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Linguistic diversity for democratic citizenship in Europe

P r o c e e d i n g s

Innsbruck (Austria), 10-12 May 1999

Linguistic diversity for democratic citizenship in Europe

Towards a framework for language education policies

Proceedings

Innsbruck (Austria), 10-12 May 1999

Education Committee

Council for Cultural Co-operation

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Contents

B. *Results of a preliminary survey on linguistic diversity in education: obstacles and possible solutions*
Presentation by Michel Candelier, université René Descartes, Paris

C. *Round table: Policy decision-making at national and international levels*
Summary of the contributions: Claude Truchot, General Rapporteur

Session III – Language education policies and democratic citizenship in Europe

A. *Presentation of the results of the discussion groups in sessions I, II and III*
Synthesis by Jean-Claude Beacco, University of Le Mans

B. *Round table: Linguistic diversity and democratic citizenship − the role of civil society*
Synthesis by Albert Raasch, University of Saarlandes, Chairman of the round table

Conclusions and "next steps"

– Alan Dobson, Office for Standards in Education, United Kingdom

– Joseph Sheils, Head of the Modern Languages Section, Council of Europe

Appendices

1. Programme
2. List of participants
3. List of documents distributed at the conference

The conference and its context

Claude Truchot, université Marc Bloch, Strasbourg, General Rapporteur

Background to the conference

Starting point: implementing the recommendations of the Second Summit

This conference, and the project of which it is a part, derive from the recommendations of the Second Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe held in October 1997. The Final Declaration of the summit notes the political, social and economic upheavals taking place in Europe and stresses that Europe must be founded on the principles of pluralist democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law. The tasks it assigns to the Council of Europe secretariat include promoting education for democratic citizenship and enhancing Europe's heritage while "respecting cultural diversity".

Among the steps taken to achieve this, a language policy project – "Language policies for a multilingual and multicultural Europe" – was launched in July 1998 on the initiative of the Modern Languages Section, as part of the Council of Europe's new modern languages project. A scientific committee was set up and started work on it. The project is the responsibility of the Education Committee, under the authority of the intergovernmental Council for Cultural Co-operation (CDCC – formed by the forty-seven countries that have signed the European Cultural Convention).

Choice of focus: language education policy

The Second Summit recommendation mentions two areas in which language policy measures can be taken: new information and communication technologies and education, both of which can serve to promote languages. It was decided to deal first with language policy in education so as to make the project a natural sequel to the Council of Europe's previous work on language policy ("modern languages projects"), while bearing in mind that a project might be set up later on language policy measures in other areas.
intelligent
Basis of a language policy

According to the letter and spirit of this recommendation, the language policy project must be based on the two principles of democratic citizenship and linguistic diversity. It was important to give it an ethical and philosophical dimension by tying it in with the project on "Education for democratic citizenship" set up as a result of the summit's recommendations (see Appendix 3 of that document). To ensure that the project was rooted in Europe's own linguistic diversity, it was decided that it should combine the different types of language used in Europe. The classification adopted distinguishes between the languages of indigenous minorities, immigrants' languages, "foreign" languages and the official languages of member states. One aim of the conference was to analyse these basic concepts in depth.

Institutional objectives

The Council of Europe draws up instruments on a consensus basis. However, the instrument to be drafted under this project cannot be a legal one like the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, nor one like the "Common European Framework of Reference". What seemed most meaningful was to draw up a "reference document", to which people could refer to

check the questions to be addressed and possible answers in the area of language education policy. The document would be made available to national as well as local, regional and European decision makers, with adjustments to the particular requirements of each level of government. Deadlines were dictated by the need to complete the document in 2001, the European Year of Languages.

Preparatory process

The reference document was to be prepared according to the following timetable:

1. Preliminary work (July 1998 to May 1999):

   – Setting up a scientific committee;
   – Drafting an introductory document;
   – Preliminary survey of linguistic diversity in education systems;
   – Final choice of themes and structure for the launch conference.

2. Conference in Innsbruck from 10 to 12 May 1999.

3. Production of the document (1999-2001).

Introductory document

Pádraig Ó Riagáin and Michael Byram were asked to draw up an introductory document entitled "Towards a framework for language teaching policies in Europe" (DECS/EDU/LANG (99) 6), in which they set out to provide an analysis of the socio-linguistic changes under way in Europe, pinpoint the issues for language policy, especially the relationship between language and citizenship, link the project to the Council of Europe's political aims and define the nature of the proposed document.

Preliminary survey

In designing the language policy project it was essential to draw on a study which identified problems and obstacles and listed and assessed some of the solutions tried, the measures introduced and the steps taken. The preliminary survey met this need. It was conducted by a team of researchers headed by Michel Candelier and set out to assess the extent to which three types of language ("foreign" languages, indigenous minority languages and immigrant languages) were included in the member states' education systems, identifying any obstacles to their inclusion. It was based on replies to a questionnaire from thirty-seven countries, all members of the Council for Cultural Co-operation, and entitled "Language diversity in the education systems of the member states of the Council for Cultural Co-operation" (DECS/EDU/LANG (99) 11). The survey findings were circulated and presented at the conference, contributing to the discussions (presentation by Michel Candelier; see Session II).

The Innsbruck Conference (10 to 12 May 1999)

Organisation

The conference was held jointly by the Modern Languages Section of the Council of Europe and the Austrian Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs. In the institutional context of the Council of Europe, it is part of the Council for Cultural Co-operation's (CDCC) Modern

Languages Project "Language policies for a multilingual and multicultural Europe", overseen by the Education Committee.

Objective

The conference was entitled "Linguistic diversity for democratic citizenship in Europe", reflecting the two basic concepts underlying the project. Its main objective was to launch the preparation of the reference document by bringing together for discussion players from most of the spheres of activity and countries with a stake in the framing of a language education policy in Europe. It was attended by representatives of almost all the CDCC member countries, observers (Canada, India, Japan), representatives of various international organisations (European Commission, OSCE, Unesco) and of agencies concerned with language policy, interested individuals particularly from the host country, Austria, and, together with the Modern Languages Section, the scientific committee and a number of experts in charge of reports or activities.

Structure

The conference was divided into three sessions reflecting three stages in the preparation of the reference document.

Session I

The purpose of this session was to define the concepts of "linguistic diversity" and "democratic citizenship" and the relationship between them and to take a closer look at the language situation in Europe. It provided substantial information and discussion, with the introductory statement by Peter Leuprecht followed by two panel discussions, the first chaired by Michael Byram involving Ingrid Gogolin, Hanna Komorowska and Pádraig Ó Riagáin, and the second chaired by Georges Lüdi involving François Grin, Gret Haller and Miquel Strubell. Michela Cecchini presented the work of the Council of Europe's project group on education for democratic citizenship, which she heads.

Session II

This session was intended to assess the challenges posed by linguistic diversity in education systems, especially the obstacles encountered, and propose some solutions for meeting those challenges. The Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly's work on language diversity was presented by its rapporteur, Jacques Legendre. Michel Candelier presented and analysed the survey of language diversity in education systems. Several decision makers in charge of language education policies then answered a list of questions drawn up by the participants in their discussion groups, on ways in which the education system can respond to the challenges of linguistic diversity; they included Pavel Cink (Czech Republic), Anton Dobart (Austria), Maria Emília Galvão (Portugal), Svein Harstein (Norway) and Liliana Preoteasa (Romania) from education ministries, and Sylvia Vlaeminck (European Commission) and Joseph Poth (Unesco) from international organisations.

Session III

On behalf of the Council of Europe's Modern Languages Section, Joseph Sheils presented the section's work and described the "next steps" in producing the reference document on language education policies. This was preceded by a panel discussion chaired by Albert Raasch, in which several representatives of civil society expressed support for the process and the underlying concepts. They included representatives of employers (Gehrard Riemer), trade unions (Alain

Mouchoux), parents (Milana Saiani) and language teachers (Terttu Valojärvi). Youth representatives also gave their views at the end of session I.

Discussion groups

For part of each session all the participants were divided up into five discussion groups which addressed a broad range of topics, pooling their experience and raising many questions. Their discussions are summarised in these proceedings by Jean-Claude Beacco (Session III).

Concepts and methods

Language education policies and the players involved

Policy-making process

Generally speaking, *language policy* denotes any deliberate effort to influence a language situation. The process of framing a language policy takes place in several stages: analysing the situation, identifying objectives accordingly, devising improvements in the areas of activity chosen and carrying them out. The content of each stage depends largely on the type of policy envisaged and the values underlining it. In a democratic policy-making process the studies conducted are intended to fuel a broad debate, while the goals, which must be explained, are inspired by fundamental rights. The process is also defined as democratic if it uses methods such as awareness-raising, co-operation and persuasion. The project whose early stages are described here aims to frame a language policy and make this part of a democratic process.

Organisations concerned with language education policy in Europe

Many different partners are involved in framing a Europe-wide language policy because no institution in Europe is in a position to do it independently by itself. In the educational sphere, the partners are the international organisations and government authorities that attended this conference, together with other local, regional and economic players who should be involved in the later stages of the process. The international players in the education sphere are the Council of Europe, the European Union (EU), Unesco and the Office for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE).

The EU's responsibilities in this area are established by the Treaties of Maastricht (Article 126) and Amsterdam (Article 149), which provide that the content and organisation of education systems are a matter for the member states and that the EU can contribute to the quality of education through co-operation between the member states. They also emphasise the need to respect linguistic and cultural diversity (Sylvia Vlaeminck, Session II). The EU's goal, as stated in the White Paper on Education published in 1995, is for each citizen to master three Community languages – reflecting the underlying aim of linguistic diversity and diversified language learning. People should learn languages throughout their lives, on the foundations laid at school. The idea of mastering three Community languages is associated with that of lifelong learning.

Unesco, which has 186 member states on all the continents, is an intergovernmental organisation concerned with developing and implementing ideas rather than with decision-making and funding. Its policies are drawn up by representatives of the member states' governments in line with their instructions. Following the directives adopted at its latest conferences, Unesco has included linguistic diversity and multilingual teaching among its objectives and a charter of

language rights among its current activities. It will take part in the European Year of Languages through its networks and national offices (Joseph Poth, Session II).

International organisations can thus play a very important part in developing ideas, building bridges and providing support. In institutional terms, states perform a key function – not an easy one given the many players involved, whether in framing and implementing language policies in general or in the education system (decision makers in the policy and technical/administrative spheres, heads of educational establishments, teachers, parents, students and students). This will probably mean setting up co-ordination machinery (see the report on the discussion groups in Session III).

The Council of Europe's involvement

The Council of Europe's role as one of these players is illustrated by its past action. The Council has been actively involved in language policy for decades, although the term was less often used in the past than it is now. The proposed project carries on the Council's earlier work which, as indicated by Joseph Sheils (Session III), covers two areas: firstly, recognition and status of regional and minority languages and secondly, language learning and teaching.

In the first area, two legal texts have been drawn up and are now in use: the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, adopted in 1992, on the protection of those languages, and the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, some of whose articles concern minorities' language rights.

The Council's work on language education policies stems from the commitments made under the European Cultural Convention signed in 1954 and from the task of protecting and promoting linguistic heritage and cultural diversity assigned to the Council for Cultural Co-operation (CDCC), which comprises the forty-seven states that have signed the convention. The modern languages projects began in the 1970s. The first series was the "Threshold Levels", the first produced for English and published in 1976 and the second produced in French and published in 1980. By 1999 the Council of Europe had published Threshold Levels in twenty languages. The planning of the second series of projects was completed in 1998; this series comprises the Common European Framework of Reference, a flexible planning instrument for modern languages teaching and learning, with a list of recommendations covering all the relevant areas, and the European Language Portfolio, a model linguistic curriculum vitae for ongoing completion.

In assessing the impact of modern languages projects on the language situation in Europe, it must first be said that the concepts, tools and methods devised have greatly influenced language teaching. They are well known by language teachers, or at any rate by managers and those in charge of course design and methodology. They have undoubtedly upgraded and modernised language teaching, increased its efficiency, made it easier to meet steadily growing demand and thus helped to promote language teaching and language skills. The Threshold Levels have also helped to broaden the range of languages taught and therefore to promote linguistic diversity. The European Language Portfolio likewise enhances linguistic diversity by enabling individuals to capitalise on the range of language skills they have acquired throughout their lives.

The reference document on language education policies cannot of course be a legal text, but, being produced by the Council of Europe, it must refer to and supplement the Council's previous texts. It is mainly a sequel to the modern languages projects and, like them, as suggested during the discussions, paves the way for "specific practical applications". In this area, as Joseph Sheils points out, the Council of Europe must act as a catalyst and a forum for discussion and analysis

(Session III). It must "anchor" the values concerned, offer opportunities for study and discussion, and inform the debate. Lastly, it has a methodological function, since it draws up instruments on a consensus basis.

Analysing the language situation

Linguistic impact of changes in Europe

A process designed to influence a *language situation* always starts with an analysis of the situation. Before framing a language policy, we need to make a comprehensive study of its context. A language situation is defined by features such as the languages involved, the state of these languages, the status or degree of institutional recognition of each one, the relations between language communities, the social forces affecting language use, the ideologies shaping the image of the languages and people's attitudes to the languages. This means analysing all the problems which language policy sets out to help solve. This analysis was conducted before and during the conference, and although it is still incomplete, several points can be highlighted.

Europe is experiencing profound changes which affect its language situation, confronting the players involved in language policy with a mass of new questions. Over the past few decades the internationalisation of the economy has generated areas of activity which exceed national boundaries. Globalisation, which means putting most human activities on the market, opening up markets segmented notably by national borders to unfettered competition and expanding them worldwide, has speeded up the internationalisation process. Multinational and internationalised firms, the cultural industry and information society networks are sectors which function on a distinctly international and often global scale. Globalisation has conferred a new dimension on the process by imposing it as a mode of development organised and upheld by a highly influential ideology. In his statement Peter Leuprecht calls it the "pan-economic" ideology – referring to George Soros, who calls it "market fundamentalism" – and points out its dangers.

This new dimension of human activity disregards national borders and in fact tends to remove them, at least in economic terms. It also tends to encompass language use, which was previously regulated as far as possible by government and is now increasingly subject to market forces. As a result, the strongest languages are in a dominant position. As Peter Leuprecht says, "The relationship between languages and those speaking them also involves power. 'Strong' languages are liable to crush 'weak' languages". Gret Haller, Georges Lüdi and François Grin (Session I) draw attention to the consequences of linguistic supremacy over language communities. This form of domination is nothing new, but it is exercised in a new socio-linguistic context featuring a wider circle of "weak languages" and vulnerable communities together with the expansion worldwide of the geographical scope of strong languages – increasingly that of a single language.

Identities and diversity

At the same time, and probably in response to this trend, many linguistic and cultural communities are more and more forcefully asserting their identities. This usually takes the form of demands for recognition of individuals' and communities' linguistic and cultural rights. But, it can also go further. As Peter Leuprecht remarks, "Pan-economic ideology, globalisation and the related sense of powerlessness have probably contributed to this longing for identity, to a fear of losing and a determination to defend one's identity (…). This is understandable, but it is not without dangers. An obsession with a narrowly defined identity, going hand in hand with a rejection of otherness and difference, brings us back to aggressive nationalism and

ethnocentrism". Europe is unfortunately experiencing this in several forms, some of them particularly tragic.

Unification and diversity

This double spiral of global and local trends around national issues is also reflected in politics. New states are being founded and new powers are taking shape at local and regional level, sometimes resulting in the emergence of nation-regions which are virtually states. At the same time we are witnessing a tendency towards unification, with the pooling of activities in transnational institutions and in a wide range of multilateral bodies. The economic integration of national communities has so far been carried furthest by the European Union. Other bodies have been set up, such as the ALENA in North America and MERCOSUR in South America, but they are still in the process of forming common markets. The EU is now at the stage of assimilating the political, social and cultural effects of its economic integration and has embarked on the process of political integration through the 1992 Maastricht Treaty. It is therefore coming up against the language problems posed by this integration process.

These problems are a challenge to Europe and confront all those with a stake in language policy: Europe's international institutions (that is, the Council of Europe and the European Union), national authorities and the political, economic, social and cultural players operating at lower levels.

Ethical basis of language policy

Defining and linking up "linguistic diversity" and "democratic citizenship"

The purpose of a Council of Europe language policy is to promote the principles and values underlying it. By explaining them it also offers an example of democratic policy-making. It was important to define and link up the two basic principles underlying the planned policy. Defining the concepts of "linguistic diversity" and "democratic citizenship" proved to be a rather difficult task. As Pádraig Ó Riagáin points out (Session I), they reflect needs and aspirations which are currently taking shape and have appeared very recently on the agendas of international organisations in Europe. Michela Cecchini (Session I) also observes that the concept of democratic citizenship is still being worked out, with no consensus as yet on its content. And the notion of linguistic diversity covers a wide variety of situations.

A few benchmarks and discussion points nevertheless emerged from the conference. Links can be established between languages, citizenship and human rights. In any local, regional, national or international community, people must be able to take part in societal processes without being subjected to language barriers, linguistic handicaps or expressions of intolerance. This applies to all areas including education, public services, information, elective democracy and work (Miquel Strubell, Pádraig Ó Riagáin, Session I). As Raymond Weber observed, we are helping to create a European public area which extends beyond the nation state towards an area of citizenship for everyone in Europe. Language cannot be used for purposes of power and exclusion in this area of citizenship, which can be built only if economics, or rather market fundamentalism, gives way to politics – politics as a reflection of the citizens, of the "city", in the sense of a community that generates policy and rights, including political rights, as F. Audigier noted in "Basic concepts and core competences of education for democratic citizenship" (DECS/CIT (98) 35).

This demand for citizenship must be extended to the processes set in motion by social change – globalisation and technological modernisation. Otherwise, as Jacques Legendre points out (Session II), "there is also another form of exclusion, one which may prove very difficult to deal

with, that of men and women who, in today's increasingly shrinking world, may be proficient only in their own language and unable to speak any other, perhaps an international language, a knowledge of which is becoming so important that those who do not speak one are excluded in turn, at least where international relations are concerned". To avoid sidelining people in this way, we could of course have a common language giving them access to information society networks and we might organise language teaching so as to ensure that they know that language. However, only the dominant ideology says that information society networks must be monolingual. All Europe's citizens must be equipped with language skills allowing them to take part in these new processes. But just as access to language must not apply only to the majority or dominant language in a given state, it must not be restricted to the dominant languages – or language – in these processes, but must embrace communities and their languages, especially the common languages they have adopted.

Schools, multilingualism and multiculturalism

The demand for recognition of language rights means that governments are called upon to recognise speakers of minority languages and empower them to take part in community life. The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages provided speakers of indigenous minority languages with a framework for recognition and facilities for accommodating their languages. Some of these languages have been incorporated into the public arena, especially in regions which have acquired a high degree of autonomy, whose languages often act as a strong focus for identity and have been given co-official status. Catalan, Basque and Welsh are cases in point. Recognition of other languages and language communities is very uneven and often inadequate, especially in education systems, but significant steps forward have been made, as indicated by several participants in the panel discussion on decision-making (Session III).

On the other hand, little attention is paid to the languages spoken by communities stemming from various forms of migration. The prevailing view in most European countries is that learning the national, official language is the key linguistic issue for the integration of those sections of their population which are from immigrant backgrounds. The teaching of these languages occupies a comparatively minor position in the education systems of most European countries (Session III). Yet as Ingrid Gogolin points out (Session I), these languages tend to remain in fairly wide use thanks to immigrant community networks, which teach them to children, albeit very unevenly. Schools must therefore cater for these communities and languages so that their speakers learn to read and write as well as speak them, in order to gain access to the knowledge they convey. The various cultures that make up many people's identities must also be considered from a social perspective. Multilingual people must not be split between their different cultures, but be able to pull them together. School has a major part to play in helping them do this.

Democratic citizenship and language teaching

A link must also be forged between democratic citizenship and language teaching. Hanna Komorowska and Michela Cecchini demonstrate in their papers (Session I) that language teaching and learning can provide a framework for democratic citizenship. This means developing a democratic classroom approach which teaches people to communicate, discuss and think – an essential process which should lead to linguistic diversity, its natural sequel and necessary adjunct.

Area of citizenship and linguistic diversity

While the conference agreed that linguistic diversity was desirable, the participants' concern to define the concept demonstrated that it has a range of meanings and will require considerable

clarification. Just as a society based on language supremacy is intolerant, diversity can also boil down to the co-exist ence of social groups that refuse to tolerate one another. As Gret Haller puts it (Session I), "The first risk is that of 'downwards' ramification, which might be described as an 'explosion of ethno-nationalist languages'". This in fact weakens each of the languages concerned and further heightens the insecurity and intolerance of those who speak them. In Raymond Weber's words, "Current political realities require us to see diversity in relation to, and in terms of its interaction with, democratic citizenship", as was the intention of the conference. Defining and linking up linguistic diversity and democratic citizenship is an open-ended and very demanding task.

Organising linguistic diversity in education systems

Assessing linguistic diversity

The findings of the survey on language diversity in education systems suggest the scale of the work still to be done (Session II). Where foreign language teaching is concerned, as Michel Candelier says in his presentation, the survey demonstrates the weight of the dominant language: "In nearly four countries out of five, the most frequently taught language is studied by more students than all the other languages combined". The other languages are offered only in limited numbers (in four countries out of five) and are taught for a much shorter time. Where indigenous minority languages are concerned, only a few countries (one in four) offer instruction to a substantial proportion (two-thirds) of the target group. As regards immigrant languages, the very limited information received by the authors of the survey (perhaps reflecting a limited awareness of these languages) shows that efforts to increase educational language diversity in this area are still less marked than is generally the case for indigenous minority languages.

The authors note that in assessing the findings they were continually presented with strong evidence suggesting that the greatest diversity is far from being the prerogative of wealthy countries – quite the reverse, although financial constraints are definitely a problem. They are less often cited than the lack of political will and certain policy makers' lack of interest in linguistic diversification, which is the most frequently mentioned obstacle in the replies to the questionnaire (thirty-one occurrences concerning nineteen countries). The other most frequently cited obstacle is the collective and individual perceptions/attitudes of learners and parents, and also of policy makers and education chiefs, concerning languages (usefulness, difficulty, aesthetic appreciation etc.), those who speak them and the cultures to which they are linked. In this connection, very favourable images of English are quite frequently cited as an obstacle (fourteen occurrences concerning eleven countries) which often discourages teachers and learners of other languages.

Prospects for improvement

The discussion among decision makers (Session II) confirmed and clarified these findings. It was pointed out, for example, that societies are becoming increasingly multilingual as a result of immigration. In the past, multilingualism was mainly a feature of the larger western European countries and their neighbours; it is now expanding to northern and southern Europe, as indicated by the representatives of Norway and Portugal, and more recently to central Europe (Hungary and the Czech Republic). It is a fact, however, that education systems pay very little attention to this language diversity, giving pride of place to teaching the host country's language.

The discussion also highlights the many factors that explain why situations differ. Pavel Cink refers on this point to John Trim's research: "a country will set greater store on language learning and teaching if it is multilingual itself, if it has minorities among its population, if its

language is not widely used or if knowledge of foreign languages is an asset in itself in that country for historical and cultural reasons, for instance because it is the key to international communication and access to a proper education". The combination of these factors in several central and eastern European countries probably explains why they generally take on a broader range of languages than some of the larger western European countries. Some of these factors, however, may be of little importance in practice. A community whose language is not widely used may opt for a single language to gain access to the international arena. Also, little account is taken of a country's natural multilingualism if a majority of the population is opposed to it and if this attitude is exploited for political purposes.

So the mere operation of these factors is not enough: the impact of appropriate language policies is also essential. Language policies address the issues comprehensively together with their consequences. Measures such as diversifying the languages taught, teaching the neighbouring country's language, developing bilingual schools and introducing multilingual teaching entail training teachers and, more generally, arousing public awareness and securing funds. All the speakers in the panel discussion viewed public awareness campaigns as the most effective way of carrying out a language policy. But it was pointed out that public opinion sometimes proves more sensitive than the authorities when it comes to recognising linguistic diversity (Portugal and Romania). Teachers and parents, the education systems' partners, favour co-operation and exchanges as a way of encouraging linguistic diversity.

Other major topics for discussion

One of the main themes of the conference was how to incorporate three types of language into a single language policy: "foreign" languages, immigrant languages and indigenous minority languages. As a result, there was little discussion of issues relating to member states' official languages. Yet these must be included in the framing of a language policy: firstly, because all the factors involved in language policy interact and it is imperative to deal with all types of language rather than just one, two or even three; secondly, because the situation of official languages varies enormously from one country and one social group to another, and is a factor for inequality. It must be borne in mind that they are mother tongues, that for many people – not necessarily those highest up the social ladder – they are the only language resource and that they serve to pull a community together. Communities are entitled to effective access to modern life via their official languages, which of course does not preclude the right of access to widely used languages or the obligation to promote the well-being of minority language communities.

Another substantive issue that was not broached is the position of English teaching. The social role of English was discussed during Session I. Logically, therefore, English teaching should be included in the discussion of how to organise linguistic diversity in education systems. It was to have been covered by the panel discussion on decision-making, but, being last on the agenda, was dropped for lack of time. Yet the fact is that in most education systems English no longer functions as a foreign language, although with very few exceptions there has been no democratic debate on this change of status.

Objectives of a reference document on language education policies

The paper by Joseph Sheils, "Next steps", which concludes the proceedings, discusses the participants' contributions and also, of course, the points that were not discussed. After reviewing the Council of Europe's work on language policy, Joseph Sheils identifies several principles of language education policy which reflect the thinking behind the project and its underlying concepts: language learning is for all, irrespective of social status or grouping; access to informal as well as formal communication networks is the right of everyone; this policy must

allow for all language varieties and for non-European languages; understanding and speaking different languages is a key to meeting people from other social groups and discovering other cultures; democratic classroom processes develop the independence of thought and action needed for participatory and socially responsible citizenship; language learning throughout one's life is a necessity and therefore a right, not an option. Joseph Sheils explains how these principles have already been addressed by the Council of Europe in its previous work, particularly the European Language Portfolio, a real aid to achieving linguistic diversity.

He outlines the remaining stages in the production of the reference document and indicates its scope: "The document would help to analyse the decision between this set of factors and other factors such as cultural, political, the need to learn the language of one's neighbours, the need for access to other cultures. For such a case the document would not suggest or impose a policy but would help to clarify the issues and the implications of different options which might be followed". He concludes with a reminder of the deadline – European Year of Languages 2001 – and encourages everyone to contribute actively to the project's success.

