention in universities where only a minority of graduates go on to a career in teaching (for example by study options or a modular structure);
- that a proper balance should be maintained between theory and practice in professional preparation. Trainee teachers should be enabled to develop scientifically-based knowledge and understanding of the structure and uses of the language they teach, as well as practical skills in the use of the language for all classroom purposes. They should have a basic understanding of the processes of second language acquisition and learning. They should be helped to develop the personal qualities of a successful teacher, including an intercultural perspective free from prejudice and intolerance. They should also acquire the knowledge, understanding and skills to enable them to develop reflectivity, creativity and independent judgement, so as to be able to take curriculum decisions responsibly and imaginatively. Programmes should also provide a solid basis for the development of a teacher's ability to observe, critically reflect upon and where appropriate experiment with classroom practice (action research);
- that student-teachers should have and explore personal experience of the language-learning process,

so as to develop awareness of their own learning and to empathise with other learners, with a view to further improving their classroom practice;

- that programmes for the initial education and training of future teachers of modern languages should contain a sociocultural component, designed

- to develop the student's sociocultural competence comprising:

- factual knowledge of the country or countries in which the language to be taught is used;
- awareness of the sociocultural characteristics of the communities concerned, especially in relation to the home culture of the students and their expected future pupils;

- an open-minded attitude towards cultural variety and change;

- to communicate the skills required for the student to:

- observe and analyse sociocultural phenomena, especially through direct experience;

- enable their pupils to acquire similar knowledge, skills and attitudes;

- that teacher training programmes should include a component on the analysis, evaluation, selection and supplementation of textbooks and other course materials as well as on the selection of authentic materials and their classroom exploitation;

- that steps be taken to provide a stable framework for the close co-operation of educational authorities, colleges and universities, and schools in the education and training of future teachers;

- that the role of experienced practising teachers in schools as trainee mentors throughout the teacher training process should be promoted and further developed. Mentors should work in close association with college/university tutors and should receive training in relevant aspects of their mentoring role (for example observation skills, pastoral care, group dynamics, etc.). The status of trained mentors should be recognised (for example by the award of higher grades, salary supplementation, further qualification, promotion criteria, etc.);

- that all established teachers of modern languages should be enabled and required to receive further in-service training in order to:

- maintain language skills at a high level;

- update language use in view of language and cultural changes;

- extend and deepen their experience and knowledge of the cultures of the country or countries where the language is spoken;

- improve and up-date their teaching skills by receiving information and direct experience of advances in language learning and teaching methodology, including new applicable theories of language acquisition, learning and use;

- prepare to act as mentor for students undergoing initial teacher training in close co-operation with teacher training institutions;



- prepare to play a central role in the establishment and development of whole-school policies for the internationalisation of education, involving cross disciplinary co-operation in setting up and developing multilateral networks for links, visits and exchanges;
- that competent authorities should take steps to ensure that salaries and conditions of work for professionally qualified language teachers are competitive with other employment options so that their services are retained and a proper return received on the resources invested in their professional training.

## **Future Action**

The Conference warmly welcomes the setting up of a new medium-term project with the necessary financial resources and staff for its successful implementation. Having further discussed in commissions and working groups specific proposals directly related to the content of and priorities for future work of the Council of Europe in modern language teaching and learning, the Conference recommends that the Council for Cultural Co-operation

- a) further refine and develop the Common European Framework by:
  - conducting pilot applications of the Framework and the associated User Guides in a balanced sample of countries, involving different types of user institutions and levels of education, with a view to their further revision and subsequent general introduction;
  - drawing on research in applied linguistics and other relevant disciplines;
  - ensuring that in its wording and presentation it is as "user friendly" as possible for its range of users;
  - focusing more closely on the needs of target groups in its user guides;
  - addressing more closely the particular circumstances of primary education;
  - taking into account the diverse situations of adult learners and in particular those in VOLL;
  - exploiting its potential to identify more precisely competences needed in teacher education and training, and to enhance the planning of courses in that sector.
- b) develop further a European Language Portfolio and pilot its introduction, at first on an experimental basis, to be followed by its evaluation, by:
  - ensuring that the wording and presentation of the portfolio are "user friendly" for all users;
  - making clear the complementary nature of its pedagogic and reporting functions;
  - emphasising its potential, as a document which belongs to the learner, in motivating learners and developing their capacity to "learn to learn";
  - considering more closely its role in primary education, and in particular its pedagogic function in that sector;
  - addressing its potential use by employers of adults;

- providing clear guidelines in self-assessment for users;
  - developing user guides to the Portfolio as well as to the Framework.
- c) actively support the actions undertaken by member States in:
- the continued updating and development of specifications of objectives of the Threshold Level type, including Waystage and Vantage Level, and taking into account developments concerning the Common European Framework. It is further recommended that this work should be established as a permanent service activity;
  - the formulation, implementation and international co-ordination of language policies based on the conclusions and recommendations of the Project;
  - the more effective educational training of language teachers in accordance with the conclusions and recommendations of the Project;
- d) disseminate the results of the Project '*Language Learning for European Citizenship*' by:
- continuing its publication of compendia and exploiting new media such as CD Rom;
  - making information available on the INTERNET;
  - setting up an electronic discussion forum for issues on the Framework and Portfolio;
  - continuing to contribute articles to specialist journals;
  - supporting the dissemination of findings at national level (for example by sending experts to participate in national information seminars);
  - developing partnerships with commercial publishers with a view to the wider dissemination of its publications;
  - distributing its publications to a network of specialist educational depository libraries;
  - joint activities with NGOs, in particular associations of teachers of modern languages.
- e) evaluate the results of the "new-style" workshop series. Within the framework of the new medium-term project, follow-up activities should be undertaken where necessary in order to maintain the innovative work and to disseminate its results.

### **Future Co-operation**

The Conference notes the importance of maximum co-operation between the different sectors and activities within the Council of Europe. Equally, work undertaken jointly with other organisations can exploit the strengths of each, and can enhance the quality of outcomes. It also reduces duplication of effort. The Conference recognises that different organisations have varying responsibilities towards varying communities, but also that there are many areas of common concern. It therefore urges the Council of Europe:

- to continue to develop co-operation between the Modern Languages Section and other sectors of the Council of Europe, including the network on school links and exchanges, the Committee on Higher

Education and Research with particular regard to diversification of language learning in higher education, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe and, in particular, the European Centre for Modern Languages;

- to develop further co-operation with the European Union;
- to develop co-operation with other international organisations and in particular with UNESCO and OSCE;
- to co-operate where appropriate with national cultural institutes, international NGOs, pan-European associations and consortia, teachers associations and other relevant bodies.

### **European Year of Languages**

The Conference recommends that the Year 2001 be designated "European year of languages" when, inter alia, a European Language Festival might be held, and the European Language Portfolio might be launched.

### III. OPENING SPEECHES AND INTRODUCTORY STATEMENTS

#### 1. Address of welcome by *Mr Raymond WEBER*, Director of Education, Culture and Sport, Council of Europe

On behalf of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Mr Daniel Tarschys, I am very happy to welcome you to the final Conference of the *Language Learning for a New Europe* Modern Languages Project. This has been one of the most ambitious projects undertaken by the Council of Europe in recent years. The fact that so many of you are here today is a striking indication of your interest and an endorsement of our decision to propose to policy-makers and practitioners a number of activities designed to promote the values in which we believe in Europe.

Since the Language Project was launched in 1989, much has changed at the Council of Europe. At that time there were twenty-four of us, today there are forty, and three states (Canada, USA and Japan) have observer status. Developments in the field of education and culture have been even more significant: today forty-four states participate in the work of the Council for Cultural Co-operation. The three Transcaucasian republics have been invited to accede to the European Cultural Convention -and are expected to do so next week - and Israel has obtained observer status with the Council for Cultural Co-operation. I should like to extend a special welcome to the Council of Europe family to Ms Khechoyan, of Armenia, Ms Babakhanova, of Azerbaijan and Ms Matiashvili, of Georgia.

In the new Europe, the fundamental objectives of the language teaching policies developed by the Council of Europe over the last twenty years are more relevant than ever. Their philosophy, which is very simple, is to facilitate the free movement of persons and ideas in Europe. In conformity with the aims laid down for us by the Council of Europe's Statute, we encourage closer co-operation between states by providing everyone with access to language facilities which will open the door to direct interpersonal communication. We also attach special importance to the strengthening of mutual understanding and the acceptance of diversity in a multilingual and multicultural Europe. All this implies respect for the individual identity sustained by local, regional and national characteristics, accompanied by a commitment to develop a common European identity.

Unfortunately, it cannot be denied that multilingual and multicultural diversity has in many cases been interpreted more as a danger than as an asset to be protected and fostered. The result, as we know, is an increase in expressions of intolerance and xenophobia in a number of our member states.

Our determination to resist this trend has been unfailing. It gave rise to the "European Youth Campaign against Racism, Xenophobia, Anti-Semitism and Intolerance" launched by the Council of Europe in 1995. In an instance of positive co-operation between institutions, the effort has been resumed this year by the European Union, which is organising a campaign on a similar theme.

A project as important as the Modern Languages Project could have contributed to the Council of Europe's campaign in a host of different ways. Opting for an extremely down-to-earth approach, we produced a publication for the use of teachers and youth workers. Teachers are often in the front line and have to answer everyday questions in a context far removed from official speeches and scholarly works. They have to make people aware of the banality of evil so well described by Hannah Arendt. The publication, entitled *Young people facing difference*, is one of many available outside the Assembly Chamber.

The acquisition of real linguistic proficiency is not only a fundamental right in our democracy, but also a practical necessity: monolingualism now has no real place in European society, if it ever did. One need only think of the guild system and the cultural routes that we are today engaged in rediscovering, and of

many other exchanges, not to mention Voltaire and Frederick the Great. Speaking another person's language also opens the door to a culture of dialogue and tolerance. It creates the conditions for a European identity based on shared values.

Concern for a common European identity is also reflected in the preparatory work for the second Council of Europe Summit, which will take place in Strasbourg next October, and which will be the only summit of heads of state and government of all the countries of Greater Europe. It will thus be a unique opportunity to make our leaders more aware of the values to which I have just referred. The main themes of this summit are still under discussion, but I can tell you now that the meeting will very probably not only deal with the question of human rights and the current weakening of social cohesion, but also discuss the role of culture and education in preparing young people for European citizenship in a new Europe.

Several Modern Languages Projects have helped to bolster initiatives by member governments striving to develop more effective communication skills and more positive attitudes towards other languages and cultures. We have endeavoured to reach out to all social strata and also to more or less all ages, so these projects have made a unique contribution to preparing young people for life in a pluralist, democratic society. The considerable body of theoretical and practical work generated by this project itself gives valuable assistance to member states, since it again focuses attention on the respect that is due to diversity of identities and cultures, on the promotion of mutual understanding between peoples and communities and on the development of greater personal mobility as a catalyst for better personal and professional relationships.

The second Summit of Heads of State and Government will also, we hope, at least be an opportunity to stress the important role of modern languages and to explain once more that European peace and prosperity are consolidated not only at the negotiating table, but also in places where people live and where plurality is encouraged. When you draw up the conclusions and recommendations of this conference, you must think how they might usefully contribute to the future work of the Council of Europe in the field of education and culture, and also perhaps how they might kindle the interest of the heads of state and government.

The final report of the Modern Languages Project Group clearly shows that the results obtained provide a sound basis for planning the continuation of this project. Like previous projects, it has struck a balance between continuity - which is necessary for consistency - and a certain flexibility which is essential to take account of often unexpected developments.

The workshops have been a remarkable success, offering an appropriate response to priorities as they emerged and incorporating them into programmes, which have thereby been revitalised. The approach developed by the project has since been adopted in other operational sectors of the organisation.

Member states have been extremely generous in hosting more than thirty workshops involving key decision-makers and people in a position to pass the message on. These experts have successfully carried through a series of action programmes via national and international networks. This has led to a clarification of educational concepts and the development of numerous modules and materials for use in teacher training and in the classroom. Conclusions and recommendations appear in the final report, pointing to a consensus about general policy thrusts and recommendations on specific priority areas, areas which will be examined during the first phase of the conference.

The priorities identified by member states in 1989 related to early language learning at primary and pre-primary levels. They also concerned the secondary level (particularly upper secondary), vocationally-oriented language learning and adult education. A number of topics for research and development work have been identified as particularly important for improving language learning methods in the context of

international co-operation. Today you will have the opportunity to review the results of the project in relation to its specified objectives, the use of information technology and the mass media, bilingual education, the role of school links and exchanges, learner autonomy, the evaluation of linguistic proficiency and, of course, the central theme of the project, teacher training. Modernising curricula without suitable teacher training runs the risk of introducing “innovation without change”. As you will see shortly, the presentation of priority areas does start with teacher training, and I reiterate that this is quite normal, an accurate reflection of its importance.

Although this project was planned at an intergovernmental conference held in Sintra during the week when the Berlin Wall came down, it very soon adapted to the new political situation, ensuring that all our member states would be able to co-operate in its ambitious programme of activities. As new member countries joined after 1989, they provided valuable input to the project on the basis of reciprocity and equality. Co-operation is never a one-way process, as we have learnt here over the last few years. A particularly valuable contribution came in the field of bilingual education, and in this context we are grateful to Dr Gaber, the Slovenian Minister, the Ambassador of Slovenia and the Slovenian authorities for hosting Workshop 5b, which was particularly fruitful with regard to language learning and teaching in a bilingual context at pre-primary and primary level.

As well as providing assistance to the member states modernising their curricula, the project also produced conceptual tools designed to facilitate the development and implementation of language policies in Europe. The proposed common European framework is intended to promote consistency and transparency in a pluralist approach to the description of objectives, methods and skills evaluation. The concept of a European Language Portfolio was developed to foster multilingualism and lifelong learning. These themes will be central to your discussions on Wednesday, and your recommendations about future developments, eg practical trials of these tools at learner level, will have a significant impact on our future activities.

The Council of Europe is committed to continue and expand its innovatory work in the modern languages field. These activities take place under the aegis of the Council for Cultural Co-operation, whose Chairperson is present here, and that of its Education Committee, also represented here by its Chairperson. They are co-ordinated by the Secretariat in Strasbourg. I am pleased to confirm that arrangements have been made with a view to a new short and medium-term modern languages project, and that the CDCC and its Education Committee will welcome the recommendations this conference makes on future action in this field.

When the conference examines activities likely to encourage the development of multilingualism and multiculturalism throughout Europe, it will of course be advisable to consider how to make the best possible use of necessarily limited resources. In this respect, the Council of Europe will consider the respective roles of the project of the Council for Cultural Co-operation in Strasbourg and of the European Centre for Modern Languages recently set up in Graz, in the form of an Enlarged Partial Agreement of the Council of Europe.

Effective complementarity is essential, and the distinctive nature of each must be made clear. As the final report of the Modern Languages Project points out, the activities co-ordinated in Strasbourg increasingly focus on the development and promotion of coherent language policies, while activities in Graz mainly deal with policy implementation and assessment. The Council of Europe should strike a balance between these two imperatives and improve international co-operation as it develops and implements its education policies.

We shall also examine the possibilities of co-operation with other international bodies, in particular the European Union. We welcome the representation of the European Commission, notably Directorate General XXII, in the persons of Mr Domenico Lenarduzzi, who will address us at the beginning of the

afternoon, and Ms Sylvia Vlaeminck, who has been following our work for a long time and has become an extremely reliable and faithful partner. We welcome the opportunity to examine together with the European Union a number of practical proposals in order to strengthen already fruitful co-operation in the field of modern languages. The Commission has been closely associated with the development of the Common European Framework of Reference, and this association has been extremely fruitful.

In conclusion, I should like to stress once more the political importance of modern languages in the context of a common European identity based on respect for the diversity of the languages and cultures of our continent. For this reason the current results of the project and the conclusions and recommendations of this conference must reach the widest possible audience at all levels. They will be presented in synoptic form on the occasion of the 19th Session of the Standing Conference of European Ministers of Education in Kristiansen (Norway) in June. We are sure that delegates will do their best to publicise them at their respective national levels.

I wish you every success in your discussions, which I am sure will be fruitful, and I await your conclusions and recommendations with interest. The results of this intergovernmental conference will, as I have said, help to guide our work in the modern languages field, both in the medium and in the longer term. And if the Committee of Ministers deems it appropriate, a new recommendation on language learning and teaching would certainly be relevant at a time when, because of new technologies and far-reaching developments in communications instruments, an ongoing process of reflection is indispensable.

Finally, allow me to say a word of thanks. First of all to the members of the Project Group, in particular the two co-chairpersons, Daniel Coste and Gé Stocks, but also to John Trim, our General Rapporteur. Thanks too to all the countries which hosted conferences and workshops during the project. Thanks to our team here at the Council of Europe, initially led by Antonietta de Vigili, and now by Joe Sheils. Not forgetting, of course, Maitland Stobart, who brought to the whole project his dynamism and communication skills. Thanks finally to you all, government representatives, experts, delegates of intergovernmental organisations and delegates of non-governmental organisations. It is through you, too, that the project will endure.

## 2. Opening address by *Dr. Slavko GABER*, Minister of Education and Sport, Slovenia

Europe in the 1990s has embarked on fundamental changes. After decades of living a separate life in two political and economic worlds we have begun to seek a form of common existence based on the principles of a market economy and within a political framework of representative democracies.

By establishing the Modern Language Learning project the Council of Europe drew attention to the exceptional importance of language and knowledge of different languages and cultures in the modern Europe, far before the above-mentioned changes.

I would like to stress that with the new circumstances - illustrated by facts such as the almost twofold increase in the number of members of the Council of Europe in the last few years, and the fact that the globalisation of electronic media is creating a new image of globalisation in general - the importance of the project which has a history of over a quarter of a century and which is based on a previous project, has increased in proportion to these conditions and dimensions.

I am honoured to have the opportunity to participate in the introductory part of the meeting which summarises the work of the "Language Learning for European Citizenship" project in front of so many experts who have been involved with this issue for many years within the framework of the Council of Europe and in their individual countries.

Please allow me here, as a non-expert, to add to the picture of important ideas and proposals for concrete solutions. My concern is not only with linguistic but with real and perhaps problematic facts called into being by the New Europe.

The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe established, as one of three basic principles, the principle "that the rich heritage of diverse languages and cultures in Europe is a valuable common resource to be protected and developed and that a major educational effort is needed to convert that diversity from a barrier to communication into a source of mutual enrichment and understanding".

If, however, we are seeking in Europe a common language for various types of communication, we are placed in a delicate and apparently almost impossible position. Language learning for common European citizenship actually often means the so-called "major" languages.

This fact requires consideration and action from **both** parties - those whose languages are "minor" as well as those whose languages are "major". Urgent recognition is needed from the speakers of the less widely-spoken languages of the necessity of learning the languages which are widely spoken. This is a reality which has to be accepted and lived with. This reality did not arise without good reason. It represents a modus of actual transnational communication and thus offers a possibility of enriching symbolic and other experience.

Of course the acknowledgement of the special status of the widely-spoken languages also has its reverse side. It requires of the speakers of widely-spoken languages to consider the necessity of the coexistence of different entities - including language entities. Personally, I share the belief that the fact that Europe will only integrate itself sensibly if it allows and develops the coexistence of a variety of cultural identities and languages is more than just empty rhetoric. The coexistence of differences - numerically superior and inferior - is indicated by a Sloven poet with the experience of life at the junction of two cultures. This poet, one of the critics of the Europe which slid into the First World War and afterwards mutely watched the emergence of nationalism and approaching fascism, indicates this coexistence through his desire for a Europe which is not just any Europe. This is what he wrote:

*I would like to walk / in a little cloak / of words. But under it should hide / the warm, bright world./*



*What are riches? / What is luxury? / For me it is only one thing / I have a little cloak / and this cloak is unlike any other./*

For a Europe which should give to all of us across its wide breadth and on its borders, at the junctions of nations and cultures, the opportunity to live freely, to preserve our individuality and to understand one another, Sre\_ko Kosovel was ready to cry out: Let Europe live!

Such an idea of a common Europe binds us not to forget about the other side of existence - and we do not need to understand this as a mere metaphor - of the so-called "minor" languages.

The unification of Europe, as an unrestrained march of universalism will reach its limit and lead to resistance if it neglects and pushes into a corner that which, while recognising the advantage and appropriateness of universality, legitimately seeks the right to preserve a space for the particular and the special.

This warning seems sensible since, and let us acknowledge this, in universalism, every language and every cultural formation, even large ones, stand at the level of "the special" and "the small". Even the largest entities, if we do not find ways of preserving the important spectrum of special features are "threatened" by the universality of European citizenship. All of this is further complicated by warning of the eminent French philosopher Alain Badiou that it is not the question of "respecting differences" which is exceptionally difficult, but *acknowledging the status of the identical or equal*. To grant someone a place which is equal to our own, to acknowledge that someone is as entitled as we are to individuality and is therefore equal to *us - is just like we are* - is the point of real difficulty.

Although this issue relates to Europe as a whole, I could only articulate it here in the sense in which it perhaps more directly relates to the languages and the places where my adulthood begins.

There are a lot of languages in Europe - they often even touch geographically - which despite their differences are linguistically sufficiently similar. From the point of view of this linguistic similarity they are easier to understand, or perhaps even master, and in principle enable easier learning and also the preservation of a kind of broader identity.

It can happen, however, that such languages, such contacts, are *suddenly not understood in this way!* Recent years have once again stressed the temporarily less noticeable dimension of being ashamed of similarity. The ethnically or linguistically nearer has become radically foreign. And on the other hand, the creation of one's own actually or supposedly threatened identity has paradoxically rested on the pedestal of the construction of one's own or foreign universality.

The idea of universalism as an adoption of and search for what is common has thus been transformed into a swearing by for example "**Europeanness**". On the other hand small differences have become the seeds of separation and even conflicts instead of constituting a universalism which concedes a place for developing specific languages and cultures - that little but unique cloak the poet speaks of - we have a swearing by the universality of norms which are in any case universal; the areas of the calm articulating of individuality, the detailed texture of differences which seek their own place under the European sun and in this way contribute to the wealth of all who live in the common European home, have been occupied by an obtrusive and exaggerated exposing of differences. But if on the basis of our own *uniqueness*, we either do not know how to, or cannot, forge ties, ultimately it is **precisely universality** - the universality of apparent deliverance from ourselves - **that which will connect us** and best protect and develop this special but valuable "little" cloak.

Ladies and gentlemen, such a possibly surprising conclusion can be one of the guarantees for the belief that the results of your work within the Council of Europe, which are now before us represent real

strength. I believe that the results of several years' work are a genuine intellectual support for the planning of language policies of the members of the Council of Europe. At the same time these results are fundamentally more than this. They also represent valuable moral support in the process of creating a common European future.

Taking into account the achievements of the Council of Europe language programme in recent years, and even before that, I have no doubt about the success of this conference and I am quite certain that your message to the Standing Conference of European Ministers of Education in Norway in June this year will lead to political and professional Conclusions and Recommendations which will have a concrete and fruitful echo among the teaching profession and educational authorities in member States, as well as in the future language programme of the Council of Europe and the everyday language use of the common European citizen.

I wish you a very successful and rewarding conference.

### **3. Presentation of the results of the Modern Languages Project: A story with a future, *Mr Daniel COSTE, Co-Chairman, Modern Languages Project Group***

The report presented to you here does not, of course, attempt to replace the report by John Trim, the Project Director, which conference participants already have in their files and which was examined by the project group at its last meeting. Nor does it claim to be a progress report, since the aim of the first phase of this conference is that the different commissions should take stock of the progress made, each adopting a specific viewpoint for this purpose. Still less will it formulate proposals and guidelines for the future, even on behalf of the project group, since this groundwork must also be done by the conference via the opinions and recommendations of the national delegations present here.

It is, however, in order, at the beginning of this meeting, to raise a number of general points, put them in perspective and make some comments. These are not so much personal opinions as ideas submitted for your consideration, at the project group's request, by a small international sub-group designated to prepare the conference. It should be added that, though I am one of the project group co-chairpersons, two other people could have spoken on this occasion: Gé Stoks, the other group co-chairperson, and Denis Girard, who was involved during the early years of the project which is now drawing to a close.

This preliminary statement will be organised in a thoroughly traditional way: after recapitulating on the context of the "Language learning for European citizenship" Project, I shall identify some of the main aspects of its progress, and then give a broad outline of how things stand today.

The "Language learning for European citizenship" Project was launched in 1989 after a final conference, similar to today's, had given rise to a number of conclusions and recommendations for the pursuance of Council of Europe action in the language field. This present conference will open a new chapter in what is already a long story, a few of whose highlights are well worth recalling.

In 1961, in compliance with the aims it was founded to pursue, the Council of Europe embarked on a range of activities designed to promote and improve modern language teaching and learning in Europe. These activities were fully in accordance with the Council's mandate because, despite the then current trend towards audiovisual methods and work on applied linguistics, they were the embodiment not of a technico-scientific approach to educational progress but of a form of European integration or reintegration, a political design comprehending broader educational perspectives than what might be called the disciplinary objectives of language learning. This early insistence on communication, on direct contact between the citizens of different countries, must be seen as part of the movement to overcome international barriers.

The period 1961-71 yielded a first valuable harvest of work and initiatives which made the Council known in specialised language teaching circles, in particular via recommendations of the Conferences of Ministers of Education, which were among the first of their kind to be held by international organisations, on the importance of oral work and, even then, on the relevance of language teaching for young children in a school environment.

But, as many people here are aware, it was 1971, a quarter of a century ago, that marked the start of the series of closely dovetailed projects which have led up to today.

The thinking behind these projects grew out of interest in lifelong education and in the setting up of unit-credit adult learning systems, a process in which modern languages were initially regarded as no more than an interesting case-study. Project 4 saw the creation of the first threshold-levels, multimedia classes, discussions of need identification, the so-called "notional-functional" approach, learner-centring, and work on self-assessment. The work conducted under the aegis of the Council of Europe

has been widely disseminated and its international reputation extends beyond Europe, occupying a special place in the movement of renewal and conceptualisation which is having an across-the-board effect on language teaching/learning.

The models developed under John Trim's guidance by Jan Van Ek, René Richterich, David Wilkins and Michel Kuhn, and then by Eddy Roulet, Louis Porcher, Henri Holec and many others were soon being widely discussed and were making a big contribution to Strasbourg's reputation as a seedplot of a flourishing body of principles and options affecting the profession as a whole, and as an active international forum with a number of distinctive features. The Council of Europe is a centre for open-minded international reflection and proposals, where internal confrontations and tensions are mitigated by an awareness of the importance of what is at stake, and the European convictions of the protagonists make for the dynamic coexistence of attitudes which are far from unanimous. It is also one of the few places where those representing different language-teaching-related professions and interests can get together and compare their experiences: administrators and decision-makers, media producers, teacher trainers, international certification authorities, academics and researchers, co-ordinators from private and public adult training institutions, and so on. Here too, an ecumenical approach is not always the order of the day and sharp differences of opinion may arise, but this is precisely what people have come to appreciate - an opportunity for generally courteous exchanges against a background of shared European ambitions, without too much stodgy language and hackneyed thinking.

In short, a broadly-based intercultural community in which due respect is shown for differences is gradually being established through regular meetings attended by a variety of participants. Most important of all, via a ripple effect, dissemination and multiple feedback, the same issues are being discussed in different places and the same concepts (notions and functions, needs, autonomy, relationship between objectives and assessment) are gradually circulating in a variety of guises, without stereotyping or dogmatism, and winning acceptance in ways that vary according to national or professional traditions.

Project 12 (1981 to 1988) was a time of consolidation and enrichment, during which the ideas formulated became more firmly established. The phase of formulating, exemplifying and discussing a flexible, coherent model gave way to a new stage of extension and testing via a dual procedure:

- international visits to pilot classes and to ordinary classes in different countries, as part of an operation co-ordinated by Rune Bergentoft;
- an international workshop programme in which persons whose function was to "spread the word" and teacher trainers from different backgrounds got together and, eschewing standard methodological approaches, began to rethink, transform and adjust to their respective contexts the guidelines that had been shaped and debated earlier.

At the same time, a broad movement of curriculum reform got under way in a number of national and regional education systems, focusing mainly on the lower secondary school, and frequently referring to the objectives specified in the school versions of the different threshold-levels.

All this work was in many ways less spectacular than that of the previous period. But in 1988 the final conference of Project 12 noted a striking range of achievements that were at once more unassuming, more widespread and more sustainable: the results of the project had been institutionalised, thanks to national decision-makers, and their efforts had been diversified, thanks to trainers and teachers. In short, a number of important innovations had been introduced, a particularly significant illustration of their definite incorporation into teaching practice being provided in the collective work edited by Joe Sheils, *Communication in the Language Classroom*, a European publishing achievement in itself. This was the first time that a European project had had such a profound impact on developments in school systems, in

the definition of objectives and syllabuses and via non-prescriptive teaching schemes. The important thing is for the message to be passed on, for duties and responsibilities to be shouldered at different levels as part of a shared experience of participation in a single European process, without any loss of identity.

