LANGUAGES IN EUROPE
TOWARDS 2020

Analysis and Proposals from the **LETPP** Consultation and Review

LETPP

Languages in Europe
Theory Policy Practice

The
Languages
Company

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LSE THE LONDON SCHOOL
OF ECONOMICS AND
POLITICAL SCIENCE

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For details of the wide range of contributions please see the project website – www.letpp.eu which will continue to operate and to accept contributions and ideas throughout 2011.

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1 INTRODUCTION – THE LETPP PROJECT

This document is the result of a one year project funded through the Life Long Learning programme of the European Union – Languages in Europe, Theory, Policy and Practice (LETPP). There is therefore an admirably democratic irony in the fact that a principal objective of our work has been to question some of the policy foundations of the European institutions and the states of Europe. From the outset we knew that a one year project with such a tight timeframe had to focus on asking the right questions as well as trying to provide some of the right answers. In fact it became increasingly clear in initial discussions that the priority would be devising a new set of questions relevant to the next decade which would become the main focus of the project. It is our hope that we have at least provided a framework for further consideration and (where necessary) change in a fundamentally important area of future policy and practice.

Overview and Rationale [1]

Multilingualism has been described as an 'asset for Europe and a shared commitment'[2]. This may, however, be more a vision of what might be than a description of reality. Reality is mediated not only by the vision (what people think), but by policy decisions (laws and regulations) and by performance (what we actually do).

We therefore set out to identify the conditions which allow good ideas on multilingualism to develop into coherent policy and practice, and also the obstacles to that happening. By policy we have included explicit strategies at European, national and regional level which can promote or inhibit linguistic diversity in social and economic life – for example the European Commission's Action Plan or the English National Languages Strategy. We have also attempted to examine implicit or unstated policies on languages – assumptions about social or educational priorities which have an impact on multilingualism, for example decisions about core subjects in school or the funding priorities for community cohesion. Finally we have considered specific measures which might support linguistic diversity, such as the EU's Lifelong Learning Programme, the work of the European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML) and national initiatives on language teaching.

Within this framework the project looked at languages and language policy from two key perspectives, one of which takes as its starting point the needs of the individual and the community (Cohesion argument), and one which relates more to the priorities of states and societies (issues of Intercultural Communication). Although often viewed separately we do not think that these are alternative or opposing views of multilingualism. In fact, taken together, they underpin the aspiration to create a viable, democratic society based on principles of diversity, inclusiveness and mutual respect.

Identifying the key questions

Those involved in LETPP were aware of the amount of available data on multilingualism. We had read and discussed reports, documents and projects that had tracked the development of ideas over the last twenty years. We were also increasingly aware that times were changing and that certainties were less definite. Our concerns were, therefore, encapsulated in some of the following questions:

* Are the ideas developed over the last 20 years still valid for the next decade?
* Are the concepts and beliefs developed with conviction and passion still realistic and realisable for the new generation of mobile, global, technically aware young people who may have a different set of priorities?

- Are the goals of having mother-tongue plus two relevant to the children of migrants who do indeed have mother-tongue plus two, but where both the mother-tongue and perhaps one of the other two are a language outside of the established European norm?
- Are there occasions where English is in fact enough and should the notion of English as a Lingua Franca be seen as an enabling communicative tool freeing up space for other languages to be learnt?
- How are current unprecedented degrees of mobility and linguistic and cultural interchange affecting people's sense of identity and what does that mean for language education?
- Where is change taking place – now and in the future?

Inevitably new questions were raised in the course of the year, for example about the nature of elite and non-elite multilingualism. That is why we wanted to devise a project that enabled as many people as possible to contribute, either in person or online. We wanted to generate the energy that we as language professionals feel about our subject but also to feed off the ideas and energy given by stakeholders who are not language professionals but come from other areas of education, business and government. We wanted new ideas and a boldness of approach in addressing questions, and a sense of realism in not trying to pretend there are absolute truths and permanent solutions to situations which are by their very nature subject to change.

Implementing the programme

There is at the very core of the LETPP project a desire to maximise involvement, set a new agenda and re-define the debate. We wanted to embed innovation into the way we delivered the project and to put communication, inclusiveness and reactivity into the way we developed it.

The implementation of the project was based on:

- **Innovation.** We wanted to involve a mix of people who had both the courage to challenge ideas and were able to express alternatives. We also wanted the involvement of experts who had contributed greatly to past debates on multilingualism but would be prepared to use their knowledge and experience to moderate ideas about future possibilities.