Opening of the conference

Opening addresses

Address by Elisabeth Gehrer, Minister of Education and Cultural Affairs, Austria (abridged)

The fiftieth anniversary of the Council of Europe is a suitable occasion to ask ourselves whether we have improved Europe. We may claim that improvements have been made, but not, unfortunately, in all spheres. We must accept the implications of this and resolve to work harder to achieve universal objectives, including peace. We must also consider the future and how we can establish a genuine citizen's Europe and ensure that this concept becomes firmly rooted in young people's minds.

I welcome this conference in particular because it has made it its aim to deliberate on how the peoples of Europe can be brought closer together through the learning of languages and the use of modern methods.

There are two dimensions which have to be considered in this context: the political and economic integration of Europe and the Europe of the regions, where diversity should be shared without Europe's common objectives being neglected.

Globalisation has generated a greater need than ever for identification with a homeland (*Heimat*) – a country with a specific culture and mentality, where people have their roots. On the other hand, the desire to look beyond the frontiers of their own country must be instilled in young people. Those who have roots also have the openness of mind required to take the first steps towards others. Hence, it is essential to be able to communicate and to speak several languages. Europe's wealth lies in its great linguistic and cultural diversity which must be preserved at all cost.

Admittedly, English opens all doors and enables people to get by wherever they go. However, it is important for them to speak other languages, if they wish to establish deeper relations. This is becoming increasingly obvious in Vienna, where we feel the need to know the languages spoken by our neighbours (Hungarian, Czech, Polish). Many businesses expect applicants to speak these languages in addition to English.

It is impossible to understand a people if you do not understand their language and it is therefore important to continue to promote language learning. Hence, I am particularly pleased that the European Centre for Modern Languages was set up in Graz exactly four years ago today, on 9 May 1995.

The present conference, which forms part of the Council of Europe's fiftieth anniversary celebrations, is a momentous event. The Council of Europe has declared the year 2001 the "European Year of Languages" and you, the participants in today's conference, are the prime movers. You are going to deliberate on what a future common languages policy may look like and on important questions, such as, "What should be done at national and at European level?", "Who are the target groups of such a policy?"

In Austria we have launched a language learning offensive. Children are taught one foreign language from their very first year at school (usually English, French or Italian), and efforts are

being made to give secondary school students the opportunity of a bilingual education (some subjects being taught in a foreign language). This should instil in them the pleasure of learning a language and help them overcome their fear of speaking in a foreign tongue.

I wish you the best of success in your work and a pleasant stay in Innsbruck, and I look forward with the greatest interest to the outcome of your deliberations.

*Address by Governor Wendelin Weingartner, Governor of Tyrol, Austria (abridged***)**

During the street-naming ceremonies which have just taken place, we have had a living experience of how European sentiments can be expressed in many different ways while the underlying spirit is always the same. In Innsbruck we believe the Tyrol to be a genuinely European region, where this spirit is alive in a specific form of its own, and we consider it a privilege that our city, which is one of the important European crossroads, has been chosen as the venue of this conference.

A community depends on communication and mutual understanding, with language as its most obvious tool. The language of a country is telling evidence of its culture. Not to believe in linguistic diversity means not to believe in cultural diversity. Europe derives its specific character from its cultural diversity which is expressed in its languages.

In Tyrol we use a German idiom which immediately reveals our origin. The way we intonate our language is part of our identity, and although we are unquestionably European, we do not wish to lose that identity.

With this in mind, I hope that the present conference will help to prove that one can be European while cultivating one's own identity. In a community we should seek to establish relations and "to build bridges" by using other people's languages but also by acknowledging the wide cultural diversity which is so specifically European.

Address by Christian Smekal, Rector of Innsbruck University, Austria (abridged)

On behalf of Caspar Einem, Minister of Science and Transport, I should like to wish this important conference every success.

The future of languages in Europe is not merely a matter of communication between European citizens. Beyond that it is vital because languages help citizens to understand one another and to understand one another's cultures. Learning languages is also a means of enhancing Europe's cultural diversity, for languages should not be barriers but bridges to understanding and respecting each other's cultures. It would be wrong to consider language learning as a means of levelling out differences or of cultural standardisation.

This conference is important because it signals willingness to address the issue of cultural diversity and in doing so will make linguistic policy much more relevant.

I hope that you will make substantial progress along the path to that diversity, which will enable us to build a multicultural Europe.

Address by Herwig van Staa, Mayor of Innsbruck, Austria (abridged)

One of the main aims of the Council of Europe is to constantly seek to improve the protection of human rights. This has entailed the introduction of efficient supervisory mechanisms which ensure the protection of fundamental rights and freedoms as well as awareness of the importance

of these issues in education and in particular of the emergence of the new threats to human rights and dignity we are currently witnessing.

Public authorities must be made aware of the significance of human rights and of the need to encourage respect for these rights.

The Council of Europe has always supported the wide diversity of the European cultural heritage. Since its accession, Austria has actively promoted these causes and two Austrians have even been Secretaries General of the Organisation. I would like to pay special tribute to Dr Peter Leuprecht, a native of Innsbruck, who was for many years Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe and is now a government adviser in Canada.

The preservation and enhancement of the diversity of the European heritage and the consolidation of democracy at local and regional level are themes that are dealt with by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities. For the past year, I have had the honour of being the President of its Chamber of Regions. In 1983, the Congress decided to devote special attention to regional and minority languages. An Austrian newspaper recently ran the following headline: "Is Europe losing its languages?" It went on to explain that, on the one hand, growing mobility leads to closer cultural contacts, thus reinforcing the importance of linguistic diversity, while, on the other hand, public pressure for information leads to a higher degree of conformity. The main European languages, especially English and French, are pushing other languages aside.

Studies show that there are thirty times as many languages in the world as countries. A study carried out in 1996 reports that, in western Europe alone, there are forty-five communities using languages other than the national language. In 1997, a survey carried out by the European Commission in thirty-four western, central and eastern European countries revealed that Russian is the main language of 35% of the population concerned, followed by English, 28%, German, 20%, French, 17%, and Italian, 10%. All other national languages are the main language of less than 7% of the total European population. One can imagine what this means for the continued existence of these languages.

Language is one of society's main tools for preserving its culture and its means of expression. For these reasons, the European Convention on Human Rights prohibits discrimination on the grounds of language and, like the Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, encourages linguistic diversity, which will be one of the main characteristics of the Europe of the future. The wealth of traditions in Europe and its multiculturalism are two of the main features of Europe's identity, which must be protected and promoted.

Languages are the essential feature of European culture. Acknowledging a person's mother tongue and ensuring the right to its use in various spheres of life may help that person to feel at home not only in his or her own country but also elsewhere in Europe, inspiring him or her with the feeling of being a European citizen. Unity and harmony cannot be achieved in Europe by introducing a standard language. On the contrary, the right to be different strengthens commitment to regional and minority languages and, consequently, to European democracy.

Language is a fundamental aspect and prerequisite for democracy. In Austria we know from experience that an ethnic minority can only survive if it conserves the language of its ancestors. And in Europe we have seen that the oppression of national minorities may ultimately lead to European agreements that improve the quality of life of minorities and enable them to contribute to the development of their regions.
his awareness of languages and of their importance, not only for people's cultural identity but also for bringing them closer together, makes me particularly pleased that Innsbruck is, for the

second time in a short space of time, hosting a meeting of international experts in the field of languages.

We hope we can help make this conference a success. As President of the Chamber of Regions of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities but also as Mayor of Innsbruck, I welcome you and wish you much success in reaching common objectives in linguistic policies.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the media who will report on this conference, in particular Radio Österreich International, who will cover the entire event.

Address by Raymond Weber Director of Education, Culture and Sport, Council of Europe[1]

It is a great honour for me, but also a personal pleasure, to be opening this Conference today on Linguistic Diversity for Democratic Citizenship in Europe on behalf of Mr Daniel Tarschys, Secretary General of the Council of Europe.

For years Austria has been a pioneer of linguistic co-operation in Europe, a Europe intended not only for politicians, experts, businessmen and bankers, but also for the citizens of our continent.

Austria's active role is once again apparent in our programmes but also in the European Centre for Modern Languages in Graz, which could never have developed without the moral and material support of the Austrian Government.

My first words therefore, will be words of thanks to the Federal Government of Austria and more particularly to you, Minister, and to your ministry, for the remarkable role that Austria has played in our language programme and for this conference which, I am sure, has come at the right time to take stock of the progress we have made and sketc.h the broad outlines of the European Year of Languages in 2001.

My thanks also to the *Land* of Tyrol and the city of Innsbruck, for offering us their hospitality for three days, during which I am sure we shall achieve some positive results.

The Council of Europe

This conference is taking place just days after the Council of Europe's official fiftieth anniversary celebrations. When the Council was set up in 1949, under the momentum of the Congress of The Hague the previous year, it was in order to build a new Europe, based on the values of human rights, democracy and the rule of law, leaving behind for good the Holocaust and the war on our continent.

When, in 1989, the Council began to enlarge rapidly, embracing the countries of central and east Europe, with the result that its membership grew in a few years from twenty-three to forty-one states, it was in order to promote a Europe of democratic security, social cohesion and intercultural dialogue.

Today, however, we find ourselves largely powerless, our values flouted and mocked: we are watching not just massacres, but also the ugly phenomenon of ethnic cleansing that is driving hundreds of thousands of Kosovars from their country, stripping them of their possessions and the things that make them what they are – their very identity and dignity. What is happening in Kosovo is of concern not just in Southeast Europe and not just in terms of political stability or the economic situation; it concerns us all, because we can see ourselves mirrored in the events there, desperately trying to make sense of the collapse of our most cherished values.

Nonetheless, as well as providing humanitarian aid, including support for education and culture, as quickly and effectively as possible, we must now begin to prepare for what I hesitate to call the next phase. We have to realise that the next phase will not be a return to normality, as if nothing had happened. I believe that Kosovo will bear deep and lasting scars. Nothing will be as it was before. Everything must, to some extent, be collectively reinvented.

1. This speech was delivered in two languages, the first part in German and the second in French.

The conference

Can our discussions over these three days contribute in any way to healing the wounds?

I have a deep conviction that they can, although it is true that any practical proposals we may make on the role of linguistic diversity in furthering democratic citizenship will have little impact in the short term. However, by influencing people's outlook, behaviour and attitudes, the proposals have the potential to restore confidence and meaning, so that dialogue between the different cultures and religions can start up again, the social fabric can be mended and real fellow feeling and active solidarity can be developed.

With a long-term view to bringing this undoubtedly difficult and laborious process to fruition, the Council of Europe can take up the challenge by drawing on legal frameworks, ideas, methodological tools and citizenship networks. As all these aspects will be covered in the course of the conference, I shall mention here only the various legal instruments:

– the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages;

– the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities;

– the Declaration and programme on education for democratic citizenship (adopted on 7 May 1999 in Budapest);

– Recommendation (98) 6 of the Committee of Ministers concerning modern languages;

– Recommendation 1383 (98) of the Parliamentary Assembly on linguistic diversification.

I should also like to mention one programme that is both a tool and a network, namely the Sites of Democratic Citizenship, about which my colleague Michela Cecchini will speak at greater length tomorrow afternoon.

Diversity

We may have fondly imagined that we could devote the year 2001 exclusively to languages and linguistic diversity, but current political realities surely require us to see diversity in relation to, and in terms of its interaction with, democratic citizenship, and indeed that is the intention of this conference.

Daniel Tarschys ended his address at the fiftieth anniversary ceremonial sitting in the Hungarian Parliament in Budapest on a challenging note when he said: "Creating Europeans – that should be the agenda for the next half-century. If we fail in this task, we will fail in many others also. But if we succeed, as we must, we will bequeath to future generations a much better Europe than the continent that we inherited from our ancestors".

Thank you all for joining us in taking up that challenge.

Keynote address

Peter Leuprecht, Former Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe

Linguistic diversity and democratic citizenship[1]

Introduction

It is a pleasure for me to be able to take part in this conference and I would like to warmly thank my dear friend, Raymond Weber, for having invited me. This is the first time since my none too gentle departure from Strasbourg that I have taken part in an event organised by the Council of Europe. I politely refused previous invitations because I thought the wounds would heal better if I let some time go by and let the dust settle. However, I had good reasons for being pleased to accept the invitation to this conference: firstly because it came from Raymond Weber and Joseph Sheils, and secondly because of the importance I attach to the theme of the conference and, in general, to the work done by Raymond Weber and his directorate, and last but not least, to be quite honest, because the conference was being held in Innsbruck. I have many links with this town: I lived here from 1946 to 1961, went to school not far from here in the Angerzellgasse, a grammar school which at that time was still described as "humanist", and got my doctorate at the local university; my dear wife was born here and my unforgettable parents are buried here; and finally my sister, my brother, my mother-in-law and many dear friends still live in this beautiful city.

When addressing an audience in my native country, I never forget the wise old saying that no man is a prophet in his own country. But I would like to assure you that I in no way consider myself to be a prophet; I would simply like, with humility and modesty, to share a few thoughts with you on the theme of this conference and to make a few personal remarks about the role of the Council of Europe and, about the tragedy in Kosovo.

When Zigong asked his revered master Confucius how one could recognise an honest man, Confucius gave him this short and simple reply: "He doesn't preach anything that he doesn't practice". In the hope that I am an honest man, I will not only preach linguistic diversity but also practise it by addressing you in three languages – though only one after the other of course, not all three at the same time.

The fiftieth anniversary of the Council of Europe

A few days ago the Council of Europe celebrated its fiftieth anniversary; an avenue lined with chestnut trees in this town now bears its name. I continue to have close links with this institution and, above all with the principles and values that it was intended to embody, represent and promote. Fifty years is a substantial period of time, not only in a human life, but also in the life of an institution. The Council of Europe has reached a ripe old age. It would be a great pity if it were simply to become a petrified monument. Monuments can be attractive and decorative; they tell us something about our – justly or unjustly glorified – past; they are also particularly popular with pigeons and other birds as a roosting place – there are examples of this in Innsbruck not far from here. I did not and still do not view the Council of Europe as a monument and a roosting

1. This speech was delivered in three languages: the introduction in German, the first and second parts in French and the third, fourth and fifth in English.

place for tired birds, even if birds are flocking to it from an ever-increasing number of European countries.

I always firmly believed that a united Europe ought to be, first and foremost, a community of values. Without well-established shared values Europe and European integration are built on sand. Those who in the darkness of the second world war and under the yoke of nazism, fascism and totalitarianism dreamt of another Europe and after 1945 set about making that dream come true, wanted to build a new, peaceful Europe based on the common values and principles so clearly expressed in the statute of the Council of Europe, the first-ever European Organisation: pluralist democracy, the rule of law and human rights. The Council of Europe was conceived as "an anchor of values" (as Vaclav Havel put it at the Strasbourg Summit in October 1997). Unfortunately, I can not shake off the feeling that these principles and values have been watered down over the last few years and sacrificed on the altar of opportunistic *realpolitik*, and that they risk becoming no more than empty shells. European political leaders now all voice the same credo: pluralist democracy, the rule of law and human rights. This was particularly clear from the last Council of Europe summit in Strasbourg in October 1997. Such lip-service is unfortunately far removed from reality. Yesterday's ideological confrontation has been replaced by a woolly consensus.

The effectiveness, significance, credibility and image of the Council of Europe have suffered from a policy that lacks clarity and has failed to live up to its principles; its profile is increasingly blurred, if at all visible. The fact that a Europe without "an anchor of values" will find no point of stability makes this all the more depressing. This is not the first time I have said this; I said and wrote this many times before, when and after leaving Strasbourg; and today I would like to emphasise once again that Europe and the Council of Europe urgently need to reflect again on the values on which they are based.

The tragedy of Kosovo

The tragic events of the past few weeks call not only for reflection but also for mourning. The European order created after the second world war, of which the Council of Europe was to be the cornerstone, was conceived as a peaceful order, based, as I have already said, on pluralist democracy, the rule of law and human rights. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, whose fiftieth anniversary was celebrated a few months ago, begins with the proclamation: "whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world". A year ago I took part in a conference on measures for securing international peace, which also took place in Austria, at which I pointed out that human rights violations were not only the consequence but also one of the main causes of wars and conflicts. I quoted Mary Robinson, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, who had said in Oxford on 11 October 1997 that today's human rights violations were the cause of tomorrow's conflicts. The events in and around Kosovo have unfortunately proved both of us right.

While we are holding our conference in – thank God – peaceful Innsbruck, a war is raging on the European continent not far from here, which is causing death and destruction, fear and suffering for millions of people. Once again a war is raging in the very region where the long chain of European wars began, in a region, which does not yet appear to have succeeded in acknowledging its diversity as a source of wealth or in finding unity and peace in such diversity. Hatred fuelled by unscrupulous *apparatchiks*, aggressive nationalism and ethnocentricity have caused millions of people indescribable suffering.

For years international bodies have been talking about "early warning", preventive diplomacy and conflict prevention. The tragedy in Kosovo has been gradually unfolding for over ten years; one didn't need to be a prophet to see it coming, and yet nothing was done to prevent it.

And now Nato's bombs and missiles are raining down on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Kosovo. I personally am quite unable to join the flag-waving connected with this so-called crusade for law and human rights; the ethical and legal considerations prompted by the Nato intervention are too serious and my sympathy with the people of this region is too great. The fact that for years Milošević and his regime have been guilty of the worst crimes against humanity and against human rights – and not only in Kosovo – is irrefutable. We are told that Nato is dropping bombs for the benefit of people in Kosovo and to safeguard their human rights. But is it not obvious that Nato's military intervention has not improved but rather drastically worsened their situation, that it has accelerated the process of "ethnic cleansing" in Kosovo, strengthened the Milošević regime and weakened the democratic forces in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia?

And what should we do now? We should do our utmost to put a rapid end to the suffering of the people in and around Kosovo, the hundreds of thousands of refugees and the people on whom the bombs are raining down.

I. Three observations on the background to our conference

1. Human rights and meeting the "other" face to face

None of you who know me will be remotely surprised if I broach the theme of this conference from the angle of human rights, which in 1949 were proclaimed as the fundamental value of the Council of Europe and of the new European society which was about to be constructed. Unfortunately, the current political context which I have just described, may well reduce such rights to a mere obligatory, rather meaningless reference. Furthermore, modern society's conception of human rights is increasingly egocentric, individualistic and clamorous. We are tending to forget that human rights are not only our individual rights but also, and above all, others' rights. Just as Bartolomé de Las Casas discovered human rights by encountering the "other" in the form of the "Indian", so we too must discover and practise these rights by encountering others.

Many of the worst scourges plaguing our society, such as racism, anti-Semitism, xenophobia, aggressive and exclusive nationalism, ethnocentrism and all other manifestations of intolerance, are rooted in a twofold rejection: the denial of all that is universal in the human being and humanity, which therefore binds all humans together and forms the basis of human rights; and the rejection of the other, of otherness, of difference.

The great philosopher Emmanuel Lévinas, who died in 1995 and who I personally consider an inexhaustible source of inspiration, places ethics at the heart of his philosophy. He posits that the fundamental human experience is "the experience of others", which he refers to as "meeting the other face to face". He stresses our "responsibility for others". Our fragmented society, with its fabric torn to shreds, has great difficulty in "meeting others face to face". This, in my view, is why it is so important for us to resolutely work towards this goal and address the subject of this conference with an awareness of the "ethical significance of the other".

In practice, the problem of respect for human rights arises wherever human beings exercise power over other human beings, often through structures or institutions. Human rights are aimed at limiting, demarcating and controlling power. They counter the utilitarian and cynical view of

power with a mandatory ethical limitation on such power. Human rights must be constantly and universally affirmed *vis-à-vis* all kinds of power, be they political, economic, social, media-based, scientific or technical.

2. The ravages of the pan-economic ideology

I would like to single out one of these types of power, one which is increasingly overstepping the limits and evading the controls. I mean economic and financial power, together with the ideology that conveys it in the context of globalisation.

The year 1989 was undeniably a turning point of paramount importance in European, and indeed world history. Some proclaimed that we had reached the "end of history" and had witnessed the "final victory" of the "western system", capitalism, liberalism, or whatever. I feel that any talk of the "end of history" or "final victory" points to a non-historic, or indeed anti-historic attitude to history. However, even a basic knowledge of history (together with a little humility, a virtue which is unfortunately becoming increasingly rare nowadays) should tell us that this is by no means the first time people have felt moved to announce the end of history.

There has also been much idle talk about "the death of ideologies". I am convinced that the opposite is true, that a powerful ideology has survived under another name, and that it is pervading and increasingly determining the prevailing mode of thought and action. I call this phenomenon the pan-economic ideology, while others refer to "economism", the "*tout-économique*" (the "economic mindset"), and the "*pensée unique*" (a doctrinaire approach to government exclusively based on market forces and liberalism). In his recent book *The Crisis of Global Capitalism*, George Soros, who unlike myself, and I would imagine most of us here, has considerable insider knowledge in this field, calls his approach "market fundamentalism". But all these terms in fact refer to the same phenomenon.

The pan-economic ideology and its practical implementation pose grave threats to the cause of pluralistic democracy, the rule of law and human rights. They affect virtually all aspects of life, including subjects we will be dealing with at this conference such as languages, diversity, particularly linguistic and cultural diversity, and citizenship, that is to say how, or how to be able, to be a citizen.

What is an ideology? It is a system of ideas and beliefs, a philosophy of the world and of life. This definition fits the pan-economic ideology perfectly, because it states that everything is dictated by economics. The revealed law is that of the market, and those opposing it exclude themselves from modernity. This law implacably imposes its demands and cannot be resisted with impunity.

The pan-economic ideology, preached to us every day, likes to don the mantle of science. However, it is probably more realistic to stress its quasi- or pseudo-religious dimension, as it has its own creed, gospel, dogmas, articles of faith, catechism, rituals and places of worship. And of course, it has its devotees and, especially, its gurus and prophets. Even the most disastrous failures such as those recently witnessed in Russia and Asia cannot shake their faith.

The pan-economic ideology is a serious threat to human rights primarily because it is based on an extremely reductionist conception of the human being. It reduces *homo sapiens* to *homo economicus*, debasing him to an economic factor, or, only slightly more optimistically, to an economic actor. *Homo economicus* regards rights, including human rights, as *his* own, rather than others' rights. Solidarity and fraternity have no place in his system of values. This culminates in a very narrow vision of human rights, far removed from the comprehensive vision

of human rights as an indivisible whole. Above all, the pan-economic ideology precludes the social and cultural dimension of human rights, depriving human beings of their social and cultural rights.

3. Identity

Identity is an infinitely complex concept. Moreover, it is normally assigned rather a paradoxical meaning. In etymological terms, the word comes from the Latin root *idem*, which means "the same". On the other hand, it is used to refer to that which is different in each one of us and is identical in no other individual. This is what the word means when used in such expressions as "identity papers".

In our world the concept of identity is frequently manipulated and misused. Men kill each other for the sake of their identities. I have often had to refer to alarming phenomena of obsession with and withdrawal into identity.

I would in no way presume to provide definitive replies to the multitude of grave questions raised by these phenomena, or the conception and use of identity. I should merely point out that I strongly believe in the virtues of an open and multiple identity. I would like to borrow the marvellous "daisy" simile used by my dear friend Antonio Perotti, one of the great interculturalist thinkers and actors: like the daisy, our identity comprises a multitude of petals. Just as this flower cannot be reduced to just one of its petals, so we would be terribly misguided if we reduced our identity to only one of its many facets (for example, ethnicity, nationality, language or religion). Our identity is quintessentially a compound, composite, reflecting the multitude and diversity of our affiliations; it would be a serious mistake to try to reduce it to one single type of belonging.

As Amin Maalouf so aptly puts it in his remarkable work *Les identités meurtrières* (*Murderous Identities*), "identity is not given once and for all, it is constructed and transformed throughout one's existence". Our identity is not fixed and unchangeable it cannot be frozen; it cannot be locked up in a museum. It is something living. Above all, we constantly define, redefine and blend our identities by contact, dialogue, exchange and, sometimes, conflict with the other and otherness. Which brings us back to what I was saying just before, namely "meeting the other face to face", encountering otherness and diversity. Diversity should be seen and experienced not as a handicap or barrier but as what it is, an extraordinary enrichment. We need to open up, not close up, to the other. It was Octavio Paz who penned the words "man (that is, the human being) is the only being engaged in the quest for the other".

II. Language

Language is undoubtedly a vital component of what we call our identity. At the same time, it obviously plays a cardinal role in encounters with the other; it is the primary means of communicating with her or him. Emmanuel Lévinas very rightly stressed the impossibility of broaching others without speaking to them: language, in its expressive function, addresses and invokes others. Consequently, it is completely aberrant to use language as a factor for division, separation or identity-based introversion. As Confucius said, "words are about communication, full stop".

The right to language, or linguistic rights, are obviously a section of human rights, and more particularly of cultural rights. Unfortunately, the latter were completely excluded from human rights for far too long. In recent years international and European legislation finally appears to

have remembered their fundamental importance and the need to protect and promote them, as witnessed by work carried out in the United Nations and Unesco and, in particular, the two Council of Europe legal instruments that came into force in 1999: the Framework Convention for the Protection of Minorities and the Charter of Regional or Minority Languages. I really cannot stress forcefully enough that the rights set out in these two instruments do not provide for a mere obligation of abstention on the Contracting States: they actually impose a positive duty of action to realise and implement the rights in question.

Just now I mentioned the relationship between human rights and power. The problems of power take on a particularly acute form in the field we are discussing. The relationship between languages and those speaking them also involves power. "Strong" languages are liable to crush "weak" languages. This reminds me of a statement by Lacordaire: "between the strong and the weak, it is freedom that oppresses and the law that liberates". This aphorism applies here as everywhere else; here, as everywhere else, we need a liberating law. This is the significance of the positive action by the Contracting States which I just mentioned.

III. Diversity

The powerful ideology of nationalism which entered history at the end of the eighteenth and in the nineteenth century was to have a tremendous impact on the perception of cultural and linguistic diversity. Ethnocentric nationalism had an overwhelming influence on political thinking and practice, on both the right and the left of the political spectrum. It provided a justification for assimilating minorities and for colonising other peoples. The writings of both J. S. Mill and Engels are highly significant in this respect; according to them, progress required assimilating smaller cultures into larger cultures. "The half-savage relic of past times" (according to J. S. Mill) or the "ethnic trash" (according to Engels) was doomed to be "absorbed" or "extirpated". Although Marx had written in *The Communist Manifesto* that the proletariat had no nationality, Marxists as well as liberals in the nineteenth century regarded the great nations as the carriers of historical development. Smaller nationalities were regarded as backward and stagnant; they were expected to abandon their national character and to assimilate to a great nation. German was seen as the "language of liberty" for the Czechs, just as French was seen as the "language of liberty" for the Bretons, and English was seen as the "language of liberty" for the Quebecois. Opposing the idea of the Quebecois maintaining a distinct francophone society in Canada, J. S. Mill thus encouraged their assimilation into the more "civilized" English culture.