The prospects for the following project, whose operations and objectives were defined in 1988-89, and which has just ended, then seemed clear: the aim would be to use existing networks as a springboard for further progress, mainly by means of two complementary approaches: one based on priority topics, the other focusing on specific sectors and target groups. In both cases progress was made: previously the focus had been on teaching beginners, especially 11-15 year olds, the early secondary years. Attention now shifted to work at an earlier stage - introductory teaching at primary level - and at a later stage - upper secondary school (15 to 18-19 year olds), the vocational and technical school sector and advanced-level teaching of adults. The topics of study were associated with the definition of objectives, the mass media and new technologies, educational exchanges, the many forms of bilingual teaching, learning how to learn and assessment. It need hardly be added that teacher training was also a pivotal part of the programme since, in all the sectors and topics chosen, the effect of proposed innovations on the roles and skills of teachers was always regarded as a key issue.

Some aspects of this programme - adopted after the final conference in 1988 - and especially its working methods were finalised at a symposium in Sintra, Portugal, in 1989. In view of the important results obtained by the international workshops in the previous project, it was decided to carry on with this system, but to give it added muscle by having two workshops on a given topic: Workshop A, organised in one volunteer country, and Workshop B, organised two or three years later in another, with various groups working between the two workshops on research and development tasks defined at the first meeting. This system is familiar to most of those attending this conference.

These workshops have produced a substantial output, enough to provide material for a number of topic-oriented publications which are already available - or will be shortly - in the form of collective works with contributions by many authors, testifying to the international character of these meetings. Here are four brief comments on these two-stage sandwich-type international workshops.

1. The number of workshops and the fact that some proposals could not be acted upon because they were made too late show that the system was a distinct success. Need it be added that this is all the more remarkable because the bulk of the organisation and accommodation costs was always met by the organising countries and not by the Project. Not all member countries have shown the same amount of enthusiasm and generosity where this mode of international co-operation is concerned, but with hindsight the high level of commitment on the part of the institutional decision-makers who made this vast movement possible is clearly apparent. This is all the more remarkable since the system of twin workshops in two different countries, and the establishment of bridging networks between them, in many ways required greater investment than the "old style" workshops under the previous Project.
2. Occasional difficulties may have occurred in the setting up of networks for the research and development phase between workshops and there may have been some slackening off of motivation during this middle period, especially when logistic support and exchange opportunities were reduced and when ordinary professional commitments were heavy. This was particularly true since the choice of participants by the relevant national bodies did not always guarantee continuity of participation between Workshops A and B.
3. Nevertheless, the results from most workshops have been remarkable and their impact has spread far beyond the actual participants. The movement launched in the previous Project was thereby continued and amplified in forms that were to some extent new. International mobility of this kind helps to establish formal and informal networks and to raise awareness of the European dimension of activities,

experience and professional responsibilities in language teaching. These effects are difficult to evaluate in quantitative terms, but they are undeniable and deeply-rooted.

4. Last but not least, the workshop system proved a remarkable instrument for associating new member countries in the work of the project. It offered a useful framework in which representatives of the central and eastern European countries could play a role as they joined Council for Cultural Co-operation programmes or were admitted to the Council's political bodies. Not only did teachers and trainers from these countries actively participate in the workshops and contribute their own experience to them, but several of them were also involved in the workshop organisation programme, hosting either an A or a B workshop in their own country. It is highly significant that the A and B workshops on one topic were held entirely in the Czech Republic and Poland, two countries which have recently begun to take an active part in the project, and equally symptomatic that these workshops dealt with initial teacher training.

The above comment leads on to what has been a major, and initially of course unanticipated, aspect of the project now ending: the Europe of 1997 is very different from that of 1988. The project's title is "Language learning for European citizenship" and the concept of European citizenship no longer covers the same area or bears the same meaning as it did a few years ago.

Since the project's inception, the number of countries involved has practically doubled, which, for an international undertaking of this magnitude, represents a considerable challenge. There has not simply (if the word "simply" can be used in this context) been a structural extension, affecting official representatives and a few groups of experts; the whole workshop system described above has had to be continually adapted to the new state of affairs and the Modern Languages Section secretariat is well placed to appreciate what these fundamental changes have meant in practice.

The political choices made at other levels of responsibility have been decisive here: as soon as the opening-up process got under way - at a particularly rapid pace - the importance of educational and cultural aspects grew. Other projects of the Directorate of Education, Culture and Sport were also largely affected, eg projects on history teaching and the place of the European dimension in secondary education. Here, too, the DECS director and deputy director had to act with determination to keep pace with the forced march of developments, whose implications everyone here appreciates.

This in-depth transformation of the geopolitical shape of Europe has naturally had a considerable impact on the Modern Languages Project. A whole list of its consequences could be compiled, but three, which are different in kind and complementary, will perhaps suffice to identify the new trends.

The first important consequence, which might be regarded as technical but is important all the same, is the renewal of contact between theoretical and teaching traditions and concepts which had been largely cut off from one another for decades, even if limited contacts existed and information circulated. The western European countries had clearly to a large extent lost sight of the considerable stock of experience and thinking in eastern Europe with regard to language teaching: bilingual schools, early learning, multilingual experience and language development arrangements in an educational context, as well as language description for teaching purposes, comparative studies, interest in specialised languages, comparative stylistics and phraseology and experience of problems of translation and interpreting. This knowledge has been very valuable in recent years in the workshops and in many of the project's priority topics and sectors.

The second consequence is more broadly concerned with organisation of educational systems and curriculum reform. The period after the fall of the Berlin Wall saw a strong desire for a rethink of curricula, especially modern languages curricula; objectives, content, syllabuses and methods of evaluating skills and attainments all came in for fresh examination. The new or associate member

countries were keen to focus more on the development of communication skills in foreign languages and to revise and update much of the cultural material in textbooks then in use. Concomitantly, the production of new textbooks usually required decisions to be taken about syllabuses. It was against a background of questions of this kind, among others, that arrangements for international co-operation were set in motion within the modern languages project.

The third consequence is more comprehensively concerned with the ultimate purposes of education. In the climate of questioning of values and of ethical unease that accompanies the approaching turn of the century, it is clear that Europe is not only the Europe of Maastricht but is also, indissociably, the Europe of Sarajevo, to mention just one name. Tolerance, respect for minorities, education for democracy and intercultural understanding may no longer be considered as high-flown empty words, noble slogans automatically used as official preambles to more technical discourse. Educational co-operation and language development influence the very core of identity. European citizenship, which features in the very title of the Modern Languages Project, is an elastic yet essential concept which is clearly, with all its variants and the levels of subsidiarity it allows, a touchstone for much of the work that has been done.

Paradoxically enough, a project which might have been suspected of being an exercise in communication techniques and purely instrumental functionalism is directly involved in a dynamic educational process where what is at stake, as we have been violently reminded in the very heart of Europe, is nothing less than the fundamental values around which a human community can be organised. The Council of Europe, as the Vienna Conference clearly showed, has been re-mobilised around the principles from which it sprang, and activities in the modern languages field are again fully perceived as part of these ultimate objectives.

In other words, contacts and interchanges between educational traditions in language teaching, co-operation in the development of new curricula, renewed awareness of the values which can underpin and give impetus to all communication-oriented language learning, and the new enlarged Europe issue new challenges for the “Language learning for European citizenship” Project; they are additions or extensions to its regular programme, but also, and primarily, involve a kind of return to its roots.

A few years after the first effects of the fall of the Berlin Wall and at a time of stocktaking and thinking about the future, who could fail to be delighted that, with the pace of history quickening and budgetary belt-tightening more prevalent than economic expansion, the Modern Languages Project has kept going and simultaneously managed to respond to new demands and incorporate new input. Things might have turned out quite differently: there was a real risk of implosion and internal collapse. This has clearly been overcome. What's more, the challenges that arose sparked off a kind of re-launch of the project at its halfway stage. At the end of 1991, the Rüslikon Symposium, organised on the initiative of the Swiss Confederation, was originally slated to focus on questions of assessment and certification, transparency and coherence of criteria and assessment of communication skills. This meeting, which was attended by representatives of the new member countries, also produced a recommendation with a far broader scope than assessment and certification (notwithstanding their great importance for tomorrow's Europe), namely that a European Framework of Reference for language teaching/learning should be developed, and a study be made of the feasibility of a European Portfolio of language skills for future European citizens. These two ambitious undertakings, which have strong symbolic and practical implications, will play a large part in discussions in the second phase of the programme of the present conference.

It is for the final conference to examine ongoing activities and to give its opinion about their relevance and future development, but it should at least be noted at this point that, as the project has pursued its course, much of the original programme has been implemented, as well as much that was not initially programmed. How has this extremely delicate transition been managed?

The existence of political determination can and must be acknowledged. It has been strong in Strasbourg, as elsewhere in Europe, and all the programmes and projects have been sustained by it. But political determination and support are not enough if principles and facilities to deal with specific situations are lacking. On this point, it is stating the obvious to say that the analyses and instruments produced by the successive Modern Languages Projects have proved particularly valuable and relevant in the international exchange that followed in the wake of geopolitical changes in Europe.

The models proposed have proved themselves to be robust and flexible. On the basis of experience, they were promptly adapted to different situations and needs. The coherence of the general approach and the adaptability of the projects were conducive to rapid adjustment, to what were perceived to be appropriate reactions and to a strong degree of mutual understanding between once unfamiliar partners who are now very active and dynamic. Urgency did not lead to improvisation and, though it is still too early to assess the results of current reforms, there is certainly reason to believe that the activities of the Council of Europe and its Modern Languages Projects have been carefully taken into consideration in recent transformations.

In return, these changes have made a real contribution to developments which impinge on modern-language-related activities in the Council of Europe in that they affect some of the approaches underpinning them, their operational methods and the partnerships they have fostered. This is bound to have an impact on the next project.

The multimedia presentation prepared by Gé Stoks and the brief but highly informative topic-oriented reports by different colleagues will give a detailed review of the project and its main results. In addition to John Trim's written report, some excellent material has appeared in the last few years: almost fifty publications, not counting thirty or so substantial workshop reports. It is unnecessary to dwell here on these achievements, except to note, in addition to their quality, two features of a series of studies of this type: the diversity of their functions and their audience, and the continuity and the changes they reveal.

Of course, tribute must also be paid to all the studies, articles, chapters in books, official programmes, syllabuses, examination and certification papers, textbooks and teaching aids which, whether or not they refer to the project, have drawn on and sometimes profited from it. The contributions by participants at the present conference constitute only a fraction of this considerable output which, again, for reasons connected with the nature of the language teaching/learning market, doubtless has no equivalent in other Council projects.

The important thing is that this very large output of paper and its spin-off have enabled the project to reach and go on reaching, indirectly and unbeknownst to them, many learners and citizens of today's and tomorrow's Europe. And that these effects may promote not only good language learning but also active preparation for more broadly-based citizenship.

The results are not only in product form but also concern protagonists, processes and methods of action. I should like to make two forward-looking remarks in this context.

Firstly, the topic-oriented and sectoral strategy adopted for the project and also, of course, the receptive approach to new countries, have considerably extended and to some extent renewed the reservoir of skills, and the pool of contacts, specialists and national and regional institutions are aware of the work of the Modern Languages Projects and interested in contributing to it. There is not only a list of names and addresses but also a wealth of international resources. These people and institutions have participated in numerous networks and set up new ones. All this would simply not exist if the Modern Languages Projects had not previously consisted of medium-term projects and had not yielded results which have been disseminated and used. It is clear that the pace has definitely speeded up in the last few years and



that this acceleration is occurring at a time of generation changes among the organisers and officials who have been associated with successive projects in different countries or who have been active in language teaching/learning developments. In other words, a human and relational capital crucial for future input is in a decisive phase of transmission, extension and renewal. Strasbourg is one of the key centres where this capital is constituted, reinforced and legitimised. It would be inconsistent at the very least to weaken such a key centre in the sensitive period that is dawning.

But, and this is my second remark, this centre, even if it is and is to remain a reference point, obviously does not intend to claim and has no interest in claiming a monopoly. The other obvious point to be made about the processes and operational methods of the project that is ending is that a multi-centred partnership-based approach has been grafted onto an approach centred on an autonomous programme. This is the result of circumstances and events, but also of human decision.

To react quickly and cope with new circumstances, it was necessary to show determination and to be able to call on a body of tried and tested principles and instruments in order to initiate new work or change its course, and also to devise and instal new operational methods.

The establishment of the European Centre for Modern Languages in Graz via a partial agreement (initially involving a handful of countries, today considerably extended) clearly forms part of this process, and will be discussed later in this conference. Founding it was no easy matter. It caused anxiety in some quarters, including the Modern Languages Project Group. But, quite apart from the need to reconcile ongoing processes with overall regulation, this new facility under the aegis of the Council is clearly using its key position to bolster the means of action and centres of initiative within a new Europe.

Equally distinctive, outside the Council of Europe, is the major role of the European Union. While Europe is not only the Europe of Maastricht, it is nevertheless to a large extent and first of all the Europe of Maastricht, of the Single Act, of Socrates and Leonardo. The years 1989 to 1997 saw the growing influence and remarkable achievements of the Lingua programme which created mini-networks and elicited new habits as regards international work on targeted short-term operational projects. The point has now been reached where pools of expertise have been constituted, and priority areas for incentive and intervention have been mapped out. Others, more entitled and qualified than myself, will describe this evolution in this very place. Everyone knows that the coming years will be a time of consultations and a resolute search for complementarity; everyone is convinced that this complementarity cannot be based on a simplistic distribution of responsibilities.

The time has now come to conclude this address since we are coming to the serious business of this conference.

“Language learning for a new Europe” is the title of this final conference. This new Europe is here to stay; now it must be built up. Putting fears, hopes, fantasies and illusions behind us, we have entered a phase of realistic, determined implementation which, because of budgetary difficulties, requires us to be imaginative in finding ways of co-ordinating action and ensuring the overall economy of European projects.

As far as Strasbourg is concerned, there is much to be done, doubtless in two major directions:

- firstly, developing and implementing indispensable reference instruments like the Common European Framework and the portfolio; this conference will surely show that this course should be actively pursued and that there is plenty to do;
- a second, newer line of attack is to put into operation broad principles such as multilingual diversification of communication skills and preparation for intercultural mediation.

In any case, what is waiting to be done is set in a broader context of education in values and democracy. Linguistic and cultural policies, especially the way in which education systems help to implement them, are now decisive for the ongoing work of European integration.

I cannot conclude this overly long statement without introducing a more personal note, but one which

will, I imagine, be endorsed by a number of participants. It would be impossible to report on a project which has reached its administrative conclusion without saying a word about the project group's monitoring and back-up role: here again, gradual enlargement has been a continuing source of enrichment. The Modern Languages Section and DECS secretariats have also played a pivotal role. Day in, day out, this is where it all happens; the buck stops here. Staying power has been needed in circumstances that have not always been easy.

Finally, to report on a project of this kind is to pay tribute to people without whom we should perhaps not be here today. Many names could be cited. I shall mention only two people, whose names will come as no surprise, who have followed modern languages projects over twenty-five years at close quarters and who are both models of European citizenship as well as unique individuals. Absent today is Antonietta de Vigili, who was for many years in charge of the Modern Languages Section, an enthusiastic and indefatigable worker for a multilingual Europe, who has now returned to her native Italy. Here with us today is John Trim, the director of successive projects, who tenaciously and lucidly devised a long-term undertaking, a long-time European who has never ceased to be a citizen of Cambridge. Both have left their mark on a story with promise for the future.

#### **4. Address by Mr Domenico LENARDUZZI, Director for Education, Directorate General XXII, Education, Training and Youth, European Commission**

Let me begin by congratulating the team that has conducted the Modern Languages project which this conference brings to a close. We have followed the project with a great deal of interest and I can assure you we will do everything in our power to help disseminate the results.

My remarks will mainly be about the European Union's activities in the languages field, but I also want to stress the importance of the co-operation between us in our language-promotion work and the complementarity of what we are doing. The principles by which we are guided in this area are the same: the importance of the language heritage and the principle of linguistic pluralism.

The main objective of all co-operation, whether in the Council of Europe or the European Union, is probably communication, hence the need to improve our language skills. For the European Union **communication is a genuine necessity** because here we have 15 peoples which have opted to join forces while respecting their diversity. At the moment there are 11 official languages, which all have exactly the same status; tomorrow there could be 15 or 20.

The European Union legislates day in, day out and it is only right that that legislation be done in the language of the individual European; consequently every official document is translated into 11 languages. The members of the European Parliament, in this very chamber, speak in their own languages. Equally, in a single employment market, an employer is free to recruit whoever is most able, and ability of course includes language ability.

**So what is the European Union doing** about the need for language knowledge? Under Article 126 of the European Union Treaty we do everything possible to ensure co-operation between member states, in particular in the languages field, the field above all others which allows the European dimension to be introduced into education. We directly invest around ECU 50 million annually in promoting language learning: 30 million in Socrates, 10 million in Leonardo and 4 million on behalf of regional or minority languages. On top of that there are the subsidies granted through the structural funds and for research purposes, for example in the field of language-related technology.

What are the **measures specifically concerned with promoting language learning?**

Firstly, the Socrates programme (1995-2000), which covers the whole field of education, includes special measures which follow on from the activities in the Lingua programme (1990-95). The programmes of European co-operation between language-teacher training institutions form the framework for development of syllabuses, modules and materials (29 projects and 200 institutions were involved in 1997). Since the start of the programmes 45,000 teachers have been awarded in-service training scholarships enabling them to spend time in another country. Scholarships are also awarded to future language teachers so that, before qualifying, they can spend time in a school in another country (500 language-teaching assistants benefited in 1997). We likewise support production of language-teaching materials, giving special priority to the less common and less frequently taught languages. Finally, we financially assist youth exchanges conducted through joint educational projects (150,000 pupils and 50,000 teachers have taken part so far).

Then there is the Leonardo programme, which is concerned with language skills in the context of initial and further vocational training (there have been 73 pilot projects - concerned in particular with language audits, recognition of skills and development of teaching materials - and 6 trainer-exchange programmes).

I have already mentioned the special action to promote regional and minority languages - spoken by around 50 million people - in their social context.

In 1995 the Commission adopted a **White Paper, "Teaching and learning: towards the learning society"**. One of the five objectives set out in the White Paper relates to language learning and the importance of knowing at least three languages.

Further to the White Paper and the ensuing debate, we would like, in association with the member states, to award a quality mark to innovative schemes in the language-learning field - innovative, that is, in relation to the context in which they develop. We have set up a working party with representatives of member states to see how the quality mark could be introduced, on a decentralised basis but in accordance with common objectives.

In the debate on the White Paper two things we have attached particular importance to are early language learning and mutual language comprehension: a new approach is needed in which language learning is treated as a lifelong process, begun as early as possible and continued throughout school and into higher education and training. In addition, as the average European will never be able to learn all the European Union's languages, a sensible approach is to begin by learning languages belonging to different language families as a help to understanding further languages. This should enable as many people as possible to use their own languages and understand other ones.

The paper calls for special attention to be paid to people who leave school without adequate qualifications and for a system of recognition of informally acquired skills. In this connection we have just begun the Dialang project, aimed at making software available to everyone so that they can test their knowledge of 15 languages.

We hope to have the first results in 18 months or so. The project will be using the Common European Framework developed by the Council of Europe, and a number of specialists who have worked with the Council will collaborate on the project.

In addition to all these special language-learning measures, language learning is important across the whole range of educational and training activity. It is important, for instance, to equip Erasmus students linguistically. Similarly there is a languages aspect to promotion of the new technologies, which are potentially such a valuable tool for learning them. A number of the Commission's Directorates General have jointly invited tenders for the development of a European educational software package.

Finally I would like to return for a moment to **co-operation between the Council of Europe and the European Union**. The Council of Europe has great experience - much lengthier than the European Union's - in the language learning field, experience which it wants to make available to all. We shall do everything we can to help disseminate and make the most of that experience. We, for our part, have acquired different expertise, and we need to pool these assets while bearing in mind our respective special features.

Incidentally, the European Union's education and training programmes are no longer confined to 15 member states. They are already available to EFTA countries which belong to the European Economic Area (Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein) and are shortly to be made available also to 10 central and eastern European countries and Cyprus. By the end of next year, therefore, there will probably be 29 countries taking part in our programmes.

The languages field is increasingly important. To build tomorrow's European Union, people will clearly need to be able to communicate with one another. I firmly believe that by intelligently pooling our resources and endeavouring to complement each other's work we shall succeed in what we have set out

to do.

## **5. Introduction to the Tasks and Working Methods of the Conference, Dr John L.M. TRIM, General Rapporteur**

I should like first to add my words of welcome to the 300 participants in this Conference. You come from 45 countries and represent all branches of the language teaching profession with its educational administrators and support services of many kinds - teacher trainers, examining bodies, textbook and course designers - and we are all of us, I suppose, learners and users of at least one modern language in addition to our many mother tongues.

### **Background**

This conference, the culmination of some eight years of intensive effort involving well over 1000 members of our profession in over 40 countries, is the latest of the major conferences which have given coherence and continuity to the series of medium-term projects in which the continuous support given by the Council of Europe to the development of modern language learning and teaching has been organised. To the best of my knowledge, the first Intergovernmental Symposium under the Convention for Cultural Cooperation was organised by France in 1961 to launch its epoch-making pioneering work in *Le Français Fondamental* and the associated audio-visual course *Voix et Images de la France* - the fountainhead of all our subsequent work over 35 years. On this basis, the Second Conference of European Ministers of Education meeting in Hambourg set out a programme for the long-term reform of language teaching and asked the Council of Europe to undertake its organisation. Throughout the 1960's a series of pioneering Symposia was held, promoting international co-operation across the complete educational spectrum and leading to the Council of Ministers first pronouncement on modern languages, Resolution (69)2, which Professor Oestreicher will remember well. In 1971, the Rüsclikon Symposium on languages in adult education initiated the process which has led in a straight line to this Conference. A small Expert Group was set up, with René Richterich, Jan van Ek, David Wilkins and myself, serviced with great dedication and commitment by Antonietta de Vigili. That Group first elaborated the basic principles on which a language teaching policy should be based so as to serve the fundamental political objectives of the Council of Europe. These were submitted to an Intergovernmental Symposium in St.Wolfgang in 1973, which recommended their further development and concretisation. The resulting *Threshold Level* and *Un Niveau-Seuil*, and a framework for a European unit-credit system were presented to a further Intergovernmental Symposium in Ludwigshaven, 1977, which recommended their application in pilot experimentation across the spectrum (Project 4). The results were presented to the First Strasbourg Conference in 1982, presided by M. Raymond Weber as Chairman of the CDCC, approved and incorporated into the celebrated Recommendation (82)18 of the Committee of Ministers. Project 12, *Learning and teaching modern languages for communication*, was then devoted throughout the 80's to support for member states in the implementation of the Recommendation, concentrating on an extensive programme of workshops for teacher trainers and the operation of a Schools Interaction Network to support innovation through intensive personal visits. The Second Strasbourg Conference in 1988 noted with satisfaction the impact of Projects 4 and 12 on national curricula, especially at lower secondary level in implementing R(82)18. Its recommendations led to the Project now ending, extending to new sectors and new themes, of which you have read the Final Report and which has been presented to you by Professor Daniel Coste. It is now time for this Third Strasbourg Conference, following in that tradition, to receive the results of this latest Project, to take stock and to make its recommendations for the future direction of effort. May we then turn in greater detail to the tasks and working methods of our Conference?

## **Tasks of the Conference**

The aims and terms of reference of the Conference are:

- To receive and discuss the Final Report of the Project: *Language learning for European Citizenship* submitted by the Project Group and in particular to examine the general conclusions reached in Chapter 9, especially those concerning the priority sectors and themes defined for the Project by the CDCC.
- On the basis of the Recommendations contained in Chapter 10 of the Final Report, to define the general orientations for all members of the language teaching profession, education authorities and support services (including examining bodies) which should influence future action for the further improvement of modern language learning in the new European situation.
- To consider proposals for a Common European Framework for language learning, teaching and assessment as well as for a European Language Portfolio and to make recommendations concerning their future development, field trialling and general introduction.
- To make recommendations addressed to the Council of Europe, the CDCC and its Education Committee concerning their future action in the field of modern language learning, including support for the dissemination and exploitation of the results of the Project at national level.

## **Title of the Conference**

The title of the Conference: *Language Learning for a new Europe* is forward looking, recognising that European co-operation is moving into a new, intensified phase resulting from many factors, such as:

- the enlargement of the membership of the Council of Europe to cover the whole, rather than a restricted part, of the Continent;
- the unprecedented and accelerating development of communication and information technologies;
- the increasingly international organisation of trade, industry, commerce, finance, defence, science, medicine and entertainment, as well as the growth of tourism as a major industry;
- the lowering of political barriers to the free movement of goods, capital, people and information.

The new situation resulting from the operation of such powerful forces brings with it great opportunities for Europeans well equipped to seize them, but also increasing disadvantages for those who are not. The need to communicate across received language barriers is felt by all sectors of the populations of member states. Those lacking communication skills risk marginalisation and feel threatened by the competition European mobility produces. Such feelings are only too easily exploited by narrow nationalisms, with the danger of xenophobic backlash. There are also legitimate anxieties concerning the vitality and even the viability of smaller languages and cultures and their continuing contribution to the richness and creative diversity of European cultural life. Heavy pressures are exerted and correspondingly heavy responsibilities imposed on the language teaching profession and on national authorities. Their response has been strong and by no means ineffective. Figures for 1994 released by EURIDICE show that for the twelve countries of the European Community at that time eight out of nine young people under 25 had learnt at least one foreign language and two out of three claimed fluency in at least one. Of course, these figures are for one part of Europe only. They conceal wide diversities and require careful interpretation. Nevertheless, they show a powerful continuing trend by comparison with older people, of whom less than 50% had learnt a foreign language and only one in three



claimed any fluency.

The central questions which arise appear to be:

- Are current policies (objectives, resources, methods) adequate to deal with the new European situation?
- How could their implementation be made more cost-effective or otherwise improved?
- What changes, if any, should be made to current policies, with what predicted practical effect?

### **Method of working**

The work of the Conference will be organised mainly in 4 **commissions**. Each will be concerned with a particular educational **sector**:

- A. young learners (up to the age of about 11 years);
- B. lower secondary education (about 11 - 16 years of age);
- C. upper secondary education (from about 16 to the end of schooling);
- D. vocationally-oriented education (VOLL) and adult education.

The working sessions of each Commission will take place in 3 **Working Groups**, one of which will be conducted in English, one in French and one bilingually, with provision for simultaneous interpretation. Participants have been allocated to Commissions and Working Groups so far as possible in accordance with their expressed professional interests and linguistic preferences. We have assumed that where no preference is expressed participants will be willing to join the Commission and Working Group in which they have been placed. Each Commission and each Working Group has been given a **Chairman** and a **Rapporteur**. The Chairman will steer discussion and liaise with the Rapporteur to produce the Working Group Report. On the basis of the three Working Group Reports, the Commission Chairman and Rapporteur will synthesise a Commission Report, which the Rapporteur will present to a Plenary Session of the Conference.

The Conference will divide its work into **three phases**.

In the first phase, following brief presentations, Commissions will undertake a **stocktaking**, covering the first two aims of the Conference as set out in 1.1 and 1.2 above. It must of course be for each Commission to organise its proceedings, but I would point out that the area covered is very large and the time available very limited. I think you will all agree that discussion must be very disciplined and focused, so as to ensure that proper justice is done to the range of conclusions and recommendations relevant to the educational sector with which the Commission is concerned.

In the second phase, again following brief and therefore concentrated presentations, Commissions will consider the proposals made by the project group concerning:

- a) a Common European Framework for the description of language learning, teaching and assessment;
- b) a European Language Portfolio.

The proposed **Common European Framework** for language learning, teaching and assessment is now in its Second Draft following an extensive field consultation. The central question here is not its exhaustiveness, nor its theoretical perfection, were that attainable, but rather its suitability for operational field trialling as a basis for reflection by practitioners on their current practice and as the

starting point for an open and dynamic system for the coherent and transparent description of objectives and methods as a basis for more effective information exchange. In view of the very heavy time constraints, I am sure Commissions will wish to keep this central concern clearly in view during their discussions of the potential application of the Framework in their sector. They will of course also bear in mind that the use of the Framework is not confined to that sector and that not all aspects will necessarily be of direct concern and use to them.