- **Communication.** We wanted to maximise the use of our existing networks and to encourage debate both outside and during scheduled meetings. We used a variety of ways to do this, for example by encouraging informal meetings and by quick surveys on the internet, with results distributed to generate further interest. We wanted to help develop informal networks that could exist outside of the more formal structures.

- **Inclusiveness.** From the outset we wanted to put together a provocative mix of people from education, government and business who would use both their intellect and practical experience to generate real debate and not just simply to agree with established ideas. We set the themes and initiated the questions but it was this vibrant mix of people who drove the actual discussions.

- **Reactivity.** We knew that a strong identity and website would be key not only to showcase what we did but also to make sure that information could be placed online. We also wanted to circulate ideas that would be of interest to everyone. Rather than waiting until the end of the project, we populated the website with articles or documents – both reflective and reactive – as quickly as possible. The idea was to create a sense of approachability where people who wanted to get involved could have their voice heard and their feelings and ideas noted.

- **Variety of stakeholders.** Language professionals, researchers, HE language providers, social scientists, business people, local and regional government officers, language teachers from schools, senior government officials, European commission representatives, policy makers, head teachers, journalists, urban planners, government ministers and students – all made a contribution to the discussion and debate.

- **Face to face meetings.** Not everyone comes to a conference so we also consulted a range of stakeholders face to face, discussing ideas in order to get immediate feedback and responses to key questions.

- **Small-scale seminars.** We targeted in both seminars a mix of people in the areas which could contribute most to an effective debate. Each presentation was designed to stimulate debate and generate questions. Based at LSE the first seminar used the experience of educationalists in secondary and higher education, of experts in planning, social and national government policy and members of the European commission. For the second event at the House of Lords we explored the relationship of language to business, with contributions from employers, politicians and academics.

- **International conference.** At the core was the need for communication, discussion and exchange of ideas. We wanted to inspire the delegates with key note speakers of the highest standard who could not only share their expertise but also add to the debate. Speakers such as David Crystal and Joe Lo Bianco, who joined us via video link from Australia, inspired us to energise the discussions and workshops. Ideas were illustrated with Visual Minutes[3] and workshop results were fed back in ways that underlined our commitment to innovation. The whole event was based on the format of interactive workshops to produce not only a serious list of agenda points to define the debate for the next decade but also a light hearted 'manifesto' to get over the message to the widest possible audience that multilingualism matters.

This report is therefore the outcome of the discussion with the broadest range of people that the timescale could permit. It is the product of committed individuals supported by key national and European professional associations, and written with the conviction not just that multilingualism matters but that it matters enough to make sure that its application remains relevant to the new century's mobile and technologically literate population.

And why it matters

We live in a period of unprecedented movement and change. Post war certainties are being undermined by a rapidly changing world economy and new power relations. A new kind of mobility is becoming the norm. In such a changing and volatile world, communication across and between cultures becomes very high stakes. Such communication is indispensable for international relations; it underpins wealth creation; it enables individual mobility and employment. Through the mass media, communication is itself a major economic and cultural activity and the new technologies have facilitated collaborative working and information exchange in ways unimaginable only a decade ago.

As regional and national cultures interact, inevitably they become less distinct and more internationalised, more influenced by this same mass media. Meanings and cultural realities are shared and there is a progressive shift from local and national to international and supranational realities. In such a complex world, simple indicators of identity – national citizenship or national culture – are challenged. People share allegiances to an ever widening range of social groups and cultural icons. The combination of such allegiances makes the concept of single identity increasingly redundant and complex identity the norm. At the same time some take refuge in simple certainties from an imagined past – nationalism, chauvinism, the closed society.

Multilingualism – and therefore the policies and practices that are adopted towards language – will be critical to making sense of this complex, volatile and at times dangerous world. To paraphrase one particular national strategy, multilingualism is not as some may perceive it 'an optional extra' but rather 'an essential part' of 21st century reality and vital to our planet's future.

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[1]This section and the final paragraphs are based on the Project 'scoping document' the full version of which is available in English or French online at www.letpp.eu or in English as an Appendix.

[2]Commission Communication on Multilingualism 2008
[3]Examples of Visual Minutes on page 52.