He also wrote: "Free institutions are next to impossible in a country made up of different nationalities. Among a people without fellow feeling, especially if they read and speak different languages, the united public opinion, necessary to the working of representative government, cannot exist."

Unfortunately, certain politicians in Europe (and even in the part of the world where I now live) share the views of J. S. Mill. As far as I am concerned, I am convinced that these views are wrong and have been shown to be wrong, for example, by Switzerland, a country with four different languages, in which free institutions and representative government have existed for a long time. In addition, experience – including some extremely tragic recent experience – has shown that any dream of an ethnically "pure" state is bound to lead to disaster.

However, in the nineteenth century and for quite some time in the twentieth century, the prevailing political doctrine and practice were those of ethnocentric nationalism basically hostile to cultural and linguistic diversity. There were however some countervailing trends. Not

surprisingly, they were present in the multinational Austro-Hungarian empire and, more surprisingly, in England, among pluralists such as Figgis and Laski. In Austria and particularly in Vienna, there existed a strong anti-nationalist current. In the legal field, Article 19 of the *Staatsgrundgesetz* (Fundamental Law of the State) of 1867 guaranteed the same rights to all ethnic groups of the state; each of them had "an inalienable right to preserve and promote its…language", and the *Reichsgericht* (Imperial Tribunal) developed a rich case law on the basis of this provision. As far as political thinking was concerned, the Austro-Marxists and, in particular, Otto Bauer, opposed the growing tide of ethnocentric nationalism. As early as 1849, the great Austrian playwright and poet Franz Grillparzer who was to be the prophet of the European tragedy wrote in a dramatic and desperate epigram: "Der Weg der neuen Bildung geht von Humanität über Nationalität zur Bestialität."(The way of the new culture goes from humanity through nationality to bestiality).

Europe, and Germany in particular, did indeed go this way which brought about immense human suffering and destruction. In his last work, *The world of yesterday – memoirs of a European*, written shortly before his tragic end in exile, Stefan Zweig refers to "nationalism – that dire scourge which has blighted the flower of European culture" and to "mankind's inconceivable relapse into a kind of barbarism presumed long dead, with its deliberate, programmatic denial of human values". Unfortunately, these words have once again acquired a chilling topicality.

A few years after these words had been written, the preamble of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was to recall that "the disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind". The Universal Declaration was the starting point of an unprecedented internationalisation of human rights. The human rights approach of the international community was a powerful means which helped to break down the colonial empires. Cultural and linguistic diversity came to be increasingly regarded as a benefit to be defended and promoted. Something like a human right to allow a culture to survive and flourish appeared in international law. This is signalled in particular in the Convention against Genocide of 1948 which defines genocide as "all acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, racial or religious group, as such" and in the 1966 Unesco Declaration of Principles of Cultural Co-operation which affirms a right and duty of all peoples to protect and develop the cultures throughout humankind. In Europe, this new orientation has found a legal expression in the two Council of Europe instruments, the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages and the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, which I mentioned a moment ago.

These texts mark a radical departure from the earlier ideology and practice of ethnocentric nationalism and assimilation which had brought about massive human rights violations. The international community seemed to draw lessons from this bitter experience. The new thinking and the increasing awareness of the value of diversity can also be seen as a reaction against the pan-economic ideology and the process of globalisation which strongly affects the cultural field and tends to force people and peoples into a homogeneous mould. Pan-economic ideology, globalisation and the related sense of powerlessness have probably contributed to this longing for identity, a fear of losing and a determination to defend one's identity. People and peoples are asking: Who are we? What are we?, and want to be recognised, with their identity to be recognised. On the one hand, this is understandable; on the other hand, it is not without dangers. An obsession with a narrowly defined identity, going hand in hand with a rejection of otherness and difference, brings us back to aggressive nationalism and ethnocentrism. Indeed, such phenomena have not vanished; on the contrary, they are raising their ugly heads once again and we are witnessing their alarming resurgence. Many conflicts of our time are due to ethnic strife, to an incapacity of societies and political systems to manage difference and diversity; they are usually accompanied by massive violations of human rights and bring about untold human

suffering. This is amply demonstrated by tragedies such as those of former Yugoslavia and Rwanda.

In today's world, ethnocentric nationalism is particularly anachronistic; it is completely out of touch with reality and its advancement can only lead to disaster. Very few countries of the world, if any, can claim to be monocultural. Whether we like it or not, we live in a multicultural society. This is not a doctrine or an ideology; it is simply a reality.

Europe in particular is "a culture of cultures", as was stated in the report "In from the margins", prepared for the Council of Europe by the European Task Force on Culture and Development. Cultural diversity today is at the same time a fact of life and a central political issue throughout Europe. The declared aim of European states and European institutions, particularly the Council of Europe, is to promote pluriculturalism and plurilingualism among citizens, in particular as a means of combating intolerance and xenophobia.

In fact, in today's world cultural diversity is threatened by the strong impact of "an all-encompassing, Americanised, global culture" ("In from the margins"). As Edward W. Said writes in his book *Culture and Imperialism*, "rarely before in human history has there been so massive an intervention of force and ideas from one culture to another as there is today from America to the rest of the world". Linguistic diversity is threatened by the growing dominance of English as the international *lingua franca*, the leading global means of communication.

Europe, like other parts of the world, seems to be torn between two conflicting trends: on the one hand, the recognition of "the rich heritage of diverse languages and cultures in Europe" as "a valuable common resource to be protected and developed" (Recommendation No. R (82) 18 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe) and, on the other hand, the pressure of pan-economic ideology, globalisation and the "market"; or determination to preserve one's "identity", sometimes even an obsession with "identity", on the one hand, and powerful forces of standardisation and uniformity on the other.

I consider it essential for European cultural and linguistic policies to resist the dictate of pan-economic ideology; and I must confess that I abhor the concept of the "linguistic market".

IV. Democratic citizenship

What do we mean by citizenship? Let me start by saying what it does not or should not mean. First of all, I believe that citizenship is not the same thing as nationality, "*Staatsangehörigkeit*" (belonging to a state). One can be a citizen without being a national of the state in which one happens to live. Secondly, neither citizenship nor nationality should be based on ethnicity.

Let us now positively define what citizenship is or should be. In the concept of citizenship, there is the idea of the city, "*la cité*", and the idea of "belonging to a community, which entrains politics and rights, notably political rights". The Greek word for citizen is "*politis*" derived from the "*polis*", the polity. It is the framework in which the citizen exercises his or her rights and responsibilities. In today's world citizenship is exercised at various levels: at the local, regional, national, European and increasingly the international level.

European citizenship must be based on shared values – those which I referred to at the beginning: pluralist democracy, rule of law and human rights.

In a democratic society, political power must be the power of the people, the citizens in the "polis". In today's world, political power understood in this sense is constantly weakened. The sites of power and the exercise of power are increasingly distant from the citizens who risk once again being reduced to subjects. Accountability is eroded. According to Karl Popper, "economic power must not be permitted to dominate political power; if necessary, it must be fought and brought under control by political power". The truth is that economic and financial power is less and less controlled by political power and that military power increasingly prevails over political power. According to George Soros, market fundamentalism which has put financial capital into the driver's seat is today a greater threat to open society than any totalitarian ideology.

As responsible citizens, we must be aware of these dangers and resist and reject the *diktat* of pan-economic ideology. We must get our hierarchy of values right. As Confucius said, "the superior man understands righteousness; the inferior man understands profit". It is essential to restore the primacy of politics and to mobilise citizens' power at all levels. At a time of globalisation, it is increasingly essential for people to get organised and to exercise their citizens' rights and responsibilities not only at the local, regional and national, but also at the European and international level. In this respect, the experience of the successful battle against the Multilateral Agreement on Investments (MAI) is most encouraging; non-governmental citizens' organisations prevailed over pan-economic ideology and the logic of the market although it did seem to be a fight between David and Goliath.

There is obviously a strong connection between citizenship and language and plurilingualism People cannot effectively participate in the democratic processes without language, without having access to the different kinds and levels of discourse involved. In an integrating Europe and a shrinking world, plurilingualism is a means of empowerment, a means of enabling people to participate as citizens in the democratic processes at the European and international level which, I admit, are far from sufficiently developed, but will have to be developed as a result of pressure from concerned citizens.

V. What Europe?

The Europe we are trying to build and of which we want to be responsible citizens must be a Europe that achieves unity in diversity; a Europe that appreciates, nurtures and celebrates its diversity as a fabulous treasure; a Europe in which meeting the other face to face is a challenging and enriching daily reality; a Europe of citizens aware of their rights and, even more importantly, the rights of others and of their ensuing responsibilities; Europe as a marvellous symphony in which a multitude of different voices produces harmony – harmony through mutual respect. And let me conclude by expressing the fervent hope that the day will come when all people and all peoples of Europe, including those who are still torn by war, violence and hatred, will be able to join the orchestra to play the symphony of peace based on respect for the equal dignity of every human being.

Session I

Linguistic diversity, democratic citizenship and language education policy

A. Round table: Linguistic diversity, democratic citizenship and language education policy

Synthesis: Michael Byram, Durham University, chaiman of the round table

The round table was planned as an interaction between the three contributors, each asked to respond to three issues or questions from a particular perspective:

Contributors

Hanna Komorowska, University of Warsaw, with respect to "second" or "foreign" languages,
Ingrid Gogolin, University of Hamburg, with respect to languages of migrants/immigrants,
Pádraig Ó Riagáin, Linguistics Institute of Ireland, with respect to indigenous minority languages.

Each question is presented below, together with the comments made by each contributor.

1. Opportunities for participation in democratic processes and mutual understanding

Hanna Komorowska: The perspective of foreign language teaching

Foreign language teaching can be seen as fulfilling three main functions in this process, for example:

– the function of a predictor of attitudes and behaviour;
– the function of a mediator on the way to mutual understanding;

– the function of a facilitator of democratic processes;

Foreign language as a predictor of attitudes and behaviours

Language policies are considered indicative of broader intentions. The very act of introducing foreign languages, languages of ethnic minorities, regional languages or languages of neighbouring countries into school curricula is perceived as a manifestation of the attitudes of the majority and of the authorities *vis-à-vis* those communities. Historically speaking this belief is frequently justified as, in the past, educational decisions have only too often been used to carry political messages. This deduction, however, can be deceptive in times of budget cuts and teacher shortages where no political message is intended in the educational system under strain.

Intentionally or unintentionally, language teaching becomes one of the most powerful descriptors and predictors of social, economic and political decisions in both internal and foreign policy. That is why they often trigger attitudes and behaviours of a given community which relate to issues far broader than the original educational question. As well as this, decisions of this kind often result in mirror behaviour on the part of the authorities of other countries where the majority language of the other country functions as a regional or minority language. The key to success lies in the sensitivity and wisdom of decision makers and in the quantity and quality of channels through which opinions of particular communities can be voiced.

Foreign language as a mediator on the way to mutual understanding

Foreign language syllabus design – if it provides for the sociocultural component – paves the way for tolerance. Foreign language teaching is in a position to provide for the cognitive, the affective and the behavioural influence in the field.

As far as the cognitive sphere is concerned – good foreign language teaching means teaching the language in its cultural context. This means that the knowledge of the present world: history, geography, literature and culture of a given community can be gained in the process of acquiring the language. Such knowledge helps the learner to understand the community, its needs and aspirations and in this way may prevent xenophobia and facilitate mutual understanding.

As far as the affective sphere is concerned – educational exchanges, international correspondence and e-mail activities built into the syllabus provide a fair amount of individual experience which develops affective competences of the learner. It is extremely hard to support sweeping generalisations and develop stereotypes when individual contacts have been established and friendships have been developed.

The behavioural sphere is best developed in the process of project work on cultural issues where students are encouraged to reflect on their own culture, to compare it with the culture of the community whose language they are learning and to develop acceptance of differences.

Education for tolerance through foreign language learning can be started very early, as soon as the language starting stage permits it and it should accompany language teaching up to higher levels of advanced language teaching. We cannot be certain of the final effect, as education may not prove to be a sufficient condition for mutual understanding. But as education is definitely a *sine qua non* condition for tolerance, we must make sure we have done our best to provide sufficient teaching and to guarantee its highest quality.

Foreign language as a facilitator of democratic processes

Organisation of instruction and teaching methodology facilitates the democratic process by developing social competencies, that is, competencies for action as it supports group work, entails planning, constructing and implementing group projects, develops communication, encourages debating, negotiating objectives and procedures, develops capacity to resolve conflicts and promotes group reflection and evaluation.

Therefore, it calls for democratic classroom interaction which prepares students for participation in democratic processes outside the classroom.

Introducing foreign language teaching in its facilitating function is extremely important in those educational systems where the teacher is seen primarily in the role of a manager, a source of information and an evaluator, where teaching processes have been considered more important than the learning processes and where power over communication and teacher talking time have been predominant in educational contexts.

The key to democratisation outside school lies in the democratisation of classroom interaction, and foreign language teaching within the interactive and communicative approach has a lot to contribute in this field.

Pádraig Ó Riagáin: The perspective of minority/indigenous languages

I have difficulties with the two concepts included in the title of this conference – linguistic diversity and democratic citizenship – largely because both have appeared on the political

agenda of international bodies in Europe only in the last decade. Because of the very recent emergence of these issues, it seems to me that our level of understanding of them as objectives of policy is for the moment very incomplete. The question that we are asked to address in this session seems to propose that there is a clear relationship between linguistic diversity – however we may operationalise and measure the concept – and the nature and extent of citizenship practices in a given situation. Several hypotheses can be derived from that proposition. The one that is of most relevance for our conference is that it suggests that, all things being equal, state intervention, by means of language teaching programmes, is going to change the practices of citizenship.

There is one sense in which this hypothesis appears entirely valid. When a substantial minority of a population is denied the opportunity to participate in normal political discourse or the activities of political processes because of the language they speak, then the distribution of linguistic competences will clearly affect the capacity to function fully as citizens. Individuals obviously cannot participate in the democratic process if communication is impeded by problems of access to the languages used in that process.

However, it is but a short step from accepting this hypothesis, which appears very plausible in itself, to arguing that the obvious solution is to intensify efforts to teach the dominant language to groups disadvantaged in this way. Actual examples where this step has been taken clearly indicate that the matter is a good deal more complicated in very many circumstances. Levelling linguistic differences do not *per se* promote the equality of treatment between language communities. In many cases, rather than promoting the practices of democratic citizenship, such policies alienate minority groups further from the state and its political institutions. The aggrieved group is likely to feel that its sense of group identity is being threatened – that its language is being derogated, its cultural self-development and its educational efforts undermined.

Linguistic diversity, of course, as a policy goal addresses this very issue. It argues that the common sense view – that political and linguistic integration go hand in hand – may not, in many circumstances be the most sensible or appropriate direction to take. Language diversity, as a policy goal, does not lead to any absolute endorsement of the minority as against the majority language, but postulates a need for some form of structured accommodation between the two. The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, for example, imposes generally a duty to offer instruction in the languages spoken by its population to a level that roughly corresponds to the number of speakers of a language, but it goes on to state that this provision can never be invoked in an attempt to deprive children the benefits of learning the official or majority language of the state in which they live. This approach evidently sets the legal framework for the variety of educational programmes regrouped under the general term "bilingual education", but such programmes are seen by many scholars working in the area as very problematic because of their consequences in practice. We still await good evaluative studies which will isolate the impact of language policies *per se*.

Ingrid Gogolin: The perspective of the languages of migrants and immigrants

The philosophy of participation in a public sphere which is familiar to us now is clearly bound to the "classical" concept of the nation state as it was developed and implemented in Europe during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The establishment of these nation states was accompanied by (among other public institutions) their public education systems. Among the main reasons for this development is that of linguistic and cultural homogenisation: the establishment of one official national language (or in exceptional cases more than one language

recognised per region) and of a linguistically homogenous society, using a standard form of the particular language. In spite of differences between European nation states, they share in principle the idea of linguistic and cultural homogeneity of a people (if not at national, then at least regional, level). Initially, the idea of creating linguistic and cultural homogeneity was related to the ideal of constructing a public sphere to which every man (and later woman also) had access. But we can learn from historical analysis that the assumed linguistic and cultural homogeneity within a nation state serves as a means of inclusion, as intended, and at the same time also of exclusion from participation in democratic processes. This is due not least to the fact that the idea of a homogenous people is strongly connected with a subtext under the heading "immobility": it can only be maintained if transfrontier mobility is the rare exception.

I would argue that the closure of the public sphere in today's European nation states for those who are not at ease with the official national languages is in deep contradiction with the officially promoted mobility of Europeans. The consequences are twofold: on the one hand, the creation of a linguistically multiple sphere in each European state is required; on the other hand, it is necessary to establish a language policy which helps the individual to develop a "plurilingual identity". In doing so, the peaceful co-existence of national and supra-national *linguae francae* and linguistic diversity could be facilitated; we must learn to accept that languages in contact can very well be languages in co-operation within the same communicative space, and not necessarily in competition for it (Byram and Ó Riagáin 1999, p .7).

2. Development of the person and social identities

Hanna Komorowska: The perspective of foreign language teaching

The significance of foreign language teaching in the development of the personality of the learner is connected to the type of tasks integrated into a well designed syllabus.

Foreign language teaching can contribute to the intellectual development of the child

Lexical tasks offer ample opportunity for the development of concentration, attention, perception, memory, concept formation and categorisation.

Grammatical tasks teach how to identify similarity and difference, search for patterns as well as develop cause-result thinking, sequencing and prioritising.

Skill-based language teaching develops:

– critical thinking;
– problem-solving skills;
– the ability to identify, locate, gather and store information;
– the ability to organise, analyse, synthesise, evaluate and use information.

Listening and reading comprehension skills in particular help develop:

– the ability to identify, describe and interpret different points of view;
– critical analysis of messages coming from different sources;
– the ability to tell fact from opinion.

Speaking skills as well as interactive and mediating skills help develop the:

– ability to analyse a situation;
– ability to formulate an opinion;
– ability to justify an opinion.

Foreign language teaching enlarges cognitive competencies of a procedural nature.

The intellectual development is supported by the teaching of other subjects through content-based teaching foreign languages and through cross-curricular interdisciplinary links.

Foreign language teaching can contribute to child personality development

In the work with young learners this is usually done through offering ample opportunity for self-expression, creativity, whole body learning, self-reflection and self-assessment as well as through the incorporation of music, dancing, movement, singing, painting and drawing.

In the work with adolescents special importance goes to self-management skills and work and study skills.

As far as self-management skills are concerned, foreign language teaching promotes:

– the ability to develop self-esteem and build an appropriate self-image
– skills of self-appraisal and self-advocacy;
– skills to develop constructive approaches to stress, conflict, competition, success and failure.

As far as work and study skills are concerned, foreign language teaching promotes:

– skills to plan, manage and evaluate one's own learning;
– skills to take responsibility for one's own learning;
– skills to manage time effectively.

This is usually done by means of introducing formative and summative evaluation as well as self-evaluation and learner autonomy.

Foreign language teaching can contribute to the social development of the child

Foreign languages help develop:

- – communication skills;

– social and co-operative skills.

Among communication skills, foreign language teaching endorses the micro-skills of listening and reading comprehension skills which support the following features:

– the ability to listen carefully to the messages of others;
– the ability to report on a message received.

Speaking and interactive skills support:

– being able to give a clear message;
– being able to compare and discuss points of view;
– being able to argue a case clearly, logically and convincingly;
– being able to negotiate in a situation of conflict.

The key to success lies in promoting project and group work which help develop not only skills to work independently but also skills to achieve desired aims in team work.

In all the above-mentioned spheres foreign language teaching helps to develop key qualifications and achieve broad educational objectives to which each subject area should make its own contribution.

The contribution of language education is immense.

Pádraig Ó Riagáin: The perspective of minority/indigenous languages

The term "identity" expresses a mutual relationship in that it connotes both a persistent sameness within oneself (personal identity) and a persistent sharing of some kind of essential characteristic with others (social identity). We have come to see identity as the outcome and product of interaction. It appears necessary for the creation of the feeling of an inner identity that one has a sense of "fit" between the social mini-structures of one's past and present interactional networks, on the one hand, and the cultural values available for the interpretation of these structures on the other.

Thus if people experience the marginalisation of their culture or language, and their relative powerlessness with respect to the marginalisers, the sense of "fit" to which I have referred, is altered. It is not unreasonable to speak of an "identity crisis". In these circumstances, identity will become salient, and people's consciousness of themselves and the factors around how their identity is structured becomes prominent. I do not think it is difficult to understand how language can become important from the point of view of the creation and development of personal and social identity. It is one of the more visible markers of identity. As the French sociologist, Pierre Bourdieu, has said, "a sense of the value of one's own linguistic product is a fundamental dimension of the sense of knowing the place which one occupies in social space". But I would also like to say that I have some reservations about the way in which identity, particularly ethnic identity, is seen as a cause of conflict in itself. Without arguing that identity is not unimportant, I think that we need to take account of the structural circumstances that determine any given situation, and the group interests that are guiding action. It may very often be the case, and the incidences of language conflict is full of examples, where language issues are invoked as part of an intergroup dispute , but where other issues between the groups may be as, if not more, important; so while the linguistic argument is advanced as part of the reason for a grievance, there are also urgent social and economic problems.

Ingrid Gogolin: The perspective of the languages of migrants and immigrants

As indicated in Byram and Ó Riagáin 1999 (part 3) the linguistic reality in Europe, despite the fundamental idea of homogeneity, has always been plural. In recent history, due to international migration, the numbers of languages spoken in Europe has increased immensely, whereas the numbers of speakers of a certain language may be small. Because of (among other factors) the communication potential provided by modern media, the numbers of speakers of a language are no longer a valid indicator of its vitality.

Research shows in manifold ways, that, contrary to common sense and political expectations in the early phase of recent migration, immigrant minorities in Europe do not tend to lose their inherited languages even though they have access to and make more use of the majority communities' languages. European immigrant minorities, for example, network intensely and as such create linguistic "subspheres" in the immigration countries with important functions for their members in numerous domains. As a result of this the minority languages are of great significance in the initial language acquisition process of children – in the same way as is widely accepted for members of autochthonous minorities. Regardless of the concrete form, and even

independently of the frequency of use of the language in question, immigrant minority children have to be considered and respected as bi- (or even multi-)lingual. There is evidence from language acquisition theory as well as from research that it is harmful for the individual development of language competence – in the sense of mastery of a specific language as well as in the sense of general language proficiency as such and the underlying ability to learn languages – if the languages of early childhood are not developed further within, and throughout, the education system. Therefore those European education systems which do not give immigrant minority children access to literacy in both (or all) their languages harm their individual development, and at the same time waste the potential linguistic wealth of the society. From this point of view, there is no justification in a democratic society to exclude anybody from literacy in his or her spoken language (cf. the practice referred to in Byram and Ó Riagáin 1999, p. 6), unless it is as a result of the person's own free choice.

3. Social equality and economic opportunities

Hanna Komorowska: The perspective of foreign language teaching

Foreign language teaching provides a common language which facilitates communication and opens the way for information technologies. Practically every domain of social and economic activity is now based on computer information networks calling for a shared international language. Introducing new technologies is impossible without the knowledge of widely used international languages which function as the common code.

Foreign language teaching opens possibilities of co-operation with other countries in the field of economy and politics and in this way works towards sustainable development. No country today can function as an isolated island. Links and exchanges form the basis for healthy economic, political and cultural activity. This calls for the knowledge of international, widely used languages, but also for the knowledge of less widely known languages, for example, regional languages or those of close neighbours.

Foreign language teaching permits international mobility for education, the flow of work force and tourism as well as enabling citizens to draw on the cultural heritage of mankind. Counteracting unemployment, facilitating mobility and providing opportunity cannot, therefore, be achieved without promoting foreign languages and introducing them as early as possible into the curricula of mass education. Content-based language teaching and bilingual education can be of immense help here.

The key to success lies in the number of languages proposed in school in curricula and in the balance between widely used languages and less widely used languages as well as in the quality of pre- and in-service training of foreign language teachers.

Pádraig Ó Riagáin: The perspective of minority/indigenous languages

I will confine myself to one or two points. This particular issue is one upon which minority language groups are particularly sensitive, and it is not difficult to understand why. Differences in language are nearly always correlated with other ethnic differences, often with socio-economic differences which strongly affect the nature and intensity of intergroup relations. The areas in which they reside tend to be less economically developed, and their access to many opportunities for democratic participation are limited, at least in part, by the fact that political and economic power is concentrated in the hands of those who speak the dominant language. Cause and effect cannot be easily disentangled here. The group may be disadvantaged because it

does not speak the dominant language, but it may equally be the case that its language has remained subordinate because of the group's relatively lower level of development.

The analysis of the relationship between linguistic diversity and democratic citizenship has thus to be set within the context of an historical study of the evolving economy and political structure of a specific region. I cannot see how language policy can be realistically abstracted from this context. In many cases, developing a positive relationship between linguistic diversity and democratic citizenship will require a multifaceted approach which will necessitate planning for population and employment as well as carefully designed language teaching programmes. To attempt one without the other will be counter-productive. What is the point, from the perspective of a minority language group, of teaching their children the language of a majority, whether this is done by bilingual methods or by any other method, if all it succeeds in doing so is promoting the movement of young people from the area of their community to other areas where their language is not spoken. So that unless there are economic and social programmes to make it possible for members of these groups to continue to live in the only area in which the language they speak is actually spoken, linguistic diversity as a policy goal will remain a piece of rhetoric.

Ingrid Gogolin: The perspective of the languages of migrants and immigrants

I fully agree with Byram and Ó Riagáin 1999 (page 7), that Pierre Bourdieu's concept of the linguistic market provides us with an illuminating way of examining the role of the state. The analysis of the traditional language policies in the European nation states, as mentioned above, clearly shows that one result is the creation of hierarchies between languages and between varieties of languages, of inequality between languages and, thus, their users. The value of a language in the linguistic market is hardly dependent on its actual communicative functions or role, but on the official legitimisation it receives. The main mechanism of legitimisation of languages, and thus enhancement of their value, is in fact their recognition as a school subject and as a regular element of the curriculum as well as of the national qualification systems; according to Bourdieu, this is a necessary prerequisite for a language to serve as "cultural capital" (Bourdieu 1991).

Considering this, individual bi- or multilingualism as such cannot sufficiently serve as a basis for social equality and economic opportunities given the historical situation in Europe, but requires mechanisms which give appropriate recognition to the individual's language abilities. The implementation of a positive right for every child to receive tuition in the language(s) being actively used in his or her family – independent of the number of speakers of the respective language or other restrictions (as it was originally introduced in Sweden) – is a step in the right direction. In this respect, a common European language policy should be implemented, accompanied by a system of supranational provisions to guide and control actual practise in national education systems. Besides this, other mechanisms of "legalisation" of language abilities should be promoted; the European Languages Portfolio is a good example in this respect, on condition that this instrument takes sources of language acquisition and learning other than foreign language teaching in schools into account.