In this second phase, Commissions will also consider the results of the Feasibility Study carried out on a proposed **European Language Portfolio** by a group of nominated experts and, simultaneously, by a Swiss National Project. The Swiss have found that their proposals have been warmly welcomed by teachers and that they offer a flexible and practical solution to problems of educational and vocational mobility posed by a highly decentralised federal system (there is no Swiss Ministry of Education). In the view of the Project Group, a European Language Portfolio could perform an equally valuable function for the fifty or so member countries of the CDCC particularly by motivating, recognising and valorising plurilingual learning and pluricultural experiences at different - often modest - levels of achievement. Since the form and function of a Portfolio may well differ from one educational sector to another, the closer examination of the proposals and models presented to the sector-specific Commissions will be of particular value. Further development work is needed, and there are important logistic, financial and linguistic questions still to be addressed, requiring negotiation with ministries and other interests in member states. Again, the important question for this Conference is whether the proposal is of sufficient merit to warrant further investigation and development.

In the third phase, following brief presentations from senior Council of Europe officials, Commissions will consider their conclusions and recommendations, particularly in respect of Conference task 1.4, recommendations to the Council of Europe, the CDCC and its Education Committee concerning their future action in the field of modern languages. There will also be the opportunity to consider priority items which might be included in a new Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers to Member States regarding the teaching of modern languages - bearing in mind, of course, that the decision whether to make such a Recommendation and if so what to include necessarily rests with the Committee itself.

#### Final stages

With the completion of Phase 3, the work of Commissions will be completed. Their Reports will be presented in the Conference Report, so that all of their Conclusions and Recommendations will be available to its readers. The content of the Conclusions and Recommendations of the Conference as a whole will be agreed at a 'semi-plenary' meeting of the Heads of the National Delegations with the presenters and the Chairpersons and Rapporteurs of the Conference, the Commissions and the Working Groups. Following that meeting, a small Drafting Group will produce the finished formulations in French and in English, the official languages of the Conference. These will be presented, discussed and if necessary amended and then formally adopted at the Closing Session of the Conference on Friday morning.

#### Concluding remarks.

As you can see, we have an interesting, important and highly intensive programme of work ahead of us in order to achieve the aims of the Conference in a way commensurate with the investment made in the Project by member governments and the work to which well over a thousand colleagues from all member states have freely contributed. The economic pressures under which we all now have to work oblige us to cut the length of even major conferences to the bare minimum. The spacious days when, for example, the Sankt Wolfgang Symposium could spread its consideration of our first ideas on a European unit/credit system for adult education over twelve days are now far, far behind us! We shall

all have to play our parts in a dedicated, imaginative but business-like way, bringing to bear in concentrated form the great wealth of knowledge, experience and understanding we collectively represent. We can leave little or no space for the sounding out of potential partners for future co-operative ventures or for the reinforcement of the flourishing international networks which are one of the most important outcomes of the workshop series. Nevertheless I hope very much that you will find it possible to use what interstices there are - we all must eat! - to renew existing contacts and commitments and to make new ones. A period of intensive effort now lies ahead. I look forward with keen anticipation to what I am confident will make a great Conference both as an event and in its consequences.

## **6. Panorama of the project "Language Learning for European Citizenship", *Dr Gé STOKS*, Co-Chairman, Modern Languages Project Group**

### **6.1. General Principles**

The Work of the Council of Europe's projects on modern languages has, since the 1960s, been guided by three principles:

1. Language learning is for all citizens and not only for a small intellectual elite.
2. Language learning is for life and cannot be confined to the learners' school life.
3. Language learning should be learner centred, i.e. take into account their needs, learning styles and individual wishes.

### **6.2. Language Learning for European Citizenship**

The project "Language Learning for European Citizenship" was launched during an intergovernmental conference in the Portuguese city of Sintra in 1989, during the very week that the Berlin Wall fell. Little did the participants to that conference then realise how profoundly the work of the Council was to change. The number of countries taking part in its work has nearly doubled from about twenty-five at the time of the launch of the project to nearly fifty in 1997.

The project was co-ordinated by the modern language section in Strasbourg, a small team led by Antonietta De Vigili, the project director Dr. John Trim, a consultant, Joe Sheils, and a secretarial staff. Numerous experts from many member states contributed to the work as animators of workshops, authors of studies or presenters at conferences and workshops.

### **6.3. Priority sectors and themes**

Whereas the emphasis in the seventies and early eighties had been on the reform of language learning in the first years of secondary education, the focus of the present project lay on the following education sectors:

- language learning in (pre-) primary education
- language learning in upper secondary education (15/16 - 18/19)
- language learning in vocational education
- language learning in advanced adult education.

These were the priority sectors as they were identified during the Sintra conference. In order to meet the needs of the many new member states in Central and Eastern Europe, however, the results of the experiences obtained in lower secondary education in previous projects in the old member states were made available to the new member states.

In addition to the priority sectors, a number of priority themes were decided upon at Sintra. These were:

- objectives for language learning including socio-cultural aspects
- the use of mass media and new technologies
- bilingual education
- school links and exchanges
- learning to learn (autonomy)
- evaluation

#### **6.4. Working models: the new-style workshop series**

During the previous project a large number of workshops had taken place at which teacher trainers from several countries met in one member state to discuss a particular aspect of language learning. Although satisfaction with this programme had been great, it was yet felt that some follow-up was needed to consolidate the experiences obtained. It was therefore decided to organise the new-style workshop programme in which two (or sometimes three) countries worked together to offer an initial workshop in one country at which problems were identified and discussed. These were then addressed in an interworkshop action programme and reported upon at a second workshop, hosted by the other country. In this way about 30 workshops took place, at which all priority sectors and themes could be adequately covered. In addition, a few 'old-style' or single workshops took place in Austria, Spain and on Cyprus. The workshops were prepared and co-ordinated by an international animating team and attended by mostly teacher trainers, curriculum and test developers, researchers, educational advisers, teachers in pilot projects, etc. In general, participants were in a position to disseminate the outcomes of the workshop itself and the work done during the interworkshop action programmes. In this way, the results have been disseminated to textbook writers, practising teachers and ultimately to learners of modern languages all over Europe. Of each workshop a report was produced. These reports have been analysed and on the basis of the workshops and the action programmes compendia have been written in which the main findings are included. In this way, the results have been made accessible for an even wider audience.

#### **6.5. Special measures for the new member states**

Although a full programme had been decided upon during the Sintra conference, the modern languages project group has been able to organise several activities to assist the new member states with curriculum reform processes and initial and in-service teacher training programmes. Apart from the fact that many participants from these countries were invited to take part in the new-style workshop series, a seminar was organised in 1993 under the auspices of the Council of Europe by the National Institute for Curriculum Development (SLO) in the Netherlands and the Landesinstitut für Weiterbildung in the German Federal State of North-Rhine Westphalia at the LSW-premises in Soest, Germany. The theme of this seminar was 'Curriculum Development in modern languages for European understanding and cooperation (secondary education 10-15/16) and was meant for two participants of each new member state. The workshop was led by an international team of animators and by the end of the week concrete action programmes had been identified, which have since then led to several follow-up activities in the Baltic States, in Poland and Bulgaria.

#### **6.6. A Common European Framework of Reference for Language Learning and Teaching**

During an intergovernmental symposium hosted by the Swiss authorities in 1991 widespread support was expressed for the idea to develop a reference framework: a tool for formulating objectives, aligning curricula, creating coherence and transparency in language learning and teaching. A small authoring group was formed, which submitted proposals to a larger group consisting of experts from several countries. The project received additional support from the European Union and ALTE, the Association of Language Testers in Europe. In 1996, a first draft was sent out to more than 200 individuals and institutions in the member states for comment. There turned out to be widespread support for the framework, which will now be published in the course of 1997.

In addition to the Framework itself, the modern languages project group commissioned a number of experts to write user guides to help potential users of the framework to use it. User guides have been written for, inter alia, curriculum developers, testers, textbook writers and also for learners. These user guides show the function of the framework for these different target groups.

### **6.7. A European Language Portfolio**

At the Rüschnikon symposium it was not only decided to develop the Common European Framework of reference, but also to examine the feasibility of a European Language Portfolio. This is to be a document in which learners can describe their learning experiences, both formal and informal ones. The formal qualifications might then be described in relation to the Common European Framework of Reference, the informal ones might contain learning experiences such as a prolonged stay abroad, having been brought up in a bilingual family, etc. Feasibility studies have been carried out by several experts who had been commissioned to do this work by the modern languages project group. These are being presented at the final conference of the project.

### **6.8. Threshold Level specifications**

In 1975 the Council of Europe published the first Threshold Level documents: *The Threshold Level for English* and *un Niveau seuil for French*. Few documents in the history of language learning and teaching have been as influential as the Threshold Levels. They were among the first documents in which language learning objectives were specified in terms of what the learner was expected to do with/in a foreign language. The specifications not only contained grammar and vocabulary, but gave detailed specifications of language functions, notions, topics and situations. In 1988 Threshold Levels were available for 12 languages, each of which was a further development of the original concept. In 1991 Threshold Level 1990 was published, which was again a further development of the original model in which the experiences of the previous twelve documents had been included. Since 1989 further specifications have been developed for: Galician, Catalan, Welsh, Russian, Maltese, Lithuanian, Latvian, Estonian, Irish, Greek, Friulian.

In all these cases, national or regional experts developed the model assisted by a group of experts who were invited by the secretariat in Strasbourg to provide assistance and guarantee the quality of the document to be produced.

Many more requests have already been received at the secretariat since Threshold Level publications have turned out to be valuable documents for language policy decisions. In the next few years Threshold level documents are expected to appear for again several other languages in both the old and the new member states.

In addition to Threshold Levels, two other level descriptions have been produced within the framework of the Council's work on modern languages: first of all there is Waystage, a level below Threshold Level, which had already been developed in the seventies and which was revised when Threshold Level 1990 was updated. In addition a new level description, Vantage Level, was written by the authors of *Threshold Level 1990*, Dr Jan van Ek and Dr John Trim. It was developed with the help of ALTE, the Association of Language Testers in Europe. *Vantage Level* was published in 1997 and is available in the English language only.

### **6.9. The European Centre for Modern Languages in Graz, Austria**

This Centre was established in 1995 under a partial agreement of the Council of Europe. The initiative for the Centre had been taken by the Austrian and Dutch governments. It was initially supported by 8 countries, but since its inception more than 20 countries have joined the partial

agreement.

The ECML's mission is:

1. to train teacher trainers, textbook writers and other experts
2. to bring together researchers and policy makers
3. to facilitate exchange of information
4. to host a documentation and information centre
5. to host annual colloquies

The ECML is governed by a board and has until now hosted more than 20 annual workshops, most of which were held at the ECML's premises in Graz. They were attended by participants from the countries of the partial agreement and led by international teams of co-ordinators.

Close working relations have already been established between the ECML and the secretariat in Strasbourg. In addition, the European Commission co-sponsored the 1997 annual colloquy. The ECML is expected to play an important role in the further development and dissemination of the work carried out within the framework of the modern languages projects over the past decade.

#### **6.10. Publications**

In addition to the key documents produced in the course of the project Language Learning for European Citizenship, The Reference Framework and the European Language Portfolio, the work of the Council of Europe on modern languages has been disseminated in various ways:

*Information leaflets* were produced in which the work was presented in a concise way; these information leaflets were available at national and international conferences; in addition a leaflet with the full list of available publications was made and updated regularly. Of both old-style and new-style workshops *reports* were produced and published by the Council of Europe. In some cases special reports were produced, e.g. in the area of vocational education; with the financial assistance of the German authorities a cd-rom was produced with relevant information about the workshops on technology and vocational education. The contents of the workshop reports, including the contributions made by the workshop animating teams, have been analysed and will be brought together in a number of compendia, so as to make the outcomes available to a wider audience.

The secretariat of the modern languages project group commissioned numerous studies in a great variety of areas, such as foundation studies for the Common European Framework of Reference and the European Language Portfolio. Among these studies is also the publication *Young People Facing Difference, some proposals for teachers*, a joint publication of the project Language Learning for European Citizenship and the European Youth Campaign against Racism, Xenophobia, Anti-Semitism and Intolerance

Finally contacts were established with the professional journal *Language Teaching*. In each issue a number of pages are available to publish results of the Council of Europe's work on modern languages.

#### **6.11. Impact**

After eight years of work the conclusion may be drawn that a tremendous amount of work has been achieved by the Council of Europe's project "Language Learning for European Citizenship". In spite of the limited resources and the relatively small secretariat in Strasbourg the impact has been much greater than could normally be expected.

Numerous teacher trainers as participants in workshops and conferences have learnt about the work on modern languages and have contributed to its further development; these teachers have been able to practise what they learnt during these workshops and in professional contacts with other participants. Their students have benefited from their contacts and so will, eventually, language learners all over Europe.

The outcomes of the work have found their way in new curricula, teacher training courses and language learning textbooks. Much energy has been given to disseminating the outcomes of the work in the new member states.

The development of powerful tools like Threshold Levels, the Common European Framework of Reference and all the other publications will be of great help for all practitioners in the field in the years to come.

Note: this address included a multi-media presentation.

Copies of this text, together with a CD-ROM of the multimedia presentation, can be ordered from:

SLO, Institute for Curriculum Development  
Mrs Angela Ligtenberg  
PO Box 2041  
7500 CA Enschede  
The Netherlands  
Phone: #31.53.4840285  
Fax: #31.53.4840620  
Email: [a.ligtenberg@slo.nl](mailto:a.ligtenberg@slo.nl)

**System-requirements:**

Pentium 75, 16 Mb Ram

Window 3.1. or higher

CD-ROM drive

40 Mb of hard-disk space

Price: Hfl 100,- or FF 300,-



## IV. PHASE I: STOCKTAKING AND PRIORITY THEMES

### 1. TEACHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING

*Professor Hanna KOMOROWSKA*

Teacher education and training as a priority area was explored in two ways, i.e.

- as an independent theme (e.g. initial training at workshops 15A and 15B)
- as an important aspect of work undertaken in all the priority sectors and themes identified in the Project.

Particular attention was paid to:

- **initial education and training** of prospective language teachers at schools, colleges and universities
- **in-service education and training** for practising teachers with the aim of improving their professional skills.

Results obtained in the research and development phases of work completed by particular networks within the Project point to the need for **comparability and compatibility** of teacher education programmes so as to facilitate co-operation between different stages and levels of education, and among different member States.

Integration and coherence have also been demonstrated to be indispensable for the clarification of objectives of teacher education at all stages and levels as well as for the evaluation of programmes, curricula, syllabuses, materials and outcomes.

The Research and Development programmes focused in particular on the nature of objectives in teacher education. Objectives should be presented in the form of **core competences** which include linguistic, educational, psychological and intercultural components, bearing in mind the need to ensure a proper balance between theory and practice.

The results highlight the importance of the **intercultural perspective** in teacher education as a means of combatting prejudice, intolerance and xenophobia, not only in teacher education, but also in the education of young people.

Knowledge and skills required for the development of **sociocultural competence** have also been identified in the R&D programmes, i.e. factual knowledge about the country in which a given language is used, awareness of the sociocultural characteristics of the community using the language vis-a-vis the home community of the student, an open-minded attitude to difference and change, as well as the ability to analyse, evaluate and select authentic materials for the language classroom.

In addition to core competences, the development of reflective skills has been identified as a central component of teacher education programmes. Specific networks designed and tested practical ways of developing reflective skills through **observation, self-observation and self-evaluation in the course of teaching practice** so as to enable young teachers to critically reflect upon classroom practice and to modify it through action research.

The context of trainees' development was also investigated and special emphasis was placed on the role of practising teachers as **mentors** facilitating the professional development of the young trainee. The results of R&D work contain procedures to ensure a high quality of mentor training, and measures to be

taken in order to give mentors appropriate status and recognition.

Research and development work made it possible to identify appropriate **methods and techniques** for ensuring success in teacher education. The use of **new technologies** has proved to be of particular value and particular importance is accorded to **educational exchanges**, especially if implemented at the level of teacher trainers, trainees and students.

Work on the efficiency and quality of teacher education programmes revealed the value of exploring trainee's **personal experience of the language learning process**. This helps young teachers to empathize with their learners and to improve their own classroom practice, in particular class and time management, teacher-student relations, ways of promoting autonomy, and language and culture awareness of their learners.

**The preparation of trainees to teach various age groups as well as target groups with varying learning and communication needs** was also stressed.

The R&D work has also demonstrated that high quality in-service teacher education programmes not only maintain and update language and pedagogical skills, sociocultural competence and reflective skills, but also prepare the teacher to exploit new technologies, to promote educational exchanges, and to function as a mentor and/or teacher trainer.

## 2. OBJECTIVES AND ASSESSMENT

### *Professor Michael BYRAM*

My title is "Objectives and Assessment". I would like to begin by reminding you that objectives have two functions:

- firstly, they help us to plan our teaching and to give it an order
- secondly, they help us to plan assessment and to ensure that it is linked to teaching

I'll begin with the planning of teaching and the fact that, in the course of the project, the interpretation of the concept of the objective has developed and become richer.

In the planning stage of the project, the focus was on revising the threshold level and extending the principle of the threshold level to other languages and other levels. This has been done, and I do not propose to recite all the work which is described in the report. It is interesting to note in this context that the Threshold and Vantage levels are spoken of as an objective, in the singular.

The specification of threshold levels for several languages and secondly, the emphasis put on partial competences have contributed significantly to the policy of the multilingualism of the European citizen.

It is in connection with the concept of European citizenship that the interpretation of the concept of the objective became richer. In the course of the project, it was recognised that the learner ought not to model themselves on the native speaker, but as a social actor in a European environment, ought rather to become a cultural intermediary, an intercultural speaker, who acquires competences which are different from those of the native speaker, especially as far as cultural competences are concerned. As is noted in the final report, the nature of the objectives - in the plural - changed in the course of the project.

This change was realised in the workshops and in the research work which developed syllabuses and methodologies which pursue both intercultural and linguistic objectives. Secondly, this vision of the learner was also realised in the framework, in chapter 4, where the competences of the learner include both general and linguistic competences.

I come now to the function of objectives in assessment. Here too, the specification of objectives in the plural and in an enriched sense played a role in the activities of the workshops. The experiments in assessment were carried out in the context of the detailed description of objectives. Secondly, in chapters 8 and 9 of the Framework, assessment specialists and teachers will find models which link the specification of objectives to assessment, and to teaching.

Nonetheless, there are things still to do, in particular because of the change of objectives which I have talked about. As is noted in chapters 8 of the Framework, the assessment of socio-cultural competence - and I would add of the general competences - remains to be resolved, and the Framework proposes a special project which would address this problem.

There are other tasks for the future linked with the specification of objectives and the planning of teaching and assessment which follow from them:

- in teacher education, it is necessary to develop the ability of teachers with respect to the specification of objectives and the planning of teaching which takes into account the learner as a European citizen

- in the context of exchanges, we also need objectives and curricula which are richer than the

concern with the acquisition of linguistic competences

- in the same way, we need specifications of intercultural objectives in bilingual education and in vocational education

- the specification of intercultural objectives, curricula, and assessment also requires a theory of cultural learning and acquisition in different contexts and for different age groups of learners.

So there is plenty of work for the future. I am sure you can think of more.

### 3. LEARNING TO LEARN

#### *Professor Irma HUTTUNEN*

The objective of learning to learn is to develop the students' ability to learn more efficiently and to develop independent management of their own learning, so that by the end of institutionalised education they have the motivation, competence and confidence to face real-life communication using the languages they have already learnt, and to tackle the new language learning necessary to cope with new challenges (Trim).

The approach was especially developed in new-style workshops 2, 6, 9 and 13, but it was present in most of the workshops in some way. 'Learning to learn' was developed in projects relating to school education (primary, lower secondary and upper secondary levels), vocational and adult education, and teacher education.

The process of change of paradigm was not always easy for either teachers or learners, but became fruitful and motivating for them during the project. As a result, there was heightened awareness of language, culture and learning as a process among learners and teachers. The focus of studies usually shifted from linguistic features to meaningful learning contents. Planning of teaching became more comprehensive, consistent, and transparent to learners and outsiders. The learners acquired the ability to plan, reflect on, and report about their own learning and its results and consequences. The process also led to co-operation and networking among learners, and among teachers of the same and different languages, and also with teachers of different subjects locally, nationally and internationally.

Especially at school level, but also in vocational and adult education, the development of learning to learn and of communicative competence in the target language were often seen as an integral part of foreign language learning. Most teachers considered the approach as a tool of teaching and learning the target language, believing that starting from the learners' needs would bring about variation and heightened motivation. To some teachers, learning to learn was the main starting point when they defined their objectives in teaching.

The approach was seen in the teaching plans/syllabuses and reports of proceedings in the following ways:

- the studies were mainly content-based with a theme or a problem as a starting point
- the learners either chose from among options, or developed their own proposals/themes/projects
- there was often teaching of sociolinguistic elements and communication and negotiation strategies
- there was fairly systematic teaching of metacognitive strategies (planning, cooperation, evaluation and portfolio assessment), and of cognitive, social, and affective strategies for increased self-awareness and self-confidence
- diverse pedagogical, authentic materials, including telematics and satellite TV-based materials were compiled, and sometimes produced, by teachers and/or learners and were used in various ways for different purposes
- joint carefully planned studies, and visits to classes abroad for practice in language, culture, communication and learning to learn.

In teacher education, some projects dealt with initial teacher education, but most with in-service education. Some descriptions of the development of classroom teaching also contained descriptions of, and reflections on, teacher development during the project.

Several descriptions of initial teacher education show how learning to learn was presented in theoretical studies, and either simultaneously or afterwards put into practice in the seminars and workshops for the

students, and also in their teaching practice periods, during which they were expected to apply in class what they had experienced. There was also a description of how theoretical studies in the linguistics department were carried out in a self-directed manner, including planning by learners, and reflection and self-evaluation in diaries.

The descriptions of in-service teacher education included development of teachers' :

- self-awareness, self-confidence and independence so to enable them to develop learner autonomy;
- awareness of sociolinguistics and of communication strategies, in particular negotiation and compensation skills;
- awareness of and competence in metacognitive, cognitive, social and affective skills and strategies;
- attitudes towards and skills for co-operation and collaboration with learners and other teachers;
- theoretical understanding of the issues and their application in teacher groups, including collaboration with colleagues, especially in planning and evaluation, and carrying out plans in class.

The in-service education programmes seemed to be of value for at least four reasons:

- they lasted long enough to allow the teachers and their learners to go through the process of change and adopt a new way of thinking;
- a sufficient amount of theory, in order to build up understanding, was combined with the teachers' own work with their learners;
- there was collegial support in teacher groups and within networks: mentoring, tutoring, and different kinds of support were offered to the teachers by the coordinators of projects.

The success of the projects in all the different contexts has also become evident through the fact that many of the teachers involved in the projects have become motivated enough to continue their development work in new national and/or international projects.

#### **4. BILINGUAL EDUCATION - PRE-SCHOOL AND PRIMARY CONTEXTS**

*Dr Medwin HUGHES*

The role of Bilingual Education within the Pre-school and Primary Contexts was addressed by the Modern Languages Project within Workshops 5A and 5B held within Wales and Slovenia. The workshops were mainly concerned with bilingual education, very early language learning, immersion programmes and ethnic community languages, concentrating on the following themes:

1. Linguistic and cultural implications of working through two languages;
2. Objectives and methods appropriate to the age, experience and language situations of bilingual learners;
3. The interface between pre-school and primary bilingual learners;
4. The use of media in teaching language in a bilingual context;
5. The initial in-service training of primary bilingual teachers;
6. Educational and socio-cultural aspects of bilingual education with special reference to the situations of minorities in a democratic society.

Particular attention within these two workshops was drawn to the recommendations of the European Charter for regional and minority languages.

The themes provided participants with the opportunity of addressing a range of concepts and models related to bilingual teaching. The various presentations and research and development programmes offered an opportunity for a common stocktaking exercise and for the sharing of expertise and co-operation in key issues such as curricular programmes, methodology and teacher training.

The results of the workshop clearly reflected that the Council of Europe's approach to language teaching has directly or indirectly influenced syllabus design, materials development and teacher education within bilingual contexts through Europe. This is especially true of attitudes and teaching methods long rooted in primary education, for example experience-based learning, interactive teaching styles and the promotion of learner autonomy.

One of the main features of the deliberations held within the two workshops was the emphasis on the diversity of bilingual teaching within Europe. Such diversity was seen with regard to:

1. Initial and in-service training of teachers;
2. The perceived importance of promoting a second and third language within the school curriculum;
3. The socio-cultural implications of bilingual teaching.

Particular emphasis was placed on the importance of promoting language awareness from an early age. The need for developing a language continuum from pre-primary to primary was specifically noted and also the importance of securing objectives and methods appropriate to the age, experience and language situations of bilingual children. What became evidently clear was that language teaching should be integrated into the school curriculum in order to secure greater harmony. The experiences reported in the inter-workshop action programme, and the discussions in the working groups at the two workshops emphasised that there was a need for securing that sensitization, awareness and learning form a coherent learning programme for children at this early age.

The value of intercultural education within bilingual contexts was also stressed in the workshops and the importance of training bilingual teachers for intercultural understanding contexts was evidently clear from the recommendations. Bilingual teachers need to be made aware of the cultural knowledge of

teaching two languages of the bicultural nature of society thus enabling enculturation to accompany linguistic developments. A bilingual teacher needs to be well grounded in the customs of two or even three cultures.

The importance of adequate support for initial teacher training and in-service training of bilingual teachers was emphasised. Further support should be given through INSET courses to reaffirm bilingual teaching skills. The workshops focused upon the contents of teacher training courses and paid particular attention to the importance of developing curricular skills within teacher training. Such skills included the ability to assess syllabuses, make decisions on the use of texts, evaluate orientation frames or guidelines and develop learner autonomy.

In light of the main results workshops 5A and 5B it was recommended that further work should be undertaken on several priority themes. These were:

1. Classroom-based research within bilingual contexts, focusing upon sensitization to language learning, effective teaching methodology, the creation of appropriate bilingual materials and developing intercultural awareness.
2. The systematic continuity of learning experiences between pre-primary and primary bilingual contexts .
3. Enhancement of teacher training and in-service courses.

It was suggested that these themes could be addressed through international collaboration by means of workshops and electronic networking. Of particular importance was the need for collaboration in the field of teacher training. The aim of bilingual training should be to produce a Europe of quality in which teachers' skills and creativity were encouraged and where a rich diversity of education traditions were respected. It was felt that cooperation opportunities should be created for teachers thus securing the educational value of bilingual teaching and training within pre-school and primary contexts.



## **5. BILINGUAL EDUCATION: A FOREIGN LANGUAGE AS A MEANS OF INSTRUCTION IN OTHER CURRICULAR SUBJECTS**

*Dr Eike THÜRMAN*

The use of a foreign language as a medium of communication in subjects such as History, Geography, Economics or Biology may be counted among the very few innovatory areas of education where *added value* can be expected.

With the ongoing process of building a new European 'house' where people may roam freely from one 'room' to another, experts and parents alike are increasingly attracted by any educational concept that is likely to improve the quality of language learning. This includes the use of a foreign language as a medium of instruction/learning in other subjects. It is considered a means of developing a more advanced language competence without necessitating a major increase in the overall weekly teaching load and - miraculously enough - without causing serious loss in achievement in subjects taught through a foreign language. In his Final Report of the Project Group Activities (1989 - 1996) John Trim considers bilingual education "a promising line of development", since it "establishes an authentic context of use and gives the subject (and the school) a valuable international perspective". The Council of Europe's Workshop 12 was intended to identify, stimulate and link experiments with bilingual concepts in member countries as a basis for in-depth evaluation.

As the Final Report clearly shows, Workshops 12A/B (Germany/Luxembourg) attracted a lot of attention from member States. They were very successful in providing the necessary data both for a typology of school-based experimentation as well as for a subtle account of gains and losses in pilot projects carried out in bilingual education. The twelve Research and Development projects carried out between the A and the B workshops produced substantial results on different aspects of bilingual education: organisational framework, learners, teachers, schools, methods, materials.

While it is not possible here to provide a detailed analysis of the results of the two workshops and the R&D projects, three basic issues are examined:

- a) bilingual programmes as an element of mainstream education
- b) learners, teachers
- c) objectives, methodology and organisational framework.

### ***a) Bilingual programmes as an element of mainstream education***

Although the vast majority of European countries run bilingual programmes in one way or another, they still offer them to a minority of pupils (trilingual Luxembourg being an exception to this rule). Obviously, the (professional as well as linguistic) situation in most of the member States does not allow for an immediate and general reconstruction of mainstream schools with a view to providing bilingual education for all pupils or at least in a substantial proportion of schools in a country. Experts acknowledge the fact that due to the more or less monolingual context in most of the European national educational systems, a sound infrastructure (teacher training curricula, classroom materials, methodology of language assistance in the non-language classroom, assessment criteria) is needed to safeguard the quality of bilingual education. There are some member States that have just begun to develop the necessary infrastructure - and the Council of Europe's Workshop 12 has contributed noticeably to this development. In these countries (e.g. Austria, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Russia, Sweden and recently the Netherlands) the number of schools with bilingual sections is increasingly steadily. It seems that at present some East European member States (e.g. the Baltic States) attach higher priority to the further development and consolidation of standard forms of foreign language teaching, than to the introduction of bilingual programmes on a larger scale.