2   SOME GENERAL REFLECTIONS ON POLICY

This is not a theoretical work, but a review and a set of suggestions for future action. We do, however, have a theoretical context as from the outset we wanted to examine the interplay between 'the vision (what people think)... policy decisions (laws and regulations) and... performance (what we actually do)'[1]. Indeed it would have been difficult to have worked with the people who participated in LETPP without any kind of theoretical orientation or interest.

It is thanks to them, and in particular thanks to the involvement of Professor Joe Lo Bianco of Melbourne University, that we have become clearer about some of the more general issues relating to policy, and specifically Language Policy, which have informed our understanding.

Three issues in particular seem of some importance if what follows is to make sense – the relation between explicit and implicit policy, the distinction (and connection) between policy and policies about language, and the relationship between language policy and broader policy issues.

Explicit and Implicit Policy

We are used to thinking of language policy as a formal process undertaken by governments to improve or extend the teaching and learning of languages. As such, language policies are public texts that declare or announce intentions, usually in the form of targets and timelines (by 2015 x% of German, British, Italian children will be studying two languages in addition to their mother tongue), providing funding, undertaking implementation, monitoring, evaluation and review.

These are all conventional and necessary steps for a systematic and reviewable process of bringing about change in some area of language, involving intervention by governments and public authorities to change the actual state of affairs. As such the announced intentions are usually preceded by a state of play report (how many German, British and Italian students currently study 2 additional languages) and a rationale (why the shortfall between A, intention, and B, actual reality, should be overcome).

This might be called formal language policy making. It tries as much as possible to resemble the way other policies are made, so that data gathering comes first, options are prepared and evaluated according to the latest protocols of cost-benefit analysis. All this is prepared by officials who proffer the advice to elected or responsible officials, politicians usually, who then make decisions based, presumably, on consideration of the return on investment offered by the different alternatives. In reality of course only a minority of policies actually function this way, but in general this process and these procedures are held as the ideal form.

However, once we look to evaluate what actually influences language education choices, and the language behaviour of individuals, social groups and nations, we see that this is too limiting an approach to language policy. We need therefore to distinguish this kind of formal language policy from the operation of economic, social and political forces that impact on the language choices and ecologies. This distinction may have particular relevance in the European context where there are a number of formal or explicit policies, concerning for example language provision in school or the responsibility of the state to support minority languages, which contrast with the realities of what actually happens ('what people do').

There are other senses too in which policy may be implicit (carried out in practice) rather than explicit (formally agreed and implemented). One such is contained in the dictum which has been variously ascribed to Milton Friedman and Mao Tse-tung that "there is no such thing as no policy"[2]. In other words the absence of a policy is a policy not to do something – in our domain to make provision for languages in primary schools for example. This kind of non-policy policy is referred to in greater detail in the particular

context of Ireland by David Little in Chapter 4[3], the point being that it is equally important as the explicit statements of Governments. Another quite common form of implicit policy may be a policy which is so imbued in practice and tradition as not to require any particular legislative justification or support. An obvious example of this is the status of English as a national language in the UK.

It is these kinds of interrelation in European language policy that we will attempt to elucidate in the pages which follow.

Policy or Policies?

Another aspect of a traditional or common sense way of thinking of language policy – an approach which we could call that of 'language planning' – is a differentiation or indeed dislocation between different aspects of language. It is in this respect quite instructive to consult Jacques Leclercs's rather comprehensive categorisation of language policies throughout the world (1999)[4]. He categorises Language Policies in many different ways (for example 'assimilation', 'non-intervention', 'bilingual') but for our purposes the interest is the extent to which there are few if any models of state level language policy which are truly comprehensive. Instead, there are policies concerning the national language, there are policies about foreign language teaching, there are policies to support or restrict minority languages. At this point in the 21st century it would appear that in the political sphere at least, language is viewed as if composed of a set of different and not always connected phenomena – national language, second languages, foreign languages, minority languages – each with a separate policy framework.

This general perspective is confirmed by the experience of the Language Education Policy Profiles carried out under the auspices of the Council of Europe, and by our review of language policies at state level (Chapter 4). We may therefore conclude that although conceptually (theoretically) there is a clear interrelationship between language in all its manifestations, and an assumption that language policy will be effective only inasmuch as that interrelationship is understood, in most parts of reality there is a range of language policies and these policies can be – and often are – contradictory.