A European language policy which aims at contributing to equal opportunities for participation in democratic processes, at the development of the person and social identities, and at social equality as well as fair economic opportunities for everybody in Europe, must strive to overcome the differences and hierarchies between languages which were invented and implemented by former European language policies themselves.

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Conclusion

The round table allowed each speaker to comment further after the presentations of their respective perspectives. The following summary of the discussion is based on notes kindly provided by Ingrid Gogolin.

The panel agreed that the idea of the cultural and linguistic homogeneity of a nation is shared by all European nation states, and that all nevertheless face a growing cultural and linguistic diversity. One – but not the only – reason for growing diversity is migration, which is officially promoted by European politics.

There are historical reasons for the difference between national identities perceived as monocultural and monolingual and the actual language and cultural practises in Europe. It belongs to our common European heritage to consider immobility as the normal situation of a citizen and international mobility as the exception. As a consequence, the state-controlled institutions, including the school systems, are constituted in a monolingual and monocultural manner. At a time in which international mobility between (European) states is promoted, this historical development leads to a deeply undemocratic construction of their public spheres as it excludes a growing number of people from democratic participation.

The panel agreed that a European language policy which could help to overcome this situation should follow (at least) two aims:

– the first should be "to create" a multilingual public sphere in the European nation states; this means legitimising officially the existing plurilingual practices of people living in a state;

– the second should be to encourage the development of a "plurilingual identity" in every member of a nation (whether they are a "citizen", in the narrow legal sense of the word, of the respective nation or not).

The first aim could be realised by political efforts to establish new language policies, not only for the education system, which gives greater value to existing language diversity. As the report by Michel Candelier *et al.* (Language diversity in the education systems of the member States of the Council for Cultural Co-operation) explains, the actually "living" languages in Europe get hardly any recognition by national school systems. School systems take into consideration the languages of states, but not those of the people. Best proof of this is that the languages of immigrant minorities in Europe are widely ignored by the European school systems.

The Council of Europe could contribute to the necessary changes by explaining to the public that linguistic plurality is necessary for the present and the future of national societies, as individual mobility grows and the rapidly expanding technical possibilities for communication ignore frontiers between nations.

The Council of Europe could promote politics which react concretely to a given regional or local situation. One possibility for realising this could be the establishment and support of local or

regional round tables on language policies, which should invite experts on the issue as well as representatives of language groups in an area. The dynamics of changes in linguistic reality in Europe cannot adequately be responded to by rigid solutions for a nation state as a whole, as is the practice still today; rather these solutions have to be accompanied by policies of flexible response to a given development which may only take place in or be relevant for a certain area or period.

The second aim could – among other activities – be realised by efforts in language education. The Council of Europe could promote didactical and methodical arrangements for language teaching in which linguistic plurality is the guiding principle. This would mean giving up approaches to language teaching in which monolingualism is the assumed starting point for the learners (as it is in fact the case in most traditional foreign language-teaching didactics now). We have to accept that the mere teaching of foreign languages does not guarantee either the development of a plurilingual self or other aims such as tolerance, sympathy for the other or a longing for justice – as it is often proclaimed in statements of aims – but that aims like these have to be explicitly introduced to teaching, be it language teaching or the teaching of other subjects.

The Council of Europe could be very helpful in this respect in that it could promote the necessary revision of the widespread general notions about the aims of (foreign) language learning and teaching. Among other aspects, this means the establishment of the idea that in a plurilingual context language learning (or teaching) cannot lead to perfect competence in every language a person comes into contact with, but will necessarily lead to various partial competences. It is an element of a plurilingual self to accept that there can never be a complete command of any language; every command of languages covers only parts – smaller or greater – of the wealth of the language, and moreover: is constantly changing.

Another aim of language teaching which has to be introduced, as it is unfortunately, not an element of traditional foreign language teaching, should be to enable the individual to acquire the concrete language tools which s/he needs to master a specific situation. The competences needed for this aim are not bound to a concrete language but could rather be described as meta- (or trans-)linguistic competences. To these belong for example: the ability to paraphrase or express in other ways than only verbally; to translate; to look up information or use different kinds of tools etc.

The participants of the panel agreed that the necessary revisions of language teaching have to include the teaching of the standard language(s) of the respective nation state. This teaching should, differently to what it does today, also contribute to the development of plurilingual identities among Europeans. One means of encouraging aims could be to spread the Portfolio of Languages in Europe and to broaden its perspective on language learning as a whole, which means: explicitly including the learner's progress in his or her development of a plurilingual self.

The panel also agreed that direct effects from the introduction of linguistic rights are not to be expected. There is evidence in contemporary Europe that formal recognition of equalities of minorities do not prevent conflict and hatred. Thus in the establishment of language policies there are various levels of effect to be expected: the direct effect of enhancing possibilities of communication; the indirect effect of greater political and democratic participation. The former affects the individual, the latter takes place at a institutional level. States can remain coherent even with multilingual institutions.

The round table thus raised a number of issues which were pursued throughout the conference.

B. Address: Linguistic diversity: a contribution to education for democratic citizenship

Michela Cecchini, Head of the Education for Democratic Citizenship Section, Council of Europe

Language learning and reinforced linguistic diversity can help promote a culture of peace, democracy and human rights. If we accept the principle that responsible participation in democratic society necessitates such social skills as readiness for dialogue, peaceful conflict settlement and mutual understanding, then languages, language learning and linguistic diversity can help people acquire these metaskills.

The organisers assigned me a difficult yet exciting task, that of linking up the theme of this conference to the "Education for Democratic Citizenship" project of which I am responsible. I would like to use our work on democratic citizenship in taking up this challenge.

The project seeks to answer three questions: what are the key values and skills needed to be an active citizen in twenty-first century Europe? How can we learn these values and skills? And how can we transmit them to the young and the not-so young?

Both exploratory and pragmatic activities are implemented with a view to answering these questions. The activities explore the concepts and definitions while at the same time supporting and analysing field projects, which we refer to as "citizenship sites". The third section involves organising training for teachers and relay persons and studying approaches and learning methods with a view to developing an educational strategy for democratic citizenship.

The project has adopted a broad and multidimensional approach to democratic citizenship, since it is now accepted that the concept of citizenship is multifaceted and open to various interpretations. This means that it is also open to discussion, which is why it is so rich and diverse.

Of course, democratic citizenship can be defined in terms of the legal rights and obligations of citizens and their participation in political life and the functioning of democracy.

The project adds two further dimensions to this definition, namely cultural and social or socio-economic aspects.

The cultural dimension involves a body of issues relating to values, identity, history and memory. We must also address the present-day quest for meaning, social and symbolic representations and the feeling of belonging to a group, a society. Lastly, there is the intercultural dimension, that is to say relations between different cultures.

The socio-economic dimension of citizenship is currently a crucial issue in societies fraught with marginalisation, unemployment, poverty and exclusion. Another aspect we shall deal with here is the role of enterprises in developing a democratic society, and their sense of social responsibility.

Several keywords pervade all the activities under the project, contributing to a definition of democratic citizenship and fuelling the debate in general:

– In states governed by the rule of law, rights and responsibilities determine the rules governing community life and the scope of and limits on each individual's freedom. These rules are naturally based on human rights, equality of rights and access to the law. The concept of responsibility is currently at the centre of debate. Some construe this as a veritable appeal to our

sense of civic responsibility, which we must in particular instil into our young people. However, this concern might arguably derive from anxiety about the fragmentation of our societies, the loss of social cohesion. Moreover, stressing responsibility as the counterbalance to human rights is liable to weaken the hold of such rights, especially as they are still by no means satisfactorily implemented. On the other hand, a positive approach to responsibility should stress the endeavour to transcend egoism and individualism, for the common good and solidarity.

– The concept and practice of participation are central to the understanding of democratic citizenship. It is a case of active involvement by individuals in all aspects of community life, whether political, cultural, economic or social. Every individual must be in control of the development of his/her living environment and destiny. Empowerment is an element in participation. This concept refers to the development of abilities enabling the individual to be in control, and also the development of autonomy and all the various ways of giving people responsibility. In other words, within this concept the sense of responsibilities which I just mentioned has a great deal to do with possibilities and capacities for participating and being a proactive subject.

– The third and last keyword is partnership, a concept whose importance is currently being highlighted by the project. Education for democratic citizenship concerns not only schools but also local and national authorities, NGOs, enterprises, local projects, neighbourhoods, and so on. In order to create a climate conducive to realising and implementing democratic citizenship, the various institutions are increasingly being called upon to join forces and take collective action. Such partnerships are a key element in strategies to support the development of democratic citizenship.

"Citizenship sites" provide practical illustrations of these conceptual bases, in the form of schemes rooted in the community at large. The important thing in these projects is not so much the place but the process taking place there, innovative practices in the living experience of democracy and participation, and the conditions for their implementation.

The sites seek, for instance, to:

– enable young people from problem areas to learn about their rights and responsibilities so that they can go on to act as mediators for other local youngsters;
– co-ordinate the different local initiatives and projects from the community development angle;
– take into account the views of the immigrant population;
– set up intercultural communication committees linking up different communities, to act as mediating bodies, including *vis-à-vis* local authorities;
– implement projects to secure reconciliation between communities separated by war;
– ensure democratic transformation by creating a democratic climate in schools and involving the whole school community, including parents, in the educational decisions taken.

These initiatives implemented in Strasbourg, Portugal, Ireland, Bulgaria, Croatia, Albania and other countries, have several common denominators:

– they create spaces for expressing and negotiating expectations and needs, boosting people's confidence, making them real protagonists and bringing them closer to the decision makers;
– they identify training needs with an eye to the basic skills and attitudes required to structure such needs and transform them into citizenship-oriented initiatives;
– they stress that the authorities must open up and listen to their citizens – young people in Strasbourg have criticised the institutions for keeping their doors closed.

Drawing on this outline definition and practice of democratic citizenship, how can we use language learning and linguistic diversity to build up a culture of peace and democracy?

Rather than attempting to answer this question exhaustively, I would just like to stress a number of points to complement the input from this morning and the working group discussions.

I would also like to take this opportunity to refer you to the excellent results of the Council of Europe's latest project on "language learning and European citizenship", especially the work on the autonomy of the modern language learner and the socio-cultural and intercultural dimensions of language learning and teaching. One of the proposals coming out of this conference might be to summarise this work on the basis of the concepts of democratic citizenship, because it shows the great relevance of experience in the language field and its capacity to enrich not only the "Education for democratic citizenship" project but also any strategy for developing such citizenship.

Obviously, language learning is central to the acquisition of the skills required for communication, dialogue, intercultural relations and mutual understanding. Such skills are vital for participation in international democratic life.

However, language learning also involves acquiring other civic skills. This morning, in fact, Ms Komorowska began drawing up a very interesting list of such skills and the requisite educational methods to acquire them.

For instance, learner autonomy is aimed at empowering students for learning. The challenge is to make them protagonists in command of their own linguistic development. This approach necessitates answering the following types of question:

– how much responsibility should the teacher afford his/her students?
– how much responsibility are students prepared to shoulder?
– how can students be encouraged and induced to learn and to act independently?

The methods and examples of good practice highlighted in studies conducted under the "Language learning and European citizenship" project show the stages by which we can build up an empowerment strategy to answer these questions. In particular, the teacher must take on a new role, replacing "instruction" with advice, support and resource provision. Great importance is also attached to the educational environment, the atmosphere in the classroom, and the space required for student expression, experimentation and participation. We also talk about democratic processes in the language class. This concept is perfectly in keeping with the "Education for democratic citizenship" project.

The social and intercultural dimensions of language learning definitely contribute to education for democratic citizenship. It is these dimensions that most condition our basic understanding of a democratic society enhanced by a diversity which we respect. In this way too, language issues lie at the very heart of the cultural dimension of democratic citizenship

Learning a language enables the individual to apprehend his/her own identity and that of others, and to understand his/her own reactions to otherness. It forces people to put their own "truths" into perspective by learning foreign symbols and interpretations. Meaning is under continual negotiation. A new language is a living experience of a multiple, plural identity.

We must intensify awareness of the socio-cultural strand of language learning because it facilitates development of social and affective skills, curiosity and empathy. It often involves opening schools up to the surrounding neighbourhood or town. It should also enable teachers and students to identify and deal with ethnocentric, exclusive or indeed racist situations and attitudes. Such an approach introduces into the education process an ethical dimension that transcends language learning as such.

So language learning helps people across cultural and mental boundaries, establishing trust, preventing conflict and improving human co-exist ence. The many theoretical and methodological aspects of this learning process make it a genuine exercise in education for citizenship. These aspects must be identified, enhanced and promoted by policies in favour of linguistic diversity, in order to make language classrooms veritable “citizenship sites“.

C. Round table: Social and economic factors promoting and inhibiting linguistic diversity

Synthesis by George Lüdi, University of Basel, chairman of the round table[1]

François Grin, European Centre for Minority Issues, Flensburg, and University of Geneva.

Gret Haller, Ombudsperson for Human Rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Miquel Strubell, University of Barcelona

During this round table the participants spoke by turn in German, English and French.

Introduction

Georges Lüdi

In the attempt to identify factors that help or hinder linguistic diversity, economic and social circumstances are not necessarily the first things that spring to mind. In 1998, a few colleagues and I had the privilege of drawing up a "global concept for language instruction in Swiss schools" (see http://www.romsem.unibas.ch/sprachenkonzept). The results of the debate which followed publication of the concept and initial feedback on its implementation demonstrated clearly that many obstacles to linguistic diversity as an education policy derive from within the education system itself. It is only in connection with the need for a complete overhaul of teacher training that I mention here the problems caused by negative attitudes and inadequate motivation on the part of those concerned, the lack of suitable teaching materials, and so forth. Conversely, the driving force behind linguistic diversity frequently lies in teachers' enthusiasm, commitment and curiosity and their will to contribute in a professional manner to improving language teaching and acquisition.

During this round table, however, we shall focus on factors which are external to the education system. What is more, we shall consider linguistic diversity from a far broader perspective than that of language teaching and acquisition. We shall approach the topic from three angles:

– François Grin represents the economic viewpoint. He is acting director at the European Centre for Minority Issues in Flensburg and also works in the department of political economy at the University of Geneva.

– Gret Haller will address legal and political factors. She is the Ombudsperson for Human Rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

– The third angle is cultural, with "culture" being understood in its widest sense. This area will be dealt with by Miquel Strubell. A psychologist by training, for a long time he ran a government sociolinguistics institute in Catalonia. He is currently teaching at the University of Barcelona.

From the language point of view, we have decided to put linguistic diversity into practice and alternate between the three official conference languages: German, English and French.[1] We shall start with a few words from each of the speakers. Questions will then be taken, and this will provide a basis for discussion.

1. Unfortunately this diversity is not entirely reflected in the report of proceedings and the contributions made in German have had to be translated into the official languages of the Council of Europe (French/English).

Introductory comments

Gret Haller

Allow me to begin with a few words on my background. At present I am working in a government institution in Bosnia and Herzegovina. I am Swiss however and see our work as an international contribution to the reconstruction of Bosnia. I should like primarily to make my contribution in the form of political considerations, since my origins are in the world of politics.

This morning we talked about participation in otherness and saw that the path to oneself cannot be found except through others. This is equally true of the search for identity in the area of language. A key factor in the search is openness to other languages and the possibility of communicating with those who speak them. This assertion applies at the national as well as at the individual level. I would draw a parallel here with the circumstances of peace in Europe ("*Freidensordnung*"). Ours is the only continent to have taken the decision – as it did fifty years ago – to reject the idea that peace should be guaranteed through the hegemony of a single powerful state. Instead, the concept of hegemony was done away with once and for all in favour of multilateralism on the basis of equal rights. It was with this in mind that the European Union was founded; although initially limited to western Europe, it had clear ambitions of enlargement in an easterly direction. The philosophy of multilateralism must also prevail in the linguistic field, whether in European language policy or in the pattern of language use in Europe. From a historical point of view, it is to be seen in the multilingualism whose support is a stated aim of both the Council of Europe and the European Union. Naturally, the philosophy of multilingualism should also be reflected in endeavours to keep the peace in Europe. We have thrown off the principle of hegemony, but if we were to relapse into political hegemony in any form the game would immediately be up for the chances of peace. Europe cannot allow this to happen. Yet in the language field there are two factors which constitute a risk of a return to hegemonic thinking. I intend briefly to examine these two factors.

The first risk is that of "downwards" ramification. I sense this in Bosnia and Herzegovina, of course, but it is perceptible in every part of the Balkans. It might be described as an "explosion of ethno-nationalist languages". Typical is the case of what was originally Serbo-Croat but has now branched out into Serbian and into an increasing number of newly developed or rediscovered forms of Croatian. The third group of Bosnians, (although "Bosnian" refers, strictly speaking, to Bosnian Muslims and not to the population as a whole) are naturally moving in the same direction and seeking to establish the autonomy of their language. To put it bluntly, the danger hidden within this outbreak of ethno-nationalist languages is that it is only possible where a hegemonic "big brother" is in place to keep the peace or to ensure that things do not turn ugly. It is in this respect that a connection exists with the risk of a return to hegemony.

The second risk is that of an "upwards" retraction. By this I mean the danger of a single European *lingua franca*, which has no place since Europe's existence is dependent on there being several "*linguae francae*". I have absolutely nothing against English. Yet any situation in which English were established as the European *lingua franca* would, in my view, be genuinely dangerous. It would mean a failure in the political sector too, to draw enough conclusions to reject hegemony. I have no idea whether the world as a whole can afford this, but Europe can certainly not allow it to happen.

Miquel Strubell

I have been asked to try and speak from a cultural perspective. There are many people far better qualified to do that, so I will take the easy road and speak of culture as a world view, a world

approach rather than, say, the sum of issues that are usually contemplated under cultural policy. My focus will probably be towards the issues of indigenous, autochthonous languages (often referred to as "minority languages") , but I believe that several of the few points that I will have time to raise are probably applicable to the other two areas we are discussing, that is, immigrant languages and foreign language teaching. I will throw seven separate but closely related issues at you, all revolving round the theme of tolerance and intolerance; and I would ask you to consider whether they are relevant in each of your countries, and if so what can be done about such issues. Your reflections could be valuable elements for discussion at a future time.

The first issue is that in some countries which apply the typical nation-state model, for a long time monolingualism has been promoted by the cultural environment, in the belief that monolingualism is the perfect or natural state for a nationality or for members of a nationality. We are talking therefore about the melting-pot theory. If that exists, then I think an educational policy must first of all address that cultural element of society in order to progress towards other points of view, rather than just simply writing text-books to teach another language. So the question in the last analysis is: in each of our countries, do we believe, as professor Peter Nelde has said on occasions, that monolingualism is a curable disease, or not?

The second issue I would like to put to you is an obstacle which comes from intolerance of imperfection. I think many of us have been subjected to very high standards required in order to be able to communicate, and for this communication to be acceptable in a language which is not ours. And there is nothing more frustrating – many of you, I am sure, will have experienced this at some time – and nothing more humiliating than for people who are learning the language of the country they are living in as a second language to find that natives laugh at their mistakes instead of acknowledging the effort they are making.

The third kind of intolerance comes of regional stereotypes, which are often transmitted from one generation to the next. It has been found, thanks to research in many counties round the world, that the capacity to persuade people, the power of exerting influence, is often closely related to the regional accent with which they speak the official or national language, I am not thinking about extreme cases, though there was a case reported in the local press, of a young Catalan lady who recently applied for a job as a conference hostess in her own town, and was turned down because she spoke the language of the state with a regional accent.

The fourth point refers to intolerance towards bilingual conversations, a strategy which is so helpful for people who are trying to begin to use a language they have learnt while conversing with other people who can understand both languages in question. Now, one can come across bilingual conversations from time to time, but they tend to go against the social norms that govern the choice of language among bilinguals. And you can see this prejudice in some language teaching methods, where there is an enormous insistence on never translating what is being taught in the other language but trying instead to look at the target language as a pure, separate linguistic system.

The most specific case which may apply in your country – and this is the fifth point – is when the (minority) language in question, is the language of a neighbouring kin-state. It may be that the dominant culture of the country is suspicious of the group that has as its own language the language of a neighbouring state. Many countries get on very well with other countries in the world except their immediate neighbours. We are all quite familiar with that. And of course, the culmination of this kind of problem is when a country doesn't even accept the name adopted by the neighbouring country. Fortunately, though, I think such cases are beginning to belong to the past.

The sixth issue regards self-esteem and the social projection of the group that speaks the language we are talking about. We all agree, I'm sure, that people should be free to choose their identity, they should be free to choose their language and culture; but how free can they be, in effect, if their group or their language is portrayed by the majority as in some way inferior or disadvantaged. So again, if this is the case, what can the education system do to change such negative attitudes, that are developed and disseminated by the majority, yet accepted and interiorised very often by the stigmatised group itself? How can a member of a minority language community be expected to value and wish to inherit and share his or her group's identity and culture, if this identity and this culture are not first of all revalued and reassessed through the action of the education system, the media and the example of opinion leaders and politicians?

And finally, there is yet another psychological element. As human beings, we are all trying to understand the world in the simplest way possible. This is a universal cultural feature, it's part of humanity, we try to simplify the world in order to understand it and cope with it. But, unfortunately, the resistance to fully accept diversity is often an overt expression of this need to simplify what is a complex world. So I think that as people involved in education we must help all levels of our society to understand that we live in complex societies and that trying to simplify them often has serious personal and social consequences.

Georges Lüdi

I would just like to point out in passing that "linguistic racism", as a Swiss colleague of mine recently termed it in the context of dialect differences inside Switzerland, is not at all new. Have a look at the passage in the Bible on the "shibboleth/sibboleth" distinction, which relates to a case where having an accent could prove fatal. Things are not always as bad as this nowadays, or at least on occasion they are less obviously so – not that this observation is necessarily very comforting.

François Grin

I shall begin in English, which, despite the fact that I work in Germany, is my usual working language. I shall then switch into French, my mother tongue, for the second part of this brief intervention.

I just mentioned a brief intervention, because it is a rather tall order to try and cover, in five minutes, all the ground that should be covered in order to discuss the socio-economic factors affecting linguistic diversity. These factors are so numerous and so heterogeneous that we all find it difficult to know where to start. As a result of this complexity, pronouncements on the subject often combine (or sometimes mix up) different levels. The discourse about diversity often sounds like a constant to-ing and fro-ing between different conceptual levels, such as the micro-level versus the macro-level, the positive level and the normative level (that is, what "is" and what "ought to be"); and within the positive level itself, there may be some confusion between the "market values" and the "non-market values" that can be associated with diversity.

When we try to make rhyme and reason of all this complexity, there is always a risk of perpetually reinventing the wheel. Nevertheless, a few notions, analytical concepts and empirical results have emerged over the years. This evolution is reflected in the central question of this meeting, in the form of a general view – which I also share – namely, that diversity is a good thing. This, I believe, is the leading theme of this conference.

However, if diversity is such a good thing, why do we have to keep proclaiming how good it is? If something is good, people usually notice it by themselves, and do not need to be told that it's good. So, why do we have to keep telling them all the time? Why do we have to keep up this liturgy? I also believe diversity is good, but in order to understand why we can say it is good, I think it is useful to use some of the instruments that the economics of diversity or, as I prefer to call them, the "socio-economics" of diversity, can provide us with.

In this brief presentation, I would like to talk about these instruments, which means that I am not going to say why diversity is good; rather, I'd like to put forward some ideas regarding the concepts and distinctions that we can use to get closer to an answer to the question of why diversity is a good thing. More precisely, what I would like to say focuses on the tools and mental categories that can be used to deal with the difficult question of the value of diversity; in this way, it may help to clarify why we are probably right in saying that diversity is good. The four distinctions that I wish to introduce now are certainly not sufficient to yield ready-made answers, but I think they can help us to navigate in this complex set of issues.

I shall now continue in French. I would stress first of all that these instruments must above all serve as orientation posts. I shall start by setting out a brief list of distinctions which are indispensable, in my view, to any attempt to address these issues of diversity in society.

The first distinction, which I mentioned at the beginning of this presentation, is between the positive and the normative. Very often, talk of diversity consists of a combination of these two levels or even a glide, sometimes uncontrolled, from one to the other. Debate usually opens with a consciously positive analysis (dealing with what "is"), but after a while it is found that there has been a switch to the normative (that which "ought to be"). Instead of comprehending phenomena, their whys and their wherefores, one is defining how one believes things ought to be. This is all well and good, but I fear it is not enough. This is chiefly because saying how things ought to be and above all how we believe they ought to be is far from expressing universal agreement. What is more, if there were such agreement there would be no need to keep repeating how wonderful we should all think diversity is! This then is the first distinction: we need to remember that a "normative" argument is not the same thing as a "positive" one.

The second distinction that needs to be made arises within a situation of positive analysis. A clear contrast must be made between developments at the level of those with a role in society whose actions both influence and are influenced by diversity and who act irrespective of motive, and the impact of government intervention in areas which concern society, assuming that government is following a policy with an effect – intentional or otherwise – on diversity. In this context too there are frequent glides between the two. If we are to improve our understanding of the social value of diversity, it is essential to be absolutely certain which context we are dealing with.

The third distinction lies between the "micro" and "macro" levels. From the socio-economic point of view, the micro-level is that of individuals and, where appropriate, companies, while the macro-level concerns states, groups of states and regions. In order to prove that diversity is a good thing, there is often a very strong temptation to seek to impose it directly at the national or regional economic level. However, the drawback is that scientific research has as yet been unable to provide conclusive evidence of its value. Very little can actually be proved along these lines, and it is consequently almost inevitable that the micro-level must take precedence, since it can furnish more proof. Generally speaking, it is at the micro-level that the value of diversity can best be established. The micro-level is thus a useful stage in the gradual accretion of an overall understanding of the problem.

The final distinction that I should like to make is one between market values and non-market values. The former are reflected in market prices; the latter either are not or show up very distortedly. When discussing the social value of diversity, we often shift between the two. In one way this movement is justified, since from a purely economic point of view non-market values are just as relevant as market values, with which most economic analysis is concerned. Indeed, a large part of the response to the core question before us draws on this very fact. And yet on analysis it is vital to be aware that these two complementary and equally relevant levels are nonetheless distinct.

I hope that these few observations have given some insight into the socio-economic approach to linguistic diversity.

Georges Lüdi

Many thanks to all three speakers for the brevity and interest of your contributions. We shall now go round the table again so that you can comment on what the others have said.

Second round of comments

Miquel Strubell

Two straightforward ideas crossed my mind, one thanks to each of the speakers; I would like to share these thoughts with you.