### ***b) Learners, Teachers***

Workshop 12 and interim R&D activities have produced convincing evidence that bilingual programmes need not be elitist or exclusive, and that they can be modified to satisfy the needs of mixed-ability groups, even of slow-learners and low achievers - as experiments have shown in Austria and in some of the German Länder.

A comprehensive study conducted with pupils from schools with a German-French bilingual section covering a period of almost 20 years shows great satisfaction on the part of the learners. These young women and men do not report any serious learning obstacles in subjects taught through French and they almost unanimously stress the usefulness of their highly developed competence in French. As far as the learners are concerned, bilingual programmes can well be part of mainstream education - provided these programmes are geared to the learners' needs and teachers can cope with the challenges arising from teaching subjects through a foreign language. Most pupils would be willing and able to study a subject through a foreign language - but at present only a minority of teachers are able to use a foreign language as a means of instruction in their special field. There is an undeniable demand for additional qualifications (language for special purposes, methodology of language assistance in subject-based teaching) and for extra support (school books, teaching manuals and curricula) to ensure the success of bilingual programmes.

### ***c) Objectives, methodology and organisational framework***

With regard to teaching objectives as well as priorities in the area of methodology, most R&D activities followed similar lines. Experts are not so much concerned with "producing more of the same", i.e. basic interactional communicative skills as they are taught in foreign language classes. They are more attracted (a) by the opportunity to cultivate the use of a foreign language as a tool for young people to organise their own learning and (b) by the opportunity to introduce an intercultural dimension to their subject-based teaching. Both the ability to use a foreign language as a working tool as well as a highly developed intercultural communicative competence will be among the key qualifications when the new Europe is built.

There is enormous diversity with regard to the organisational framework of bilingual education. This diversity is caused by several factors, e.g. presence/absence of selection, the age when bilingual programmes start, setting/streaming, the range of the curriculum (number of subjects) taught through the foreign language, preparation/reinforcement through additional teaching, procedures and standards of assessment, the role of native teachers in the programme, etc. At present, no standard form of bilingual education seems to emerge. Surprisingly enough, experts at Workshops 12 A/B viewed this fact as a blessing rather than an obstacle and -for the time being - they support experimentation with a broad range of organisational models, including more flexible approaches (e.g. occasional modular bilingual units across the whole curriculum instead of teaching one, two or three subjects completely in a foreign language).

Summing up the experience with the Council of Europe's Workshop 12, it is clear that bilingual programmes have proved their value for mainstream education in Europe, but they cannot be had on a cost-neutral basis. The many projects all over Europe still need protection, incentives, support and publicity. Investments have to be made in pre- and in-service teacher training and in building up networks: (a) for schools already running bilingual programmes to overcome obstacles encountered in their daily routine and, (b) for those institutions that are commissioned to develop the necessary infrastructure for introducing bilingual programmes to mainstream education. A European network is

being developed through a joint effort by the European Platform for Dutch Education and institutions in Finland, Great Britain and Germany. In 1996 the European Platform hosted an international conference on bilingual education, and a report was published on the situation of bilingual education in a number of European countries (Austria, Belgium, Britain, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Sweden). As a follow-up to this conference the EUROCLIC (Content and Language Integrated Classrooms: a European Network for Plurilingual Education) is being developed with a WWW-site and a periodical is to be produced (both are scheduled to be in operation by January 1997). These activities are supported by the European Commission.

## **6. THE USE OF COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES LANGUAGE TEACHING/LEARNING**

*Ms Lis KORNUM*

Several workshops and seminars on new technologies have taken place within the Council of Europe's Modern Languages Project.

Their aims and objectives were to heighten awareness among language teachers of the advantages -and disadvantages - of new technologies. A common theme was the search for solutions to technical, economic and educational problems which prevent the incorporation of new media into traditional language teaching methods.

The workshops gave participants an opportunity not only to discover various computer media, but also to use them and, in some cases, to develop materials and methods for the use of these tools in teaching.

The assessment of computerised materials by language teachers played a central role in all the workshops. The design of computer applications for language teaching should be based on pedagogical and teaching principles, not on technological considerations.

Initial and in-service training of language teachers in new technologies is essential to overcome apathy and sometimes animosity on the part of many language teachers towards them. Several sub-projects were intended to disseminate examples of good practice in training centres in various countries, and participants took advantage of contacts made at the workshops to invite colleagues to national seminars and colloquies.

Exchanges of this type are useful, not to say vital, for the new Central and East European member states.

The "New-Style" workshops proved particularly successful, as participants in workshop A and workshop B were able to co-operate. Although they encountered numerous obstacles thrown up by either lack of funding or technological problems, workshops 7 and 9 succeeded in producing innovative material and setting up telematic networks among participants.

Contact continued after the workshops were over. Several projects - both national and international - benefited from the expertise of "resource persons" operating from a distance.

Telematics enables teachers not only to bring authentic material into the classroom, but also to call on people and opinions relevant to the theme being covered. Almost every day, requests are found in electronic mailboxes for contributions to teleconferences, "European days", electronic newspapers, and so on.

During the workshops, participants worked with a range of multimedia language-teaching materials. CD-ROMs produced for other subjects such as history, religious knowledge, geography, literature and art also offer attractive possibilities for interdisciplinary projects, and these have already been turned to advantage by several teachers.

In addition to a high degree of interdisciplinarity, another positive aspect of the workshops was the co-operation that took place between different sectors of the education system. The problems involved in introducing new technologies to language teaching have proved to be similar, and as there is always a certain mobility of teachers between systems, interaction can but benefit teaching as a whole.

Telematics makes many of the projects accessible to the most distant and disadvantaged teachers.

Electronic mail requires relatively simple equipment, so several instructors, teachers and learners from remote or disadvantaged regions have been able to participate in interesting projects from a distance while developing their own infrastructure.

It should be stressed that foreign languages are not taught only at a distance. All the projects referred to show the importance of face-to-face interaction. Educational exchanges and visits to other countries will never be replaced by electronic mail or CD-ROMs, but the new media are excellent for preparing for such contacts. A visit abroad is far more beneficial if learners have had an advance opportunity to acquire knowledge and put questions to the people they will actually be meeting.

In conclusion, experience shows clearly that with the necessary training and satisfactory working conditions, language teachers are capable of, and interested in, using new technologies to create modern, specialised language-teaching courses which motivate learners. The Council of Europe's new programme should promote the incorporation of such techniques into all language teaching programmes.

## 7. EDUCATIONAL LINKS AND EXCHANGES

### *Mr Alf Olav HAUGEN*

The role of educational links and exchanges in the school curriculum was identified as one of the six priority themes at the Sintra symposium in 1989. In a series of intergovernmental meetings of the Council of Europe's Network on School Links and Exchanges, established in 1991, officials of member States have looked at different ways of implementing "*la pédagogie des échanges*".

The aims and objectives of Workshops 18A and B, organised by Norway and Portugal, were to review the current situation regarding the implementation of "*la pédagogie des échanges*", explore different approaches of integrating links and exchanges into school curriculum and identify needs and strategies for a vocationally oriented language learning.

The achievements of the six Research and Development projects established at Lillehammer in October 1995 and finalised and presented at Sesimbra in December 1996 can be put into three major areas of concern.

#### A. School management

One project group was concerned with the challenges met by school managements in organising links and exchanges and recommends that school managements should

- accept responsibility at all levels for the integration in the curriculum and implementation of "*la pédagogie des échanges*"
- adopt the "whole school ethos" by making links and exchanges institutional
- apply a manual for co-operation and networking with schools abroad
- accept responsibility for gathering and communicating information
- adopt a method for promoting and evaluating links and exchanges

#### B. Teacher training

Two Research and Development Projects were focused on the development of new modules for initial and in-service training aimed at motivating and sensitizing language teachers to implement "*la pédagogie des échanges*". New modules for initial training have already been introduced in Switzerland and Norway and deserve support and attention. Participants recommend

- that favourable conditions are created for suitable training for "*la pédagogie des échanges*"
- that such courses are implemented in teacher training and given official status and credit
- that exchanges should be part of the formal curriculum, whether these exchanges be "virtual" (e-mail) or real; this fact should be reflected in teacher-training courses
- the training of non-language teachers should be stimulated by providing opportunities abroad for developing their linguistic skills and raising their cultural awareness

#### C. Joint Education Projects and Exchanges

The last point leads us to the concerns of an ambitious Research and Development Project, which is only in its initial stages. The objective of this project was to improve receptive and productive skills by encouraging and stimulating interests for LWULWT (less widely used-less widely taught) languages by exchanging national tales and legends. Networks and sub-projects have been established for this purpose. The group recommends that

- Joint Educational Projects should be given official status and certification
- special attention should be given to LWULWT languages as desirable adjuncts to the first foreign language; it is desirable to promote plurilingualism and multiculturalism by working together in a number of languages of participating countries and not simply using one language of international currency.

#### D. Manuals

Among the Research and Development Projects finalised and presented in Portugal in December I would like to draw your attention to two manuals for exchanges, one for students and one for teachers.

The first one is called "Primus", which is a students' manual containing information, practical advice, exercises and vocabulary relevant to an exchange visit - to be used **before**, **during** and **after** an exchange visit to facilitate preparations and contact with a new culture.

The "**Guidance on Practical Administrative and Organisational Matters**" is a set of guidelines aiming at

- assisting teachers of foreign languages and other subjects in the organisation of exchange visits with other countries
- providing motivation by giving teachers the confidence to initiate an exchange
- giving a framework for the establishment of a teamwork among teaching staff

It presents a model upon which different countries and individuals schools can base their own practices. It provides background information for parents, hosts and pupils; liabilities, safety, codes of conduct, contracts and insurance.

The report of every project group bears witness to a spirit of enthusiasm and commitment, which characterised the Workshops 18A and B. It is astonishing what has been achieved in such a short time and how the intentions of the groups have materialised into dynamic projects which are worth supporting and promoting. Subnetworks and individual projects have been established, local resources have been activated and exploited.

Small but important steps have been taken to strengthen the bonds between the nations and improve conditions for working together. We have come to realise that links and exchanges, if well conducted, "are a desirable and feasible, even essential element in preparing young people for life in a democratic, multilingual and multicultural Europe. Leadership from the top is needed as well as a sense of common purpose and a belief in the international mission of education" (Trim).

## **V. PHASE II: DEVELOPING INSTRUMENTS FOR EUROPEAN CO-OPERATION: COMMON EUROPEAN FRAMEWORK AND EUROPEAN LANGUAGE PORTFOLIO**

### **1. General Introduction, *Mr Joseph SHEILS*, Head of the Modern Languages Section, Council of Europe**

During Phase II of the conference our discussions will focus on the proposal for a Common European Framework and the feasibility study for a European Language Portfolio.

By way of introduction to the contributions to be made by my colleagues Ingeborg CHRIST and Brian NORTH, I should like to describe how work on these instruments stands today.

I should also like to take this opportunity to thank the authors for the high quality work they have produced.

#### **Common European Framework**

The proposal for a Common European Framework was drawn up by a small team reporting to a working group made up of representatives from the language teaching world. The European Commission also participated in this group and we drew considerable benefit from co-operation with important bodies working on the LINGUA programme.

The Common European Framework proposed today is now in its second provisional version, after extensive grassroots consultations. The respondents to the questionnaire which accompanied the framework represent all language teaching sectors and functions. Reactions were **very** positive, and the philosophical and theoretical basis of the framework was approved by an overwhelming majority. It is true that, as is normal in any scientific debate, some specialists would have preferred another theoretical approach. The **practical** suggestions for amendments made by respondents have been taken into consideration wherever possible in the preparation of the second draft of the framework.

Consequently we are sufficiently confident about the revised version of the framework proposal - which has received the support of a substantial proportion of the language-teaching world - to proceed with trials in the field if this proves appropriate.

The framework is an open-ended, dynamic system which will evolve on implementation. It must be stressed that there has never been any question of imposing an instrument, nor of disseminating an instrument that has not shown its worth in practice. We should like people working in different educational contexts to try it out, with all its imperfections, and then to tell us about their experience with a view to possible amendments.

Guides for different categories of specialised users have been prepared in order to expedite this process. For the moment these are still at the early draft stage. If trials in the field are continued, the guides will evolve and will, like the framework, be revised during this ongoing process. Others could be commissioned and a general guide is envisaged.

#### **What is expected from Phase II of the conference with regard to the framework?**

The aim of this conference is not to decide whether this proposal for a framework is sufficiently exhaustive or theoretically perfect (if indeed such an objective could be achieved).



The conference should, however, decide

- whether the framework, in its present state, is suitable for use in trials in the field as a basis for discussion by the different users in their everyday practice;
- whether it represents an appropriate starting point for an open-ended, dynamic system for the coherent, transparent description of objectives, methods and skills;
- whether it encourages a more effective exchange of information between all partners in language teaching/learning.

### **European Language Portfolio**

The commissions will also examine the results of the feasibility study carried out simultaneously by specially commissioned experts and under a Swiss national project; the latter was set up following the intergovernmental symposium held in Rüslikon which initiated work on the framework and, consequently, on a European Language Portfolio.

The Swiss have carried out trials on their portfolio in the field and both teachers and learners reacted very positively. It offers a flexible, practical solution to problems of educational and professional mobility in a decentralised administrative system. The Swiss experiment is indicative of the valuable function a portfolio could perform in other CDCC member states.

The Modern Languages Project Group has received the proposals for a portfolio put forward in document CC-LANG (97) 1 and has agreed on the feasibility of a portfolio, thus endorsing the conclusions of the authors of these studies.

A European Language Portfolio could improve learner motivation by providing recognition for multilingual learning and multicultural experience in a more flexible way than is possible with the usual assessment methods. More modest levels - and partial skills - could then be given appropriate recognition.

It is clear that this work should be furthered. Important logistic, financial and linguistic questions remain to be answered.

The task of this conference is, however, to decide whether the proposals are sufficiently interesting to justify further studies and development.

Since the form and function of a portfolio may vary from one educational sector to another, it would be desirable for each commission to examine more particularly the proposals related to the educational sector in question.

### **Conclusion**

The conclusions and recommendations of the conference will be significant for the decisions of the Council for Cultural Co-operation and its Education Committee with regard to possible future action concerning these instruments.

## 2. Modern Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment a Common European Framework of Reference

*Dr Brian NORTH*

### Background

Following the recommendation of the Intergovernmental Symposium at Rüschnikon in 1991 entitled: "*Transparency and Coherence in Language Learning in Europe: objectives, evaluation and certification*" a Working Party was set up in 1993 to develop a Common Framework of Reference for language learning and teaching in Europe.

The Rüschnikon Symposium considered that the Common Framework should be comprehensive, transparent and coherent:

By "comprehensive" is meant that the Common European Framework should specify the full range of language knowledge, skills and use. It should differentiate the various dimensions in which language proficiency is described, and provide a series of reference points (levels or steps) by which progress in learning can be calibrated. It should be borne in mind that the development of communicative proficiency involves other dimensions than the strictly linguistic (e.g. socio-cultural awareness, imaginative experience, affective relations, learning to learn, etc.).

By "transparent" is meant that information must be clearly formulated and explicit, available and readily comprehensible to users.

By "coherent" is meant that the description is free from internal contradictions. In respect to educational systems, coherence requires that there is a harmonious relation among their components:

- the identification of needs;
- the determination of objectives;
- the definition of content;
- the selection or creation of material;
- the establishment of teaching/learning programmes;
- the teaching and learning methods employed;
- evaluation, testing and assessment.

In addition, the Symposium considered that the Common Framework "should be open and flexible, so that it can be applied, with such adaptations as prove necessary, to particular situations."

A Draft Proposal was produced by an authoring sub-group under the guidance of the Working Party during 1994-5 and circulated for consultation in member states in Spring 1996. Feedback on the proposal was overwhelmingly positive and a number of suggestions made to improve the document have been taken into account preparing Draft 2 of the Proposal distributed to this Symposium.

### Purposes

The uses envisaged for a Common Framework of Reference include the planning of language learning programmes, of language certification and of self directed learning. The Rüschnikon Symposium concluded that a Common Framework is desirable in order to:

- a) promote and facilitate co-operation amongst educational institutions in different countries;

- b) provide a sound basis for the mutual recognition of language qualifications;
- c) assist learners, teachers, course designers, examining bodies and educational administrators to situate and co-ordinate their efforts.

A Common Framework of Reference can be seen as a metalanguage. It offers an opportunity for partners in the process of foreign language learning to "talk the same language" in deciding on choices to be made, and in informing one another about the choices made.

1. Such a common means of expression will, it is hoped, encourage greater co-operation between institutions and educational sectors concerned with particular groups of learners. In addition a reference framework which is common to the different foreign languages concerned could also help to increase communication and cross-fertilisation between the pedagogic cultures associated with different foreign languages both within individual institutions in one country and between institutions in different countries (Point a above).
2. A Common Framework will also make it easier for the partners who between them design the environments in which language learning takes place to co-ordinate developments and efforts. Learners, teachers, course designers, examiners, inspectors and administrators each see foreign language learning from different perspectives. A Common Framework which describes significant parameters involved in language learning and significant stages in the attainment of communicative language proficiency will make it easier for partners to map out common ground and situate their efforts relative to each other. This is true both for groups of partners with the same perspective (e.g. materials designers discussing the specification for a joint development project) and for partners with different perspectives (e.g. teachers, curriculum advisers and testers discussing a curriculum reform) (Point c above).
3. Finally, not all stakeholders are partners in a particular language learning environment. Some are more concerned with the different competences and the level of proficiency acquired in that environment. Explicit reference to a transparent Common Framework will make it far easier for qualifications gained in one learning environment to be "translated" into the terms of the scheme operating in another environment. In a world of ever increasing personal mobility, in which learners may change educational systems several times during their career, a scheme which will help institutions to situate the qualifications they offer in relation to common reference points is more and more desirable. In a field of core competence like language learning, in which some of those qualifications gained by an individual are quite likely to be obtained whilst travelling or working abroad, such a scheme is even more necessary (Point b above).

To summarise, the main aim of the Common Framework is to present a set of categories facilitating the description of (a) the objectives and content of teaching and learning, (b) the results obtained and levels reached and (c) the possible connections between the different elements and the stages of a learning path.

To put this another way, the Common Framework describes:

- target areas of concern in language learning - the *competences* language learners strive to attain ***Descriptive scheme***;
- stages of attainment in those competences - the *proficiency* learners attain, ***Common reference levels***, whilst taking account of factors impinging on language use such as the mental context of the learner/user and of the interlocutor, and conditions and constraints under which communication takes place.

## The Descriptive Scheme

The provision of a transparent, coherent and comprehensive descriptive scheme is an ambitious undertaking, given the incompleteness of research on communicative competence, communicative language use and second language acquisition (SLA). The approach taken in the Common Framework is to synthesise existing models, insights from research and expertise in member states. The Common Framework is not a theoretical document and does not purport to present a model of communication or an explanation of the language learning process. Rather it seeks to offer a set of higher level (in the sense of more abstract) parameters of description, with sub-categorisations where feasible, which may help users to *profile* language learning needs and language learning provision.

The descriptive scheme envisages language use and language learning as

"...actions performed by a social agent who, as an individual, has at his or her disposal and develops a range of *general competences* and in particular *communicative language competence*. He or she draws on these competences in different kinds of *language activities*... in specific *domains*, activating those *strategies* which seem most appropriate for carrying out the *tasks* to be accomplished".

This contextualised use of competences stimulates feedback which in turn leads to the modification of the competences.

It is not possible in a short presentation to go into many details of the scheme, but it may be helpful to give an overview of what, from the point of view both of content specification and of scaling, are three of the most significant parameters: communicative language competence, communicative language activities, and the use of strategies.

**Communication language competence** can be considered as having three intertwined aspects: linguistic competence, sociolinguistic competence and pragmatic competence:

**Communication language activities** can be seen in terms of reception, interaction, production and mediation, each of which can be subdivided for spoken and written language. Receptive activities are those in which the recipient is not able to interact with the source; productive activities are those involving sustained monologue (long turns), as opposed to the alternating short turns in interaction. Finally, in mediation the language user acts as an intermediary between a text and a recipient and/or between two people.

	Reception	Interaction	Production	Mediation
Spoken	Non-participatory listening, e.g. :  • Listening as a member of an audience	Spoken interaction, e.g. :  • Discussion	Spoken production, e.g.  • Addressing an audience	Interpretation e.g.:  • Simultaneous interpretation at a conference
Written	Reading, e.g.:  • Reading for general	Written interaction, e.g.:  • Correspondence	Written production, e.g.:  • Writing an article	Written mediation e.g.:  • Summarising the gist

	orientation			of an article
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**Use of strategies** plays a pivotal role in effective language use. Strategies are a means the language user exploits to mobilise and balance his/her resources and to activate skills and procedures in order to fulfil the demands of the task in context in either the most comprehensive or in the most economical way feasible - depending on his or her precise purpose. The use of communication strategies can be seen as the application of the metacognitive principles: *Pre-planning; Execution; Monitoring* and *Repair* to the different kinds of communicative activity: Reception, Interaction, Production and Mediation.

**Diversification** and the concept of **Partial Competences** have been of language learning objectives to suit particular communicative needs can be facilitated by a scheme providing the means to *profile* language learning provision and language learning achievement. The provision of common categories can provide a transparent and coherent structure to plan and to report partial, targeted competences. All learners do not need to learn all parts of the language, so which parts are relevant for which learners?

### **Common Reference Levels**

Profiling also implies highlighting particularity in relation to some common reference points. Common reference points in a language learning context imply the description of progression - levels of proficiency - as well as or categories of content. The Common Framework therefore proposes a set of 6 Common Reference Levels, themselves subdivisions of the distinction *Basic User, Independent User* and *Proficient User*, and suggests that relevant categories which it is technically feasible to describe meaningfully at different levels should be scaled at the 6 levels.

<b>Proficient User</b>	<b>C2</b>	Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarise information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.
<b>Proficient User</b>	<b>C1</b>	Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
<b>Independent User</b>	<b>B2</b>	Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.
<b>Independent User</b>	<b>B1</b>	Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes & ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
<b>Basic User</b>	<b>A2</b>	Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.
<b>Basic User</b>	<b>A1</b>	Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

The common reference levels can be presented in different ways for different purposes. For some purposes it will be appropriate to summarise each of the six levels in a single holistic paragraph. Such a simple *global scale* will make it easier to communicate the system to non-specialist users. For other purposes it may be more useful to present an overview in the form of a *profiling grid* showing

significant categories at each of the six levels. Such a grid showing major categories of language activity at the six levels (Table 7 in Chapter 8) could offer a potential "hard core" for a Language Portfolio. For yet other purposes -e.g. the Portfolio , it may be useful to present the relevant parts of the contents of a common reference level in the form of a *checklist*.

It is to be expected that the precise formulation of the descriptors in the Common Framework will develop over time as the experience of member states and of institutions with related expertise is incorporated into the description. Ways in which such descriptors can be developed are discussed in the Framework and Chapter 8 and the Appendix provide descriptors which were scaled empirically in a Swiss research project set up for that purpose as a follow up to the Rüşchlikon Symposium. These descriptors are also exploited in the Language Portfolio.<sup>2</sup>

## Conclusion

This edition of the Common Framework is labelled "Draft 2" because whilst it has been extensively amended to take account of feedback from member states in the consultation phase, it can not be considered a definitive document, despite an overwhelmingly positive response, because it has not yet been trialled. Piloting in a wide range of educational contexts in most member states is seen as the potential next step. To aid this piloting process, a series of *User Guides* have been prepared for a) learners, b) teachers, c) teacher trainers d) examiners e) textbook writers f) curriculum developers g) educational policy decision makers, h) providers of adult education.

From one perspective, however, a Common Framework will always be a draft, reflecting the state-of-the-art at the publication of the edition concerned. In line with the recommendations of the Rüşchlikon Symposium, the Common Framework is seen as an open, dynamic and non-dogmatic reference tool which will need to be revised at intervals to fully incorporate expertise in member states and developments in the field. It is the higher common reference categories and the broad common reference levels which are being proposed, not the particular wordings which in this current draft attempt, imperfectly, to describe them. The authors are aware that certain areas - notably the treatment of socio-cultural competence - need further attention. As the Common Framework is piloted, tested and further refined in practice, it is hoped that it will provide a Europe-wide basis for reflection and mutual exchange of information. Draft 2 is intended to provide a firm basis for such future development.

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<sup>2</sup> Schneider G., North B. and Richterich R., (forthcoming) Evaluation et auto-évaluation de la compétence en langues étrangères aux points d'intersection du système d'enseignement suisse. Bern, Swiss National Research Council.

### 3. European Language Portfolio

*Dr Phil. Ingeborg CHRIST*

I am honoured to put before you what seems to be a particularly inspirational initiative which will become one of the key elements in the Council of Europe's Modern Languages Project in coming years. You are familiar with the documents prepared for this conference, so I need only give a brief outline of the subject and put forward a few ideas for future consideration.

#### **Historical background**

The language **portfolio** idea is linked to that of a *Framework of Reference*. Both emerged from the 1991 Symposium in Rüslikon, Switzerland, on "Transparency and Coherence in language learning in Europe: objectives, evaluation, certification". Unlike the *Framework*, which is primarily a tool for reflection and analysis, the language **portfolio** is developing into an instrument by means of which those who so desire will be able to record information about their formal and informal language learning attainments and experience, highlighting their acquired skills in a positive and internationally comprehensible way. The idea is to produce a document that fosters multilingualism by stimulating young people and adults to build up throughout their lives the knowledge, skills and attitudes they need to become European citizens.

#### **Questions of principle**

The working group tasked with putting the idea into practice raised numerous questions, eg:

- What is a language **portfolio**?
- What is the purpose of a language **portfolio**, what are its principles, objectives and functions?
- Who will use, hold and receive a **portfolio**?
- Will a single **portfolio** be enough or will several be needed?
- What will a language **portfolio** contain?
- What form is it to take?
- What language will it use?

The term initially mooted was "Language Passport", but that was soon abandoned because of a realisation that it would have unwelcome connotations: a passport opens doors, of course, but it also shuts doors to those who do not have one. The name **portfolio** was chosen as being more in keeping with the proposed objectives.

#### **What is a LANGUAGE PORTFOLIO? - Definition**

It is a document, or rather an organised collection of documents, relating to language studies and assembled over a period of years, the purpose of which is to record qualifications, results and experience, and also containing samples of personal work.

#### **What is the purpose of a LANGUAGE PORTFOLIO, what are its principles, objectives and functions?**

A language **portfolio** has firstly a documentary function. It will provide relatively complete information about skills, knowledge and experience acquired by its holder over a period of time, including those not highlighted in official - eg school - documents. It will also encourage holders to become aware of their language learning process. Assembling **portfolios** will encourage holders to plan, organise and assess their own learning process, and, it is hoped, will provide motivation for lifelong language learning. The



**portfolio** can thus be considered to stimulate multilingualism, so it has a pedagogic function as well as providing a record of attainments. It will, however, provide potential employers with information about skills, knowledge and experience, and it will ensure that attainments are clear in every country, since it contains an international evaluation grid. The language **portfolio** thus has a presentational and informational function, as well as a pedagogic function, and it will, via this duality, facilitate and encourage mobility among European citizens.

### **Who will use, hold and receive a LANGUAGE PORTFOLIO?**

The language **portfolio** will have a lifelong use. The working group members who contributed to its design represented different language teaching sectors. Each one naturally had his/her normal audience in mind. Some wanted to target young people, even the very young, while others focused on adults, and eventually the view was adopted that all actual or potential language learners at any stage of life were potential users. References to *young people* and *very young people* also imply teachers and parents, since their co-operation will be required for the compilation of the **portfolio**. References to adults mean that potential employers are possible recipients of **portfolios**.

### **One PORTFOLIO or several?**

Discussions about **portfolio** holders naturally led to the question of whether there should be one **portfolio** for everyone, or a range of different ones. The question has not been settled yet, but the working group tends to favour a set of **portfolios** to meet the different age-related needs. If there is a set of **portfolios**, however, they must have common features, so that there is no break in continuity. Here are three phases that might be distinguished for language **portfolio** use, with their respective functions:

#### *Function of a PORTFOLIO in pre-primary and primary education:*

At this level, skills evaluation will be less necessary than providing information about introductory aspects characteristic of this form of teaching (songs, games, counting rhymes, sketches), and giving children a sense of purpose. A **portfolio** for young children will require a special layout, with space for children's activities, eg drawings. It will act as a stimulus and as an introduction to knowledge-building, but it will also have informative value when pupils move from one school level to the next: pre-school to primary school and primary school to secondary school.