Language policy and broader policy

Our third general assumption is that language policy is also only one element in a much broader policy context, comprising issues that have been described as the 'drivers' of educational (and indeed economic or social) policy. Yet again the Council of Europe Policy profiles are instructive in this respect as they demonstrate some commonality in educational priorities – issues such as 'raising standards', 'improving quality', 'developing coherence' – of which a language policy can be one element, but to which it is in some sense subordinated. Whatever language specialists may believe, language is not generally regarded as central to such educational aspirations.[5]

This is even more the case when it comes to economic or social policy. In the 21st century these tend to involve such major aspirations as 'creating a competitive economy' or 'developing a modern skills base', or social aims such as cohesion, solidarity and affirmation of identity. In each of these cases the importance of language and more specifically of multilingualism is relatively non-controversial[6]. Yet from what we have seen and heard it is actually quite rare to find in such general policy statements any significant reference to the role of communication, multilingualism or language. The language element is either understood, or more likely overlooked in a more conventional articulation of policy directions.

This also demonstrates how much more needs to be done in developing a deeper and broader appreciation of the importance of language in 21st century politics and society.

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[1]LETPP Scoping Document – www.letpp.eu
[2]"Whatever governments do they are doing something. If they do print money, that is a policy, and if they don't, that is also a policy".
[3]See below p24
[4]www.tlfq.ulaval.ca/AXL/monde/index_politique-lng.htm

[5]See Francis Goullier's paper on French language policy – www.letpp.eu
[6]White Paper on Education and Training – Towards the Learning Society (European Commission 1995). These arguments are also summarised for example in 'The Agenda for Languages' (CILT 2001)

3   A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF LANGUAGE POLICY IN EUROPE

We will now examine some of the main features of language policy at European level as it has developed over the last few decades – both in the EEC/EU and The Council of Europe. We will do this based on stated policy statements and also on actual practice, in particular as manifested in the various funded programmes in support of multilingualism.

THE EUROPEAN UNION – FROM WHITE PAPER TO ACTION PLAN

Ever since the formation of the European Economic Community, multilingualism has been at the heart of the European project, although not always in an explicit sense. Indeed for some years the European Community refrained from developing an overt language policy at Community level or from intervening in areas of language learning or teaching, which were considered to be exclusively the responsibility of the member states. This apparent neutrality in policy terms was, however, belied by the implicit policies of the Community which adopted institutional multilingualism, granted equal status to the official languages of the EEC, and developed specific policy formulations on languages which upheld fundamental philosophical and cultural values such as equality, human rights and better understanding between peoples. So, on the one hand, there has always been an assumption of freedom in language use and language choice in the national and international European context; while on the other hand, there has been a commitment to and promotion of cultural and linguistic diversity.

The Single Market and Enlargement

Inevitably over time this required further articulation of multilingualism at a policy level and the development of a range of incentives and support programmes for languages. In addition by the late 80s there were a number of key factors which were to have an impact on European multilingualism. The increased globalisation of the economy and, linked to this, the internationalisation of science and higher education meant that more explicit policies were needed and indeed bound to develop. This process was intensified by the impact of new technologies (in particular information and communication technologies) and new expectations relating to the likely demands of the European Single Market (1992) and the 1995 enlargement from 12 to 15 languages. Both of these key developments were predicated on the mobility of European citizens and an open European labour market necessitating more than simple equality of languages but increased levels of operational multilingualism (plurilingualism)[1].

In the first instance (1980s) the main manifestation of a more explicit policy framework was through the adoption of incentive measures targeting minority languages and lesser used national languages[2]. From the late 80s these were supplemented by mobility programmes – Erasmus for Higher Education in 1987 and Lingua in 1989 in the area of foreign language education including at school level. The preamble to the Lingua programme is instructive in this respect as the new programme is clearly linked to the establishment of the Internal Market which it would:

> facilitate... by quantitative improvement of foreign language training within the Community to enable the Community's citizens to communicate with each other and to overcome linguistic difficulties which impede the free movement of persons, goods, services and capital[3]

The Maastricht Treaty (1992) contains more specific formulations which refined the general principle of subsidiarity. While upholding the principle that Member States are responsible for the content and organisation of education, the Treaty explicitly permits the adoption of incentive measures in response to increasing internationalisation and the need to equip young people for the (global) labour market and for mobility. Article 126 of the treaty encourages cooperation between member states in the sphere of education, and in particular calls for the development of the European dimension in education through the teaching and dissemination of languages. It also encourages greater mobility – for students, youth and teachers – and exchanges of information and experience on educational matters. (see Appendix)