The first is on this issue of linguistic atomisation or fragmentation: what we've always thought of as one language, somebody tells us is now two languages or three languages or even more. It obviously represents a deliberate attempt to try and draw a barrier between two or three groups for which internal linguistic variation did not use to be a salient issue. There are several cases of such trends or attempts in Europe right now and I think this is very, very serious. Firstly, for economic reasons. It makes any product in the field of literature, the media, CDs, software or similar language-based products, much more expensive (or harder to pay for) because it will be directed towards a smaller potential market. As a result, speakers will probably find that the range of products available is reduced as a result of the linguistic fragmentation or secession. But secondly, this is politics: as we heard this morning, in the last analysis, languages are defined by politicians and not by linguists. And who was it that said once, perhaps a little cynically, that a language was simply a dialect with an army behind it? Some may find this statement amusing, yet it gives us plenty of food for thought.

The other question I would like to raise is this issue of diversity and the diverse ways that countries define the concept or interpret it. I am sure we can all think of cases of countries which are extremely keen now, in the European context, on promoting multilingualism and linguistic diversity, but which, if you look at their even very recent history, have had a very bad track record on respecting and promoting their internal linguistic diversity. So, there again, I hope all our countries will gradually move towards more coherent interpretations of the term and the concept, and towards the possible consequences that derive from it when it is applied both at home and abroad.

Gret Haller

I should like to pick up on something said by Miquel Strubell. You pointed out that someone who makes mistakes when speaking a foreign language may be subject to an unbearable degree

of ridicule. In my view this is a matter of power, just as interrupting others when they are speaking is a matter of power. It is no accident that it was the feminist movement that initiated this line of study since, as you can well imagine, men interrupt women far more frequently than *vice versa*. Some of you – men especially – are laughing because that is the usual way of handling this kind of question. Laughter indicates that something is not to be taken seriously. That is a policy decision. In the same way, the issue of which language is to be taken seriously is a matter of policy. There is a link with what I said earlier. I have frequently come across situations where you are not taken seriously unless you speak English. This has been in Bosnia, not in my own country. No one pays attention to what you say unless you speak English, because English is the language of power. If you show by speaking another language that you have no power – this could be dangerous for Europe. Another point came to mind when Miquel Strubell said that a language is a dialect with an army behind it. This struck a chord with me, and I cannot help but wonder, thinking about what I have seen in Bosnia and about the awful events in Kosovo, whether the strength of a *lingua franca* is not dependent on the military might behind it.

François Grin

I would like to react to the point just made about language and power, because I think it ties in directly with the issue of language and democratic citizenship. It also gives me a golden opportunity to introduce the fifth of the distinctions that I wanted to make, and that I did not have the time to mention before. I fully agree that language interaction raises questions of power: it is possible to be an economist and to recognise that power matters. Power is no less important than money, and very often the two are very closely connected. This, to a large extent, is the problem of the position of English in Europe. The role of English in Europe may be a problem for two reasons. This duality of reasons can be explained by referring to a distinction between what we call the "allocative" dimension and the "distributive" dimension, which I want to explain briefly in relation to Mrs Haller's comment.

In the particular context of "linguistic diversity", the allocative problem can be summarised as follows: Do we want to use our social resources to live under a hegemonic language regime (in which one language dominates), or do we want to use our social resources to live in a more diverse linguistic environment? This, fundamentally, is the question of how we allocate our resources as a multilingual, multinational, or multi-ethnic society – hence, it is an allocative question. At the same time, it raises a distributive problem. If we decide to move towards an environment characterised by the dominance of one *lingua franca*, this implies an enormous transfer of symbolic and financial power towards one segment of the population. Keeping things simple, this part of the population is made up of the people who are either native Anglophones, or people who are quasi-native Anglophones, or who speak it well enough to pass as such. This can be shown using a very simple example. If English were to become the sole *lingua franca* of Europe, this would imply that translation and interpretation would be, even more than now, overwhelmingly into and out of English. We also know that translating and interpreting into English is work that would normally be carried out by Anglophones. This amounts, literally, to giving a market to a very specific subset of people. We may decide that this is what we want, but it is also useful to consider the implications, not only in terms of the allocation of resources (that is, in terms of the efficiency gains that this could give rise to), but also in terms of the resulting distribution of resources (that is, in terms of the significant transfer of symbolic and material resources to the Anglophone segment of the European population that would appear). In short, language is power, but to fully understand it, it is useful to identify how this comes about both on the allocative and on the distributive levels.

Georges Lüdi

Thank you, François. I think this answers, at least partially, one of the questions raised before in the discussion group, that is, the question of the relation between language diversity and social exclusion, not in the sense of exclusion from a community, but of exclusion from a market.

Miquel Strubell

You have reminded me of a play I saw in Manchester a few years ago, which was called, "Translations". It describes the first contact between a small party of peaceful English soldiers in Ireland with a virtually Irish-monolingual village and the enormous power that, as you say, is gathered in the hands of the few people who connect as go-betweens and can use this role to their own ends.

Georges Lüdi

For my part, I should like to put another question to François Grin. He spoke to us about decisions concerning the allocation of resources and mentioned two areas of advantage in this context. He appeared on one hand to be saying that diversity was desirable. On the other hand, he said more or less explicitly that a single European *lingua franca* would bring economic benefits. The question now is how economists should go about reconciling two apparently irreconcilable aims. On one hand there is the aim of promoting minor languages, which means promoting diversity, and on the other that of promoting international communication by reducing the necessary effort to the minimum.

François Grin

Thank you for your question, the answer to which could prove very complex indeed. I will therefore try to reply as succinctly as possible and focus on one point only. When diversity increases, we as a society are confronted by the problem of knowing what to do with it. As was suggested in the discussion group in which I took part this afternoon, the way a society deals with the objective diversity facing it might be termed its "diversitism". The decision to adopt a more "diversitist" strategy – one that is more favourable to diversity – is naturally more costly. At the same time, however, diversity and its ramifications do bring benefits. These come in many different forms. I have pointed out that there are not only market benefits and that non-market benefits are just as relevant. All in all, these costs and benefits need to be weighed against each other. The terminology I am using is obviously too restrictive, and I therefore prefer to speak not of "benefits" and "costs" but of advantages and disadvantages, which clearly indicate that this is not merely a question of money but has far greater implications. Symbolic aspects in particular need to be taken into account also.

Each possible strategy comes with a real bundle of advantages and disadvantages. Accordingly, the main issue is how to compare the different strategies that might be adopted. I have too little time to go into this in detail. Suffice to say that, generally speaking, it is noticeable that the more desirable strategies are certainly not those which lead to multiculturalism or multilingualism in all areas (what might be termed "out and out multiculturalism"). On the other hand, it is practically certain and relatively easy to prove that the best strategy is never, and I mean *never*, uniformity.

Georges Lüdi

Is there any evidence for all this?

Miquel Strubell

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Georges Lüdi

I would like to ask a second question, this time to Miquel Strubell. You defined culture in a broad sense. In preparing this round table, we thought of course of cultural policy in a more narrow sense. We made the hypothesis that there is a relation between a cultural policy and a language education policy. The example I had in mind was the way in which, for many years, the Spanish government tried to cope with the "problem" of Catalonia. What about the articulation between a language education policy and a cultural policy?

Miquel Strubell

You have just mentioned the way a centralist Spain describes Catalonia as a problem. Actually, some Catalans think that Spain is a problem for Catalonia!

Let me generalise this point. Very often we think that the minorities are the problem; at least part of the problem may be the majority way of thinking which tries, as I said before, to simplify the world to an extent that some people find unacceptable because it may be humiliating for them and their group to feel excluded.

Coming back to this issue, I would like to recount an anecdote which might be of interest. Throughout the Franco regime which, as you know, was quite keen on the Spanish language, all foreign language films were dubbed into Spanish, so Paul Newman, Marilyn Monroe and John Wayne were all always dubbed in Spanish. When the revitalisation of Catalan started, one of the earliest films to be dubbed into Catalan starred Paul Newman. The moment Paul Newman appeared on the screen and started speaking in Catalan, everyone in the audience started laughing. "What's Paul Newman doing speaking Catalan when he always speaks Spanish?" I hope we can again learn from this example. I laughed also, for it came as a little shock: it broke pre-conceived ideas of relationships between languages and different domains.

In any effort to revive or to spread a language, and I might be talking about immigrant languages, indigenous languages or foreign languages, I hope nobody will be so naïve as to believe that all you have to do is to teach the language in the school and then you will have the solution. It should hardly need to be stressed that other, additional aspects of government policy are needed to support, where necessary, the new asset that people have acquired, the new skill they have learned in the classroom. And therefore, helping through a cultural policy, to ensure that people have access to books in the language they have studied or learned, to television programmes from a neighbouring country that speaks the language that they have learned, and many, many other aspects of cultural activities with a language content, must all be included in an overall government policy alongside education. Because, otherwise we shall simply be inviting the schools to achieve the impossible. Such policies should give whatever financial assistance is needed to ensure that high quality products in the given language actually reach the marketplace in similar conditions to products in the state language. In conclusion: schools are a necessary condition but they are not sufficient in themselves to complete the process of taking learners from competence to real use of a second language, be this use active or passive.

Georges Lüdi

Allow me to add one point that has nothing to do with elitist culture but is also a part of the cultural dimension. I refer to the practice, customs and even the rules governing language use in

large companies. A major Swiss daily newspaper recently published an article under the heading: "English has become the common denominator of the Swiss economy". This is obviously the message that everyone expects. Yet you realise on reading the article that the Swiss economy is not nearly as uniform as it would appear. At the University of Basle, for example, there is no rule, and English is not compulsory in spite of the myth. The spokesperson in the article goes on to say that although there is English on the intranet systemin the bank in question, *Schwyzerdütsch* is also used, and in the Zurich branches so is *Zuridütsch*. He concludes by saying that employees are given just one message: "if you want to get ahead in the bank, speak several languages". The company attitude promotes diversity, and it affects young applicants to the banking sector in their motivation to learn a number of languages. At Swissair, the opposite is the case. It has been policy ever since Americans were taken on to the board that the company language is English. This approach is obviously an obstacle to linguistic diversity, since it discourages staff from feeling the need to learn several languages. Once again, to come back to what Gret Haller said, it is a matter of power.

Gret Haller

Take the example of the Swiss army. As in many Swiss institutions, every soldier is supposed to speak his own language. In Bosnia, where the Swiss army has a number of logistical duties, I was astonished to come across a German-speaking Swiss and a French-speaking Swiss conversing in English. This is a recent phenomenon, but it is becoming more and more common. I realised that they were right to communicate in the language which was their common denominator.

Georges Lüdi

This anecdote irritates me enormously. Let me try to explain why. First of all, take a look back in time. In nineteenth century France the army was an important instrument of linguistic unification. At the end of the eighteenth century, the majority of French people spoke not French but regional languages and dialects. French only really took hold in the nineteenth century, and military service – along with schools and increased mobility – was a decisive factor in its new status. French was the only language allowed in the military. By this means, the army managed to hinder linguistic diversity. In Switzerland, precisely the opposite happened. The army was one place where everyone spoke his or her own language and where young Swiss people had direct contact with and experience of other national languages. It was thus a place where national languages could be acquired. If this policy is being replaced by one of English for all, the loss to linguistic diversity will be huge.

Allow me to make these same points in respect of the European institutions. Here too there are two main solutions to the problem of communication between people who do not speak the same language. Either everyone can adopt a *lingua franca* or there can be linguistic pluralism. The "French" approach would be to say that there is only one language of power. This is the way at Nato where English is used by all. In contrast, the "Swiss" approach would be to say that international European institutions are meeting places where people from different places, speaking very diverse languages must be given the opportunity (and the duty…) to know and learn the language of others. With Gret Haller, though, it has to be acknowledged that there is a corresponding risk of overdoing the pluralism and ending up with excessive, even unhealthy, diversity. Ms Haller, is there a middle way? Are there any compromises between the two solutions?

Gret Haller

Well, to complete the puzzle of the languages, I think the two elements that I put on the table as problem cases are linked with each other. I would like to stick to the second theme I was speaking about. Now, I am a politician, so I come up with practical wishes. Please do not restrict the discussion of linguistic diversity to the question of what children should learn at school in order to understand each other, thinking that one should just learn different neighbouring languages. This is, of course, very important. But I think we should really go further and make an European policy that makes it clear to everybody that there is sense in learning different *linguae francae*. This is not the same as learning different neighbouring languages to be found on the borders of our nation-states. It is of course difficult to say what those languages should be. Why, for example, should French and English remain as the only official languages at the Council of Europe? But if we add German, or Russian, then why not also Italian and Spanish too? Obviously, we need a rationale to find out how to reach the goal of having different *linguae francae.*

Recently, I met an ambassador from a western European country in a European capital. She was pregnant and said: "How I would like all of my children to learn one Slavonic language". Actually, in central and eastern Europe, everybody is learning one or two western European languages. Then why don't western Europeans accept the idea that it would be completely normal for everybody to learn one Slavonic language? Of course, it cannot be my generation because we grew up during the cold war era, but what about the next generation? Who says that our future will be a transatlantic one? To come back to peace: we should imagine peace arrangements that are real ones. Peace has to do with languages and with the possibility of talking to each other on a basis of equality. Perhaps we should in the long term aim at real European peace arrangements – but with a broader concept of Europe than has been held for the last fifty years.

Conclusion

Georges Lüdi

Thank you. I should now like to conclude this round table by making three comments.

Firstly, I consider Ms Haller's final remarks to be very important. At a time when we are asking ourselves which languages should be learned and taught in schools, it would be entirely wrong to limit the choice, as an Austrian member of a discussion group did earlier, to Spanish, Italian, English and French (to which of course German would be added in countries where it was not a national language). It is also vital, in central Europe in particular, to take account of the languages spoken by our eastern neighbours – both Russian and less common languages. The same is true of northern Europe.

Secondly, thought must be given to the nature and level of skills that we intend to target. I should like to support and expand upon Miquel Strubell's defence of imperfection. Above all, we need to have the courage to learn a language simply in order to understand it without being able to use it actively. Mutually asymmetric bilingual communication (where each protagonist uses his/her own language but understands the language spoken by the other) is far better than dialogue in which each speaker murders a *lingua franca*.

Thirdly, and lastly, a comment to do with education. Recent studies have shown that it is possible to learn several related languages at once and even to learn a new language with a good deal less effort when starting from its relationship with other languages which are already known. In other words, a Romance language (or a Nordic or Slavic one) might be taught in such a way that it also serves as a springboard for the rapid acquisition of other Romance (Nordic,

Slavic) languages, at least at the level of comprehension. In the European Union a number of teams are working on this problem. The availability of methods and curricula giving access to entire language families will mean enormous progress in promoting and increasing diversity in the teaching and acquisition of modern languages.

The goal would be, at a conference like this one, to replace communication in three languages with the help of interpreters, by communication in several languages without simultaneous interpretation. Will we have the capacity to alter basic political, social, economic and cultural conditions so that this can become a reality one day?

D. Round table: Young people's views

Synthesis by Georges Lüdi, moderator

The Council of Europe has already organised many conferences in the field of education. However, this is the first time that those directly concerned, that is, young people themselves have been invited not only to listen but also to take part in the debate. At a panel discussion chaired by Maria Streli, an Austrian journalist working for radio ÖRF Tyrol, Dick Cochuis (the Netherlands), Alexandra Bisanz and David Herrman (Austria) and Andrea Székely (Hungary) were invited to discuss two fundamental issues: how young people feel about the teaching of modern languages – and how do they react to the experts' views as expressed at the conference. The participants' linguistic experience shows that there is a wide variety of national situations (the internationalism of the Netherlands, the situation with regard to contact with other languages in Austria, the prospects for a less commonly used language like Hungarian), but also many forms of individual multilinguism depending on schooling (teaching of English as a second language in the Netherlands, possibility of attending an Italian-French secondary school in Hungary) as well family backgrounds (for example, the girl from Vienna has a Polish mother). Unfortunately, for technical reasons, we do not have the full text of the debate. Therefore, only a few highlights from this extremely interesting panel discussion are described.

Choice of topics and editing: Georges Lüdi

Motivation for learning languages

Andrea:

It is true that if you want to learn foreign languages you have to work hard and that children are not always prepared to make the effort. Young people are only motivated to learn a foreign language if they will need it in their future profession. Children do not learn languages for cultural reasons. Their interest is focused on finding a job.

Dick:

I think you need to have a precise reason for learning a foreign language. One important reason is if you feel that you are cut off from the rest of the world. Many people are prepared to move from one country to the next; many want to have access to information, to swap places with others, to get to know people like themselves from other countries. In order to do so it is very important to speak the same language otherwise it is very difficult to communicate.

Alexandra:

If I were to learn a third language, my main motivation would be if it would help me to find a job, which would not be a bad thing. There is keen competition in the fields of the economy and industry, so any extra skills are an advantage.

Andrea:

I don't think it is enough just to speak foreign languages. The most important thing is to be trained for a good job – languages are only a tool for your profession.

David:

Everybody here, including me, agrees that we have to learn many languages. But when you hear the experts discussing questions of minority languages in Norway, for example, I wonder if they are not missing the point. The discussions I attended were coloured by all sorts of visions and

ideologies but when I take a look at the young people round about me I do not get the impression that they share these visions. Their ideology is probably "I do what I want to do and what I think is necessary for me and with as little effort as possible". Their negative attitude towards learning other languages is just one example of their general outlook.

Is it enough to learn only English?

David:

I attend a technical school and it is obvious that without English you can't get far. Otherwise, you don't really need any other languages, except in very specific circumstances. A further foreign language may simply be one burden too many for some students.

Dick:

If you want to use all the new communication tools like the Internet, you have to be able to speak English. In Holland it is easy enough to learn English and even German as a supplementary language because so many Germans come to Holland.

David:

I think that it is an advantage to know something that few people know and which is also useful. For example, I wouldn't mind learning Russian or another eastern European language. The economy of these countries is rapidly expanding and as a result of globalisation they are importing everything you can imagine and there is therefore a need for people who can speak eastern European languages.

Andrea:

Only those who were born in Hungary can speak the language well and communicate in Hungarian. I am pessimistic about the possibility of foreigners learning Hungarian; they will never be able to speak it perfectly, not even more or less perfectly. I think it would be better for Europeans to learn Italian or perhaps Romanian because Latin languages are similar; that would be an alternative to learning Hungarian.

Impediments to language learning caused by prejudice

Alexandra:

The fact that I am bilingual (Polish-German) is not always an advantage. Sometimes I am the object of nationalist prejudice: in Austria I am "the Polish girl" and in Poland I am "the Austrian girl". Personally, I consider myself to be "European". At school teachers do not take advantage of my knowledge of the Polish language and culture. I'm sure it would be quite different if I spoke English or French.

The average Austrian does not believe there's anything worth seeing or doing in Poland. And yet some of the towns are really beautiful and life there is very pleasant. Perhaps it was less attractive in the past but now things have changed. Young people ought to visit not only Poland but also other east European countries and see what 'they're like now.

David:

I live some fifty kilometres from Vienna and about thirty kilometres from the Czech border. You might think that people there speak Czech but not at all. The population still has an iron curtain attitude: those who live on the other side of the border are the "baddies", the underdeveloped.

These are the stereotypes of the average person in the street. People have grown up thinking like this, close to the communist enemy, and no one can make them believe otherwise. The current generation, that is my generation, was also brought up with this attitude. If our parents say "Czech? Who wants to learn Czech? You have to be crazy!", then it should come as no surprise that young people still think the same way.

Alexandra:

There's plenty of talk about an open, pluralistic society but nobody really believes it. The idea has not really been put into practice in our daily lives.

Learning methods and contexts

Andrea:

I believe that if you want to learn a language well you have to live or be immersed in a setting in which the language is used. We are lucky in that our school is twinned with several secondary schools in France. This provides an exceptional opportunity to get to know the French way of life and to explain our way of life to them.

David:

You don't have to learn languages at school; there are always other opportunities to do so later in life.

Andrea:

I think that the best way to learn languages (particularly less frequently taught languages like Polish) is to have friends who speak those languages, especially where young people are concerned.

Alexandra:

I have noticed that school exchange projects and class exchanges are not successful. When the French came to visit us they stuck together and only talked French to one another and the Austrians did likewise; there was no real communication between the two groups. These exchanges cannot take place in the school context because at school we only learn how to buy bread or to order a drink in a bar not what we need to really talk about personal interests. Perhaps the teachers could prepare students better for school exchanges by emphasising the need for intercultural communication, for example. But the students must also want to communicate. Teachers can't force groups to mix.

What would you like to see during the European Year of Languages 2001?

David:

It is difficult to motivate young people, except where music, television, drugs and sex are concerned, so these themes – except perhaps drugs and sex – should be used to stimulate them. It is the only way to make language learning interesting. It is also important to enlist the support of young people's idols. However, it will still be difficult because young people are sceptical of anything that is not of immediate use to them.

Alexandra:

You have to make students want to learn languages!

Session II

The response of education to the challenges of linguistic diversity

A. Address on linguistic diversity from a political perspective

Senator Jacques Legendre (France), Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

I am somewhat hesitant, and even apprehensive, about speaking here in Innsbruck to an audience of linguists, above all because I am not one myself, because I did not hear Mr Peter Leuprecht's statement yesterday on linguistic diversity and democratic citizenship, and because I think that you already said everything yesterday during the first session. However, I would like to explain what concerns prompted me to present a recommendation that has been adopted by the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly.

I became interested in these language questions for a number of reasons. I first came into contact with them many years ago, as a French teacher in central Africa. Between 1965 and 1967, I taught French to students who were not native speakers, and who were the first generation of children taught in French at school. At the time, I had written a study on French-language literature by black Africans.

I encounter these questions now too, as a parliamentarian and as Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly of French-speaking Countries.

I was also rapporteur for the French-language law, known as the Toubon Act, which was debated in France in 1994, and I was the initiator, in 1995, of a fact-finding mission for the French Senate on foreign language teaching in France, at which time my fears were confirmed: a broad choice in theory, whereas in practice only two European languages were taught to any great extent in France, the others having been, shall we say, sacrificed.

Lastly, I was also rapporteur for the recommendation on language diversity that was unanimously adopted by the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly in September 1998. I believe that these various activities are complementary and that these concerns in fact come down to just one: namely, how people communicate and understand each other through their different languages.

That said, there are very different approaches depending on one's point of view. In any case this is now apparent in the very title of your conference, which takes a clearly political approach, language being at the core of civil life. I say this for the following reasons.

As I see it, the most important thing is that mastery of a language confers power, the power to express oneself and make oneself understood. Let me give you a practical example: a few days ago, in Nantes, the Ministry of Education organised a major conference attended by all those concerned with the issues of reading and languages. Its purpose was very clear: not to exclude; hence the theme of the conference – learning to share this power of language.

That was what the title implied: language and language skills are power, they confer power and abilities. Some people have this power and some are denied it. Clearly, the words used show that we are dealing with a genuine political issue. Taken further, that is what mastering the written and spoken language means – the power of speaking, reading and writing; the power of learning and understanding, of thinking and improving oneself; the power of having an influence on the world and, ultimately, living together. That was how this colloquy was presented in France last week, an event which clearly illustrated the political issues at stake.

Learning to read and understanding a language is an essential part of democratisation. To us this now seems natural, but bear in mind that not so long ago it might have been regarded as revolutionary. In France, the birth of the Republic was associated with a major effort to develop primary schools. Known as the "black hussars" of the Republic, primary school teachers were responsible for teaching all Frenchmen how to read, write and count, which they needed in order to become citizens at that time.

Today's young rebels in poor urban neighbourhoods are often those who lack the fundamental skills, and so they revolt against school; hence the emphasis placed on the power that knowing a language confers. It is a power conferred primarily by knowledge of one's own language. But there is also another form of exclusion, one which may prove very difficult to deal with, that of men and women who, in today's increasingly shrinking world, may be proficient only in their own language and unable to speak any other, perhaps an international language, a knowledge of which is becoming so important that those who do not speak one are excluded in turn, at least where international relations are concerned. This, too, poses a real problem, a political problem.

The goal is to enable citizens to understand and make themselves understood. I have been talking from a citizen's point of view, but concomitant points of view must also be borne in mind, such as that of consumers, are able to make informed purchases, or workers, who must be able to perform the tasks required of them. Problems may arise in certain companies if their language is not the national language, the language that is spoken and taught. In this way people are excluded from certain jobs. Here we are at the heart of things.

At the core of the problem of power is the fact that there is not only a citizen's approach, but also a state approach. The state cannot turn its back on such issues, because it is itself a factor of power. The state itself has to answer a whole set of questions: what is its educational policy to be, and what is its policy on foreign languages? Is it simply responding to demand, or does the state try to elicit a particular response? That, too, is at the heart of your questions and of what we were getting at when the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly's recommendation was adopted. Then again, if it is decided to teach foreign languages, which ones? In some countries the choice is no simple matter. Should a language of international importance be chosen in addition to the national one? And if so, which one?

I encountered these issues when teaching in black Africa: the African countries, in order to have their say on the international scene, often have to choose to teach and learn English or French, frequently for historic reasons. What national language should they learn? Should there perhaps be more than one? Is that language their mother tongue? A mother tongue signifies identity and belonging to a group. Depending on whether it is chosen or not well treated, this will pose enormous problems which may be felt as an assault on the ideas, thinking and national sentiments of the day. Attacking a mother tongue can trigger very strong nationalistic reactions and make people feel excluded and humiliated.

There is also the problem of minority or regional languages, which are not always well treated either, and which now demand their place in the sun. For us in Europe this is a real issue. States may either want to give minority languages their due or, on the contrary, may fear that certain minority languages will be pushed into prominence perhaps by the emergence of regions – those where these languages are spoken. That would mean building a ramified Europe; a Europe of regions rather than a Europe of states. As you know, this is one aspect of an issue currently being discussed in our countries.

With regard to the problem of knowing other peoples' languages and foreign languages in general, and deciding what language to learn, I invariably recall a comment made by Boutros

Boutros-Ghali when he was United Nations Secretary General and gave a talk at the Francophone Summit in Mauritius: he said that the choice of language is a reflection of power relationships.

Of course such a statement refers to what happens at state level. States have a tendency to group together on the basis of language affinity, which is a rather new development. At the UN, as well as in other international organisations, including those in Brussels, delegations now organise themselves on the basis of language affinity. There is the group of French-speaking countries and the group of Portuguese-speaking countries, and other such examples could be cited. In other words, a new phenomenon is emerging, which includes very diverse, but nevertheless important situations.

States and peoples that find it important to learn other nations' languages have a different attitude from those for whom this is less so. As with the French in the eighteenth and even the nineteenth century, there is a tendency among the English or Americans of the nineteenth century and the present day to consider it only natural for others to speak their language and consequently to see no need to learn the languages of other people.