#### *Function of a PORTFOLIO in secondary education:*

Here the main purpose will still be to motivate, but the aim of encouraging language learning and an awareness of pupils' own learning process will be more important. The **portfolio** will thus be an aid to self-directed learning. The need for an attestation of learning achievement will also be more manifest. The question of how to use the *Framework of Reference* evaluation grid remains to be examined.

#### *Function of a PORTFOLIO for adult learners:*

A **portfolio** for adults will certainly include a more detailed presentation of skills and information about achievements, as well as a job-oriented evaluation. In a school context the core of the **portfolio** will be the learning process (hence the learner), but at the adult stage, the addressee (the person to whom the **portfolio** is shown) will be more central to the selection of documents. This will also be the key phase for the **portfolio** as a means of backing up the holder's self-directed learning process, helping him or her to clarify personal objectives and facilitating self-evaluation.

It having been established that the functions may vary depending on the learning context, it must also be noted that there are crossover points and elements in common. For example a very young child who learns to record songs and nursery rhymes on a sheet prepared for that purpose is taking the first steps towards organising not only a language **portfolio**, but also his or her lifelong language learning.

### **Structure of the PORTFOLIO**

All **portfolios** will include three sections:

- an overview of lifelong language learning (past and present),
- a language "biography" or profile of the languages learnt,
- a dossier or compilation of personal work.

The *overview* will present language attainments at a given time. It will list the languages known, the level, and any qualifications achieved. The working group also favours the inclusion of intercultural experience.

The *language "biography"* (or *profile*) will detail language skills and experience, each language being considered separately, and intercultural experience with a language-learning component.

The *dossier* will contain additional information, giving the holder the opportunity to make a more personalised presentation. It may, for example, include information about the holder's self-set and institutionally-set objectives. It may contain a "logbook" or learning diary, and possibly observations about the language learning process. Extracts from school curricula or lessons may be incorporated, as well as samples of evaluation and documentary back-up. Learners may include evidence of authentic contacts, samples of completed projects and any other documents which will substantiate their qualifications. Since learning takes place over a period of time, the dossier as presented may become out-of-date, so the holder may remove it.

### **The form of the PORTFOLIO**

The learning process brings about changes in attainment levels, and consequently in the way they need to be recorded. This observation led us to the conclusion that the **portfolio** would need to be flexible, ie in a loose-leaf format enabling pages to be added, removed or replaced in accordance with circumstances and needs. The idea of a pre-printed booklet simply to be filled in by the holder seemed to us overly regulated. We considered a loose-leaf format arranged in sections to be more flexible, given that the learning process takes place over a period of time, and in very different teaching and learning environments. The sections will contain *hard* and *soft* pages. The hard pages will mainly contain information, while the soft pages focus on the learning process and educational considerations.

### **The language of a PORTFOLIO**

A distinction will have to be made between entries under headings and the holder's own entries. In a school context the mother tongue will be used for both. In the employment context this may still be sufficient, but in an international context, it will certainly be necessary to use the languages of the Council of Europe, ie English and French. In some contexts, however, it might be helpful to use the language of the addressee, ie the person to whom the **portfolio** is to be presented.

### **Models**

The documentation for the conference contains specimen **portfolios** for the three groups mentioned, i.e. very young children, secondary school pupils and adults. The work of the commissions will lead to a

specification of the distinctive features of these models, based, with a few variations, on the aforementioned three-section structure.

### **Questions for future consideration**

Questions still remain to be answered in some areas, and I submit the following for future consideration:

1. *Concept*

- one or more **portfolios**?

2. *Layout*

- what will be the best layout for the different readers?

3. *Content and form*

- content and form of the *hard pages* and *soft pages*
- inclusion of foreign language skills only or of mother tongue skills as well?
- inclusion of general socio-cultural experience (eg tourism)
- inclusion of cultural activities in the mother tongue  
(eg reading/films in translation; learning about European themes in the mother tongue)?
  - European languages only or non-European languages too?

4. *Structure of the PORTFOLIO*

- rate of entries
- should the **portfolio** be comprehensive or selective? If selective, on the basis of what criteria?
  - what information should appear? Who will decide on this?
  - support in the learning environment; the role of teachers and the establishment

5. *Skills evaluation and self-evaluation*

- how will the evaluation grid function at the different stages?
- at what stage and at what age would its use be advisable?
- how should the grid be altered for the school context?
- will the evaluation plan be the same for a first, second or third language?

6. *The language of the PORTFOLIO*

- the language(s) of headings/holders' entries

7. *Administering the PORTFOLIO in a school environment*

- who will keep it?
- where will it be kept?
- how in practical terms will the **portfolio** be built up?

8. *Finance*

- who will finance its production?

- who will finance its purchase?

#### 9. *The role of the Council of Europe*

- will Council of Europe supervision be needed or is this a matter for individual countries with some standard European features?
  - will a single European model be most effective, or national models with core elements originating from the Council of Europe?
- is validation at European level necessary or will national validation along lines proposed by the Council of Europe be sufficient?
- would a European seal of quality be desirable or would it be sufficient to use the Framework standards as a basis and to justify the standards adopted in relation to those in the Framework?

Many questions thus remain to be clarified.

#### **Conclusion**

What are the next steps? The plan is that, after being examined by the commissions, the proposals will be revised, and countries will be invited to carry out trials from 1998 to 2000. In 2001, if all goes according to plan, a EUROPEAN LANGUAGE PORTFOLIO will be launched.

Finally, let us voice the hope that the EUROPEAN LANGUAGE PORTFOLIO will help to build up the knowledge, skills and attitudes which holders will need to become mature citizens of 21st century Europe.

## VI. PHASE III - FUTURE ACTION

### 1. PRESENTATION BY *MR MAITLAND STOBART*, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, CULTURE AND SPORT, COUNCIL OF EUROPE

#### INTRODUCTION

In this part of the Conference, we will **turn to the future** and consider the next stage in the Council of Europe's work on modern languages. In my introductory remarks, I would like to highlight **the wider institutional and political context**, in which we should set our reflections. My colleagues, Joe SHEILS and Claude KIEFFER, will then focus more specifically on their areas of responsibility.

First of all, I should emphasise our Organisation's **long-standing commitment** to the learning and teaching of modern languages. The importance of modern languages in furthering "a greater understanding of one another among the peoples of Europe" is recognised in **the Cultural Convention of 1954**. This international treaty is the very basis of our Organisation's work on education and culture.

This long-standing commitment has been reflected in the various projects on modern languages. And only last year our Education Committee decided to undertake, as part of its programme until the Year 2000, **a new project** on modern languages which will be based on the conclusions and recommendations of this Conference. The Committee feels that priority should be given to the **piloting and introduction of the Common Framework and the European Language Portfolio**. The new project could culminate in a **European Year of Languages in the Year 2001**.

The Council of Europe is very fortunate because it has **two distinct fora** for its work on modern languages - each with its own specificities and strengths:

- (i) **the Council for Cultural Co-operation and its Education Committee** which involve all of the States party to the European Cultural Convention;
- (ii) **the European Centre for Modern Languages** in Graz, which is the subject of an enlarged Partial Agreement and involves, at present, 23 States.

We must do all in our power to ensure that there are **effective synergies and complementarity** between these two sets of activities.

Furthermore, the Council of Europe must - repeat must - take account of the ambitious programmes which are under way in **the European Union**. At a time of scarce resources, it is good common sense and sound management for international institutions to **share information and expertise**, to **work together** - and whenever possible - to **establish joint activities**. Not only will we avoid duplication of effort, we will also **enrich each other's work** because each institution brings - to this co-operation - its own specific approaches, experiences, programmes and networks. I was heartened by the very positive remarks on Tuesday afternoon of my good friend, Domenico LENARDUZZI.

I also hope that, in the next phase of work on modern languages, we will find ways of working more closely with **national cultural institutes** and **international non-governmental organisations**, in particular associations of language teachers.

## THE CHALLENGE OF THE NEW EUROPE

I remember attending the final conference of our last project on modern languages, which was held in this hemicycle in 1988. Then we were working with a much smaller number of countries, and, in effect, the Council of Europe was **the Council of only half of Europe**.

As a result of the far-reaching changes in Central and Eastern Europe, our Organisation has become the **widest intergovernmental and interparliamentary forum** in our continent. 44 States now take part in our education programme, and the number will rise to 47 when Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia accede to the European Cultural Convention next week. In short, the Council of Europe has become a **pan-European organisation**, and the region served by our education programme ranges from Reykjavik to Berlin and Warsaw to Vladivostok - and from North Cape to Malta and Cyprus, and soon to Baku, Tbilissi and Yerevan. We are, therefore, confronted with a much **greater diversity of national situations** than in the past, and some of these situations are very daunting indeed. They call for generosity and solidarity.

The title of our Conference is "Language Learning for a New Europe". And I would like to recall **the Council of Europe's vision of the New Europe** which was proclaimed at the First Summit of our Heads of State and Government in Vienna in 1993. They looked forward to a continent where "all of our countries are committed to pluralist and parliamentary democracy, the indivisibility and universality of human rights the rule of law, and a common cultural heritage enriched by its diversity". As John TRIM reminded us yesterday, the Council of Europe is **not a neutral value-free forum**. It is the author of the European Convention on Human Rights and the home of the European Court of Human Rights, and the values of the Convention permeate all of the activities in the Organisation's work programme.

The "common cultural heritage enriched by its diversity" mentioned by the Vienna Summit is reflected in **the increasing number of Threshold Levels**, which now includes the languages of some of our new partner countries: Estonian, Latvian, Lithuanian and Russian. There are plans to prepare Threshold Levels for Hungarian, Polish, Albanian and Ukrainian and perhaps also Romanian. It is unthinkable that the Council of Europe should withdraw from this important area of activities, and it may be that the production of further Waystages, Threshold Levels and Vantage Levels should become a permanent activity in its own right: what we call, in Council of Europe jargon, "a service activity" with its own budget.

## THE EUROPEAN DIMENSION OF EDUCATION

European co-operation and integration are now **part of the daily lives** of governments, business people, trade unions, professional groups and private citizens.

In addition to such well established institutions as the Council of Europe, the European Union and the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (the OSCE), there is an increasing number of **regional initiatives between neighbouring countries** eg. the Barents Region in Northern Europe, the Baltic Region, the Central European Initiative, the Danube Region, the Carpathian Euro-Region, and the Black Sea Region.

Co-operation is, of course, not limited to national and regional authorities. **Business and industry** across Europe are seeking mergers and new partnerships, and there has been a marked growth of **scientific and technological co-operation** through such bodies as the European Organisation for Nuclear Research and the European Space Agency.

Furthermore, professional associations, trade unions and private citizens have also realised that there is strength in numbers and that people with similar interests can benefit from a **pooling of ideas and from joint action**. Thus, there are now European political groups, European trade union groupings, European

employers' organisation, and European professional associations.

In particular, there is a growing number of **European educational associations and networks** like the European Parents' Association, the Organising Bureau of European Schools Students' Unions, the European Association of Teachers, the Association for Teacher Education in Europe, the European Secondary Heads' Association, the European Bureau of Adult Education, the European Rectors' Conference, and the European Educational Publishers' Group. My colleagues and I are in touch with over 80 of these international non-governmental organisations, and their number increases every month.

In short, our lives are taking on "**a living European dimension**", and this is true of our education systems.

For a long time, the European dimension of education was seen as **a simple "education for reconciliation and better understanding"**. It had little official recognition, and it interested only a few idealists and a few teachers. Today, the importance of the European dimension is fully recognised by Ministers of Education and the European Institutions. It is **a dynamic evolving concept** which is concerned with the preparation of our young people for life in a democratic, multilingual and increasingly complex Europe. It has important implications not only for the content of curricula but also for school organisation, school-leaving examinations, guidance and extra-curricular activities.

Implicit in the European dimension of education is the idea of **links, exchanges, mobility and partnerships**, and ambitious initiatives are under way across Europe to:

- (i) develop school links and exchanges;
- (ii) help university students to spend periods of study in other European countries;
- (iii) foster co-operation among European universities and post-graduate institutions;
- (iv) facilitate the recognition of higher education qualifications.

In this context, I would like to draw your attention to **the new joint Council of Europe / UNESCO Convention on the Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications in the Europe Region**. This pioneering initiative was opened for signature last week, and it brings up-to-date and will eventually replace the existing conventions of the two organisations.

The Council of Europe has long recognised the strategic contribution which modern languages can make to international understanding, co-operation and mobility. We are convinced that a knowledge of modern languages is **one of the key competences** which all of us will need for study, training, work, research, leisure and everyday living in the New Europe.

Programmes to promote an awareness of Europe must not, in turn, generate Eurocentric or selfish attitudes. And the Council of Europe recommends that education systems should encourage all young Europeans to see themselves "not only as citizens of their own regions and countries, but also as **citizens of Europe and the wider world**". If Europe is to co-operate with other continents and compete successfully in world markets, our citizens will need a global vision, sophisticated intercultural skills and a knowledge of non-European languages.

## **LANGUAGE AND IDENTITY**

In the present volatile situation in Europe, there is **a new sensitivity about identity**.

Identity is a complex concept which usually covers: language, religion, a shared memory, and a sense of history - sometimes of historical grievance and even revenge. It can assert itself in a destructive and violent way at the expense of the identity of others. Who are the "others"? Migrants, immigrants, refugees and minorities - usually people who speak a different language. One of the greatest challenges facing Europe is **how can we live together harmoniously in multicultural and multilingual societies**, and the Council is concerned by the resurgence of xenophobia, racism and anti-semitism across our continent.

The Council of Europe is receiving an increasing number of requests from its new partner countries for advice and support for **the formulation of language policies in multilingual societies**. These requests are likely to continue in the near future, and they are important for stability, democratic security and peace in our continent. As the Council of Europe's **Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities** of 1995 emphasises, "a pluralist and genuinely democratic society should not only respect the ethnic, cultural, **linguistic** and religious identity of each person belonging to a national minority, but also create appropriate conditions enabling them to express, preserve and develop this identity".

## **DISSEMINATION**

I would like to end with one of my biggest concerns - even an obsession: dissemination. The Council of Europe's activities are in vain if their results are not known to, and used by, member States and their citizens. In the next two or more years, we must make a determined effort to **improve the dissemination of the results of our work on modern languages**.

This can be done through:

- (i) the new mailing-list which is in preparation for our reports on modern languages. All of you will be added to this list;
- (ii) our new quarterly information bulletin on the Council of Europe's education programme;
- (iii) our new Web Site on the Internet where our key documents are available in both French and English;
- (iv) the effective use of CD-ROM and multi-media presentations of the sort which Gé STOKS introduced on the first day of this conference;
- (v) the establishment of a network of specialised education depository libraries;
- (vi) co-operation with commercial publishers;
- (vii) the organisation of national information seminars;
- (viii) joint activities with non-governmental organisations, in particular association of teachers of modern languages.

If we are to seize the exciting new opportunities for co-operation within Europe and between Europe and other continents, we must overcome the barriers of ignorance and prejudice, of apathy and pessimism. It has been said that "true co-operation calls for a meeting of minds, and **minds cannot meet unless they can communicate**". Helping them to communicate is one of our most urgent and challenging tasks.



## **2. PLANNING FUTURE WORK BY MR JOSEPH SHEILS, HEAD OF THE MODERN LANGUAGE SECTION, COUNCIL OF EUROPE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Having completed the stocktaking of our activities regarding the priority areas of the Project, and having examined the feasibility of the Framework and Portfolio proposals, we now turn to a consideration of future action, i.e. What, in concrete terms, might a new modern languages project do? We need to identify specific priorities for the next three or four years, while also bearing in mind the longer term perspective.

The conclusions and recommendations of the Modern Languages Project Group in the Final Report are offered once again as a starting point for your deliberations on a new Project. National delegations may, of course, wish to propose amendments, additions, deletions or emphasise certain areas which correspond to their particular priorities and concerns. The wishes of national authorities are paramount in planning future activities of the Council of Europe in modern languages, and it is the conclusions and recommendations of this intergovernmental Conference which will provide the necessary orientation for planning our activities.

My task this morning is simply to recall the aims of this third phase. After doing so I will briefly outline the basic parameters within which any new Modern Language Project will have to operate. Finally, I will very briefly synthesise the main suggestions contained in the Final Report of the Project Group concerning future action by the Council of Europe in modern languages.

### **AIMS OF PHASE III**

You will remember that the conclusions and policy recommendations of the Conference are directed towards three different levels of decision making:

- (i) educational authorities in member States regarding policy development;
- (ii) the language teaching profession regarding practices (objectives, methodology, assessment..);
- (iii) the Council of Europe regarding its programme of international co-operation for future work concerning the development and implementation of policies.

The first two will provide a framework to guide longer term work, and this final phase provides an opportunity to review further, if necessary, areas addressed in the earlier phases of the Conference. As you know, it is hoped that the final Conclusions and Recommendations will also form the basis for a possible new Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers concerning modern languages - to replace the current Recommendation which dates from 1982. The Conference, therefore, might usefully indicate those areas to which particular attention might be paid in any **new** Recommendation, should the Committee of Ministers decide on this course of action.

The third category concerns Recommendations addressed specifically to the Council of Europe with regard to its new medium-term Project. The proposals of the Modern Languages Project Group in this respect are presented in chapter 10, section 4 of the Final Report. You are asked to examine these, and it is hoped that they will be helpful to the Conference in making **its** Recommendations. The priorities identified by this assembly will be significant for the planning of a new medium-term Modern Languages Project under the aegis of the CDCC and its specialised Education Committee.

### **WHAT ARE THE PARAMETERS FOR PLANNING FUTURE WORK?**

The Secretariat and the Committees which direct its activities need to know not only to what extent the current project has achieved its objectives, but also what remains to be done or what new tasks are to be undertaken, and how future work might best be carried out. In making recommendations for future medium term action it is useful to bear in mind the broad parameters within which any new project must operate. We need to consider the criteria which the Council of Europe expects new projects to respect.

### **Project criteria**

Criteria to guide the planning of future projects have been outlined in the strategy for action prepared by the Education Committee in setting out its priorities for the years 1997 - 2000.

Future projects will be of shorter duration than has previously been the case, i.e. 3 - 4 years. This means that our next medium term project would normally finish in the year 2000 or 2001 at the latest.

Projects will have

- a clearly defined set of objectives; the extent to which these objectives are met will be evaluated ;
- working methods must be cost effective, making the best use of necessarily limited resources ;
- target groups must be clearly defined and duplication with existing work must be avoided ;
- expected outcomes and their likely impact should be clearly set out. Effective dissemination of the results is considered essential and will be examined in order to assess their impact in member States.

Projects will be managed by a small project group of experts and must respect their timetable.

It is important to bear in mind the necessarily limited financial and human resources likely to be available to any new project. While it is valuable to have a range of proposals to guide longer term planning, it is important also to be realistic and extremely **focused** in relation to what should and can actually be undertaken in the **short term**.

### **The political dimension**

The importance of acknowledging the political dimension of our work in modern languages has been clearly stated in Maitland Stobart's presentation. The Modern Languages Projects of the Council of Europe can never be concerned merely to improve language teaching as an end in itself - although this is clearly very important. All our work has to be placed in the context of the overarching goals of the Council of Europe, i.e. to promote human rights, fundamental freedoms and pluralist democracy, to promote mutual understanding and respect among the peoples of Europe, and to seek joint solutions to common problems in our rapidly changing societies.

Of course, it is the solidity of our work on the technical level, and its practical usefulness to people working in the field of language teaching, that raises our work above mere political rhetoric. However, the political dimension **is** present and needs to be highlighted as an important aspect of the value which member governments derive from supporting Council of Europe activities in modern languages. This is one further aspect to bear in mind in proposing conclusions and recommendations.

## **THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MODERN LANGUAGES PROJECT GROUP FOR FUTURE ACTION IN THE FIELD (FINAL REPORT, CH. 10)**

The proposals for a follow-up to the current Project outlined in the Final Report of the Project Group might be synthesised under three broad headings:

- 1 - dissemination of the results of the Project
- 2 - the development and promotion of European language policies
- 3 - the implementation of policies in practice

## 1. Dissemination

The Final Report stresses the importance of the widest possible dissemination of the results of this Project and Maitland Stobart has outlined our plans to develop an effective strategy in this regard. We welcome your suggestions and recommendations and look forward to your co-operation in the dissemination process.

## 2. The development and promotion of language policies

Policy **development** activities cover four main domains:

- (i) the development of models for the specification of appropriate objectives based on learners' needs, i.e. Threshold level and related Waystage and Vantage Level specifications; requests continue to be received from national authorities for further work in this area

- new Threshold levels
- revision of existing models
- Waystage and Vantage levels for various languages

As Maitland Stobart has indicated, the Education Committee has recently suggested that this work may now have developed as a **permanent service activity** rather than as an activity belonging to a project, which of course would help to assure the place of this important work in our programme of activities.

- (ii) the elaboration of common instruments - both conceptual (Framework) and practical (Portfolio), to assist member States in promoting plurilingualism and pluriculturalism.

The Common European Framework will facilitate mutual information and coordination of effort among authorities and institutions throughout Europe.

- the Conference has already considered the possibility of pilot applications of the draft Common European Framework with a view to its further revision and subsequent general introduction.
- Importance is attached to the continuing development of cooperation with the **European Union** in any future stage of this work which may be approved.

The European Language Portfolio is intended to motivate and assist citizens in improving and diversifying their linguistic and cultural competence. This would encourage and provide recognition for a wider range of cultural and language learning achievements than a record of formal qualifications alone can provide.

- The Conference has also considered the possible further development and introduction, on an experimental basis, of a European Language Portfolio.
- If it is recommended to proceed with this, the Project Group has suggested that the Portfolio might be introduced on a large scale as a contribution to the proposed **European Year of Languages in 2001**.

- (iii) the preparation of policy recommendations and guidelines - which is, in effect, the function of this intergovernmental Conference. A CDCC Project is unique in that it alone can provide a forum for creating a consensus among a large number of States -at present 44 and soon to be 47, and of course there are a number of observer States, including Canada which is strongly represented at this Conference, and which contributes in a significant manner to our activities. It is conceivable also that our work could contribute to a Resolution of the Parliamentary Assembly on language learning and teaching.

Our future work will, no doubt, be significant in helping to develop an international consensus on key aspects of language policies. As John Trim has reminded us, we need to ask ourselves whether current policies are adequate to deal with the new European situation, and what changes, if any, might be made and with what predicted practical effect.

- (iv) finally, an activity treated in the Final Report although not specifically addressed in the Conclusions and Recommendations, concerns the normative aspect of language policies. This involves expert assistance with the development of national language policies in the context of linguistic legislation in multicultural and multilingual societies; the experience and expertise built up within the Project is increasingly called upon - particularly in the area of bilingual education policies, and the assessment and certification of proficiency in official state languages for citizenship or occupational purposes. These activities add an important political dimension to our work on language policies.

#### **Activities aimed at facilitating policy implementation**

As indicated in the Final Report, these have been concerned primarily with teacher education and training which has been identified as a key element in effective curriculum innovation. 31 workshops with related action programmes have been organised, and a number of networks have been set up on specific aspects of curriculum development.

The Project Group requests the CDCC to continue to support its member Governments in developing appropriate and effective programmes for all involved in teacher training. Proposals include the further development of the Teacher Bursary Scheme which is coordinated by another Section in this Directorate, the organisation of workshops and support for international networks of teacher trainers, and of course, the dissemination and application of good practice.

#### **EUROPEAN CENTRE FOR MODERN LANGUAGES (ECML)**

In this respect it is important to note that the **ECML** is rapidly developing its work in policy implementation, and in carrying out valuable action research into the effectiveness of policies. The Centre has continued work on specific priority areas initiated in workshops or networks in the Modern Languages Project. Undoubtedly there are further possibilities for co-operation and complementarity with regard to future action, not least in disseminating the results of this Project, and in the piloting of the draft Common European Framework and European Language Portfolio, if the Conference recommends further work in these areas.

It is appropriate, therefore, that the Executive Director of the ECML should inform delegates of the general orientation of the Centre's activities so that the Conference can note the possibilities for developing further co-operation between the CDCC project in Strasbourg and the ECML in Graz in the follow-up to this Project. Clearly, an effective complementarity will need to be developed in responding to the needs of member States, and the respective role of both of these 'arms' of the Council of Europe will be carefully considered in planning future work in modern languages.

A coherent synergy in our own activities will, of course, be beneficial in developing further our co-

operation with other international organisations, and in particular the European Union, as well as with instances such as the OSCE, UNESCO, NGOs and relevant pan-European consortia or associations.

The Conference, in considering its recommendations concerning a new medium-term project in Strasbourg might indicate priorities for action with regard to the twin aspects of policy **development** and policy **implementation**, and the degree of importance to be accorded to each of these two aspects in a new CDCC Project.

### **Conclusion**

Now that the results of the Project 'Language Learning for European Citizenship', and the Conclusions and Recommendations of the Project Group, have been presented to this Intergovernmental Conference, we will shortly reach the point where the Conference must arrive at its conclusions and recommendations which will provide a framework for international cooperation.

The Secretariat looks forward, therefore, to your recommendations, for you represent national authorities and the community of interests in the field of modern languages, a community which shares the central aim of promoting increasingly effective plurilingualism and pluriculturalism in the new Europe.

### 3. COMPLEMENTARITY BETWEEN THE ACTIVITIES OF THE EUROPEAN CENTRE FOR MODERN LANGUAGES AND MODERN LANGUAGES PROJECT BY MR CLAUDE KIEFFER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, EUROPEAN CENTRE FOR MODERN LANGUAGES, GRAZ

In the light of the discussions last November, it appeared that the relation between the two types of activities might be defined in terms of **functions** and that an effective **division of labour** might result which would not blur the specific identity of each set of activities.

This division of labour is desirable for obvious political and financial reasons: it is important to avoid at all costs **useless duplication or overlapping of activities**, and it is clearly in our interest to achieve **the best possible interaction and complementarity**.

The two activities do not involve the same number of member states or participants: the CDCC is currently 47-strong, and, I am told, will exceed 50 in the near future, compared to 23 at present for the Graz Centre, with good chances of approaching 30 in the future.

I already had the occasion, at the CDCC meeting last January, to evoke some of the functions of the Graz Centre, but I shall now be more specific.

#### **A training function**

How is this function exercised?

First of all, through a varied programme of workshops and seminars in Graz and through activities elsewhere, notably in a number of countries of central and eastern Europe.

The year 1997 marked the first time that the Graz Centre turned outwards: to Warsaw for example, where a workshop took place in March in conjunction with a major publisher of school books; to the Russian Federation, where a workshop will be held in September in St. Petersburg in co-operation with a relatively new institution, the International Centre for Educational Innovation of the Herzen University of Teaching; to Hungary, where a workshop is jointly planned for this autumn with the Hungarian Ministry of Education and the European Youth Centre; and to Sarajevo, where a follow-up and dissemination workshop is scheduled for the end of the year in co-operation with several local partners (public institutions, international organisations, foundations, NGOs).

Our training function also takes other forms in the context of our co-operation with states facing urgent needs, for example Bosnia and Herzegovina, already cited earlier and the beneficiary of a training programme to help rebuild an adequate professional basis in modern languages at all levels of the education system. Another case is Albania, where the ECML offers training sessions for experts reorganising modern language curricula and arranges *ad hoc* expert visits.

Actually, this training function has already been exercised in co-operation with the Modern Languages Project Group, because since 1995 the Graz Centre has hosted and/or financed a number of activities linked to the Council of Europe's New-Style workshops (B workshop, interim meetings and a workshop for following up and disseminating results).

The ECML's Governing Board has repeatedly spoken out in favour of such co-operation, which might grow with the implementation of the Common European Framework of Reference, which reflects a large number of the Graz Centre's current priority action themes. Co-operation might also progress in the development and use of the European Languages Portfolio.

The complementarity and interaction that we are calling for might really be achieved in the course of the development of these two key Council of Europe instruments.

### **A research function**

Simultaneously with this vital training function, the Graz Centre also intends to step up its activity in the area of research - not basic research, which is not its domain, but **research/action**, the results of which are likely to be of practical interest to teachers and decision-makers in the area of modern languages.

In this connection, the Centre would finance the work and publications of recognised research teams on themes falling within the Centre's scope, for example the theme "learning to learn", "how to introduce change into education systems", "language policies", etc. An initial project in this area will be carried out in 1997.

Starting in 1998, the Centre might also sponsor young researchers, especially from central and eastern Europe, on specific programmes of research/action which directly meet priority needs of the countries of this region and are also part of the ECML's current activities. I am thinking in particular of further training for teachers and curriculum reform.

The Graz Centre has in fact already begun to finance field studies: for example, a study on basic and further training for language teachers in four countries of central and eastern Europe has been published and was circulated at the Second Annual Colloquy.

In 1997, three publications of this type are planned, which can be included in the category of research/action projects in view of their very practical objective.