Towards the Learning Society

If the core concept of Maastricht in relation to educational policy is the proposition that the European dimension will be manifested primarily through the teaching and dissemination of the languages of the Member states, this view is taken yet further by the 1995 White Paper on *Education and Training – Towards the Learning Society*. The White Paper set out as one of the five key objectives of the Community's drive towards the knowledge-based society 'Proficiency in 3 Community Languages'. This was seen as:

- a precondition for citizens to benefit from the occupational and personal opportunities open to them in the border-free Single Market, and an effective means for better understanding between the citizens of Europe
- a way of ensuring that language learning is no longer the preserve of the elite but **necessary** for everyone irrespective of training and education routes chosen,
- a concern of all levels of education from pre-school to vocational education and training, and including mainstream school level.

Multilingualism is described as both 'a factor of European identity and citizenship' and 'a cornerstone of the knowledge-based society'.

The 1995 White Paper was not envisaged, and nor was it described, as a package of specific measures but rather as the outline of a new agenda describing options and seeking common ground for future discussion and implementation. It was however followed up by a range of activities establishing a kind of framework for action at a European level. These included the concept of recognition for excellence and commitment in language learning and teaching – eventually to be launched as the 'European label' and a number of other initiatives to promote and disseminate multilingualism, notably the European Year of Languages (2001). It also suggested the need for greater coherence at European level – through common indicators, exchange of experience, cooperation and coordination, all issues which were to come to the fore in the 21st century.

A major stimulus to these aspirations was given in 2001 by the promotion across Europe of **The European Year of Languages**, which was significantly a joint initiative between the European Union and The Council of Europe and which was implemented by the member states with financial support from the Commission and the Council. It had five specific objectives[4]:

- to raise awareness of the wealth of linguistic diversity within the European Union and of its value in terms of civilisation and culture
- to encourage multilingualism
- to bring to the notice of the widest possible audience the advantages of proficiency in several languages
- to encourage lifelong learning of languages
- to collect and disseminate information about the teaching and learning of languages.

One specific outcome of the Year was the 2001 Eurobarometer on languages which gave an overview of the linguistic landscape. In addition there were hundreds of events and initiatives, mainly of a promotional nature intended with some success to raise the profile of languages across the continent.

Language Learning and Linguistic Diversity

The central idea of the White Paper had been the notion that European citizens – through national systems of compulsory schooling and vocational education – should acquire 3 languages. In 2000 this three language policy was included as a key element in the *Lisbon Strategy* with its aim of making the EU 'the most dynamic and competitive knowledge based economy in the world'. It was further clarified at the Barcelona Council of 2004, which refined the meaning of '3 community languages' as 'mother tongue plus two' and called for 'further action... to improve the mastery of basic skills, in particular by teaching at least two foreign languages from a very early age'.

The rationale for this language policy – the prime need for mobility and mutual communication in the Union – runs through European Commission documents of the late 90s and early 00s, not least in the EC 'Action Plan' of 2003.

> The European Union is built around the free movement of its citizens, capital and services. The citizen with good language skills is better equipped to take advantage of the freedom to work or study in another Member State… (It will have) 450 million citizens from diverse ethnic, cultural and linguistic backgrounds. It will be more important than ever that citizens have the skills necessary to understand and communicate with their neighbours (p3).

The Action Plan – entitled *Promoting Language Learning and Linguistic Diversity: An Action Plan 2004-2006* was very much a vision for multilingual Europe and set out the shared responsibilities of national, regional and local authorities and the EU. Based on broad consultation with stakeholders it was intended to unify existing activities and initiatives in a single framework and it set out what could be achieved at European (as opposed to individual state) level. At its core is the belief that Mobility is a fundamental right of every citizen and that this right will be supported by the European dimension in education and training. This in turn is addressed in two ways – by identifying measures at a supranational level to support national language policy objectives and by seeking to set an agenda for issues of policy and practice which would be decided by collaborative work and discussion.

A clear steer on what were seen at this time as key areas of European policy (implied in action rather than prescribed by text) is given by the main priorities of European programmes (and Funds) following the Action Plan. These include support for multilateral partnerships, development of learning and teaching materials for languages (with a special emphasis on lesser used European languages); awareness raising, extending the range of stakeholders and developing greater expertise in language teaching and assessment. More specifically, the Action Plan identifies three general priority areas: lifelong language learning (all stages of learning from early to adult); the quality of language learning (support for teachers, learners and development of assessment tools); and what was called the 'language friendly environment' (a development from the Year of Languages and including community issues, the media and civil society)[5].