We French had this failing in the past – less so now, because things are changing. In any case, we are in the process of reconciling ourselves to this development. For our American friends, the need to learn the languages of other people is still not apparent. That, too, implies a position of strength. In other countries, people have always spoken foreign languages and consider this attitude normal and important.

But it would be better for me to speak about something which I have examined closely: the situation of foreign languages in a country like France. Notwithstanding the cliché, the French are setting out to learn foreign languages, and the state has long emphasised the importance of teaching foreign languages. If we consider the number of foreign languages offered in secondary schools, we see that there are quite a few. But this is only the theory.

In practice, for a whole set of reasons, it is clear that English is the number one foreign language taught, with Spanish comfortably in second place. What this means is that other major European languages such as Russian, Italian and Portuguese, are being ignored and forgotten, despite their enormous importance. They are not much taught and are not given their proper place – even German, despite the fact that France and Germany signed the so-called Elysée Treaty, under which both countries undertook to promote a knowledge of the other's language. Neither of the two has really complied with the provisions of that treaty, which also pursued a political aim, namely to rebuild Europe on the basis of understanding between France and Germany. To that end Adenauer and de Gaulle wanted French people and Germans to learn each other's language. The inescapable fact is that these objectives have been somewhat forgotten and that, for various reasons, neither in France nor in Germany is any real effort being made in this matter.

This holds for France, but I think it also applies elsewhere. We haughtily disregard non-European languages, although some of them are very important and are spoken by large immigrant minorities in our countries. In France this is the case with Arabic, but it might equally be asked why Chinese and Japanese are taught to such a limited extent.

And then there are the regional languages: they are spoken and they are increasingly supported by the state and the regions, and yet those who speak them have the feeling that these languages are somewhat marginal. Moreover, there is discussion as to whether regional languages are the languages of groups – which are recognised as groups – or whether there is an individual right to learn a language, be it foreign or regional.

From this point of view, the French Constitution is very clear, and gives precedence to the rights of individuals. This issue is very topical, because the French Government has stated its intention to ratify the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, and the Constitutional Council has been asked to rule on whether ratification is constitutional. The government itself has made an interpretative statement making it clear that ratification would not constitute recognition of group rights, but would strengthen the individual rights of French citizens to learn minority languages.

But I do not want to limit myself to a consideration of the matter at state level, which is too political. Being able to communicate directly with others in their language is also of cultural and economic interest. Sometimes it is necessary to resort to using a third language, and we often do so, although it over-simplifies things and can pose political problems. It is important to be aware of this in the current discussions.

Some people, including participants in Parliamentary Assembly debates at the Council of Europe, think that for both financial and political reasons, only one European language should be used; and why should that language not be English, since it is the one that most people know best? Others argue that this poses the problem of European identity *vis-à-vis* America. So there is disagreement on this point.

Others stress the Europe of regional languages and either underscore or play down the role of states. As they see it, since the Europe of the regions is gradually taking shape, with a concomitant reduction in the role of states, what many debates are really addressing today is another vision of Europe. And then there is, of course, as I have already said, the question of the role of English.

In view of the above, linguistic diversity means, in the first instance, respect for the natural choices individuals make, and above all respect for mother tongues, and I believe that is the issue a few hundred kilometres from here.

Citizens of one and the same country, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, are treated very differently by their own government depending on whether they speak Albanian or Serbo-Croat. That clearly shows the role that languages play in these problems. They are the crux of this tense situation, this paroxysm.

So we must be careful to respect all languages so as to avoid explosions of anger and passion. You know better than I do that every language conveys a vision of the world which is slightly different and which is always important. The world's language diversity must be protected, even if that complicates life and goes against the natural tendency to economise. We must not allow language policies to be decided by the ministries of finance, because everyone knows very well where that will lead. And if we allow certain visions of the world which are linked to certain languages to vanish, the impoverishment of our culture and civilisation will be the result.

Language is a source of enrichment, but it undoubtedly has its price as well. That is a problem for states, but safeguarding linguistic diversity is an essential element of democracy in this area. As rapporteur for the budget in my own Parliament, I have often stressed that linguistic diversity deserves a budgetary and financial effort; it is just as important as many other fields.

In any case, I am pleased for that reason that you are discussing the subject here today in Innsbruck.

B. Results of a preliminary survey on linguistic diversity in education: obstacles and possible solutions.

Presentation by Michel Candelier, Université René Descartes, Paris

Aim of this presentation

The survey report[1] which I am about to outline was issued to you in two separate parts: the main part, which was sent out before the conference, and the part entitled "Obstacles/constraints and attempts to overcome them", which you received only on arrival in Innsbruck.

I shall spend most of my allotted few minutes discussing this second part, firstly because you might not have had sufficient time to acquaint yourselves with it, and secondly because it deals precisely with the issues which the conference's scientific committee felt could be a useful starting point for your group discussions later on. Your task in the groups will be to come up with questions to ask the speakers taking part in the round table on "Policy decision-making at national and international level".

I would, however, like to mention a few aspects of the first part of the survey in order to remind you of some of the basic considerations forming the backdrop to our discussions.

Diversity: an overview

To begin with, it is worth pointing out the limitations of the preliminary survey we carried out.

As the introduction to the report made clear, our intention was to "provide an impressionist picture of educational linguistic diversity in Europe. This is complex, since we are seeking to establish links between the data and take account of various sorts of non-quantifiable information, but nevertheless remains faithful to the impressionist genre in that it does not aim for precise lines and frontiers between objects."

The main reason for these constraints was, as we explained in the report, that we did not have the time, or resources of any kind, for a more detailed study.

Our assessment of educational linguistic diversity reveals above all that much remains to be done in this area. To quote a key passage of the report:

In the case of foreign languages (FLs):

– in two countries out of three, it is only possible to learn a second foreign language in one sector of pre-school, primary and secondary education;
– in more than four countries out of five, there are no more than five language tokens (the total number of languages on offer) in the whole of pre-school, primary and secondary education;
– in nearly four countries out of five, the most frequently taught language is studied by more students than all the other languages combined.

In the case of indigenous minority languages (IMLs):

1. Candelier, Michel, Dumoulin, Bérengère and Koishi, Atsuko (1999). Language diversity in the education systems of the member states of the Council for Cultural Co-operation – Report of a preliminary survey. Strasbourg: Council of Europe. [Document CC-LANG (99) 11 rev.]

– barely one country in four offers instruction in the language to two-thirds of those concerned and in two-thirds of the relevant languages;
– there is little evidence of a "compensation" process, in which IMLs are taught as subjects where they are not generally used as languages of instruction.

In the case of immigrant languages (ILs):

From what can be seen from the very limited information available (which itself may reflect the limited awareness of these languages), it appears that efforts to increase educational linguistic diversity in this area are still less marked than is the case for IMLs.

Initial findings of the assessment itself: economic and ideological factors

The main question addressed in our examination of obstacles/constraints is whether they are chiefly the result of economic or ideological factors. The part of the report assessing the survey findings provides a number of valuable pointers.

In assessing the findings, we were continually presented with strong evidence suggesting, as we reiterated in the concluding section, that the greatest diversity is far from being the prerogative of the wealthy. This indicates that financial constraints should be put into perspective. Of course, it does not mean that greater diversity does not have a cost, simply that it is financially bearable. Otherwise, it would not be possible for less well-endowed countries to improve their performance.

If financial constraints can be put into perspective, then surely the main constraints are ideological? We shall come back to this point later.

Significance and limitations on obstacles/constraints and attempts to overcome them

This part is based on the statements made in the questionnaires sent to the different countries. Such an approach is probably justifiable in this context since it allows for close analysis of the various kinds of constraints observed. In any case, it enabled us to produce a typology.

We should not, however, be under any illusions as to the nature of the data. Our findings reflect certain people's subjective views on the actual situation rather than the actual situation itself…

Bearing this in mind, it is clear that the survey has two main kinds of limitations, as we noted in the report:

– firstly, although a considerable number of countries (thirty seven) are represented, there are an insufficient number of different opinions for each country. Indeed, we only received an average of 1.4 replies per country. We are therefore highly dependent throughout on individual perceptions;
– secondly, it was clear from the replies to the questionnaire that the majority of respondents, when referring to obstacles, were thinking mainly of problems relating to diversity in foreign languages. You should bear this in mind as you read the report and as you listen to me now.

Examples of obstacles/constraints

I shall discuss the examples in approximate order of frequency, "approximate" being the operative word given that we should obviously not place too much importance on frequency when we are dealing with such an unquantifiable topic and have such a limited range of replies.

The lack of interest of certain policy makers in linguistic diversification (2.*b*) is the most frequently mentioned obstacle in the replies to the questionnaire (thirty-one occurrences concerning nineteen countries). It is followed, in order of frequency, by the lack of teachers of less common languages (5.*d*, twenty-four occurrences concerning seveteen countries). Financial constraints in general (category 5 as a whole) are mentioned by nineteen countries.

Perceptions/attitudes of learners and parents concerning languages, those who speak them and the cultures to which they are linked (3.*a*) are an obstacle cited relatively frequently (fourteen occurrences concerning eleven countries), chiefly with reference to extremely favourable images of English. The number of language places and language tokens on offer is mentioned almost as frequently (5.*a*, twelve occurrences concerning nine countries), although it is not always clear whether this constraint is being described as resulting from a lack of resources. Geographical distribution of the provision is a similarly frequent obstacle (ten occurrences concerning eight countries).

Strategies intended to promote or demote certain languages (2.*a*) are mentioned in only six questionnaires (concerning six countries), each time with reference to policies favouring English.

Category 1.*a* (representations/attitudes of policy makers and education chiefs concerning languages, those who speak them and the cultures to which they are linked) is cited relatively infrequently, even if we include all references to either policy makers or teachers (five occurrences concerning five countries). It should, however, be borne in mind that lack of political will is the most frequently mentioned obstacle here.

Even less frequent (three or four occurrences) are three obstacles relating more to educational problems: lack of continuity for the less commonly taught languages (6.*c*), the ideal of having a native speaker among the teaching staff (1.*b*) and representations concerning the situation of the teachers (1.*c*). In the last-mentioned category, this related in each case to disillusionment among teachers of less commonly taught languages.

Other obstacles and constraints were mentioned only once: strategies for access to education and culture (4), low pay for teachers (5.*c*), competition between options (6.*a*), validation (6.*d*), inability to pay for expensive courses (7.*a*) and inability to pay for travel or accommodation (7.*b*).
At a level which remains, as I have said, very approximate and general, the respondents' replies appear to indicate a rough balance between obstacles/constraints stemming from perceptions and obstacles/constraints of a material nature. In the latter category, purely educational considerations appear less significant than concerns due to financial constraints. This in itself is pleasing to note; educational concerns are not being used as an alibi to conceal a lack of resources.

Typology

The typology is an important component of the findings of this part of the survey and may help you to structure your own approach in the group sessions afterwards. I shall therefore run through it and make a few comments.

	Provision	⟸⟹	**Utilisation**
	1. Collective/individual		**3. Collective/individual**

Obstacles/ constraints stemming from representations ⇑	**representations/attitudes of policy makers and education chiefs:** *a*. concerning languages (usefulness, difficulty, aesthetic appreciation, etc.) of those who speak them and of the cultures with which they are linked; *b*. concerning learning capacities (extra work, girls/boys, etc.); *c*. concerning the situation of the teachers. **2. Political will:** *a*. strategies intended to promote or demote certain languages; *b*. absence of any political will in favour of diversity.	**representations/attitudes of learners and parents:** *a*. concerning languages (usefulness, difficulty, aesthetic appreciation, etc.) of those who speak them and of the cultures with which they are linked; *b*. *concerning learning capacities (extra work, girls/boys, etc.).* **4. Strategies for access to education and culture**
⇓ **Obstacles/ constraints of a material nature**	**5. Limitation of resources and the consequences in terms of:** *a*. number of language places and of language tokens offered; *b*. geographical distribution of the provision; *c*. low pay for teachers; *d*. teacher training. **6. Organisation of courses:** *a*. competition between options; *b*. upstream effects; *c*. lack of continuity for the less commonly taught languages; *d*. validation.	**7. Inability to pay for:** *a*. expensive courses ; *b*. travel or accommodation. ***8. Objective limits to learning capacities:***

In the report, we were careful to stress that the typology, like any other, is the result both of its authors' preconceptions and of the body of information acquired. In this particular example, we

even included some categories which did not appear in the data; these are printed in italics in the table and are explained in detail in the report.

We attempted to group the various obstacles and constraints mentioned along two axes, depending on whether they concerned:

– the provision of education or the utilisation made of it;
– the world of representations or that of material contingencies.

The reasons why we opted for a "provision versus utilisation" dichotomy rather than "supply versus demand" are set out in the report. The report also points out that the division of each of the table's four main sections into subcategories does not mean that these subcategories are completely separate from one another. For example, it is clear that political will is not independent of the policy makers' perceptions of languages, and that curricula might be organised somewhat differently if more financial resources were available.

Ways of overcoming obstacles

The second section of the supplement to the report provides a very concise list of attempts to overcome these obstacles, as described in the replies to the survey.

I shall not repeat the list here, but instead I shall attempt to classify these initiatives according to the typology of obstacles. I shall then consider the wider implications.

What is striking is that the attempts are nearly all concerned with obstacles and constraints from the "material" category. I shall briefly outline them before returning to this general observation.

– Introducing a compulsory second language place or a choice between several language tokens for the first language learnt is undoubtedly an effective means of overcoming obstacle 5.a by increasing the number of languages that are learnt.

– The same applies to the introduction, at primary level, of indigenous minority languages, immigrant languages or languages of neighbouring countries – rather than languages that are already dominant – as has occurred in pilot projects launched in a number of countries.

– In allowing students to take any language they have learnt, rather than just the one they have studied during their eight years of secondary education, for their school leaving examinations, one country has attempted to overcome the obstacles in category 6.d, concerning validation.

– Accelerated training of teachers of languages other than the dominant language, so that teaching provision quickly becomes more diversified, is one way of overcoming the obstacles in category 5.d.

– Initiatives to develop linguistic diversity at local level, which often appear to depend on the willingness of particular individuals or groups, may well reduce the geographical inequalities identified as obstacles in category 5.b.

– I have deliberately left until last the example of setting up a Modern Languages Council, as noted in one of the replies to the questionnaire – obviously because of its strategic importance, but also because it was the only concrete example which came under the heading of representational obstacles. It is, of course, an attempt to overcome an obstacle listed in category 2.b (absence of political will), precisely by creating a political will and setting out its objectives.

Admittedly, it could also be argued that a measure such as introducing the option of less common languages is likely to improve popular perceptions of these languages. On the whole, though, it seems true to say that hardly any of the various attempts to overcome obstacles are designed to change people's attitudes.

In other words, although the importance of ideological factors is clear in our assessment of the replies (see "Initial findings" above) and is further endorsed by our examination of perceptions about obstacles and constraints (see "Examples" above), the problem of attitudes has not actually been tackled head on. No real "ideological work" has been attempted.

What can we and should we do? There is obviously no place for propaganda; rather, we should seek to spread our convictions among the general public. Recently, the Brussels underground displayed posters advertising a multilingual language festival. There are also trade fair-style language exhibitions which are sometimes – at least in France – aimed at publicising less common languages.

There should be more initiatives of this kind, particularly among the mass media. To illustrate the size of the task ahead of us, I would simply like to tell you an anecdote of some significance. I was told by a reliable source that in a court in the Paris suburbs, some young people charged with petty crimes addressed the judge as "Your Honour", in the style of American soaps. These youngsters were unaware of their own country's legal traditions, but were quite familiar with those projected by English-speaking productions.

Market forces are so strong that it is extremely hard to curb influences such as these. However, we can at least attempt to counterbalance them in their own environment. As far as I know, nobody has yet made a series of commercials for young people throughout Europe, presenting linguistic diversity as an asset to be exploited. Longer programmes could also be made. Some countries have a tradition of TV movies dealing with social issues, such as life at school, emergency medical services or problems in deprived urban areas. Why should we not, from time to time, see TV movies highlighting the benefits of linguistic diversity, alongside the main plot?

We should also bear in mind what one of the young people interviewed last night said, and use the medium of existing interests. Out of the three fundamental interests he mentioned – sex, drugs and idols – I shall, following his own advice, deal only with the last one. If I may let you into a little family secret, my 15-year-old great-niece has started to teach herself Swedish using a method bought by her great-uncle, purely because her favourite pop group happens to be from Sweden – which goes to show, if you are still not convinced, that speaking at conferences is not the only way in which great-uncles can promote linguistic diversity!

There is plenty of opportunity for discussion and suggestions here. All that is needed is a bit of imagination, particularly in the context of the European Year of Languages, which we have heard about on several occasions.

What image of languages do schools convey – do they encourage them?

I have left this question until last, disregarding the proverb "charity begins at home", or, in other words, one should begin by helping oneself or, in this case, calling oneself into question.

Let me explain. I believe that all of us – teachers, educational advisers, education chiefs – who are wondering how to convey the importance of diversity to the general public, parents and

students should first ask ourselves what the education system itself is doing to change attitudes. The likely answer is that little is being done or even that the only effects are negative.

As far as I am concerned, I have no doubt that in many cases, the answer will be that the education system is doing all it can to heighten negative images of diversity. By choosing to favour dominant languages, it is merely reinforcing the idea that it is essential to learn them.

It is deliberately shepherding children, often as early as possible, into a world where only the country's own language and the most common foreign language are taught. That is not, in my opinion, a good way of fostering an interest in, and a taste for, diversity.

If the education system is to make a genuine attempt to encourage awareness of, and respect and a taste for, linguistic and cultural diversity, I am convinced that it must incorporate it fully into the teaching and learning process. I recently launched an innovative primary education programme in which this eminently sensible principle is put into practice. I would like to say a few words about it, just to show that this is possible and to encourage other initiatives.

In the project, each pupil discovers – the approach is based on discovery – a number of languages (several dozen) of varying status, from all over the world. The aim is not, of course, to learn them, but to become actively acquainted with them. The languages spoken by immigrant children, and this is only one aspect of the project, thus become a source of curiosity for their classmates, resulting in an intercultural approach.

The project is currently being evaluated, so it is too early to speak of any results. What is already clear, however, is that the pupils greatly enjoy it and are extremely curious to see and hear such a large number of languages. The teachers greatly enjoy it too and have been very keen to embrace an approach of which, in many cases, they had previously been entirely unaware.

In conclusion, as the project has shown, it is possible to convey our desire for diversity, in schools and elsewhere, through approaches which are essentially simple.

Perhaps we just need a bit of courage…

C. Round table: Policy decision-making at national and international levels

Summary of the contributions, Claude Truchot, General Rapporteur

Questions discussed:

1. What is your concept of linguistic diversity? How would you judge whether your education system is achieving linguistic diversity?
2. What possibilities do you see within your domain of responsibility to recognise existing multilingualism in the population and to validate it throughout the education system?
3. Do you see your role as policy makers in terms of following demands or rather influencing diverse demands for language teaching?
4. If you think it is your role to influence demand, what measures should be taken to stimulate interest in learning a variety of languages, especially with reference to the European Year of Languages in 2001?
5. There is a widely held view among language teaching professionals that language learning as such should be an integrated subject in the curriculum, including foreign languages, indigenous minority languages, immigrant languages and national languages: What is your opinion?
6. How do you conceive that an education system including teacher education can and should respond to the concept in question 5?
7. With a view to promoting the learning of other languages, do you feel it desirable/feasible to restrict the teaching of English in the education system in order to promote the learning of other languages?

Chairman of the round table:

Peter Medgyés, Director, Centre for English Teacher Training, Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, former Under-Secretary of State for Education, Hungary.

Contributors at national level:

- – *Pavel Cink*, Director General, Ministry of Education, Czech Republic

– *Anton Dobart*, Director General, Federal Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs, Austria

– *Maria Emilia Galvão*, Deputy Director, Ministry of Education, Portugal

– *Svein Harsten*, Assistant Director General, Ministry of Education, Research and Church Affairs, Norway

– *Liliana Preoteasa*, General Director, Ministry of Education, Romania

Contributors at international level:

- – *Sylvia Vlaeminck*, European Commission, DG XXII

– *Joseph Poth*, Languages Division, Unesco

Peter Medgyès

Now that we have taken stock of the obstacles to linguistic diversity, the next step is to consider the solutions envisaged by national governments and international organisations. Six of the participants at this round table are policy makers in national governments and two in international organisations: the European Union and Unesco. The Council of Europe is not represented at this round table since its views are expressed by the conference as a whole and its representatives will take the floor at the final session.

Each of you will be asked to answer seven questions which have been prepared by the discussion groups, giving where possible your personal opinion and also your response to the other participants' proposals.

Question No. 1: What is your concept of linguistic diversity? How would you judge whether your education system is achieving linguistic diversity?

Maria Emilia Galvão

Ten years ago the Council of Europe considered Portugal to be one of the few monolingual and monocultural countries in Europe. This is no longer the case. For the past ten years or so, nationals of Portugal's former African colonies have been emmigrating to Portugal. These immigrants have their own languages and the Portuguese education system is endeavouring to meet these new needs. The range of languages being taught in Portugal is increasing: in addition to the three foreign languages previously taught – French, English and German – it is now also possible to learn Spanish. I would also like to point out that, owing to its use in Africa and South America, Portuguese is the third most widely spoken international language. European linguistic strategies should take account of this.

Svein Harsten

Norway can also be described as linguistically homogeneous, with the exception of a small Sámi (Lapp) community, whose differences have not always been recognised. However, a large number of immigrants have been admitted to Norway over the past ten years or so and we now have to meet the challenge of integrating them in Norwegian society. English has a special status in Norway as it is the only language taught in addition to Norwegian. It is taught to all children for the first ten years of compulsory education and continues to be a compulsory subject for the first three or four years of secondary school, which is attended by 95% of all children.

Liliana Preoteasa

There are two aspects to diversity in Romanian education: the teaching of foreign languages and the teaching of minority languages; immigration is not yet an issue. It is compulsory to take two foreign languages at school: students can choose from French, English, German and Russian. Italian, Spanish and Portuguese have now also been introduced. The new curriculum allows students to choose a third language. A reform of the education system in 1998 introduced a great deal of flexibility, leaving the choice of languages to the school, parents and students.

Romania has several minorities, the largest of which are the Hungarian, German and Roma minorities, who are taught in their mother tongue. Teaching for the other minorities is divided equally between their mother tongue and Romanian.

Anton Dobart

In Austria there is a broad consensus that linguistic diversity is a desirable goal. However, this is not always translated into action and language is still a source of exclusion. Austria must now

endeavour to leave its traditions behind and encourage multiculturalism. Schools are beginning to offer more languages by including the main European languages in their curricula. Where possible, the languages of neighbouring countries are also taught.

Pavel Cink

In the early 1990s the situation was clear: after a long period during which young Czechs could not choose which languages they wished to learn, it was time to introduce linguistic diversity in schools. The aim was not only to meet the expectations and demands of parents and students but also to take account of all the work done at the Council of Europe over the past decades.

Students in compulsory education can now choose from five, if not six, languages. Depending on their policies and resources, schools may also decide to offer other languages.

The Czech Ministry of Education has supported the concept of linguistic diversity through various institutional and administrative measures. For example, the importance of languages is underlined by the equal weight given to each language in exams. Measures have also been taken to make the teaching of languages more effective, for example by issuing recommendations that classes consisting of more than a certain number of students should be split up into smaller groups.

Maria Emilia Galvão

I have a rather provocative question for my friend Anton Dobart. I noted in Michel Candelier's study that the countries with the highest economic growth generally take far less account of linguistic diversity than others. Austria's linguistic diversity policy seems to involve primarily English and French. Is there no possibility of introducing a wider range of languages, so as to take account of current immigration trends?

Anton Dobart

As far as the range of languages offered is concerned, French and English are offered at primary level and a third, if not fourth, language is introduced in secondary schools. These are not, as a rule, the languages of neighbouring countries but we are endeavouring to arouse interest in these languages in various ways.

In the bilingual schools that exist in some towns, there is a high demand for English but when we offer Czech in the border regions the demand is much lower. A great deal still needs to be done to motivate people to learn other languages.

The teaching of immigrant languages is unsatisfactory. Some voluntary support is offered but the problem is also one of social acceptance.

Svein Harsten

In Norway the question of taking account of linguistic diversity comes up against the need to have an education system in which there are no regional disparities and to ensure that there is a good level of education in small towns and rural areas.

As far as immigrant languages are concerned, we believe that immigrants need to be able to read and write in their mother tongue in order to be able to learn Norwegian properly.

Question No. 2: What possibilities do you see within your domain of responsibility to recognise existing multilingualism in the population and to validate it throughout the education system?

Pavel Cink

I must unfortunately acknowledge that, as a result of the history, my country, once a melting pot of cultures, has become monolingual. It reached the height of monolinguism on 1 January 1993 when Czechoslovakia split up into two separate countries – until then we were naturally bilingual, Czech and Slovak.

The members of the only remaining minority in the Czech Republic speak Polish. They have their own school system and Czech children may also attend these schools if their parents so wish.

I believe that, as in Romania, we will in coming years be confronted with the problem of immigrant languages. Until 1996-97 the Czech Republic was a country of temporary residence for immigrants heading towards Germany or Austria, but that is no longer the case and the number of illegal immigrants in the Czech Republic is estimated at 200 000, which is certain to cause problems at some point or other. We obviously intend to consult the other European countries faced with this problem and I would be extremely interested to hear further comments on this situation.

Maria Emilia Galvão

Immigration is a recent phenomenon in Portugal and concerns far smaller numbers than in Austria, France and the United Kingdom. For the time being, children who speak Creole languages are mainly catered for by schools in the suburbs of large towns. In Portugal multilingualism mainly takes the form of the learning of foreign languages and Creole languages.

Peter Medgyès

Immigration flows to central and eastern Europe are also increasing. In Hungary, the Kosovo crisis resulted in a large influx of refugees. We also have a large Chinese community of some 20 to 25 000 people who have chosen to settle here permanently. Their children now attend Hungarian schools.

Liliana Preoteasa

In reply to this question, I would like to give you some examples. In Romania the Ministry of Education takes all decisions concerning subject content and school curricula. Recently we tried to cut down our costs by offering only one compulsory language instead of two. However, there was such strong opposition from teachers, parents and students that we had to reintroduce two languages.

The second example is the decision to offer all students the opportunity to learn minority languages and to introduce chapters concerning the history of minorities in textbooks on Romanian history.

Finally, to illustrate what has been said at this conference about the pleasure of learning, compared to the situation prior to 1989 when both the form and the content of lessons were dull, we are now striving to have language textbooks which are pleasant to read and look at and which make students want to read them.