Where appropriate, and in specific situations, this research function might also be used for the future work of the Council of Europe's Modern Languages Project Group.

### **A function of providing and disseminating information and networking**

This is a function of fundamental importance, because if the Centre is unable to provide its current or potential partners with up-to-date information on its own work and that of the Council of Europe and other European institutions active in the area, it will not be fulfilling one of its central missions. For this reason, we are planning eventually to create **a virtual documentation centre**, a project which might go hand in hand with the one which the CILT (London) has just submitted to the European Commission (*Educational Multimedia Task Force*) and which is entitled "*Linguanet-EU: the virtual resource for language teaching, learning and research*".

The wide dissemination of the information which the Centre produces, whether workshop reports, the proceedings of colloquies, field studies, reports on research/action or booklets, is **a vital dimension of our work**, and it seems logical to make use of the Internet site which the CDCC now has, and which has an entry on the ECML.

The first workshop reports will soon be available on this site, but the Centre's Secretariat is perfectly aware of the major effort which has still to be made in this domain.

I would also point out that, since April 1995, the Graz Centre has been disseminating on a relatively large scale Council of Europe publications in the area of modern languages; the fact that the Centre receives more than 800 people in Graz every year, many of whom have potential to "spread the word", shows the importance of this effort.

Lastly, as the programme of international workshops that we are setting up in Graz is, for the moment at any rate, the ECML's main activity, it is essential to ensure that follow-up activities are possible and that the participants are able to pursue their contacts, exchanges and projects in the aftermath of the workshops.

From this year, the Graz Centre is sufficiently budgeted and is flexible enough to **set up networks and carry through follow-up projects**; a number of working groups have already been created, and follow-up projects are under way which will eventually produce practical tools for teachers of modern languages in Europe.

In fact, among the tasks of the future "Director of Studies" to be appointed in Graz in a few months' time, will be the dissemination of workshop results and the Centre's publications, encouragement of the creation of follow-up networks and leadership of their activities.

## **Conclusion**

You will have realised that the European Centre for Modern Languages, through its Governing Board or its Secretariat, is perfectly aware of the importance of complementarity and interaction between its own activities and those of the Council for Cultural corporation.

To my mind, there is no rivalry between the two types of activities. Those of the Graz Centre are very specific, because thanks to an annual programme of international workshops, an annual colloquy, activities conducted elsewhere to meet the individual or urgent needs of its partner countries, field studies, research/action projects, ad hoc visits of experts and a documentation centre, it helps to disseminate good practice for modern language teaching and acts as a pan-European forum for exchange and discussion. The Centre's current role is required to evolve, notably as a result of the accession of new states and changes which will not fail to affect the teaching and learning of languages in the various regions of Europe. The Centre's Governing Board and Secretariat are, as I have already pointed out, very eager to co-operate with the Modern Languages Section in order to ensure the best possible coordination between these two types of activities.

I shall close by voicing my wish and my hope that successful co-ordination and fruitful complementarity might also be conducive to persuading states which have not yet done so to join the Enlarged Partial Agreement on the European Centre for Modern Languages without delay, so as to make the most of the co-operation which has already begun to emerge and which is destined to grow between Strasbourg and Graz, the two inseparable partners in a single, vital Council of Europe activity.



## **VII. COMMISSION REPORTS**

### **1. COMMISSION A: (Pre) Primary education (4-10/11)**

#### **PHASE I**

##### **INTRODUCTION**

The members of the three groups of Commission A found themselves in the fortunate position of being able to generally agree to the conclusions contained in the Final Report prepared by John Trim.

The activities within the Project 'Language Learning for European Citizenship' - 5 workshops, 12 research and development programmes and work on the compendium - have led to the consensus that language learning should be seen as an integral of the children's education in primary schools, and, where possible, in pre-primary institutions.

##### **AIMS**

Teaching a foreign language for learning must be addressed to all pupils at the primary level. The learning of languages at this level should reflect the linguistic diversity in Europe and no single model for a whole country should be proposed.

In view of the long-term objective that every European child should learn two foreign languages, the first language should be introduced sufficiently early to allow the learning of a second language at the age of 10 or 11.

The issue of choice is highly complex and is of course the responsibility of the Member States. But decision makers should consider the consequence of the choice of language on issues such as teacher education and continuity. Also there should be awareness that free choice may lead to the dominance of one language. Diversification of language education is in principle to be regarded as a desirable aim.

Whereas early foreign language education can support the learning of other languages at a later stage, choice of first and second language could be based on various criteria such as:

- neighbourhood
- economic considerations
- political considerations
- historical considerations
- local considerations.

The first foreign language should not necessarily be one of the widely used languages, and the two languages should belong to two different linguistic families.

##### **ORGANISATION**

The organisation of foreign language education will vary from country to country, but experience has shown that it is particularly successful

- if it starts before the age of nine
- if it is integrated into the primary curriculum and
- if it meets the needs of specific target groups.

However systematic learning of languages should come after literacy in the mother tongue has been achieved.

Close attention should be paid to the issue of continuity from the primary to the secondary levels both in the provision of the languages taught, and in the content and methodology used.

On the content level, it should be noted that the interculturality is an intrinsic part of early language learning since linguistic meaning is culture bound and cannot be taught independently of it.

In this respect, early foreign language learning does not differ from that at other levels.

The acquisition of linguistic competence must necessarily go together with an acceptance of the culture of which the language learnt is a part and at the same time its expression.

## **TEACHER EDUCATION**

Teacher training is an important issue. A condition of greatest importance for the successful introduction of FLE into the primary schools is the supply of suitably qualified teachers. These teachers have to be experts, both in primary education and in foreign language pedagogy. Emphasis should be put on their linguistic, intercultural and methodological competence.

One or two foreign languages should be included in primary teacher training: this would be optional for a transitional period but would subsequently become compulsory so as to ensure that at least one foreign language is taught to all primary school pupils.

Intensive in-service training could make use of communication technologies, and could be used in class by teachers who have inadequate language skills.

Measures should be taken to support the mobility of teachers.

Findings in research should be collected in a data-bank accessible through INTERNET to everybody involved (decision makers, teacher trainers, teachers, parents, etc).

The Commission stresses the necessity of setting up a NEW MODERN LANGUAGES PROJECT of the Council of Europe and plurilingual, intercultural education at the primary level should be one of the priority themes.

In this context, co-operation with the European Union will be helpful.

## **PHASE II**

The three groups appreciated the flexibility, richness and openness of the Framework and its usefulness to the development of multilingualism in Europe, as well as the possibility of adapting it to the specific needs of primary education.

To increase this scope for application in the primary sector and the impact of the Framework on teaching, the groups put forward a number of recommendations:

1. The specific nature of primary and pre-primary education should be properly taken into account, meaning the school and its environment and the learners themselves, their cognitive development and their specific needs.

2. To this end, the communication needs of the children should be taken into account, from the interaction necessary to school work (to understand instructions, for instance, and to be able to respond to them) to the language functions which require inventiveness, imagination and the use of language in play.
3. The role of parents as partners in education should not be overlooked. They seem to have been rather overlooked in the Framework.
4. The Framework should be a larger part of the cultural and intercultural component.
5. The term "foreign language" should be used with care, as multilingual situations exist in which a language other than someone's mother tongue is nonetheless not a foreign language for that person.
6. The legibility of the Framework should be improved through a glossary.
7. Use of the Framework as a teacher training instrument should be explicitly envisaged.

### **The Portfolio**

The groups considered that the Portfolio concept was an interesting and very useful one and that, like the Framework, it would be appropriate to make it specific to its target audience, namely children in primary education.

They unanimously reiterated that:

- the purpose of the Portfolio in primary education is to help and to encourage learning;
- they also recommended that the Portfolio take into account acquisitions, not deficiencies;
- in no circumstances may it be used for awarding marks or exercising discrimination;
  - the Portfolio remains an individual tool, the property of the learner;
  - the role of teachers and parents and the assistance they may give in building up Portfolios is clearly defined;
  - lastly, gradual serious and controlled trials of the Portfolios are to be undertaken before their general use is considered.

### **PHASE III**

In moving forward to the next phase of the project, it is important that linguistic initiatives do not become detached from broader initiatives on citizenship, cultural cooperation and other overarching objectives of the Council of Europe and that communication between East and West and between Europe and the rest of the world, and also internal communication between European bodies, including the council's own division is maintained at a high level.

An inventory of plurilinguism in Europe and associated plurilingual systems of education is needed. The Council should undertake the task with national agencies, taking into account the diversity of multilingual phenomena. Indeed multilingualism is not exclusively a transnational phenomenon. Multilingualism within countries, including minority and migrant languages must be addressed too. This is not a semantic question only, but it goes to the core of the conception of European plurilingualism

and pluriculturalism.

The work on the development of the common European Framework of Reference, the linked user guides and the European language portfolio should be taken forward and the Council is urged to engage in further research, development and trailing. Also, that the council assist Member states to focus on those aspects of the framework which individual Member states' needs dictate by providing expert advice and services as support and by encouraging the development of partnerships among Member states.

The Council is urged to assist the Member state in their efforts to promote early modern language learning and to contribute to the evaluation of how effective in terms of language acquisition an in terms of linguistic diversification early language programs are. Focus should be placed on the intercultural dimension of language learning and on the need for plurilingualism to be an integral part of schooling. Other key themes, like languages across the curriculum, the use of communication technologies and testing are to be related to the overarching principles mentioned above.

The Council is urged to help create tools and materials favouring language awareness programs and setting early language acquisition within the context of learner autonomy.

The Council's role of sharing expertise, and of widely disseminating examples of good practice as well as of key finding in ways that are complementary with those of other relevant bodies is to be further encouraged and strengthened.

The setting up of data banks and effective networking could effectively contribute to disseminating the work and results of workshops and research undertaken.

## **2. COMMISSION B: Lower Secondary education (10/11-15/16)**

### **PHASE I**

As agreed, each of the three working groups took a different starting point for their discussions on the conclusions and recommendations of the Modern Languages Project. Working Group B1 discussed the presentations of the Priority Themes as given during the morning session. Group B2 started with Chapter 9 as the basis for its discussions and Group B3 with Chapter 10.

The Commission was unanimous in its appreciation of the report on Project "Language learning for European citizenship" as presented through the Priority Themes.

The following issues were raised during the working groups' discussions referring in particular to the lower secondary education:

#### **LEARNING TO LEARN**

The recommendations concerning "Learning to learn" were supported because it was felt to be of particular importance for this level of education, which is a transition between primary and upper secondary level. It was suggested that the "Learning to learn" concept should be geared to the needs of the pupils in the lower secondary age-group.

In addition, the recommendations should be supplemented with the following points:

- i. the component of "Learning to learn" should be incorporated into the curriculum for all subjects not just for Modern Languages;
- ii. this component should also be an important part of the initial and in-service training/education of teachers;

It was considered that "Learning to learn" should be continuously developed from primary up to adult education.

#### **BILINGUAL EDUCATION**

The Commission supports the recommendations concerning bilingual education, whilst recognising the complexity of this issue, and stresses the need for continued attention to be paid to it by future language programmes undertaken by the Council of Europe. Although the concept of bilingual education is explained in the Final Report, the term still caused some confusion in the course of the discussions.

The Commission suggests the following additions:

- i. there is a need for closer co-operation between language teachers and other teachers in order to implement the idea of "Language across the curriculum";
- ii. co-operation between schools which provide bilingual programmes needs to be increased at the local, regional, national and international levels.

#### **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES**

The Commission confirmed the recommendations concerning the Information and Communication Technologies contained in the Final Report and particularly stressed the statement that they should be

based on a sound pedagogical basis, especially at lower secondary level.

## **EDUCATIONAL LINKS AND EXCHANGES**

The Commission confirmed the recommendations in the Final Report and stressed the need for the full integration of educational links and exchanges in the curricula and their thorough preparation and follow-up work.

## **TEACHER EDUCATION**

The Commission recommended that:

- i. teacher education should be seen as a lifelong process;
- ii. the term "teacher training" contained in the document should be replaced by "teacher education" or "teacher development";
- iii. teachers should also be encouraged to analyse their own language learning experience as part of their ongoing education.

## **PRIMARY EDUCATION**

One of the working groups endorsed the recommendations concerning the introduction of foreign language learning into primary education but suggested that particular efforts should be made to reinforce the diversity of languages offered at primary level. This has consequences for the lower secondary level, since some of the less commonly taught languages would not be chosen at that level any longer.

## **DISSEMINATION**

The Commission strongly supports the suggestion to disseminate the results of the Modern Languages Project with a view to ensuring that they reach the widest possible audience, in particular, the policy-makers, the teachers, the support workers etc.

## **INTERCULTURAL AND SOCIO-CULTURAL COMPETENCE**

The Commission recommends that various ways of recording intercultural and socio-cultural experiences should be examined, including the extent to which Portfolios can be used to document this type of educational experience.

## **ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS**

- Whereas the development of partial skills may play a role, for instance in the area of bilingual education, partial competences should not be offered in lower secondary education if this means the teaching of separate skills. However, in exams separate credits should be given to achievements in one or more language skills.
- Since very practical tasks are sometimes stressed in language learning at the lower secondary level experiences for primary education show that the imaginative and creative aspect of language learning (quality of texts and tasks) is also important and deserves to be further developed.
- In the lower secondary sector block lessons and periods of intensive language learning should be made

possible.

## **PHASE II**

### **1. THE FRAMEWORK**

The Commission considers the Framework to be a wonderful instrument for programming language courses and to be an excellent source of ideas for curriculum developers, textbook writers, initial and in-service teacher trainers, examiners and, lastly, educational policy-makers.

The Commission encourages the writers and users of the Framework to continue their trials and management, each in their own sphere of activity.

It seems obvious that the Framework fills a vacuum which existed previously in the programming of language courses.

In practice, there had not been any previous agreement on the meta-language to use, the levels, profiles, fields... in short, while all the categories listed were known, they were not included in such a coherent and transparent collection.

It is self-evident that the complexity of the document and the desire to make it comprehensive do not make it very easy to use. Hence the usefulness of the user guides which the Project Group had the good idea of commissioning, which give all involved in language education a more personalised view of the problems tackled, as well as filling certain gaps.

The question of the distribution of the Framework was dealt with. Although regarded as a reference instrument which might be useful to a very large number of users, a choice of preferred users will have to be made for the Framework. It seems that it is possible to agree that its usefulness is greatest for curriculum developers, textbook writers and examiners.

### **EXPERIMENTATION**

In any case, it will be useful to collect and analyse national experience of the use of the Framework in order to verify whether it is genuinely practicable and whether it has shortcomings and areas of light or shade. In this context, modern communication methods could make the exchanges more rapid. One example is electronic mail, but another is the development of computerised protocols with the support of appropriate "writer" software. The dissemination methods used so far will, however, also be able to be used again: workshops, seminars, conferences, particularly within the context of the activities of the European Centre for Modern Languages in Graz.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

An objection was raised to the financial implications of using the two documents, Framework and Portfolio.

A considerable amount of time might go by before all the unwieldiness which derives from the traditionalism of the teacher's task is removed and before the funds are released to enable management to start.

### **IMPACT**

The very title of the Framework introduces a principle of order: "Learning, Teaching, Assessment. A Common European Framework of Reference". Each word in the title has its own importance. The Commission believes that, while there will be no immediate impact on the ordinary language teacher,



the Framework as a source of ideas will prove as relevant as the threshold levels were 20 years ago. Examples in Spain and the United Kingdom were cited to confirm that those countries' education authorities have already begun to explain how to use the Framework.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

A suggestion was made for a bibliography to be drawn up to provide further information to users of the Framework.

A glossary would also be welcome.

## **2. PORTFOLIO**

The Commission congratulated the designers of the Portfolio and invited them to continue their research in this field, since the Portfolio gave learners highly significant encouragement. Learners will be better motivated if they know that their linguistic and socio-cultural achievements, formal and informal, will be taken into account.

A clear and detailed attestation of certain skills will encourage learners to take their own learning and self-assessment in hand, and it will tie in with the concern expressed in Phase I to promote the process of learning how to learn. On this point, there is absolute unanimity among all the working groups. The Portfolio thus has to be regarded mainly as a "structured curriculum vitae". It will have the same credibility, particularly if it displays the prestige logo of the Council of Europe.

On the other hand, its role as an official certification document does raise a problem. Political, institutional and administrative implications likely to give rise to some friction between national certifying bodies and official national or international examiners were mentioned.

As for the Framework of Reference, the Commission suggests that any changes felt to be necessary during the trial period should be the subject of a close study co-ordinated by the Council of Europe. Certain changes might affect, inter alia, the grids used, the levels of which ought to allow for the achievements of pupils, their age and their maturity. Thought should also be given to the frequency of marks and to the type of work taken into account.

The question of wording was also tackled. The choice of terms is an awkward problem, on which agreement will also have to be reached, since this tool should be comprehensible to all users.

In any case, there is unanimity, and I stress this again, on the educational usefulness of the Portfolio, but also on the benefits which this document might have for future employers. In this latter case, the legibility of the document will have to be made appropriate to its user.

The question of minority languages was dealt with. Is it really an insurmountable problem for children who speak a different language at home from the one they use at school?

As in the case of the Framework, the problem of financing was dealt with, and certain participants expressed doubts about the possibility of immediate use in their countries, bearing in mind the budgetary difficulties they are experiencing.

Lastly, the complementary nature of the Framework and Portfolio was highlighted.

Where the Portfolio is concerned, the problem of the document's legibility is probably greater than in the case of the Framework, which, in the view of a large number of participants, remains a more theoretical

document, whereas the Portfolio is regarded by all as a practical instrument directly usable by the learner.

### PHASE III

Commission B strongly supports the continuation of the work in Modern Languages undertaken by the CDCC. It recommends, in particular, the setting up of a new medium-term project with the necessary financial resources and staff for its successful implementation. It also recommends that the priority themes of the new medium-term project should be the following:

- i. diversification of language learning;
- ii. learning to learn including language awareness;
- iii. school links and exchanges;
- iv. interdisciplinarity.

#### Recommendations with regard to the Common European Framework and the European Language Portfolio

The Commission fully endorses Points 4.4 and 4.5 of the Recommendations in Chapter 10 of the Final Report. In addition, it wants to stress the strong interrelationship between the two instruments in terms of both the pedagogical function and the recording function, the two vital components in the language learning process. However, the financial implications must be taken into consideration.

The Commission recommends that, in the next medium-term project, the emphasis should be on the piloting and the dissemination of the Framework and the Portfolio, inter alia, through:

- i. leaflets and brochures for public relations purposes;
- ii. electronic media, such as CD-Rom and Internet;
- iii. a general users' guide and glossary;
- iv. a concise version of the users' guides;
- v. sending experts to national information events presenting these instruments.

An electronic discussion forum should be set up to discuss issues related to both instruments. This forum should be monitored by a group of experts invited by the Council of Europe.

The Commission recommends that politicians should be made aware of the fact that both instruments will ultimately have a considerable impact on the raising of the standards of language learning in the member States.

#### Dissemination of the results of the Modern Languages Project

The CDCC should facilitate the dissemination of information at national level by supporting and coordinating strategic planning and networking (eg through bilateral and multilateral partnerships), drawing on the experiences of the member States. Also, the Commission suggested that the Council of Europe could disseminate the results of the Modern Languages by making its publications available to national documentation and research centres, libraries, and teacher training institutions, etc.

The Commission recommends that, within the limits of available resources, every effort should be made to ensure complementarity between the work of the Council of Europe's Modern Languages Section and the European Centre for Modern Languages with regard to the organisation of further seminars, continued networking and the encouragement of action-research.

The CDCC should evaluate the results of the "new-style" workshop series. Within the framework of the new medium-term project, follow-up activities should be undertaken, where necessary, in order to maintain the innovative work and to disseminate the findings of the R and D work carried out between the paired "new-style" workshops in the member States.

#### Training of trainers

The CDCC should support teacher education by encouraging the training of the trainers (eg through international workshops, training guidelines and modules, networking of teacher trainers). The necessity for continuity in the initial and in-service training of teachers was stressed.

### **3. COMMISSION C: Upper Secondary Education (15/16-18/19)**

#### **PHASE I**

Commission C congratulates the Project Group on its excellent work on the Final Report and generally endorses the recommendations for a medium-term programme of co-operation in the field of language learning as set out in Chapter 10. The Commission does, however have a few suggestions for reinforcements and clarifications of the text.

In its discussion on the various areas covered by the recommendations Commission C decided to focus on the following points:

- bilingual education
- the role of educational links and exchanges
- teacher training

As regards the section on bilingual education, point 2.7 of Chapter 10 the Commission wishes to add the following indents

- that the use of a foreign language as a teaching medium be encouraged also in lesser-used languages
- that learners gain extra credit for work done in a bilingual environment.

A general comment from Commission C is that the upper secondary level, naturally, is the appropriate level at which to introduce bilingual education. Another comment is that bilingual education will become a natural component of school curricula only in so far as there are teachers who are motivated and possess the dual qualifications required to conduct it.

The Commission is pleased that stress is made in the recommendations not only on the need for in-service training modules but also for special provision in the initial training of teachers.

As a matter of clarification, Commission C wants the term "bilingual education" to be defined in the recommendations in line with what has been done in Chapter 9, point 5.2.5.

Regarding point 2.10, the role of educational links and exchanges, Commission C wants to underline the importance of both physical and virtual mobility of learners and teachers for the promotion of mutual knowledge and understanding between the peoples of Europe. It thus fully endorses the recommendations to integrate exchanges in the school ethos and curricula. Such an approach would be facilitated by a greater synergy between the Council of Europe's work in the field of language learning and its action ties on school links and exchanges - an aspect which Commission C wishes to see reflected in a new indent under point 2.10. Another indent should deal with the usefulness of guidance, and where appropriate practical experience for teachers, school managers and other administrative staff.

Under point 3, Teacher Training, Commission C wants greater emphasis to be put on the importance of sociocultural and intercultural competences. It thus suggests reinforcing the text by including recommendations on the promotion of

- exchanges between teacher trainers, administrators and teachers
- initiatives enabling future teachers to acquire experience abroad, such as assistanceship

-the design of teacher training programmes which develop the learners' capacity to present their own environment and culture.

Furthermore, Commission C wants to underline that teacher training should

-take into account new objectives and methods of language learning such as partial competences and diversification of teaching.

-make the best use of the new technologies with the aim of promoting the quality of teaching

Finally, it would be useful to introduce a mutually recognised accreditation system relating to periods of international experience undertaken during pre-service and in-service training.

## **PHASE II**

The three working groups of Commission C all highlighted the basic benefits of the Framework of Reference.

Two fields of application were mentioned:

1. (initial and in-service) teacher training: the Framework may be a highly useful instrument, a coherent and transparent source of ideas about teaching
2. the definition or revision of school curriculae.

The Framework, in its current form, is felt to be highly abstract and, for certain audiences at least, difficult to understand.

The "Learning to learn" and level system topics are considered to be particularly important at upper secondary level.

It is recommended that the Framework and the user guides be translated into national languages. There was common agreement that the Framework is suitable for field trials. A questionnaire should be attached to each user guide in order to collect feedback about its usefulness.

Where the Portfolio is concerned, the working groups of Commission C emphasised its educational value, and particularly its role in:

- learner motivation
- learner autonomy, to which it contributes particularly in the field of self-assessment.

Although some concerns were expressed about:

- the size of the Portfolio
- its setting up in practice
- the problems of validation of the assessments contained in the Portfolio
- the costs arising from its application,  
the proposed models were considered to be a good starting point for trials.

Support is therefore given to the recommendation that the Council of Europe take steps, in consultation with its member governments and with other groups of users concerned, to study implementation of a

pilot experiment in a number of countries with a view to introducing a European Language Portfolio on a large scale by the year 2001.

There is a wish to make the following additional proposals on the recommendations mentioned:

1. A three-year trial period seems adequate, but Community financing is essential and is appropriate to the spirit of the Portfolio project.
2. The trial should be conducted in countries in different language, status and financial positions and in situations of targeted teaching.

It is noted that the trials could be conducted in secondary education and in various languages.

3. During the next stages of the introduction of the Portfolio, a clear definition will have to be made of the party to whom the Portfolio is addressed and of the way in which the documents in the Portfolio are validated.
4. Where content is concerned, it is proposed that thought be given to including in the Portfolio references to knowledge forgotten and maintained.
5. It is also proposed that the advisability of preparing one or more guides for users of the Portfolio be studied.
6. A mechanism for collecting experience must be studied. Electronic mail will be useful here. A "new-style workshop" would be very appropriate, allowing for R and D work and e-mail contact between the workshops.

### **PHASE III**

1. Make the Framework and Portfolio the most important pursuit of the Council of Europe over the next 3 years whereby workshops etc. focus on the Framework and Portfolio where other topics in Chapter 10 point 4.1.2 are addressed in the context of the Framework and Portfolio.
2. Make sure all information relating to Framework and Portfolio are disseminated as widely as possible through INTERNET, newsletters etc in the upper sector and university sector.
3. Establish joint working groups between C of E and Commissions to further propote the adoption of the Portfolio and Framework.

Commission C chose to concentrate on four priority areas:

-bilingual teaching, teacher training, exchange education, and assessment.

It proposes the following activities:

1. Bilingual teaching

Committee C stresses the need to make a clear distinction between bilingual teaching in a multilingual environment and the use of a foreign language as a teaching language. The Council of Europe's work should ensure that all possible means are used to promote mobility for teachers in all subjects and not just language teachers. Pressure will have to be brought to bear on policy-makers to make the institutional arrangements for these exchanges.

It is proposed that a workshop bringing together exchange officials and linguists be set up to devise a new exchange policy for non-language teachers.

## 2. Teacher training

Committee C proposes setting up a data base on the basic and further training centres of the member countries of the Council of Europe, to be disseminated electronically or in the form of a directory. It recommends that the networks set up after the discussion or training workshop should continue to operate and be open to new members.

## 3. Exchange education

Committee C stresses that there is a particular need for improvement in the distribution of Council of Europe products in the area of exchange education.

Exchange education should be included in teachers' basic training and not just for language teachers. It seems vital to raise the awareness of administrative staff (head teachers, etc).

Some work will be required to assess the programmes linked to exchange education which should produce results before the European Reference Framework is introduced in 2001.

## 4. Assessment

Committee C proposes that the Council of Europe should consider incorporating a cultural aspect into the Framework's assessment tables in a form based on the linguistic assessment. It also proposes that a common Europe cultural reference system should be drawn up in a spirit of openness encouraging knowledge of other cultures.

The Council of Europe should endeavour to bring existing assessment systems into line with one another by analysing various examination systems in the light of the assessment scales of the Common Framework.



#### 4. COMMISSION D: Vocationally-oriented language learning and adult education

##### PHASE I

After the most lively deliberation, Commission D has come to the following conclusions:

1. Over the recent years the term "**adult education**" has become a catch-all word. As we remember it was first introduced as far back as 1971 but it has not been adequately defined. It has found its way in the official language of the Council of Europe in different meanings. Some experts unduly stress the school context, others believe that it should cover post-school and university education as well. It is complementary to compulsory education and provides for life-long opportunities to learn, to work and live in a multicultural society. It could be related to another very important issue of the day - continued education. The Commission admits that the concept of **adult learner** has not been fully developed and needs special attention of the CDCC.
2. *Commission D* approves of the content, ideas and recommendations of the Final Report, chapter 9 and chapter 10 in particular concerning general conclusions as well as recommendations and options for future actions (VOLL & Adult) / *see pages 49-52, 64, 25.*
3. *Commission D* expresses its unanimous support of most items relating to the priority themes presented at the plenary morning session. The three groups of the commission considered **VOLL and adult education** along the lines of the priority themes i.e. teacher training, objectives and assessment, learning to learn, bilingual education, information and communication technology and educational links and exchanges. Chapter 9 highlights the framework of the most important references of the required steps in the field of VOLL.
4. The Commission puts forward the following proposals:
  - 4.1 One of the most essential points is the elaboration of curricula for adult learners and the initial as well as in-service teacher training.
  - 4.2 The initial teacher training should develop the ability to teach adults. For this purpose the objectives should be specified taking into account the differences between adult and young learners in language acquisition and the knowledge of the world. The specification of objectives should be accompanied by the development of a metalanguage to analyse the learners needs.
  - 4.3 Special attention should be paid to partial competencies, learning to learn strategies (autonomous learning), ability to assess adult learners.
  - 4.4 To put the above-mentioned into practice new technologies should be introduced into learning and communication (support for INTERNET network).
  - 4.5 Conceptual approaches should be worked out to describe target groups and degree of ambition. There is a need to prioritize the audience most in need of special activities or forms of support.
  - 4.6 Some universities of CE member-states have acquired a considerable experience in teaching languages for professionals communication which should be taken into account and made an object for CE consideration.
  - 4.7 It should be realised that adult education is provided not only through state-run establishments but also through private (non-state) organisations complimentary to the official education.