The Framework Strategy

In 2005 the Framework Strategy on Multilingualism brought many of these developing tendencies together in a comprehensive strategy for the new millennium. Significantly it also included support for minority (immigrant) and world languages, and put forward a rather more rounded view of multilingualism as a competence which supports both economic growth (trade, competitiveness) and social cohesion (mutual understanding and respect) as well as individual fulfilment and growth.

> The ability to understand and communicate in more than one language – already a daily reality for the majority of people across the globe – is a desirable life-skill for all European citizens. It encourages us to become more open to other people's cultures and outlooks, improves cognitive skills and strengthens learners' mother-tongue skills; it enables people to take advantage of the freedom to work or study in another Member State.

What this illustrates is that by 2005 there had been a definite development of 'EU' policy on languages to be more inclusive and sensitive to social change. At the same time some of the key elements remained relatively constant:

- The concept of multilingualism was fundamental to the creation and development of the European Community/Union
- Internationalisation of language education was a major priority of the Community/Union
- Implementation, however, was a more tricky business, involving as it did a negotiation between supra national priorities and national policies on education
- In broad terms the European dimension in education was reinforced by the development of shared goals and agreed frameworks and incentive measures

- As the possibilities for mobility have increased and more effective means of communication have developed, language policy has become more integrated into general policies for economic and social development.

New Strategic Policy Documents (2007-2009)

The policy as developed and articulated up to 2005 was reaffirmed in a series of new strategic documents between 2007 and 2009.[6] These show the clear influence of the Framework Strategy by their stress on the increasing impact of linguistic and cultural diversity on the daily life of citizens of the European Union. They reaffirm the importance of multilingualism, stating that "the acquisition of a diverse range of language skills is considered to be of the greatest importance for all EU citizens, since it enables them to derive full economic, social and cultural benefit from freedom of movement within the Union". In line with the more outward vision of the mid 2000s the 2008 Communication also cites the importance of "cohabitation in our multicultural societies" and "relations with third countries and between peoples and nations from the most diverse regions of the world".[7] If there is any new direction it is towards broadening the commitment to multilingualism beyond the sphere of education and training, although as yet it is too early to say whether this new orientation has been clearly identified and operationalised.

Overall, however – despite some tensions between national and European needs, between economic and social priorities and between the aspirations of different language groups – EU policy as it has developed since the 1980s has been remarkably consistent and influential. The question for further consideration is whether it is entirely appropriate for the complexities of the coming decade. This is something which our project has sought to clarify and which we consider in more detail in Chapters 5 and 6.

THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

The other major transnational influence on European language policy has been The Council of Europe, and specifically the work of the Language Policy Division (and more recently the European Centre for Modern Languages at Graz). As an inter-governmental organisation the Council of Europe is even more dependent than the EU on the agreement of member states for the development, and in particular implementation, of policy positions. At the same time this rather more consensual role seems to have allowed the Council considerable latitude in developing positions and advice on languages, perhaps because from the beginning language policy was firmly rooted in the democratic and inclusive principles which underpin and provide the rationale for the Council's existence.

On its own website the Language Policy Unit describes a number of phases in the development of policy[8].

> Early programmes of international co-operation in Strasbourg focused on the democratisation of language learning for the mobility of persons and ideas, and on the promotion of the European heritage of cultural and linguistic diversity. Projects assisted member states in implementing reforms aimed at developing learners' communication skills and encouraged innovation in language teaching and teacher training, with an emphasis on a learner-centred approach. While continuing to promote innovation for successful communication and intercultural skills, more recent projects have increasingly addressed the social and political dimensions of language learning, focusing on language education for democratic citizenship, diversification in language learning, improving coherence and transparency in language provision, and the language education rights of minorities. The European Year of Languages (2001) led to further initiatives to support member states in developing policy responses to the new challenges to social cohesion and integration.

It would be fair to say that the early initiatives of the Council of Europe (from the late 1950s until the late 1980s) were primarily associated with language teaching and learning – methods, approaches and curricula. Such seminal developments as the Unit Credit scheme (1971-77) and the programme on Language Teaching for Communication provided the basis for a consensus of thought (and to a lesser degree practice) about languages pedagogy and organisation. Although not overtly concerned with

policy these initiatives did nonetheless contribute to a view about the fundamentally democratic nature of language teaching. Put simply the underlying assumption of all of this detailed work was that languages were for all citizens and that they provided access to both opportunities and enrichment. In this there were obvious parallels with the assumptions of the EU's 1995 White Paper.