Anton Dobart

In Austria we live in a multicultural society but there is no general consensus that this is something to be welcomed. On the contrary, it is seen rather as a threat or a danger. Much still has to be done, not only in schools but also in society.

We also have indigenous minorities which have their own education laws and which, in some regions, are taught in their own language. However, this has given rise to heated political debates. Whereas, in the past, any language other than German was vehemently rejected, people are now beginning to consider a second language as an asset which should be cultivated. Austria must set aside its monolingual traditions.

The immigrant issue is equally important. Since the 1960s most immigrants to Austria have been Turks and Yugoslavs. It seemed natural to encourage them to learn German. In view of the geographical proximity of their country, they were also offered the opportunity to be taught in their mother tongue if they so wished.

As a result of the situation in Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina, some 10 000 children of school age arrived in Austria in the space of a few weeks. It was necessary to prepare them to return to their home country and the government had to make available a large number of teachers.

Everyone knows the situation in Vienna where German is not the mother tongue of the 38% of school students who are second and third generation immigrants. The efforts made in primary schools to teach children to read and write in two languages have been very successful in some areas but have not, as I have already said, been unanimously accepted.

However, a country is either multicultural or it is not. Many Austrians have a particular traditional view of society which influences their acceptance or support for any measures that might be introduced in schools.

Question No. 3: Do you see your role as policy makers in terms of following demands or rather influencing diverse demands for language teaching?

Sylvia Vlaeminck

The theme of the conference is central to the work and concerns of the European Union (EU). Each international organisation has its own specific project. The EU project, which is the joint effort of a number of countries and peoples, is ambitious and unique. It is based on a principle which was drawn up and agreed to by everyone, that is, the EU will be multilingual. It is already multilingual by definition and the question of whether it should be is superfluous. Its multilingualism can be seen in the eleven official languages which are already used in all contacts between the EU and its citizens and will continue to be used in all decisions affecting individual citizens. EU activities also take account of immigrant, regional and minority languages.

As many of you know Article 149 of the Treaty of Amsterdam, which replaced Article 126 of the Treaty of Maastricht, stipulates that EU member states are responsible for the content and organisation of their education systems and that the EU can contribute to the development of quality education by encouraging co-operation between member states. It also stresses the need to respect linguistic and cultural diversity.

What does that mean in terms of language teaching policies? The aim of the EU, as set out in the White Paper published in 1995, is that each citizen should have a command of three Community languages. This objective corresponds to a desire for linguistic diversity and diversity in language training. We at the Commission are convinced that languages, like many other subjects, should be part of lifelong learning and that the basics should be acquired at school, and this is how we came to decide that it should be possible to learn three Community languages.

I think this answers your question. Yes, policy makers can influence public demand. I say "influence", which is quite different from "imposing" certain things. If we decide on a multilingual Europe, then it is for those who contribute towards building it – for example, the Commission – to take responsibility for attaining the objective of multilingualism. Our influence on public demand must primarily take the form of activities which arouse interest in languages and activities which raise everyone's awareness of the world in which they live and in which each person must be able to make informed decisions.

Svein Harsten

This question is one of the most interesting of all the questions asked, but it is also difficult to answer. If I take the example of a small country like ours (Norway), we do not have enough teachers to provide the teaching required in such an ideal situation. We have to meet demands, that is, to obey the laws of the marketplace. If parents tell us that such and such a language is necessary to find a job, that language becomes our priority. Moreover, as I have already said, in Norway we have small schools all over the country and linguistic diversity consists, first and foremost, of allowing everyone to study a foreign language. In our case that language is English and in saying so I feel I am being somewhat provocative.

Peter Medgyès

I quite agree. It is very important to consider demands, since they come from different sources: students, particularly adult students, and parents. Then there is also the question of the number of teachers available. This was what happened ten years ago in central and eastern Europe when there were many teachers of Russian and very few teachers of other languages. As a result teachers had to be retrained to teach other languages.

The diplomatic corps may also wish to have a say in the matter as recently happened in Hungary when several ambassadors complained that very few foreign languages were taught other than English and German.

Joseph Poth

Unesco, which has 186 member states from all of the world's continents, is an intergovernmental organisation responsible for devising and executing projects rather than for decision-making and funding. Its linguistic diversity and education policies are mapped out every two years by the General Conference which issues instructions to the Unesco secretariat in the spheres of education, science, culture and communication. Its policy guidelines are laid down by the delegates of member states in accordance with their government's instructions and implemented by the Unesco headquarters in Paris.

These guidelines include those concerning language policy. At the last General Conference in 1997, the member states gave Unesco a mandate to promote multilingual education in all countries and to uphold linguistic diversity. In response to this, the Director General set up a Language Section which I have the honour of running and which deals with all matters concerning linguistic diversity and multilingual education that come within the institution's

remit. However, as I have already said, Unesco is not a decision maker but carries out the instructions of the 186 member states which contribute to its budget.

Pavel Cink

I believe that the two possibilities expressed in this question do not really contradict one another, as they are not mutually exclusive. The pertinent question in relation to this subject concerns the measures to be taken, that is, your fourth question, and I will answer that question now. There are sociological and political limits to the influence that can be exerted on public opinion, as J. Trim explained in his recent study on this subject. For example, a country will attach greater importance to the learning and teaching of languages if it is itself multilingual, if it has minority groups living in its territory, or if its language is spoken by only a small number of persons, and, I would add, if it is a country in which a knowledge of foreign languages is of particular value because of historical and cultural developments and because that knowledge will facilitate international communication and access to a proper education.

Maria Emilia Galvão

I would like to illustrate my reply to this question by taking as an example what happened in Portugal in 1986, as it shows how public demand can change a decision that was wrong from the start.

In 1986 the Portuguese Minister of Education decided to reform the education system. The main reason for this reform was the very high failure rate in Portuguese, mathematics, French and English. It was therefore decided that the best way to remedy this situation was to remove a foreign language from the curriculum. This reform came up against very strong public opposition, particularly on the part of parents and students who took various steps to ensure that two foreign languages continued to be taught. The language issue has become so important that, as a result of the recent reform, students who complete their studies in 2004 will have studied not two but three foreign languages.

That is my reply to my Norwegian colleague who was deliberately provocative in highlighting the need to obey the laws of the marketplace. I, personally, do not believe that education systems should conform totally to economic demands but rather that they should offer the best possible education. This was what the users of the education system in Portugal sought and obtained by insisting on the need for linguistic diversity.

Anton Dobart

I would like to make three comments. Firstly, account must be taken of parents' and students' expectations and of schools' freedom of action. Secondly, language learning is not confined to school but is a lifelong process. Finally, we know that young people's motivation often depends on their social background and that the media can therefore make a major contribution.

Question No. 4: If you think it is your role to influence demand, what measures should be taken to stimulate interest in learning a variety of languages, especially with reference to the European Year of Languages in 2001?

Sylvia Vlaeminck

With regard to the European Year of Languages, I would like to reiterate the importance of arousing interest in languages. This event should make a major contribution and I hope that it will take the form of a partnership between the Council of Europe and the EU.

Joseph Poth

Of all the measures taken by Unesco to arouse interest in linguistic diversity, I wish to draw your special attention to the World Linguistic Atlas project which will have three aims:

– to describe all of the world's languages, including the least-used languages, local languages and vulnerable languages;
– to explain certain phenomena, for example, why some languages are growing in importance while others are in decline, and the lessons which can be drawn from such phenomena;
– to encourage people to learn languages. What measures can be taken to promote a declining language or to promote a language in education, public life and social life, etc.?

Unesco also sponsored a conference on linguistic rights in Barcelona which brought together 118 NGOs working in the field of languages. The results did not come up to our expectations and we are working with the organisers of the conference on a charter of linguistic rights to be presented at the Unesco Conference and to the United Nations.

I would also like to add that the European Year of Languages also interests us very much and that our offices and our Unesco University Chairs/Networks will be happy to provide assistance.

Liliana Preoteasa

It is possible to influence demand at national level by offering a sufficiently wide range of languages to allow everyone to choose freely. However, if this is to be done there must be enough qualified teachers. This also entails financial constraints, which means that schools in small towns will not be able to offer as wide a range of languages as large towns. It is important that when there is only the possibility of studying one foreign language that a specific language should not be imposed. Of course it is always better to have two foreign languages in addition to the mother tongue, even if that costs more. The ministry can also influence decisions. In Romania we decided to introduce Spanish when there was no demand for the language. We did this after teachers had received the requisite training. Now the school in Bucharest where Spanish is taught is very popular. We also intend to open a school offering Bulgarian, which will open up new horizons for students whose mother tongue is Bulgarian.

The importance of lifelong learning should not be forgotten either. In my country there is a generation gap between young people who usually know two languages and people over forty or fifty who would like to learn a language but cannot because our system of adult education does not function efficiently enough.

Finally, we need to change the way in which languages are taught by giving priority to communication and also by encouraging people to develop even partial language skills.

Maria Emilia Galvão

The most significant contribution that the European Year of Languages can make is in the field of lifelong learning. Although education systems will not be significantly changed by this event, it should be possible to make a very large number of people aware of the advantages of learning languages, where such opportunities exist.

Pavel Cink

This is a difficult question. Public demand is mainly for English. However, the public will accept other languages if interesting approaches are proposed and if they are offered the possibility of studying those languages in addition to English. Yesterday we heard young Austrians complain

that Czech was not taught widely enough in Austria. This is the result of a fifty-year rift between our countries. It will take another twenty or thirty years to redress the situation.

There is a co-operation project between the north-west of the Czech Republic and the neighbouring *Land* of Saxony, which intend to set up a joint school in which students from Saxony will be taught in Czech. This is a good example of a European project.

With regard to the European Year of Languages, we should think about ways of developing the teaching of minority languages, for example by promoting multilingual comprehension and bilingual education. We need to study the ways in which we can open up our education systems to these languages.

Svein Harsten

In Norway considerable importance is attached to lifelong learning because a large proportion of the adult population would like to learn or improve their knowledge of other languages. This is made easier by the fact that further education is integrated with secondary education.

Joseph Sheils

I would like to inform all of you that the Council of Europe secretariat has asked all member states to support the European Year of Languages. It has also asked the delegations to the Education Committee to appoint national co-ordinators. A meeting of co-ordinators will shortly be convened. A European steering group is currently being set up on which we shall be pleased to welcome the European Commission and Unesco.

Questions No. 5 and 6 were taken together:

Question No. 5: There is a widely held view among language teaching professionals that language learning as such should be an integrated subject in the curriculum, including foreign languages, indigenous minority languages, immigrant languages and national languages: What is your opinion?

Question No. 6: How do you conceive that an education system including teacher education can and should respond to the concept in question 5?

Maria Emilia Galvão

This concept does not only concern language teaching professionals. If language teaching is to be an integrated subject, we first need to ask ourselves how learners learn and subsequently how their mode of learning can be taken into account in school reforms.

Anton Dobart

In Austrian vocational schools subjects are taught in the relevant foreign language. There are also plans to adopt this method in general secondary education, but admittedly mainly in respect of English – there are currently thirty mathematics and science teachers on training courses in New York secondary schools who, on their return, will be able to teach their subject in English.

Liliana Preateasa

In Romania there are two ways in which language learning is integrated into the curriculum. In schools in which minority languages are used, there is no problem in teaching in the students' mother tongue because it is possible to recruit teachers from these minorities. However, it is

more difficult to find a maths teacher who can teach in German, for example. Teachers who are either recruited from minority groups or elsewhere have to be specially trained.

Some schools also have bilingual classes. In these schools extra teaching is provided in the chosen foreign language and some subjects are taught in that language. This is compulsory in the case of the history, geography and civilisation of the countries where the language is spoken. Other subjects can also be taught in this way. I myself have taught maths in French in a Romanian/French bilingual class. The students found these lessons particularly hard. We had to find a compromise: that is, basic concepts and theorems were explained in French and demonstrated in Romanian.

Joseph Poth

The question of teaching the languages of national minorities, immigrant languages and national languages was raised by the Unesco Executive Council, but several of the larger European countries opposed this project, with the result that we dropped the idea of a draft resolution.

The question is no less difficult in countries outside Europe. Several countries which had introduced the teaching of national languages in addition to the official language, that is, English, French or Portuguese, have had to shelve their projects.

Q.uestion No. 7: With a view to promoting the learning of other languages, do you feel it desirable/feasible to restrict the teaching of English in the education system in order to promote the learning of other languages?

Peter Medgyès

There is unfortunately not enough time left to answer this question, which is regrettable as it is central to this conference.

SESSION III − LANGUAGE EDUCATION POLICIES AND DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP IN EUROPE

Presentation of the results of the groups of Sessions I, II and III

Synthesis by Jean-Claude Beacco, University of Le Mans, France

The participants at the conference not only received information and ideas about language policies in Europe, they also contributed to the general debate in exchanges that took place in workshops. There were five of these discussion groups (as they were called officially) which met during three working sessions, each of which had a specific purpose:

– making contact and taking stock of the situation and of ideas on the issues of linguistic diversity;

– questions relating to the management of linguistic pluralism: identification of obstacles and of proposed solutions or mechanisms already in operation, in connection with the round table on "Policy decision-making at national and international levels";

– summary reports presented at the final plenary session setting out the participants' comments on the Council's of Europe's project for the preparation of a document to be used as a guide for language education policies in the context of broader discussion on the role of linguistic diversity at national and individual level in the establishment and exercise of democratic citizenship in Europe.

This is not an exhaustive report that can give a true account of the wealth of exchanges. Indeed, details of the latter were only passed on in the form of oral reports that were mostly summaries themselves, of which this report, in turn, is a new version. At this level of abstraction, there can be no guarantee that all participants will find their contributions reflected here, especially since the place given to some of them at the conference and, hence, the actual time they had for explaining what each national situation can offer of relevance to discussion of this kind seemed inadequate. However, an attempt will at least be made to reflect the spirit of the exchanges within the groups.

The discussions took place around central questions concerning the nature of language policies and the ways they currently manage – and should manage – linguistic diversity, for instance:

– the socio-linguistic nature of language diversity and the political and legal approach to it, in particular, the rights and obligations of the majority in relation to minorities and *vice versa*, individual rights and group rights, and economic efficiency and social justice;

– he way education systems cope with this diversity: simply offering several languages in school curricula will not, for instance, automatically generate multilingualism on a widespread basis;

– the complexity of the processes and the wide range of people and bodies involved in defining and implementing language policies at the general level (action of political parties, cultural associations, etc.), at institutional level (municipalities, regions, etc.) and within the education system (political and technical/administrative decision makers, school heads, parents, students and students, etc.). This makes it necessary to establish networks and co-operation processes and, indeed, set up cross-disciplinary bodies (in ministries and government departments, etc.) responsible for regulating language policies as such (for instance, regional language councils);

– the importance of the social forms of representation of the language diversity within given national territories (Challenge to national unity? Cultural and economic asset?) and the role played by the media (the presence of the various languages in the mass media, the image of the languages and their speakers, enhancing or devaluing the status of regional languages or migrants' languages, for instance);

– the strategies to be devised, in particular to counter certain demands within society that give precedence to the labour market value of languages (especially American-English), sometimes to the detriment of their cultural, communicational or educational value; the place of American-English in curricula (Should it be made compulsory? Should it be restricted to the lower grades so that other languages can be taught afterwards? Should a non-interventionist policy be preferred?), this being one of the key questions for all language policies in Europe;

– the way foreign, regional and migrant community languages are dealt with in school curricula, the link between the teaching of children's mother tongues and other languages, the way the teaching of the various languages is organised over time (compulsory schooling, upper secondary, university, vocational further training, individual training, lifelong learning) so as to reduce the competition between languages, which, in the present case, also derives from the choices that they give rise to at particular junctures in individuals' lives, although this does not make them incompatible over time. What cultural roles do mother tongues, second languages and foreign languages play in the formation of individuals and citizens depending on whether they are national or regional languages or languages of migrant or foreign communities?

– research on means of building on the skills of students whose mother tongue is not a national language, looking at the question of the teaching of migrants' languages inside and outside the original group of speakers, and assessing the economic value of linguistic diversity or the cost of establishing it;

– methods of raising awareness of and teaching democratic respect for linguistic diversity without underestimating linguistic and cultural changes, but with a view to preserving an extremely valuable cultural heritage that can prove very fragile. This means taking action aimed at the public at large, political decision makers at all levels, teachers from all subjects and, above all, language teachers (as part of their basic training, in particular) and adapting teaching programmes (at least initial ones) accordingly.

Of course, it is impossible to quote all of the examples that were given to illustrate specific points in these discussions. The result is that this summary is excessively abstract.

Although many proposals were made at the close of the discussions, they did not all enjoy unanimous support. They focused on the Council of Europe's future work in the field of languages, which should be carried out in close co-ordination with the national delegations. The participants proposed that:

– the maximum possible account should be taken of the potential of the European Language Portfolio and of the prospects that the European Year of Languages (2001) is bound to open up in terms of raising awareness of the challenges of preserving linguistic diversity and diversifying language skills at individual and collective level;

– the new ideas that emerged from the conference should be resituated in relation to the Common European Framework of Reference, which is still at the level of didactics and teaching methods (concepts harmonised for the formal description of curricula) but links them with educational cultures and the institutional organisation of language teaching;

– a document should be produced to pool the information available on the diversification policies adopted or planned by member states, in relation to the European Education Information Network (EURYDICE);

– the document presented at the conference should be practical in nature, that is, it should enable decisions on language policies to be taken in full knowledge of the facts: decision makers are poorly informed about these issues and often act in a piecemeal fashion and according to traditional criteria rather than on the basis of the assessment of needs. Language teaching is not seen as a coherent whole (see, for example, the Italian concept of *competenza linguistica*).

It should be clear – and there was broad agreement on this point – that the function of such a document should not be to define types of language policies to be proposed or recommended. Like the Framework of Reference, and in parallel with it, the new discussion paper will be situated upstream of specific forms of implementation, which is fully in line with the methods of action adopted to date by the Modern Languages Section.

It was also proposed that:

– assessments should be made, in this connection, of the role that should be assigned to the possible teaching of a *lingua franca* and of specific (or partial) skills, the relationship between the number of languages of which people have command and their actual level of proficiency in them, the teaching of (genetically and/or culturally) related languages, the teaching of the languages of neighbouring countries (in border regions), so-called "bilingual teaching" (where certain school or university subjects are taught in a foreign language), early learning, the individualisation of language teaching, and school exchanges, etc.;

– the relationship between linguistic diversity and the concept of democratic citizenship (relationship between language and power) should be looked at in greater depth in the above document and elsewhere.

The discussions were enriched by the experience and expertise of the participants and of the specialists invited for the occasion, in an interactive process that was the aim of the conference. They revealed great differences regarding the relevance of particular issues in given situations, but it can be said that priority should be given to teacher training, the reform of language syllabuses, the production of new language textbooks and an increase in the number of languages offered by education systems. Nevertheless, no matter how technical these problems may be, none can be solved in the absence of a political perspective. The discussions showed that failing to take this dimension into account would mean abandoning the social aspects and thus running the risk of invalidating some excellent teaching solutions because they were not devised on the basis of comprehensive strategies.

B. Round table: Linguistic diversity and democratic citizenship − the role of civil society

Synthesis by Albert Raasch, University of Saarlands, Germany, chairman of the round table

Contributors:

Alain Mouchoux, European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE)

Gerhard Riemer, Union of Industrial and Employers' Confederations of Europe (UNICE)

Milana Saiani, European Parents' Association (EPA)

Terttu Valojärvi, World Federation of Modern Language Associations (FIPLV)

Introduction

Milana Saiani

Ms Saiani spoke on behalf of the European Parents' Association, which represents a total of more than 100 million parents in Europe. She said that students' parents were entirely in agreement with most of what was said during the Innsbruck Conference. They were extremely interested in co-operation with other associations or institutions. As evidence of this, Ms Saiani cited a project subsidised by the European Commission on the role of parents as partners in school education in which co-operation had been established between teachers and students.

Terttu Valojärvi

Ms Valojärvi teaches in a Helsinki upper secondary school and took part in the conference as a representative of the Finnish Association of Modern Language Teachers and the FIPLV (the World Federation of Modern Language Associations). She is also the Chair of the regional Nordic and Baltic Association of Language Teachers.

Gerhard Riemer

Mr Riemer thanked the organisers for inviting employers' and workers' representatives to the conference. He had been very impressed by the far-reaching discussions and lively debates on subjects such as interculturalism, democracy and languages, the Europe of citizens, etc.

The economy was currently undergoing a radical change brought about by transformations such as internationalisation and globalisation, which meant that it was the natural and ideal ally of all those who worked to promote foreign languages. It was the view of both the UNICE and the Austrian employers' association that "the economy needs language skills". The task of these organisations was to create favourable conditions for economic processes and activities to be optimised. The subjects discussed throughout the conference were also of key significance for the European economy. Decisions which affected the economy were often taken outside economic circles. The following were three examples of this:

– students at an Austrian university had publicly protested against the introduction of compulsory language classes into all university courses;

– obstacles were being created to prevent the introduction of a compulsory language into the training of apprentices;

– the organisations represented by Mr Riemer had explained what essential conditions had to be met in the context of "the economy and training".

Mr Riemer placed particular emphasis on the importance of intercultural skills which went well beyond the traditional notions of foreign language proficiency.

Alain Mouchoux

Mr Mouchoux represents the European Trade Union Committee for Education and, as such, was speaking on behalf of 8 million teachers. He stated his organisation's interest in fostering the growth of linguistic, cultural and professional skills. His organisation was also prepared to co-operate with parents' organisations and all other associations and institutions. In particular, he confirmed the organisation's commitment to lifelong learning as a principle of language learning.

Mr Mouchoux referred to a number of difficulties and obstacles which arose in this context:

– he agreed with the principle of three languages (one mother tongue and two foreign languages) and agreed also with the need to promote regional languages. But there was more: for example the languages of the inner cities should not be forgotten;

– the fight against racism and xenophobia was one of education's primary tasks and so it should also be a priority in language teaching.

Discussion

Albert Raasch put the following question to *Alain Mouchoux*: "What steps have you already taken to promote democratic citizenship in language teaching?"

Alain Mouchoux

We insist that the essential conditions should be created for successful language teaching and learning. This includes for example ideas on appropriate initial and in-service teacher training. We support teacher mobility and we are in favour of more training courses abroad for language teachers. We are not convinced, on the other hand, that the products which are found in ever-increasing numbers on the market, offering intensive training by means of CD-Roms, can replace training courses and thorough basic training.

Question from *Albert Raasch*: "The Maastricht Treaty has not yet made it possible for a 'native speaker' to enter the teaching staff of a German school officially and on the same terms as German nationals. Contacts with target-language countries continue to be reliant on assistants and therefore on students. Is there some resistance from the unions (as rumour has it) against this "dilution" of the teaching staff of schools?"

Alain Mouchoux replied that:

– foreign teachers had already been incorporated into the teaching staff provided they had the necessary qualifications;

– the unions were not totally opposed to this idea, but it would not be possible to replace every single language teacher by a native speaker.

Question from *Albert Raasch* to *Gerhard Riemer*: "Promoting the economy is certainly not the only task of language teaching. Would you agree with this observation?"

Gerhard Riemer

We believe that vocational training involves much more than exclusively economic aspects and amounts to much more than preparing young people to do a job. Huge changes are taking place in the world of work requiring extremely rich and varied forms of training. And yet training should not be carried out exclusively with the workplace in mind.

Gerhard Riemer said he was willing to co-operate in any activities relating to the planning and organisation of language teaching.

Question from *Albert Raasch* to *Terttu Valojärvi*: "How does the FIPLV view the problems of the internationalisation of school teaching staff? And how does your association help to promote democratic citizenship in the language classroom?

Terttu Valojärvi

We should be aware of the danger that teachers will lose their jobs in their own country. In the long term we are not in favour of this internationalisation. For example, it may seem acceptable initially to invite German teachers to teach German in Finland. However there are other solutions: pupil exchanges, teacher exchanges. It is in this area that the FIPLV is currently most active.

Question from *Mr Raasch* to *Ms Valojärvi*: "Do modern language teachers have sufficient training to apply the principle of democratic citizenship in the classroom, particularly with regard to the three aspects of the conference: modern languages, minority languages and immigrant languages?"

Terttu Valojärvi explained that the FIPLV was working to promote multilingualism and minority languages. For example it was co-operating in the Unesco LINGUAPAX project. The FIPLV helped to prepare teachers to work internationally.

Question from *Albert Raasch* to *Milana Saiani:* "How does your association view democratic citizenship? How do you regard the possibility of extending your co-operation to other institutions and partners?"

Milana Saiani

"The European Parents Association explicitly offers the co-operation of parents as partners in projects. Democratic citizenship is already inherent in its programme and structure."

Question from *Albert Raasch* to *Alain Mouchoux*: "Would you be willing to co-operate as a partner in activities to promote democratic citizenship?"

Alain Mouchoux

Yes, because language learning along the lines endorsed by this conference is vital. Our commitment to the cultural diversity of Europe is the trade unions' contribution towards bringing about democratic citizenship.

Albert Raasch thanked the participants and noted with considerable satisfaction that everyone had said that they were willing to build on existing forms of co-operation. This provided an excellent basis on which to continue the activities scheduled for the post-Innsbruck period.

CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

Alan Dobson, Office for Standards in Education, United Kingdom

As an English speaker, I would like to explain one thing before I start. I usually speak English at official meetings, for two reasons: the first is that French is only my third foreign language, and secondly, my French is sometimes rather strange and I do not wish to make life even more difficult for the interpreters! [1].

Next week I am working in another member state. The working language will not be English or French or German. I say this because I think it is important to register that Anglophones are no less committed to plurilingualism and multilingualism then speakers of other languages. And secondly I wish to make the point because I greatly admire those colleagues who have to operate in a session not in their first or second, but in some cases in their third or fourth foreign language. And I know how difficult that can be. If I may, I shall continue in English, although I do speak plenty of French outside the formal sessions as many of you know.

May I first of all explain my presence on the platform alongside Joseph Sheils and Claude Truchot. I am here for three reasons. First of all, as co-chairperson of the Modern Languages Project group, which covers a range of activities of which this conference is only one. I must stress that I am here as a co-chairman of that group. The other is my friend and colleague Dr Pavel Cink of the Czech Republic who at other activities during the year takes the chairman as I am doing on this occasion. Secondly, the Council of Europe operates on the basis that the member states collectively, and not the secretariat, decide on priorities. The secretariat rarely appears prominently in plenaries but its professional expertise is invaluable to us. I should like to take the opportunity at this point to thank yet again Joseph Sheils and his colleagues for coping with all the things we gave them to do in extremely difficult circumstances. The secretariat has to make sense of our deliberations both here and elsewhere. The end of this conference is where the secretariat fulfils its key role in trying to pull together the threads and advise us on the next steps. The third reason I am on the platform is a sad one. One of our colleagues Jean Claude Beacco had to return to France on Sunday morning suddenly, following a family bereavement. I am sure you will all share with us in the condolences we have already extended to Jean Claude. I am sure you will also understand that the loss of a key colleague from our deliberations at the last moment has meant considerable restructuring in the programme of work.