- 4.8 Another important consideration is to work out bilingual terminology and to separate bilingual areas and mainstream education. It concerns the situation in multilingual societies. "Content-based language teaching" might be a better term for it.
- 4.9 Dissemination should be based on interactive principle (for example, arranging workshops according to the CE pattern in target-language countries).
- 4.10 Cognitive approach should be developed in the field of adult language teaching for professional communication (metaphoric usage of common core words as new terms in recent industries).

Professional language education carries a huge part of national cultural identity and its acquisition will make a considerable contribution to a new multilingual and multicultural Europe.

## **PHASE II**

### Preamble

In introducing its report Commission D wishes to reiterate a key conclusion of its earlier deliberations on the nature of the so-called "adult" sector. It must again be stressed that this description encompasses a wide range of learning and teaching experiences and that "adult education" is by its nature diverse and heterogenous. This may also explain a certain diversity of views in the working groups. It certainly suggest the need for greater precision in future descriptions and indeed actions.

### The Framework Document

1. Having said this the Commission was unanimous in its approbation of the work carried out in developing the Framework Document. A range of epithets - possibly culturally determined - was applied to the document. These included rich, excellent, greatly appreciated and useful.

The Commission enthusiastically recommends that the Common European Framework of Reference should be published and trialled as a matter of urgency.

The Document was also described as daunting (or in more positive terms challenging) - a point to which we return later.

2. The groups did not systematically address questions 2 and 3 relating to specific directions and specific priority areas, but the main elements of a response are covered as follows:
3. Some issues emerged relating to the rationale or theory underpinning the document. Although the Framework claims not to be a theoretical or scientific document it was thought that it would nevertheless be strengthened by a preamble setting out the theoretical assumptions on which it is based. This is particularly the case since the very richness and complexity of the text means that some users are likely to access the Framework only in parts. In this respect too concerns were expressed over the extent to which some sections of the Framework might - at least implicitly - lead to a degree of prescription or methodological matters. Again a theoretical "Framework to the Framework" might help clarify this potentially contentious issue.
4. The working groups also considered areas in which the Framework Document might be improved by greater precision and further development. These included:

- 4.1 some "tidying up" of terminology (for example there seems to be an interchangeable use of the terms "independence" and "autonomy") and the inclusion of a glossary of terms
- 4.2 particular attention to the descriptions of competences in Chapter 4 to include more specific reference to "vocational" competences which may at present be subsumed into "knowledge of the world". Existing vocational (occupational) competence is often a key support for language learning in this sector.
- 4.3 Similarly it was felt that the examples of Communicative Activities could be extended to include more vocational examples in particular at higher levels (e.g. car repair).
- 4.4 Finally it was strongly felt by some members of the Commission that in applying the proposed scaling system great care should be taken to ensure maximum compatibility with existing national systems and descriptions of competence. This would involve continuing consultation and adaptation of the Framework if it was to be an effective and usable tool. It should be stressed that such compatibility may be of particular importance for Vocationally Oriented Language Learning for which there are a number of existing national level descriptions.
5. The Commission also considered that there were a number of elements missing from the Framework as it stands. These too are of particular relevance to the VOLL field and relate to some points made above.
  - 5.1 It was strongly recommended that in future versions of the Framework more attention should be given to the particularity of the learning strategies used by adults who have a specific kind of relationship to teaching and learning processes and to the institutions providing such teaching and learning. This might also imply a reassessment of the concept of strategy as is currently used.
  - 5.2 In addition it is recommended that the whole VOLL dimension is given greater emphasis in subsequent versions of the Framework. Such key matters as Vocational Communicative Context and consideration of partial competence do not figure highly in the current text. It was felt that the unspoken assumption behind the framework was that the main context for language learning was actually the traditional school set-up.
6. Finally the Commission has a number of recommendations relating to the dissemination and implementation of the Framework. This is where we return to the terms DAUNTING AND CHALLENGING.

Commission D as a whole is particularly concerned that this major document should be effectively trialled and validated, that it should be used, rather than simply admired. For this to happen, in particular given the complexity of the text a considerable degree of mediation will be necessary. A number of suggestions are put forward, in addition to the proposals and recommendations embedded in points 1-5.

- 6.1 Considerable doubts were expressed about the draft user guides which were variously characterised as "top down" "unclear" and "too specific" to the Anglo-Saxon tradition."
- 6.2 Time did not permit the elaboration of a comprehensive alternative but some elements have emerged which are proposed for further consideration -

i A general guide for all potential users. This might also include the rationale, referred to

above.

- ii The development of specific guides on national regional and sectoral levels
- iii A programme of interaction between the producers of national/regional/sectoral guides and the "guardian" of the Framework.
- iv Non-paper and non-linear support - conferences, workshops, on-line user groups.

Unless such a range of user-friendly support mechanisms is developed as a matter of urgency Commission D is concerned that the "adult" sector, characterised as it is by diverse needs and in many cases lack of resources and low levels of teacher education, will be untouched by the undoubtedly stimulating and potentially illuminating descriptions and ways of thinking contained within the Framework document. In this respect this final recommendation is the most important one of all, for without it the Framework may fail.

## B. The Portfolio

The Commission makes rather fewer recommendations relating to the Portfolio, discussion of which was relatively limited:

1. There was general approval for the development of a Portfolio which it is presumed will be integrated quite specifically with further work on the Framework.
2. Commission D applauds the piloting work which has been carried out by the Swiss colleagues.
3. If the Portfolio is to be used by employers it must be a) simplified and b) of understandable value. This may require the production of a summary version of one page.
4. In any case in the adult field an over complicated model is likely to be counter-productive. After trialling (see below) it is to be hoped that a number of key elements to the Portfolio will be identified which will then be applied on a national and regional basis.
5. There remains some confusion over the purposes of the Portfolio - the term Passport is sometimes used. This confusion must be clarified.
6. Of key importance is the effective trialling of the Portfolio - this must include reaction from employees as users!
7. Commission D is not in favour of one single document "for life". It agrees on the importance of questions raised relating to Form, Language etc; but also suggest that such questions should be answered by a limited trial and validation process.
8. Finally - and again in the interest of transparency - there was a concern that the vocabulary of the Framework, in particular the terms VANTAGE and WAYSTAGE were not sufficiently clear to be meaningful for a wide range of users. This was said to be the case even in English!

## **PHASE III**

Commission D strongly supports the value of the work of the Modern Languages Project, both in general and specifically for the way in which it has promoted the combination of vocational qualifications, and personal growth. In looking forward to the next phase we wish to make proposals and recommendations under 3 main headings:

MATTERS OF GENERAL SIGNIFICANCE

MEDIUM TERM PROPOSALS

LONGER TERM ASPIRATIONS

Throughout we ask for two central presentational principles - SIMPLICITY AND USER FRIENDLINESS.

### **1. GENERAL**

1.1 Commission D reaffirms its view that in the recommendations and future proposals of the CE, adult education should be represented in its full range as a major area of concern, with particular reference to adult education as complementary to mainstream compulsory education. We should further take into account societal changes which mean that adult learners need languages for both non professional and professional purposes. Those needs are for a range of languages over a citizen's life time and for the maintenance and consolidation of languages learned at different stages of life.

1.2 From this overview there emerge 2 main recommendations -

1. The Council should continue to reflect upon and clarify the basic MLP texts with the intention of stressing the specificity and indeed diversity of the adult and vocational spheres. Such matters as the definition of 'Trainers', 'Education', 'School', 'Pupil' have a particular resonance in this respect. It is therefore recommended that amendments to the current texts should be undertaken based firstly on the Commission's conclusions to Phase II and secondly on the specific proposals from the working groups attached to this report.
2. In future work of the Council, language learning in institutions of higher education (particularly but not exclusively of "non-specialists") should be included as a legitimate field of inquiry.

### **2. MEDIUM TERM PROPOSALS**

In looking at the next 3 years it is believed that the key task will be that of VALIDATION, in particular validation of the scaling in the FRAMEWORK and validation of the use of the Portfolio in the field of work. To this end a number of support mechanisms will be of great importance. These include

- a glossary for the Framework document
- a user-friendly rationale / introduction
- electronic links (user groups)
- networks (in particular in the adult + VOLL field)
- the development of task models

PRIORITY ACTIVITIES are classified under 2 main headings which are of course interrelated and which must be developed in an interactive manner.

- 1) on the CONCEPTUAL LEVEL it is proposed that the Council take forward the work of developing the framework and the Portfolio in the directions outlined.
- 2) In relation to IMPLEMENTATION this will be the concern of a wide range of actors, not least the member States. A number of implementation mechanisms have already been outlined. Of particular relevance to the VOLL sector may be the involvement of NGOs of various kinds, and also the promotion of physical and virtual networks. Issues which it is hoped will be given particular attention are content based learning, learning styles and (eventually learner needs analysis).

### **3. LONG TERM ASPIRATIONS**

Based on this initial viewpoint it is hoped that it will be possible to develop a more systematic analysis of the changing nature of adult education since 1971. A particular priority will be the development of reliable tools to analyse learner needs, taking account of varied educational and social backgrounds and the requirements of continuity.

It is also hoped that ways will be found in this resource-poor sector to state appropriate methods and materials.

Without in anyway wishing to diminish the importance of other sectors it is strongly believed that such analysis and support will be crucial if we are to build a truly multicultural Europe and to combat exclusion and lack of opportunity. We are reminded that the language programmes of the Council of Europe were founded on such progressive and humanitarian aspirations. Commission D seeks and supports their reaffirmation in the new circumstances of the 21st century.

## VIII. SUMMING UP OF THE CONFERENCE BY JOHN TRIM, GENERAL RAPPORTEUR

When setting before you, less than three days ago, the tasks and working methods of this Conference, I warned that a period of intensive effort lay ahead. Those of us who have been involved in the work of this and previous Projects will have been under no illusions in that respect. I should like to express my deep appreciation of the very hard work that has been put in by all participants.

We have been in all some 272 participants and observers, of whom 223 have been delegates or observers from 41 member states. In addition we have had observers from Armenia, Azerbaidjan and Georgia, soon to accede to the Convention on Cultural Co-operation and five representatives of Canada, continuing a long tradition of participation in our work. I doubt whether any Intergovernmental Conference - certainly not in our field -has ever been so broadly representative of European countries. We have been honoured with the participation of many observers. Other Council of Europe bodies have sent representatives: the CDCC, the Education Committee and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities. Particularly welcome has been the participation of the European Centre for Modern Languages, our closest partners, together with colleagues from the European Commission, whose active contributions are an earnest of the close co-operation and mutual confidence that now exists between the Council and the Union. The Union Latine and the Cultural Agencies of France, Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom, as well as seven Non-Governmental Organisations with consultative status and ten other European Associations bring up the total. Our Conference has thus been a microcosm of European diversity, which makes the excellent professional and personal relations among participants the more remarkable - though again it repeats the experience of the Project's workshops. Not only can the Conference speak with authority for the language teaching profession in Europe, it has provided a heartening model of what European co-operation can be.

In their opening speeches, M.Weber, Dr.Gaber and Professor Daniel Coste set out the context for the Conference by reminding us of the continuity of development of Council of Europe language policy since 1961 and the steady adherence to a set of fundamental principles first clearly enunciated in the early seventies. The Project: *Language learning for European citizenship* was a logical next step in a long process of educational reform, in which all member States have been actively engaged. However, their perspective was not at all nostalgic or backward-looking. The scale and importance of language learning has grown at least as fast as our understanding of what is needed. If we do seem to have reached a powerful consensus on the educational values which inform educational policy in our field, there is still a long way to go to raise quality standards to the levels that the fully interactive Europe of the next Century will need for its survival, as M.Gaber emphasised. M.Weber confirmed that the Council of Europe will continue to support modern languages and that a new Project will be organised. Daniel Coste and Gé Stoks, as co-chairmen of the Project presented its work in complementary ways: Coste by a careful analytic account of its bases, structure, progress and impact, Stoks by the striking and memorable computer-generated audio-visual presentation which followed. The stocktaking phase continued with a rapid succession of presentations of the priority themes of the Project by experts closely involved in the workshop programme. I must most warmly congratulate the seven speakers not only on keeping with scrupulous self-discipline to the time allowed, but also on the quality of their presentations, truly *multum in parvo*.

On Tuesday afternoon, the contextual survey was completed by the address of Mr.Lenarduzzi, Director of Education for DGXII of the European Commission, who gave an account of the broad lines of European Union language policy following the Maastricht Treaty in the light of the Commission's White Paper. It is a source of great strength to language teaching that the policies of the Council and the Union are so congruent. What differences there are arise from the essential differences between a supranational body covering fifteen states and an international body covering forty-eight including those fifteen. The

Union has to be very careful to respect the principle of subsidiarity, but has very large resources to fund collaborative ventures by institutions across its member states. The Council has to operate, certainly in our field, with exiguous funds and cannot in any case issue directives. It must operate by consensus and persuade its member states that it is in their interest to support its work both morally and materially. Above all, it relies upon the good-will of public-spirited experts across the continent to give their services for extremely modest returns in financial terms, offering in return the intense professional satisfaction of working together in a common enterprise that does in fact have important practical consequences in the real world. Of course, as Mr. Lenarduzzi pointed out, this does not in any way mean that 'the Council supplies the brain and the Commission the brawn'. On the Council side, certainly, we have never entertained such a view, which in no way corresponds to the facts. Actually, a high proportion of experts and administrators in the countries concerned are working in both contexts, their experience and expertise enriching and indeed enriched by both.

Following a short briefing by myself as General Rapporteur, we divided into the four Commissions concerned with different educational sectors and each Commission organised its deliberations in three Working Groups based on language preferences. The work of the Commissions and their working groups was divided into three successive phases. Phase 1 was devoted to a stocktaking of the work of the Project, especially the priority themes as relevant to the sector concerned. Detailed scrutiny of conclusions and recommendations was not possible in the short time available for discussion, which relied on participants having informed themselves in advance by studying the Final Report and in many cases through their personal experience of the Workshops on which the Conclusions and Recommendations of the Final Report were based. As such, they were already the work of many hands and the result of extensive discussion, modified and confirmed by the Project Group. Even so, it was a further proof of the strong consensus on aims, objectives and even means that now exists across Europe, that all four Commissions found themselves in agreement. At the same time, this endorsement was no mere rubber-stamping. The Commission Reports on Phase 1 all evidence lively discussion and make further proposals. They will be published in their final form in the Conference Report and have been taken fully into account in the formulation of the Conference Recommendations. I think that all participants are to be congratulated on the business-like way that a very difficult task was tackled. In particular the chairpersons and rapporteurs of the Commissions and Working Groups deserve our thanks for the extra thought and effort they gave to the formulation of their Reports.

After the presentation of these Reports on Wednesday morning, the Common European Framework and the European Language Portfolio were presented respectively by Dr. Brian North and Dr. Ingeborg Christ, introduced by Joe Sheils. The time available for discussion in Phase 2 was again limited, but was more than for Phase 1. The Commission Reports give a welcome to both the Framework and the Portfolio, but make it clear that both must be regarded as projects in the course of development. All make serious and well-considered comments and proposals which I am sure will be found valuable by those responsible for the trialling and further revision of the Framework in the next few years. No-one should underestimate the magnitude of this undertaking, however well the ground may have been prepared. The linguistic and educational issues raised are deep and complex, not easily resolved. We have to be clear in our minds that we are evolving a tool for reflection, information exchange and practical co-operation. We should not imagine that we shall be able, by the year 2000, millennial though it may be, to produce a definitive, comprehensive theory of language which will subsume and supersede all others. However, in the more limited perspective, we feel that a good working system can be developed on the present basis. I am sure that the Secretariat will be greatly heartened by the warm welcome you have given the work done so far and by the critical spirit which shows your commitment to serious work to go further. The Secretariat will have need of your full co-operation in the process.

At the Official Reception on Wednesday evening, it was a particular pleasure to have Antonietta de Vigili among us physically, as she has been in spirit throughout. It was Antonietta's vision and sense of



mission, her commitment, unremitting drive and an understanding of the strategy of the Council's language programme which sustained it over so many years and through a series of medium-term projects, each building on its predecessors but with its own clear objective. It is a cause for regret that she retired before seeing the Project through to its successful conclusion in this Conference. We wish her every happiness in retirement and can count ourselves most fortunate that in Joe Sheils we have a successor in every way equipped to carry the work forward to new heights.

What these might be was considered in Phase III 'future action', following presentations by Maitland Stobart, Joe Sheils and Claude Kieffer, in which they looked at the prospects for future Council of Europe activities in Modern Languages from the viewpoints, respectively, of the Committee for Education, the Modern Languages Section in Strasbourg and the European Centre for Modern Languages in Graz. The time for discussion of the proposals contained in the Final Report was once more limited, and the resulting Commission Reports which will, of course, be printed in the Conference Report, could not be presented to a full Plenary Session, but to the Semi-Plenary which subsequently met to agree the content of the Recommendations of the Conference, which took them fully into account. At the meeting of the Semi-Plenary, consisting of Heads of Delegations, Chairpersons and Rapporteurs of Plenary Sessions, Commissions and Working Groups, it was clear that all warmly welcomed the Council's decision to launch a new Strasbourg-based Project and all were in agreement that it should be largely concerned with the trialling and further development of the Framework and Portfolio.

At the same time it was clear that all attached a good deal of importance to continuing Council support for the development of policies in the sectors represented by the Commissions as well as for practical measures for the implementation of national policies and not just their formulation. The actual detailed formulation of the Recommendations in English and French was left to a small Drafting Group which worked in a dedicated and self-sacrificial manner until the not-so-early hours of this morning, when our equally dedicated Secretariat worked on to produce and reproduce the documentation now before you for your perusal, discussion and - with any necessary amendment - adoption. I trust that you will find that they indeed represent your views and conclusions. Once adopted, they will be influential in a number of different ways. At European level, they will be submitted to the higher bodies of the Council of Europe and to the Standing Conference of European Ministers of Education at their meeting in Norway in June 1997. At national level they will, I am sure, be submitted to Ministries by Heads of Delegations. When published, they will be available for study by decision-makers of all kinds. I also hope that all participants will seize whatever channels of communication are available to them to bring them to the attention of professional colleagues who have not had the privilege of participation here.

In conclusion, I should like to take this opportunity to express my thanks to those who have contributed to the success of this Conference:

- the member governments, who have steadily supported the Modern Languages Projects of the Council of Europe, and who have nominated and in many cases financed delegations, often of a substantial size.
- other governments, international bodies, cultural agencies and non-governmental organisations who have shown their interest and support by sending observers.
- participants, who have given freely of their time and professional expertise - in most cases not simply here but over a period of time. In thanking them, I should like to thank the literally thousands of colleagues in all sectors of the language teaching profession: teachers, teacher trainers, examiners, course designers, the authors of textbooks and teaching materials, curriculum and syllabus developers, inspectors and advisers, educational administrators and researchers, who have made our

Projects and Conferences a crucible for close and sincere co-operation in Europe.

- the members of the Drafting Group, as well as the Chairpersons and Rapporteurs of Commissions and Working Groups, who have willingly undertaken at short notice the additional responsibilities without which a Conference of this kind would be unthinkable. They have been worthy successors to predecessors who over the years have given these services to our conferences, symposia, workshops and innumerable meetings.
- those who have provided printed materials and videotapes for display in the exhibition, reminding us of the huge amount of material, published and unpublished which have been inspired by our countries. the colleagues who have made the presentations to guide discussions in Phases I, II and III on the basis of the work of the Project in which they have played a prominent role, and the many colleagues who also contributed to the work on priority sectors and themes, as well as to the members of the Project Group -many here present as Heads or members of the National Delegations, whose guidance has enabled the Project to achieve the results presented to the Conference and finally to all those whose collaboration in the framework of the Project produced the wealth of studies and reports on which its findings have been based.
- the members of our small but dedicated Secretariat, who have worked extremely hard under the difficult conditions of an interregnum to prepare the Conference in so thorough a fashion and the numerous colleagues from other parts of the house who have given their services over this period, and with them we remember Antonietta de Vigili and all those who have worked with her over these years.
- the CDCC and the Council of Europe itself who have placed this building at our disposal, with many kinds of logistic and material support and who have given consistent and continuous support to language teaching for over 35 years.

As my duties as Director or Adviser of successive Projects since 1971 now come to an end, I feel profoundly grateful to have been given the opportunity to act as a focus for the work of so many outstanding, loyal and dedicated colleagues, starting with the 'gang of four' convened by Herbert Jocher following the Rüschnikon Symposium in 1971: Renë Richterich, Jan van Ek, David Wilkins and myself and gradually expanding in the course of the unit-credit feasibility study, Projects 4 and 12 and the Project just now ended. Much has been achieved and more remains. You the participants in this great Conference have already contributed much and will together play a vital part in the mission now ahead of the language teaching profession: to give the young people and adult population of our countries the language and cultural knowledge, understanding and skills they need to play their full part as independent-minded, responsible communicators and citizens in the new fully interactive, democratic Europe of the Twenty-first Century. With great trust and confidence I wish you every success in that great task.

## IX. CLOSING SPEECHES AND STATEMENTS

### 1. Adress by *Mr Daniel Tarschys*, Secretary General of the Council of Europe

This is an extremely important Conference as it marks the culmination of a range of Project activities between 1989 and 1996. The original programme was planned at an intergovernmental conference in Sintra in 1989 the same week that the Berlin wall fell. The Project has since then successfully integrated all our new member States and has carried out special activities to facilitate this integration. Both the Project title "Language learning for European citizenship" and the Conference title "Language Learning for a new Europe" capture the general aim of the activities undertaken.

Successive Modern Languages Projects have sought to promote more effective and large scale language learning and this has an important political dimension which needs to be fully appreciated. The development of language skills in European citizens is central to the achievement of the political aims of the Council of Europe in an enlarged and increasingly diversified Europe. Practical communication skills are more essential than ever in everyday life in an age of mobility and new developments in communication and information technologies, and for deepening mutual understanding and tolerance in our multilingual and multicultural Europe.

The Council of Europe is currently preparing the Second Summit of Heads of State and Government. The need to bring Europe closer to its citizens, and the role of education and culture in strengthening the stability of our continent are already at the forefront of the preparatory discussions on the Summit. It could therefore provide an opportunity to develop further programmes of education for citizenship, tolerance, democracy, solidarity and responsibility under the European Cultural Convention.

The Recommendations and Conclusions of this Conference will help to highlight the central role that modern language learning can play in the process of preparing the next generation for democratic and pluralist European citizenship. Indeed, the Modern Languages Project has attached particular importance to helping learners to appreciate both their own cultural identity and that of others, and assisting them in developing the ability to resolve conflict between cultures. This is essential to strengthen the concept of a common European identity based on shared values.

To reach these aims, the Council of Europe is fortunate in having two 'arms' for its work in modern languages, since the European Centre for Modern Languages was set up in Graz under an enlarged Partial Agreement of the Council of Europe which has very quickly become a success story. We must now develop an effective complementarity between work undertaken in Strasbourg and in Graz. The Strasbourg Project could intensify its pioneering work on pan-european policy development while Graz concentrates on policy implementation through training, research and information so that both aspects are adequately and coherently catered for.

The Modern languages project has also excelled in another permanent endeavour of our Organisation: the co-operation to be established with other international organisations, including the European Union with we already have a number of joint programmes. The presence of the representatives of the European Commission at this Conference, which we warmly welcome, illustrates the commonality of interests in this field.

I am very pleased to know that the Council for cultural co-operation and its Education Committee have given their approval for a new medium term project on modern languages. The CDCC's programme would be incomplete without it.

When the project is planned in detail, the Conclusions and Recommendations of this Conference will be important as an expression of the informed opinion arising from shared reflection and diversified experience. They should also provide the basis for a possible new Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers on the teaching and learning of modern languages, so as to secure political recognition and proper dissemination of the remarkable achievements in this field which is so central to our common vision of Europe.

I wish you a successful closing of your Conference, which is called final, but which, in reality, is another major cornerstone in a longstanding tradition of the Council of Europe - the Modern languages projects - which undoubtedly needs to continue.

## **2. Statement by Mr *Hilaire LEMOINE*, Head of the Canadian Delegation**

I should like first of all to thank you on behalf of the Canadian Ambassador, Mr Réjean Frenette, and the Canadian delegation, for this opportunity to say how much we appreciate having been able to participate in all the phases of the “Language Learning for European Citizenship” Project.

Canada has only recently obtained the status of permanent observer with the CDCC, and as one result we had the pleasure of welcoming you to Canada a few months ago, Secretary General.

Canadians have, however, been taking an active part in the Council of Europe’s work on modern language teaching since the 1982 final conference, and since 1989 Canada has been represented on the “Language Learning for European Citizenship” Project Group.

This participation has been particularly valuable for us in view of the importance of the language question in Canada over the last quarter of a century. The many top experts called in by the Council of Europe for its modern language projects in Strasbourg, in the member countries and, more recently, in Graz have given the “profession” in Canada an opportunity for fruitful contacts, and the work done has, being so wide-ranging and forward looking, been a matchless source of inspiration.

We feel that the Canadian experience is relevant to the Council of Europe’s work. Canada, a vast language laboratory, introduced innovations in a number of fields related to language teaching after language laws came into force at both federal and provincial level. This has, moreover, given rise to fruitful co-ordination between the federal government, which is responsible for applying the legislation on the official languages, and the Ministers of Education, who come together in the Council of Ministers of Education of Canada, and are responsible for education in the provinces and territories of Canada.

A few examples will suffice to illustrate the special features of the Canadian experience.

In the school sector, the major developments have mainly been in the teaching of French:

- Firstly, early teaching of French as a second language has become generally available at primary level, and often at pre-primary level. In most provinces, the development of a frame of reference has resulted in new co-ordination between curriculum designers and practitioners;
- There has been a major and rapid development of bilingual education, known in Canada as “immersion”, at all primary and secondary levels. It is interesting to note that it originated, not from an initiative by the education authorities, but from a grassroots project requested by parents. The “profession” had to react a posteriori, working on research, evaluation, the curriculum, teaching materials and teacher training;
- Finally, still in the school sector, a network of autonomous schools has been set up and administered for minority French-speaking communities, with measures taken to revitalise the mother tongue and a specific teaching method developed to meet the needs of these children.

In the out-of-school sector, large-scale vocationally-oriented language training schemes for working adults have been set up. In the federal civil service, some 100 000 civil servants have been trained to provide the bilingual services to which citizens have a statutory right. This type of training was later extended to the private sector in response to economic factors or to comply with provincial laws on the status and function of the official languages in the workplace. In tandem with this training effort, major adjustments have been made in the languages sphere, particularly with regard to terminology, toponymy

and translation.

Outside the confines of education and training in the strict sense, in schools or for adults, considerable efforts have been made in four related fields:

- setting up of initial and in-service training schemes for teachers and instructors;
- production and introduction of teaching materials and methods calling for new technologies and autonomous work;
- production of facilities for the criterion- and norm-referenced assessment of language skills, including scaled-down computerised tests for self-evaluation by learners;
- numerous linguistic exchange and holiday schemes at all levels, including one for group leaders/assistants.

The implementation of language policies is a long-term process. It is also a constantly changing field. This is why we have followed with the keenest interest the proceedings of the conference as it took stock of developments. Mindful of the recommendations for future action you will doubtless shortly be adopting, we should like this fruitful transatlantic collaboration between the Council of Europe and Canada to be continued and extended. In an era of new technologies that eliminate distance, our collaboration should become easier, and we firmly believe that it can continue and make a positive contribution to thinking, planning and practice on both sides, within the new project which will take over from the one that is ending today.

I should not like to conclude without extending special thanks to Mr Maitland Stobart and his colleagues from the Modern Languages Section for their advice and constant support over many years.

### **3. Statement by Mr Klaus EICHNER, Chairman of the Education Committee of the Council for Cultural Co-operation (CDCC)**

I'd like to address you in my present capacity as chairman of the Education Committee of the Council of Europe under whose responsibility, budget and above all Secretariat staff the language project (1989-97) and this Final Conference were conducted.

Technically speaking it will be this committee which will now "receive" the "results" of the project and the recommendations of this final conference. It will have to decide on how to continue the work. Before doing so we will, however, report back to the Education Ministers of the Council of Europe in June in Norway and seek political guidance.

Against this perhaps rather procedural background, I'd like personally to draw some preliminary, tentative conclusion under three points:

#### **Role of the Council of Europe**

You are aware that the various European institutions currently seek to redefine and readjust their specific mandates under the new political realities - so as to best contribute to the process which is termed "european construction or architecture". There is no doubt that- if the process of peaceful development and stabilisation is to be successful - education (including culture) will have to play an essential role and bear crucial responsibility.

The Council of Europe for its part (besides the EU, OSCE, OECD, NATO) will consider its options later on this year at a special summit of heads of State and Governments. It is hoped and expected that on this occasion the role of the Council of Europe - as the only pan-european forum thus far - is duely reflected and the educational mission (i.e. its programme) will be strengthened. It may be upheld that Europe will only (at least peacefully) survive if there are stable and pluralist democracies and developing civil societies in all its regions.