One of my roles as co-chairman of the project is to assist briefly Joseph Sheils and Claude Truchot in setting the context of our work. I should briefly like to say the following. I think it is good for all of us at times to remind ourselves of context, because all of us, and I include myself obviously in that, can lose sight of the full context in which we operate. Recommendation No. (98) 6 was a key starting point on the path towards this conference. The Education Committee of the Council for Cultural Development on which all member states are represented, advised on an outline for the work of the Project Group. This included some familiar things such as the Common European Framework of Reference and the European Language Portfolio, but also a number of other tasks, including a conference on language policies.

The information note for this conference, which you all received in advance (Document DECS/EDU/LANG (99) 5 rev.) began with a statement of the areas of language policy to be promoted, areas defined as priorities by the Education Committee: not by the language group, but by the Education Committee on which all member states are represented. Just to remind you briefly, that note included five points, some of which concerned ideals and principles such as developing mutual understanding and tolerance, promoting plurilingualism and promoting respect for linguistic diversity. The other two in that list referred to strategies and tools to facilitate more extended and diversified language learning and the organisation of international co-operation in order to develop principles and standards for language learning and teaching. In other words, those two provide the means of achieving those aims and ideals to which we all subscribe. It was in this context then that the conference was arranged with the two purposes indicated in (98) 6. First of all, to alert both policy deciders and experts together with a full range of issues to be considered, and secondly, to take the first step towards a policy document taking into account – I think this is important – both the Common European Framework of Reference and the European Language Portfolio. So that is why we are here. That is where we are coming from.

We have had three very rich days with multiple inputs and I am sure many of us will have a kaleidoscope of ideas in our heads. To help us settle these ideas I invite, on behalf of the Modern Languages Project Group, Joseph Sheils to point us towards the next steps in the development of a framework for language education policies. I know he will not have the time or the space to review the entire conference, but his perspective will be invaluable to us.

Joseph Sheils, Head of the Modern Languages Section, Council of Europe

Introduction

This conference marks our intention to be centrally involved in what might well be described as a paradigm shift in the area of language policy. We are, as Raymond Weber indicated on Monday, contributing to the creation of "*un espace public européen*" which goes beyond the nation state towards an "*espace de citoyenneté pour tous*" in Europe – an area for citizens' commitment and full participation where national and regional policies should play their particular part as they can profoundly affect our daily life.

For the Council of Europe, and the CDCC Modern Languages Project, it is a question of providing a forum for the necessary dialogue and exchanges, of creating links and networks between key deciders, of acting as a catalyst for new ideas and thus helping to develop the new paradigm. In this process – and it is a process – we must expect and accept some difficulties and learn from both successes and failures. As Oscar Wilde has said "experience is the name that we give to our mistakes".

In addition to providing a forum for debate and reflection, the Council of Europe develops instruments based on consensus. The Modern Languages Project, while not involved with legal instruments, has played and continues to play its part in elaborating instruments for policy development.

The third area of action for the Council of Europe is the operational one, moving from a forum for reflection to activities in medium-term programmes, and trying to adopt a prospective approach. We are, in this process in Innsbruck, attempting in a small way to anticipate developments and to shape them in a European perspective. Perhaps in this way we can try to influence the kind of Europe we want rather than simply reacting to developments.

In this final part of the conference we are looking at how we go forward. We wish to build on earlier and current initiatives to promote more diversified language learning. We also wish to take note of the direction provided by this conference in order to take further our reflection in a document on language policies in education.

1. Council of Europe language policy

It may be helpful briefly to situate this objective in relation to the Council of Europe's policy in this area. The conference has stressed the importance of utilising existing Council of Europe work. The Council of Europe has a primary concern with both language use and language teaching/learning. With regard to language use two major normative instruments are now in force: the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages which is concerned with the protection of these languages and the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities which has a number of paragraphs dealing with the language rights of national minority communities. Any Council of Europe document on language education policies will have to address issues related to regional and minority languages and the languages of immigrants, – but also the official languages of member states. These language problems and their associated policy areas should be included in our future work in educational language policy as a complement to the existing legal instruments of the Council of Europe.

The second key area is that of "foreign" or second language learning and teaching in formal education contexts and outside formal structures. It is here that the concept of lifelong learning is crucial.

The Council of Europe's activities, as developed through international co-operation in its CDCC Modern Languages Projects over several decades, have led to a European-wide consensus on key policy principles guiding teaching and learning. As one of the main functions of this conference is to examine the relationship between linguistic diversity and democratic citizenship (and we have only begun) I would like to recall a few of these principles which are particularly relevant to our future work:

Access: language learning must be for all.

Competence in the language, or languages, of an individual's political system is not a privilege but a right and a necessity in our increasingly interactive continent for all citizens regardless of social status or grouping. Language teaching and learning thus assumes a new significance in view of the uneven and socially disruptive effect of globalisation on social integration, and the danger of increased marginalisation of those without the linguistic skills needed to face the challenges created by socio-economic processes in the late twentieth century. Access to informal as well as formal communication networks is the right of everyone. This requires a particular effort as treating equally does not necessarily lead to equality. The complex relationship between language policy and social cohesion needs to be at the centre of our future work.

The aim of language learning/teaching

Obviously the development of plurilingualism and pluriculturalism among Europeans. Full participatory democratic citizenship in Europe requires citizens to be able to understand and bring different languages and cultures into relation with their own, whether within or beyond national borders. "Citizens need the ability to mediate between and relate to a number of social groups and their cultures" (Document DECS/EDU/LANG (99) 6). Diversified language learning builds up the individual citizen's cultural capital – which is not to be understood solely in terms of economic benefits, but can and should have social and cultural dimensions. Going beyond the cultural to the intercultural, the goal is not to develop native-like proficiency, but intercultural speakers, citizens able to mediate between cultures within national, regional and European identities. Of course we do not wish to be Eurocentric in these efforts, so our reflection should extend to the value of non-European languages – not only those of immigrants but also others in parts of the world, Asia, Africa, India, with which the people of Europe seek not only economic but also cultural and social interaction.

Our future reflection on language policy in education thus needs to include a coherent approach to curriculum planning, integrating not only foreign and regional and minority languages, but also majority mother tongues, and all other language varieties in a cross-curricular perspective. We need language education policies which take account of language learning biographies just as the European Language Portfolio is intended to recognise all language learning experience for the individual.

In our future work we hope to promote responsible learner independence and more diversified language learning through the development of a European Language Portfolio – an instrument to record and give value to lifelong language learning. Such a document will enable learners not only to record their qualifications in an internationally transparent and portable manner, but also to record a wider range of language and intercultural experiences and achievements than formal certificates allow, including languages acquired outside formal learning contexts. The European

Language Portfolio can greatly enhance the recognition of regional languages, the languages of immigrants – in fact all language achievements have status in a European Language Portfolio.

The European Language Portfolio has both a recording and pedagogic function. The pedagogic function serves to motivate learners and to assist them in becoming more independent in improving and diversifying their language competencies throughout life. When the present pilot scheme concludes it is our hope that the European Language Portfolio can gradually be widely diffused among citizens from 2001 onwards. It will be a valuable instrument for involving civil society directly in educational language policy development.

Language learning and teaching should promote the development of socially responsible citizenship

Learners and teachers can be empowered to take and carry through co-operatively decisions on learning and teaching in order to democratise language learning and teaching. In this way democratic classroom processes can help in developing the independence of thought and action needed for participatory and socially responsible citizenship.

Furthermore, as I said earlier, plurilingual and pluricultural competence is crucial for participation in multilingual networks and this includes the capacity to live and work together with others in democratic processes, both at national and international levels.

Language learning is for life

As stressed at this conference, language learning throughout one's life must be seen not as an option but as a necessity, and therefore a right. Needs, while clearer, are also more diverse in adult language learning. Instruments for sustaining motivation and for quality assurance, particularly with regard to certification, are necessary.

2. The link between previous activities and new proposals

The Common European Framework of Reference: an instrument for describing policy

Continuing on the theme of building on existing work, most of you are now familiar with the Framework which aims to facilitate communication and co-operation among all the partners concerned, in reflecting upon and describing their own policy decisions concerning objectives, methods and forms of assessment. It is already a planning instrument which can facilitate greater diversification in the curriculum. It offers a basis for developing further and for extending those policy issues described in summary form in the Framework and in the specialised User Guides. I am thinking in particular, but not only, of chapter 7 which deals with curricular scenarios for diversification and the Guide for policy deciders. In the next stage we can add a new dimension by situating policy goals within the context of contemporary societal processes and by addressing the various tensions and constraints related to diversification which have been to the forefront of our discussions at this conference.

Towards a stronger focus on analysis

It is however necessary to take reflection on policy development forward in an analytical approach which, wherever possible, is founded on objective analysis of situations – what is actually happening and why – rather than on mere opinion or ideology. In order to successfully link language policy goals with contemporary societal processes we require objectives and criteria which in the first instance provide a basis for stating problems. However, we need to go beyond a mere description of these obstacles/constraints to an analysis of why they are

occurring. Only then is it possible to specify policy options and the degree of intervention which may be considered necessary. Decision-making can then be related back to the goals which guide policy.

It is of course important that the CDCC Modern Languages Projects in Strasbourg continue with the elaboration and maintenance of policy instruments to promote and support linguistic diversification. However, in view of the challenges posed by the transformation of Europe at the present time, and as the thrust of the discussions at this conference seem to confirm, it is increasingly clear that this valuable pragmatic "instrumental" dimension should be complemented by a stronger "analytic" component in the CDCC's language policy activities. In other words we must go beyond what might be seen as the more technical aspects of policy formulation, vitally important though these are.

This is necessary in view of the new agenda and new priorities for language policy which are beginning to emerge. In the next stage, as this conference has underlined, we need to reassess the goals and context in which language policy is being appraised in view of the profound changes in socio-economic processes and in the socio-political structure of Europe. The analysis in our pre-conference documents, and the deliberations at this conference – which will shortly be reviewed by Claude Truchot – moves the policy debate into the realm of societal processes.

This introduces new parameters and presents new challenges for language education policy. Indeed, language policy has to be placed at the centre of our response to the increasing fragmentation of our societies.

A dynamic approach is required which uses information of different kinds as a basis for action in policy formulation. Some of this information is currently available and more needs to be gathered, as shown by the study undertaken for this conference by Candelier and his colleagues. This revealing survey, although of a preliminary nature and hampered by certain constraints, offers valuable pointers for the next stage and provides a basis for developing and refining our analytical tools in the next phase of our work.

We acknowledge of course the valuable role that is played by the European Commission both in promoting linguistic diversity and in gathering essential information about what is happening concerning linguistic diversification in many countries, and the contribution of Unesco and the OSCE with regard to language policy in many sensitive situations. Clearly international organisations have a crucial role to play in promoting informed debate on policy issues and in bringing national authorities together to seek common solutions to those challenges which they can best confront together.

The Council of Europe, in fulfilling its role as a catalyst and forum for reflection and analysis, will, in the proposed policy document, address the complex and often interrelated issues which influence the goals of language policy in European societies today.

3. Results from this conference

We will reflect carefully on the outcomes of this conference and will review our preliminary work in the light of these discussions.

I would now like to review what we have learned from the conference.

The aim: towards a language education policy framework

First let me remind you of what was said in the document DECS/EDU/LANG (99) 6 by Byram and O'Riagain about the purpose of a document on language policies: "A language education policy framework instrument will integrate the common language of the Common European Framework and the European Language Portfolio into a broader document dealing with the socio-economic and political factors which policy deciders have to take into consideration. It will provide a general template for the development of specific language education policies taking account of local and regional conditions and constraints. Policy deciders will be able to use the instrument as a means of checking the issues which should be take into consideration, the possible responses to them, whether at local, regional of European level.

The instrument will serve as a third means of co-operation and a common language to enable policy deciders to co-ordinate their decision-making at local or national level to take into account the European and global context, and the intention of the Council of Europe and its member states to create and maintain a Europe of free and participatory democracies.

Therefore the nature of the document, like the Common European Framework, is to help decision makers at different levels (and the conference has stressed the wide range of partners – everyone is a decision maker at some level) to:

– reflect upon choices, decisions, options;

– help them analyse decisions and their likely implication;

– to relate goals and problems;
– to develop strategies for action.

It is non-prescriptive and will not impose policies. For example, one factor in decision-making is the power of market forces, often but not always connected with the position of English. The document would help to analyse the decision between this set of factors and other factors such as cultural, political, the need to learn the languages of one's neighbours, the need for access to other cultures. For such a case the document would not suggest or impose a policy but would help to clarify the issues and the implications of different options which might be followed.

Another example would be how to respond to the dominance of English. The document would not indicate yes or no, but different ways of integrating English into an individual's language repertoire. It would offer options for particular types of situation based on an analysis of the factors involved.

In summary, it will include principles, methods of analysis, and various options related to their implications for implementation. It is for users to select those elements in the document which are directly relevant to their needs and at the level of detail which they require.

Issues for further reflection

What have we learned from the conference about issues which require further reflection?

They include for example:

– the need to analyse the decision-making process in order to see who the key actors really are (it may not always be the highest level decision-makers who actually influence the final decision) and to see how others are incorporated in the process;

– the importance of consultation with a wide range of partners – not only with the traditional policy deciders; this could take various forms depending on national contexts but suggestions included language committees or informal advisory bodies with wide representatives;

– the importance of focusing upon the individual citizen and learner and his or her language learning biography, and the repertoire they develop over their life span;

– the significance of representations and images of specific languages and the implication for policy decisions;

– the value of recognising that learning environments are not only to be found in the formal education system but also in out-of-school institutional contexts and in informal self-directed learning – which means that policy making cannot exclusively be focused on national education systems. Other areas have tended to be neglected in spite of their vital importance for lifelong learning;

– the need to take into consideration the tensions between individual and collective rights in the offer of languages;

– the significance of pursuing in more depth the question of the relationship between foreign language learning and democratic citizenship (which we had difficulty with in the first part of this conference); we need to develop stronger links between work on education for democratic citizenship and that on language policy development;

– the value of collecting examples of good practice in decision-making;

the need to conduct case studies on languages in their socio-political context, in particular on a regional basis (rather than just a national basis).

Working methods

How might we proceed on elaborating a document on language policies?

We propose to draw on expertise in working groups and to develop consultation with policy deciders, our privileged interlocutors being ministries of Education. We hope that national authorities will establish a mechanism and representatives to feed into this process. Consultation could also be facilitated by a discussion group on our website with access restricted to national co-ordinators (European Year of Languages) and national correspondents of the Modern Languages Project. The planned policy document in the first instance will have to be prepared in draft form with whatever consultation the time and material constraints will permit. A basic document should be ready in the course of 2001, the European Year of Languages and presented to the major intergovernmental conference which could be held in the Netherlands in autumn 2001.

We would welcome in the near future offers to organise a number of national seminars on priority policy issues. This process could develop into a series of round tables on national language policies to be conducted in a spirit of dialogue – non-threatening and non-judgmental in nature. One result would be informative and analytic-style country reports on language policy. We invite national authorities to help develop this process of policy dialogue and analysis by offering to organise national seminars with wide representation. This will contribute both to the reflection process and to the refinement of the analysis component of the document on language policy, while no doubt also supporting action in member states. These events would be particularly appropriate in 2001 (the European Year of Languages) as a means of involving a wide range of partners in society in the process.

The reality of our time frame is that we must conclude the current modern languages project in late 2000, and then consolidate it during the European Year of Languages in 2001. This will also provide the opportunity to launch a new medium-term project which, subject to the approval of the Education Committee of the CDCC, could focus more intensively than previously on language policy issues, building up a repertoire for policy reflection and analysis in a rolling programme of seminars.

The fundamental aim of such a programme would be to share expertise and good practice in order that the development of language policy might contribute more fully to the promotion of democratic citizenship as a basis for socially cohesive and stable societies in our multilingual and multicultural continent. I conclude by renewing the invitation to member states to become actively involved in this international programme of language policy reflection, debate and analysis.

Thank you.

Elements of a preliminary proposal with regard to future priorities for CDCC language projects

The following addendum is a result of discussions within the Modern Languages Project Group subsequent to the conference.

The following brief outline of possible future work is intended to promote initial discussion on the main direction of CDCC activities in the field of languages after 2000. It attempts to take account of the need for more transversal activities in the field of education (in particular linking the concepts of democratic citizenship, identities and language policy). It aims also to focus activities on the development (rather than implementation) of language policies in order to accord with the mission of CDCC projects.

Three main areas of activity are proposed:

– the evolution and dissemination of the European Language Portfolio with particular reference to the policy implications (for example, a code of practice, recognition by the Council of Europe or self-regulation, introduction in member states, etc.);

– ctions to develop the spirit of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages

– a programme of actions in policy development entitled "Languages, identities and democratic citizenship in Europe".

The first two areas represent an extension of current work which is to be further developed.

The third area, which follows on from the Innsbruck Conference (see "Next steps", doc. DECS/EDU/LANG (99) 15), might have two broad dimensions: political and technical aspects of policy development.

A key focus of a project on "Languages, identities and democratic citizenship in Europe" would be to elaborate on and develop the relationships and links between the three elements: "languages", "identities", and "democratic citizenship". This would involve studies and seminars to develop these concepts and their relationship.

A first result of the Project at a political level might be a declaration and/or set of recommendations on the nature of these elements and relationships between them, and the need to take them into consideration in language planning and in the development of language education policy (for all languages including regional and minority languages and the languages of immigrants).

Policies developed in this context would aim to reflect the spirit of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, The Hague and Oslo Recommendations and other international language policy statements.

A second consequence of the Project at a technical level would be twofold:

1. the production of a "handbook" for policy deciders suggesting and illustrating how the above declaration and/or recommendations can be realised in specific policies. Such a handbook would explain, among other things, the function of the Common European Framework and the European Language Portfolio in specific policies.

The handbook would be an extended and enriched version of the basic document on language policies in education to be produced during the current Modern Languages Project and to be presented in 2001.

This means, therefore, that policy development guidelines and instruments would be available to facilitate the analysis and formulation of policies.

2 the organisation and offering to national governments of round table discussions between national representatives and teams of experts from the Council of Europe, and/or the provision of expert consultants as a means of facilitating the use of the handbook mentioned above at two levels of policy development:

– overall policy development: the organisation of language education (for example, issues of which languages at what point in the (compulsory and non-compulsory) education system)

– curriculum and syllabus development: the elaboration of new curricula and syllabi to match new policies and reflect the spirit of the declaration and/or recommendations made at the political level.

APPENDICES

- ***1.*** Programme of the conference

2. List of participants

3. List of documents distributed at the conference

Appendix 1: Programme of the conference

Sunday 9 May 1999

5 p.m. Registration of participants – Congress Centre Innsbruck

6 p.m. Ceremony to name the street opposite the Congress Centre after the Council of Europe to celebrate its fiftieth anniversary

7 p.m. Official opening of the conference
– Elisabeth Gehrer, Federal Minister of Education and Cultural Affairs, Austria
– Raymond Weber, Director of Education, Culture and Sport, Council of Europe

Reception hosted by the Ministry of Science and Transport in the presence of the Governor of Tyrol, Wendelin Weingartner and the Mayor of Innsbruck, Herwig van Staa – Congress Centre Innsbruck

Monday 10 May 1999

9 a.m. Opening addresses
– Herwig van Staa, Mayor of Innsbruck
– Raymond Weber, Council of Europe

9.45 a.m. *Linguistic diversity and democratic citizenship*
– Peter Leuprecht, Former Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe

10. 15 a.m. *Conference themes, objectives and working methods*
Claude Truchot, General Rapporteur

10.30 a.m. Break

Session I – Linguistic diversity, democratic citizenship and language education policy

11.00 a.m. **Session I.1 – *Linguistic diversity and democratic citizenship:*** Round table
Chairman: Michael Byram

Contributors:
– Ingrid Gogolin, University of Hamburg, from the perspective of languages of migrants/immigrants
– Hanna Komorowska, University of Warsaw, from the perspective of "second" or "foreign" languages
– Pádraig Ó Riagáin, The Linguistics Institute of Ireland, from the perspective of indigenous minority languages

12 noon Lunch

2 p.m. **Session I.2 – Linguistic diversity and democratic citizenship**: Discussion groups

3.30 p.m. Break

4 p.m. *Linguistic diversity and democratic citizenship*
– Michela Cecchini, Head of the Education for Democratic Citizenship Section, Council of Europe

4.15 p.m. **Session I.3 – Social and economic factors promoting and inhibiting linguistic diversity**: Round table
Chairman: Georges Lüdi

Contributors:
– François Grin, Department of Political Economy, University of Geneva and European Centre for Minority Issues, Flensburg
– Gret Haller, Human Rights Ombudsperson for Bosnia and Herzegovina
– Miquel Strubell, Institut de Sociolinguistica Catalana, Barcelona

5.15 p.m. **Session I.4 – Young people's views:** Round table
Chair: Maria Streli (Journalist, ORF Landesstudio Tirol)
– Alexandra Bisanz, Austria
– Dick Cochius, Netherlands
– David Herrmann, Austria
– Andrea Székely, Hungary

6.15 p.m. End of Session I

8 p.m. Concert: Paul Zauner and the Itslyf Jazz Band, by courtesy of the Federal Chancellery

Buffet

Tuesday 11 May 1999

Session II − The response of education to the challenges of linguistic diversity
Chairman: Alan Dobson

9 a.m. Introduction to Session II: Claude Truchot

Linguistic diversity from a political perspective
Senator Legendre, Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

Session II.1 – *Obstacles and solutions*: Presentation of a preliminary survey

9.15 a.m. *Linguistic diversity in education: obstacles and possible solutions*
Results of a preliminary survey undertaken by Michel Candelier (université Paris V, France), Bérengère Dumoulin (université Paris VIII) and Atsuko Koishi (Keio University, Japan).
Presented by Michel Candelier

10 a.m. Break

10.30 a.m. **Session II.2 – *Obstacles and solutions:*** Discussion groups

12 noon Lunch

2 p.m. **Session II.3** – ***Policy decision-making at national and international levels***
Group reports in one consolidated list of questions to participants in the round table

Chairman: Peter Medgyès

Contributors

National level

– Pavel Cink, Director General, Ministry of Education, Czech Republic
–Anton Dobart, Director General, Bundesministerium für Unterricht und kulturelle Angelegenheiten, Austria
– Maria Emília Galvão, Deputy Director, Ministry of Education, Portugal
– Svein Harsten, Assistant Director General, Ministry of Education, Research and Church Affairs, Norway
– Liliana Preoteasa, General Director, Ministry of Education, Romania

International level

– Sylvia Vlaeminck, European Commission, DG XXII
– Joseph Poth, Language Division, Unesco

End of Session II

4.15 p.m. Break

Session III − Language Education Policies and Democratic Citizenship in Europe

4.45 p.m. **Session III.1 – Towards a framework for language education policies in Europe**

Discussion groups

6.15 p.m. Close

8. p.m. Reception/dinner hosted by the Land Tyrol and the City of Innsbruck – Hofburg

Wednesday 12 May 1999

9 a.m. **Session III.1** (continued)

Reports from groups

Session III.2 – Towards a framework for language education policies in Europe
Linguistic diversity and democratic citizenship: the role of civil society
Round table
Chairman: Albert Raasch

Contributors

– Alain Mouchoux, European Trade Union Committee For Education (ETUCE)
– Gerhard Riemer, Union of Industrial and Employers' Confederations of Europe (UNICE)
– Milana Saiani, European Parents Association (EPA)
– Terttu Valojärvi, World Federation of Modern Language Associations (FIPLV)

10.45 a.m. Break

11.15. a.m. **Session III.3 – Towards the development of a framework for language education policies: next steps**

– Joseph Sheils, Head of the Modern Languages Section, Council of Europe
– Alan Dobson, co-Chairman of the Modern Languages Project
– Claude Truchot, General Rapporteur

12.15 p.m. **Official closing of the conference**

– Johann Popelak, Bundesministerium für Wissenschaft und Verkehr, Austria
– Joseph Sheils, Council of Europe

1 p.m. End of the conference.

Members of the Scientific Committee

Jean-Claude Beacco, université Sorbonne nouvelle, Paris III , France
Michael Byram, University of Durham, United Kingdom
Michel Candelier, université René-Descartes, Paris V, France
Alan Dobson, Office for Standards in Education, United Kingdom
Georges Lüdi, University of Basel, Switzerland
Peter Medgyès, Director of the Centre for English Teacher Training, Budapest, former Under-Secretary of State for Education, Hungary
Dan Nasta, Institute of the Science of Education, Romania
Pádraig Ó Riagáin, The Linguistics Institute of Ireland, Ireland
Albert Raasch, University of Saarlandes, Germany
Claude Truchot, université de Franche-Comté, France, General Rapporteur of the conference.

The Modern Languages Project is co-chaired by Pavel Cink and Alan Dobson.
The Project advisers are Jean-Claude Beacco and Michael Byram.

Appendix 2

List of participants

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Appendix 3

List of documents distributed at the conference

1. Programme (DECS/EDU/LANG (99) 10 rev.)
2. Revised Information Note (DECS/EDU/LANG (99) 5 rev.)
3. Towards a framework for European language policy in education by Michael Byram and Pádraig Ó Riagáin (DECS/EDU/LANG (99) 6)
4. Preliminary enquiry on language diversity in education prepared by Michel Candelier (DECS/EDU/LANG (99) 11)
5. Report of a preliminary survey: obstacles/constraints and attempts to overcome these by Michel Candelier (DECS/EDU/LANG (99) 11 - add)
6. Abstracts prepared by contributors to round tables (DECS/EDU/LANG (99) 12)
7. Recommendation No. R (98) 6 of the Committee of Ministers to Council of Europe member states concerning modern languages
8. Recommendation 1383 (1998) Linguistic diversification - Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe
9. Trends in the provision of language learning opportunities for 'non-specialists' within the European university sector by David Little (DECS/EDU/LANG 99) 7)
10. Summary of the General Report of the Third Colloquy of the European Centre for Modern Languages: Living together in Europe in the 21st century: the challenge of plurilingual and multicultural communication and dialogue, Graz, Austria, 9-10 December 1998
11. Basic concepts and core competences of education for democratic citizenship. An initial consolidated report by François Audiger (DECS/CIT (98) 35)
12. Education for democratic citizenship: dimensions of citizenship, core competences, variables and international activities by Ruud Veldhuis (DECS/CIT (97) 23)