Therefore, language learning and teaching being the key to mutual understanding will remain one of the essential tasks and working area for the Council of Europe and needs to be part of any future work programme, which is sufficiently and credibly budgeted.

#### **Future Council of Europe Project on Modern Languages**

My second remark has to do with the objectives or scope, on which a future Council of Europe language project might focus. I cannot prejudge the Education Ministers position on this - all the more so as language teaching policies are - and with "Europe's enlargement" increasing so - subject to conflicting, at least ambivalent, objectives; one can easily establish a list of "antagonising" principles such as

- language diversity (vs) unifying language policies (the EU pleads for 3 so-called community languages);
- communicative skills (vs) deeper profound language competence;
- wide spectrum of options for language learning in schools (vs) streamlined school curricula, standards and comparable attainment targets;
- language skills for all (vs) special needs for particular, especially professional groups.

Between such - often antagonising, at least ambivalent (if not dialectically entwined) - objectives educational policy has to steer a somewhat cautious course. There has to be constant political will and impetus to advance progress.

It is obvious - as there are also national and political essentials at stake - that on an European level there can be no centralised, harmonising or regulating approach not a predominately economic perspective but rather converging practice, continuous dialogue and exchange: diversity instead of uniformity.

Still it seems that in the course of this conference certain conceptual options and possible elements for the future Council of Europe work on languages have emerged:

-language competencies and skills are a conditioning factor for stable democracies and peaceful European development: possibly the key towards European integration;

-european states see the need for diversified and intensified language learning and teaching in flexible structures leading to individual career choices in Europe (and the world) and intercultural understanding.

It may be noted in this context, that the needs of the individual is of such prominence as - in the age of new communication technologies - the individual experiences the outside world unfiltered by national or cultural boundaries often contradicting personal life experience risking the creation of prejudice and destabilisation;

-there is further agreement from this forum that international organisations need to provide for exchange of national policy and practice, conceptual work and innovative practice;

-international bodies are trend setting, not harmonising but developing and offering tools, models experiences and cautiously comparative standards.

In this sense the Council of Europe should continue its work under a new project, which will also have to elaborate on the "framework" and "portfolio". It is clear that there have to be "synergizing" efforts with the EU and the European language centre in Graz.

### **Impact of the final conference**

My final remark is to acknowledge the general importance of our conference, its thrust, its atmosphere, its public impact, and its possible enlightening and, above all, motivating consequences. The organisers brought together not only officials but also researchers, teachers, practitioners, publicists, NGO's - and also for the first time in this expert forum, representatives of eastern Europe. We covered -catalysed by the language project- practically the whole field of "Languages in Europe" - learning and understanding" an eminently vast yet crucial area for Europe.

A similar conference of that scale in the Council of Europe in March 1982 covered the same ground. At that occasion the then French Minister of education, M. Savary, gave a striking yet realistic note of warning. He stated that Europe as yet had not crossed the threshold to a multilingual Europe - it needed further political will; he further warned about aiming solely at mere communication skills -presumably with English as a minimal tool. He advised not the "strangle" cultural and linguistic diversity under unifying economic necessities. He pleaded to complement the concept of communication by that of searching for identity through languages - so as to broaden any utilitaristic perspective. Language learning - tedious as it sometimes and necessarily may be - should and must lead to deeper mutual understanding. An objective or method lacking this aspect - the Minister concluded - would "mutilate"



the pupil or student.

I suppose this analysis stands valid also today. Perhaps our new project should - besides its already broad scope - look closer to the motivating potential of languages, an area where teachers and their training including the relevant university departments will come to be more involved.

After all we need to make sure - and here I refer to the fairy tale of Rumpelstielzchen - we have to solve the secret of R'ens name and make its name known so that any fear will be banned from among the peoples of Europe.

**4. Statement by Ms Sylvia VLAEMINCK,  
Directorate General XXII, Education, Training and Youth, European Commission**

It is a pleasure and honour to have been present at this Council of Europe conference attended by so many people active in the field of language teaching, whether as experts or representatives of a country or organisation.

As has been pointed out, the Council of Europe has had a long involvement with languages, and the work it has done since entering that field is impressive: this conference is thus particularly important as an opportunity to assess what has been achieved and to put forward recommendations for the future.

I must say that I have found myself on familiar ground: the topics discussed these last few days are those with which the European Union also concerns itself.

In our multilingual Europe there is a greater need than ever to learn languages. Many of the speakers have made that same point, and I shall not dwell on it.

However, I would like to give **some figures** which show how much progress has been made - and also the challenges which remain. In the European Union twice as many of the 15 to 24 age group have learnt a language as of the over-55s; conversely, whereas 54% of people over 55 have never learnt a language, only 11% of the 15 to 24 age group are in that position. But of the 65% of young people who have learnt a language, only 41% say they can speak it. In the 1993-94 school year, 88% of those in general secondary education were learning English, 32% French, 18% German and 8% Spanish.

So there is undoubtedly still **work to be done** to improve the quantity and quality of language teaching and learning, but a greater variety of languages must also be a central concern.

That means taking action on both the supply and demand sides. Otherwise we shall be trapped in a vicious circle: very few people feel any need to learn the less spoken and less taught languages; and anyone who does want to learn them cannot find any means of doing so.

Needless to say - and many speakers referred to this - languages will be increasingly learnt in the context of lifelong learning. The conference has drawn attention to the increasing importance of the adult learner.

It is therefore necessary to develop an overall approach and ensure continuity of language learning. School must lay the foundations for language learning, teach how to learn and about setting oneself aims and assessing one's proficiency. In this context the Common European Framework and the Portfolio are extremely valuable, and I am pleased to see that work continuing.

Improvement of language teaching and language learning involves many different agencies. Local, regional and national authorities all have an important role to perform. Indeed, it is essential to point out how important it is for each country, region and individual to take responsibility for propagating its/his/her language.

International organisations likewise have a responsibility. Before going into co-operation between the Council of Europe and the European Union, I would like to devote a moment or two to the European Union's activities in the field of language teaching and learning. The difficulty of getting information across has been mentioned several times, and I gladly take the opportunity of such a large event as this to provide a little information and incidentally help improve co-operation.

The work of promoting the teaching and learning of languages really began in 1990 with the Lingua programme. These activities then widened out and developed in 1995 into the Socrates and Leonardo programmes (Leonardo dealing with vocational training and the teaching of languages for special purposes). Priority is given to less common, less widely taught languages.

While member states are responsible for content and organisation, the European Union helps promote quality education for co-operation purposes.

Lingua activities are designed to have a multiplier effect: they are aimed at improving the learning environment (through training for teachers and development of tools) and at motivating the language teacher and language learner. Lingua includes mobility activities (in-service training scholarships for teachers, language assistantships, youth exchanges as part of joint educational projects) and transnational projects (co-operation between teacher-training institutions, development of learning tools). Leonardo deals with the specific needs of vocational training.

Mr Lenarduzzi referred to the **White Paper** and more specifically to its objective 4: proficiency in three Community languages. To give you a little more information about implementation, we identified a number of topics that provided a framework for discussion with specialists, which in turn yielded a basis for various projects which are in progress at the moment. A number of specialists who also work with the Council of Europe are involved.

Let me mention a few of the projects.

**Early language learning:** we have begun an analysis of all known experiments to try and identify the success factors. These will be described in a handbook aimed in particular at political decision-makers.

**Use of other languages in subject teaching:** we have helped set up a support network, called Euroclit (with a secretariat, a newsletter and a Web site). It was mentioned in the introductory paper on the subject during the conference. The project is based on a book of case studies and a conference instigated by the European Platform for Education, in the Netherlands.

A specialist seminar on **mutual understanding** was held in March of this year. The proceedings will be published and a Web site is being prepared. This is an innovative area and the work should help develop a strategy on the subject.

**Quality of teaching/learning methods and materials** will be the subject of a handbook in which experience with the Common European Framework will be taken into account.

The single-theme conference on objective 4 of the White Paper, which was attended by Council of Europe colleagues and specialists, identified another two topics: language teaching to adults and the training and role of teachers.

Lastly, a word or two about **co-operation between the Council of Europe and the European Union**, which has likewise been mentioned several times. I would repeat what Maitland Stobart said yesterday: proper co-operation is not just a matter of good management practice, it is also beneficial in itself. I can assure you that the European Commission is also keen to have proper co-operation and develop complementarity.

There is already regular information exchange on work in progress. Quite a few specialists are involved both in Council of Europe work and European Commission work.

To take the Common European Framework as an example, the Commission, as has been pointed out,

has kept closely in touch with the work and regards it as of great interest. There was an endeavour to ensure complementarity in the previous work in the same field, under Lingua. The Commission was also anxious that the results of the project be taken into account in the Dialang project, whose aim is to make tools available with which anyone can assess their skills in all the official languages of the European Union, plus Irish, Luxembourgish, Norwegian and Icelandic. We shall be considering how we can usefully help test the Common European Framework, in particular by mentioning it in our guidelines for applicants.

With regard to the Graz Centre, the latest annual colloquy, to which Mr Kieffer referred, was held in association with the European Commission. I recognise quite a few specialists here today who were present on that occasion.

So I think it is fair to say we are progressing on the right lines.

Lastly I would like to congratulate the organisers on an excellent conference, and the participants on the high standard of discussion.

I trust that we shall long continue to work together, pursuing the same objectives in the promotion of language teaching and learning.

**5. Closing Address by *Mr Maitland STOBART*,  
Deputy Director of Education, Culture and Sport of the Council of Europe**

What can the representative of an international secretariat say at the end of a meeting like this - I think a very loud " 'Ouf", an immense sigh of relief - "we did it". On behalf of our Secretary General I'd like to thank first of all you, the participants, delegates and observers for your enthusiasm, your help and your practical advice. You have pointed us in the right direction for the next stage. We owe a very special debt to the speakers, to the chairs of the plenary sessions, to those brave souls who acted as chairs and rapporteurs of the working groups, a thankless but necessary task. My colleagues always twist arms with great elegance to persuade people who have this skill of synthesis to give up their nights, their evenings, their breakfasts. We're very grateful to you, and of course to last night's drafting group - it worked long and hard, and to the project group - a rare group of people. We admire the commitment and the guidance that they have received from two very special friends, Daniel Coste and Gé Stoks.

I'd like to break the rule of Council of Europe Protocol. You know that normally international Secretariats, like general staff offices have no names, they are anonymous. But I have seen at it first hand that my colleagues have identified themselves with your work, and perhaps you'll allow me to break the rule of protocol. First of all to pay a tribute to my colleagues in our Modern Languages Section, to the other colleagues in the Education department and the Secretariat of the European Centre for Modern Languages in Graz. Also to the people who have worked behind the scenes: our publications department, it was a miracle to get those documents out as we did, thanks to our technical services and of course, our language services, the interpreters and the translators.

If we manage to do good work (and I'm convinced we have) on Modern Languages, it is because of a very, very unusual set of circumstances that may not happen again. I think it is something very special - an unusually committed group of experts, an unusually committed Project Director, John Trim, an unusually committed Secretariat team led until recently by Antonietta De Vigili. They worked together over an unusually long period of time. They laid the foundations and our Secretary General this morning talked about the Conference being a mile stone - transition from one Project to another, but perhaps also a transition from one group of people to another. A few months ago we said "Au revoir" to Antonietta and today we say "Au revoir" to John. For years I have admired John's rare wisdom, his incredible skill of synthesis and consensus, a man of unflinching integrity and courtesy. I am not a linguist, I am a historian. And as a historian I am obsessed with memory and loss of memory. The French historian, Régine Pernoud, has pointed out that without a healthy accurate memory we are not whole people - we are amnesiacs and something I dread is institutional amnesia, a lack of memory. I feared with a very deep fear what could have happened after this massive loss of memory which is constituted by the departure of John Trim and Antonietta, but with that incredible conscientiousness which characterises both of them, they have handed on a well-defined and a vibrant heritage. Before I say my final remarks, John, I would like to present you with a very modest present, but a reminder of the friendship of the members of the Secretariat and another good friend, Dagmar Heindler would like to present you with a present from your friends among the participants.

## **APPENDIX A: COORDINATORS FOR COMMISSION A, B, C AND D CHAIRPERSONS AND RAPPORTEURS OF WORKING GROUPS**

### **COMMISSION A: (Pre) Primary education (4-10/11)**

Chairperson: Mr Germain DONDELINGER (Luxembourg)  
Rapporteur Phase I: Mr Peter DOYÉ (Germany)  
Rapporteur Phase II: Mr Francis DEBYSER (France)

#### English Speaking Group:

Chairperson Ms Stasé SKAPIENE (Lithuania)  
Rapporteur Phase I Ms Isobel McGREGOR (United Kingdom)  
Rapporteur Phase II Ms Zdravka GODUNC (Slovenia)

#### French Speaking Group:

Chairperson Mr Jean-Pierre OESTREICHER (Luxembourg)  
Rapporteur Phase I Ms Yvonne VRHOVAC (Croatia)  
Rapporteur Phase II Ms Lucija \_OK (Slovenia)

#### Bilingual Group

Chairperson Mr Antonio GIUNTA LA SPADA (Italy)  
Rapporteur Phase I Mr Franz SCHIMEK (Austria)  
Rapporteur Phase II Mr MacAOGÁIN (Ireland)

### **COMMISSION B: Lower Secondary education (10/11-15/16)**

Chairperson: Ms Dagmar HEINDLER (Austria)  
Rapporteur Phase I: Ms Alena LENOCHOVA (Czech Republic)  
Rapporteur Phase II: Mr André BAEYEN (Belgium)

#### English Speaking Group:

Chairperson Mr Andrew BUHAGIAR (Malta)  
Rapporteur Phase I Mr Per MALMBERG (Sweden)  
Rapporteur Phase II Mr Viljo KOHONEN (Finland)

#### French Speaking Group:

Chairperson Mr Gabor BOLDIZSAR (Hungary)  
Rapporteur Phase I Mr Miquel LLOBERA CANAVES (Spain)  
Rapporteur Phase II Ms Turid TREBBI (Norway)

#### Bilingual Group

Chairperson Mr Gé STOKS (Netherlands)  
Rapporteur Phase I Ms Danica BAKOSSOVA (Slovak Republic)

Rapporteur Phase II

Ms Gloria FISCHER (Portugal)

## **COMMISSION C: Upper Secondary education (15/16-18/19)**

Chairperson: Mr Tony MALE (United Kingdom)  
Rapporteur Phase I: Ms Karin HENRIKSSON (Sweden)  
Rapporteur Phase II: Mr Christoph FLÜGEL (Switzerland)

### English Speaking Group:

Chairperson Ms Flora PALAMIDESI CESARETTI (Italy)  
Rapporteur Phase I Mr Donald MacCULLOCH (Norway)  
Rapporteur Phase II Mr Bror ANDERED (Sweden)

### French Speaking Group:

Chairperson Mr Hilaire LEMOINE (Canada)  
Rapporteur Phase I Ms Maria Emilia GALVAO (Portugal)  
Rapporteur Phase II Mr Michel BOIRON (France)

### Bilingual Group

Chairperson Ms Birgit CHRISTIANSEN (Denmark)  
Rapporteur Phase I Ms Suliko LIIV (Estonia)  
Rapporteur Phase II Mr Michael MILANOVIC (United Kingdom)

## **COMMISSION D: Vocationally oriented language learning and adult education**

Chairperson: Mr René RICHTERICH (Switzerland)  
Rapporteur Phase I: Ms Irina KHALEEVA (Russian Federation)  
Rapporteur Phase II: Mr Lid KING (United Kingdom)

### English Speaking Group:

Chairperson Mr Gerd EGLOFF (Germany)  
Rapporteur Phase I Mr Sauli TAKALA (Finland)  
Rapporteur Phase II Mr John DE JONG (Netherlands)

### French Speaking Group:

Chairperson Mr HAESENDONCK (Belgium)  
Rapporteur Phase I Ms Geneviève ZARATE (France)  
Rapporteur Phase II Mr Jean-Claude BEACCO (France)

### Bilingual Group

Chairperson Mr Tony FITZPATRICK (Germany)  
Rapporteur Phase I Mr David LITTLE (Ireland)  
Rapporteur Phase II Mr Rolf SCHÄRER (Switzerland)



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Mrs Marie-José de FORNEL (France)

Mr Arnold GREMY (France)

Mr Claude TRUCHOT (France)

English speaking group:

Mr Alan DOBSON (Royaume-Uni)

Mr Barry JONES (Royaume-Uni)

Mr Joseph SHEILS (Council of Europe)

Mr John L.M. TRIM (Royaume-Uni)

## **APPENDIX B: Declaration of support**

"We the undersigned participants at the Final Conference 'Language learning for a new Europe' in Strasbourg 15-18 April 1997, representing organisations concerned with international language examinations express our interest and support for the continuing work of the Council of Europe in the field of modern languages.

Specifically, and with reference to the high level of interest shown by member States in language testing, assessment and certification (CC-LANG (96) 21 extract, point 4.1.2.), we offer support in deliberations and measures aimed at operationalizing and piloting the Common European Framework and the Language Portfolio in these areas".

International Certificate Conference (ICC)

Michael MAKOSCH

Dutch National Institute for Educational Measurement (CITO)

John DE JONG

Association of Language Testers in Europe (ALTE)

Michael MILANOVIC

## APPENDIX C:

### ALLOCUTIONS D'OUVERTURE ET DE CLOTURE

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Secretary General of the Council of Europe

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Ministre de l'Education et du Sport, Slovénie  
Minister of Education and Sport, Slovenia

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Mr Maitland STOBART  
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Deputy Director of Education, Culture and Sport of the Council of Europe

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Matin, 15 avril  
Ouverture officielle

Dr. Slavko GABER, Ministre de l'Education et du Sport, Slovénie/  
Minister of Education and Sport, Slovenia

Morning, 15 April  
Official opening

Matin, 15 avril  
Morning, 15 April

M. Arnold GREMY,  
Doyen de l'Inspection des langues vivantes, France

Matin, 16 avril  
Morning, 16 April  
Bulgarie/

Vice Minister of Education, Science and Technologies, Bulgaria

Mme le Professeur Ekaterina DRAGANOVA,  
Vice-ministre de l'Education, de la Science et des Technologies,

Matin 17 avril  
Morning, 17 April

Mr Stephen JONES, Président du CILT, Royaume-Uni/  
Chairman, Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research  
(CILT), United Kingdom

Matin, 18 avril  
Morning, 18 April

Germany

M. Hermann STRÖBEL, Secrétaire d'Etat, Ministère de la Culture  
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## SECRETARIAT OF THE CONFERENCE / SECRETARIAT DE LA CONFERENCE

### DIRECTION DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT, DE LA CULTURE ET DU SPORT DIRECTORATE OF EDUCATION, CULTURE AND SPORT

M. Raymond WEBER, Directeur / Director

M. Maitland STOBART, Directeur adjoint / Deputy Director

### SECTION LANGUES VIVANTES / MODERN LANGUAGES SECTION

M. Joseph SHEILS, Chef de la Section / Head of Section

Mme Carole REICH, Administrateur / Administrator

Mme Philia THALGOTT, Administrateur / Administrator

Mme Johanna PANTHIER, Assistante administrative principale / Principal Administrative Assistant

Mlle Beejul TANNA, Secrétaire / Secretary

Mme Christine AUGUSTO, Secrétaire / Secretary

Mlle Barbara VALENTINI, Stagiaire / Trainee

### SERVICE DE L'EDUCATION / EDUCATION SECTOR

Ms Alison CARDWELL, Administrateur / Administrator

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Mme Natacha TURENNE, Administrateur / Administrator

Mme Tatiana MILKO, Assistante administrative / Administrative Assistant

Mlle Himka ZYGA, Assistante / Assistant

Mme Isabelle BILBEAU, Secrétaire / Secretary

### COMITÉ DE L'EDUCATION / EDUCATION COMMITTEE CONFÉRENCE PERMANENTE DES MINISTRES EUROPÉENS DE L'EDUCATION / STANDING CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN MINISTERS OF EDUCATION

M. Jean-Pierre TITZ, Secrétaire

Mlle Lisa CITTONE, Assistante administrative principale / Principal Administrative Assistant



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SECTION DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT SUPERIEUR / HIGHER EDUCATION SECTION

Ms Stefanka HRISTOSKOVA, Administrateur / Administrator

CENTRE EUROPEEN POUR LES LANGUES VIVANTES (GRAZ)  
EUROPEAN CENTER FOR MODERN LANGUAGES (GRAZ)

Mme Mechthilde FUHRER, Adjointe au Directeur / Assistant to the Director

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M. Amath FAYE  
Mme Cynera JAFFREY  
Mlle Sylvie BOUX  
Mme Maryline NEUSCHWANDER  
M. Jean-Pierre RINGLER  
Mme Anne MEYER  
Mlle Rémy JAIN  
Mme Anne DU BOUCHER  
Mme Elisabetta BASSU

## APPENDIX D: CONFERENCE TIMETABLE

Tuesday 15 April

### **PLENARY SESSION** (Hemicycle)

9.00 OPENING OF THE CONFERENCE

Chair: **Dr Slavko GABER, Minister of Education and Sport, Slovenia**

Address of welcome by *Mr Raymond WEBER*, Director of Education, Culture and Sport of the Council of Europe

Opening address by *Dr Slavko GABER*

9.45 Presentation of the results of the Modern Languages Project  
"Language Learning for European Citizenship"  
- *Professor Daniel COSTE*, Co-Chairman, Modern Languages Project Group

10.30 *Coffee Break*

11.00 **PLENARY SESSION** (Hemicycle)

Chair: **Mr Arnold GREMY, Doyen de l'Inspection des langues vivantes, France**

### **PHASE I: STOCKTAKING**

'Panorama' of the Project "Language Learning for European Citizenship",  
*Drs Gé STOKS*, Co-Chairman, Modern Languages Project Group

11.30 **Priority Themes:**

- **Teacher Education and Training**  
- *Professor Hanna KOMOROWSKA*, Vice Dean, University of Warsaw, Poland
- **Objectives and Assessment**  
- *Professor Michael BYRAM*, University of Durham, United Kingdom
- **Learning to Learn**  
- *Professor Irma HUTTUNEN*, University of Oulu, Finland
- **Bilingual Education: Pre-school and Primary Contexts**  
- *Dr Medwin HUGHES*, Trinity College, Wales, United Kingdom
- **Bilingual Education: A Foreign Language as a Means of Instruction in other Curricular Subjects**  
- *Dr Eike THÜRMAN*N, Landesinstitut für Schule und Weiterbildung, Soest, Germany
- **The use of Information and Communication Technologies in Language Teaching/Learning**  
- *Ms Lis KORNUM*, Christianshavns Gymnasium, Copenhagen, Denmark
- **Educational Links and Exchanges**

- *Mr Alf Olav HAUGEN*, Lillehammer VG Skole, Norway

12.45 *Lunch*

14.45 **PLENARY SESSION** (Hemicycle)

Address by *Mr Domenico LENARDUZZI*, Director for Education, Directorate General XXII, Education, Training and Youth, European Commission

Introduction to the tasks and working methods of the Conference  
- *Dr John TRIM*, Project Director and General Rapporteur

15.30 **MEET IN COMMISSIONS** [WORKING GROUPS 1,2 AND 3 TOGETHER]

- |    |   |           |
|----|---|-----------|
| A. | (Pre) Primary education (4-10/11)                           | [Room 7]  |
| B. | Lower Secondary education (10/11-15/16)                     | [Room 10] |
| C. | Upper Secondary education (15/16-18/19)                     | [Room 11] |
| D. | Vocationally oriented language learning and adult education | [Room 1]  |

15.45 Parallel working groups

18.30 *End of session*

[18.30 Rapporteurs and Chairpersons of each group finalise Group Reports]

[19.00 Meeting of Chairpersons and Rapporteurs of Commissions and Working Groups to prepare Commission reports]  
[A - Room 7; B- Room 10; C - Room 11; D - Room 1]

**Wednesday 16 April**

**PLENARY SESSION** (Hemicycle)

Chair: **Professor Ekaterina DRAGANOVA**, Vice Minister of Education, Science and Technologies, Bulgaria

9.00 Presentation of the Reports on Phase I by the Rapporteurs of Commissions A, B, C, and D

Summing up of Phase I by *Dr John TRIM*, General Rapporteur

10.15 *Coffee Break*

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**PHASE II: DEVELOPING INSTRUMENTS FOR EUROPEAN COOPERATION: COMMON EUROPEAN FRAMEWORK AND EUROPEAN LANGUAGE PORTFOLIO**

10.45 **General Introduction**

- *Mr Joseph SHEILS*, Head of the Modern Languages Section, Council of Europe

**Common European Framework**

- *Dr Brian NORTH*, Eurocentres, Switzerland

**European Language Portfolio**

- *Dr Phil. Ingeborg CHRIST*, Ministerialrätin, Ministerium für Schule und Weiterbildung, Germany

**11.30**            **MEET IN COMMISSIONS** [WORKING GROUPS 1,2 AND 3 TOGETHER]

- |    |   |           |
|----|---|-----------|
| A. | (Pre) Primary education (4-10/11)                           | [Room 7]  |
| B. | Lower Secondary education (10/11-15/16)                     | [Room 10] |
| C. | Upper Secondary education (15/16-18/19)                     | [Room 11] |
| D. | Vocationally oriented language learning and adult education | [Room 1]  |

**11.45**            Parallel working groups

**13.00**            *Lunch*

**14.30**            Parallel working groups (ctd.)

**17.15**            *End of session*

[**17.15**            Rapporteurs and Chairpersons of each group finalise Group Reports]

[**17.45**            Meeting of Chairpersons and Rapporteurs of Commissions and Working Groups to prepare Commission Reports]

[A - Room 7; B- Room 10; C - Room 11; D - Room 1]

**18.30**            **Reception offered by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe**

[*Restaurant Bleu*]

**Thursday 17 April**

**PLENARY SESSION** (Hemicycle)

Chair: **Mr Stephen JONES**, Chairman, Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research (CILT), United Kingdom

**9.00**            Presentation of the Reports on Phase II by the Rapporteurs of Commissions A, B, C and D  
Summary of Phase II by *Dr John TRIM*, General Rapporteur

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**PHASE III : FUTURE ACTION**

- 10.15**            - *Mr Maitland STOBART*, Deputy Director of Education, Culture and Sport  
                     - *Mr Joseph SHEILS*, Head of the Modern Languages Section  
                     - *Mr Claude KIEFFER*, Executive Director, European Centre for Modern Languages, Graz

**11.00**            *Coffee Break*

**11.30**            **MEET IN COMMISSIONS** [WORKING GROUPS 1,2 AND 3 TOGETHER]

- |    |                                   |          |
|----|-----------------------------------|----------|
| A. | (Pre) Primary education (4-10/11) | [Room 7] |
|----|-----------------------------------|----------|

- |  |           |
|--|-----------|
| B. Lower Secondary education (10/11-15/16)                     | [Room 10] |
| C. Upper Secondary education (15/16-18/19)                     | [Room 11] |
| D. Vocationally oriented language learning and adult education | [Room 1]  |

**11.45** Parallel working groups

**13.00** *Lunch*

**14.30** Parallel working groups (ctd)

**16.00** End of session

[**16.00** Rapporteurs and Chairpersons of each group finalise Group Reports]

[**16.30** Meeting of Chairpersons and Rapporteurs of Commissions and Working Groups to prepare Reports] [A - Room 7; B- Room 10; C - Room 11; D - Room 1]

**17.15-18.30** SEMI-PLenary SESSION [Room 10]

[with Heads of Delegations, Chairpersons and Rapporteurs of Commissions, Chairpersons and Rapporteurs of Working Groups and the General Rapporteur to agree the content of Conclusions and Recommendations]

from:

**18.30** Drafting Group to Finalise the Conclusions and Recommendations

**Friday 18 April**

PLENARY SESSION (Hemicycle)

Chair: **Mr Hermann STRÖBEL**, State Secretary of the *Land* of Thüringia, Germany

**9.00** **CLOSING OF THE CONFERENCE**

- Address by *Mr Daniel TARSCHYS*, Secretary General of the Council of Europe

- Summing up: *Dr John TRIM*, General Rapporteur

- Presentation and Discussion of Conclusions and Recommendations

**10.15** *Break (for informal discussion)*

**11.00** - Adoption of Recommendations  
(approx.)

Closing Addresses

**Mr Klaus EICHNER**, Chairman of the Education Committee of the Council for Cultural Cooperation of the Council of Europe

**Ms Sylvia VLAEMINCK**, Directorate General XXII, Education, Training and Youth, European Commission

**Mr Maitland STOBART**, Deputy Director of Education, Culture and Sport of the Council of Europe

**12.30**            **PRESS CONFERENCE**  
(approx.)