The 1990s saw a rapid expansion of the Council of Europe with participation of newer member states from Central and Eastern Europe. Work continued on broadly methodological issues – through the 'new-style' twinned workshops organised on issues such as information and communication technologies, bilingual education, educational links and exchanges and learner autonomy. At the same time – and in particular leading up to the 1997 Conference in Strasbourg – there was a more overt emphasis on the importance of intercultural communication and plurilingualism as key policy goals. Following the Conference and leading up to the European Year of Languages in 2001, this articulation of the link between languages and a European identity which was increasingly plurilingual was made clearer, in particular through the launch of the Common European Framework of Reference and the European Language Portfolio. The CEFR in particular was seen as a major resource for ensuring coherence in European language policies in support of greater mobility, mutual understanding and cooperation. In the first chapter it sets out the key recommendations of the Council of Ministers:

- that the rich heritage of diverse languages and cultures in Europe is a valuable common resource to be protected and developed, and that a major educational effort is needed to convert that diversity from a barrier to communication into a source of mutual enrichment and understanding
- that it is only through a better knowledge of European modern languages that it will be possible to facilitate communication and interaction among Europeans of different mother tongues in order to promote European mobility, mutual understanding and co-operation, and overcome prejudice and discrimination
- that member states, when adopting or developing national policies in the field of modern language learning and teaching, may achieve greater convergence at the European level by means of appropriate arrangements for ongoing co-operation and co-ordination of policies[9].

The establishment of the ECML (1994) permitted a separation between the largely methodological orientations of Graz and the policy development work which continued in Strasbourg. Since 2001 the specific policy orientations of the Council have concerned a number of key areas:

- The development and use of reference instruments for planning and assessment (linked to the CEFR) and support for mutual recognition of qualifications
- Co-ordination of language policies and in particular the support given to individual member states through the process of Language Education Policy Profiles, involving a detailed (but importantly joint) review of priorities and the production of a report. To date there have been 15 such profiles[10], which as well as their value for the countries concerned are also a rich source of information and analysis about European language policies
- Extension of the policy sphere from 'foreign' languages to broader issues of the languages of education, including mother tongues, the official language/s of schooling (both as a subject and a vehicle for learning) and learned new languages.

As in the case of the EU there is a consistency in the policy orientations of the Council of Europe but also a noticeable development. The consistency resides in the fundamental Council view of languages as a key element in democratic citizenship and so the desirability of the widest possible access to language competence (the link between policy aims and practical guidance). It is contained also in the view that language diversity is something to be promoted and cherished.

The development has been a response to changing conditions. Of particular importance, in our view, has been the concept of plurilingualism, especially the idea that people have and can develop a plurilingual repertoire. Described by John Trim as:

the enlargement of an individual's overall communicative competence to include integrated competences in a number of languages[11]

this seems to us to offer a potential solution to the complexity of language needs in the 21st century. Although there is a large body of analysis and theory about the importance of this phenomenon, not only in Europe but beyond[12] we have as yet found little evidence of impact on policy or language teaching practice. This could clearly be a major issue for the coming period.

What remains to be seen, however, is whether the extension of the Council of Europe's interest in languages to the languages of education/schooling will prove to be so productive. These are early days and current discussions have been rather diffuse[13]. Some have suggested that this could divert attention from outstanding issues relating to multilingualism, while others maintain with some certainty that this is in fact a logical next step in the articulation of a languages policy for the 21st century.

LANGUAGE PROGRAMMES AND SUPPORT FOR MULTILINGUALISM

We have already seen that language policy is not only a question of what Governments and Institutions say or prescribe, but is also about what happens in practice – what we actually do. And in Europe a great deal has been done, primarily through European funded programmes – Lingua, Erasmus, Socrates, Leonardo, Comenius and latterly the Lifelong Learning Programme – and in the Council of Europe through workshops and more recently the projects of the Graz centre.

The various EU programmes were devised to promote multilingualism and develop the European Dimension in education (and training) by strengthening the spirit of European citizenship and social cohesion. Key elements – corresponding also to policy priorities – were improving the knowledge of languages spoken in its member states, including those less widely used and taught, leading to greater understanding and a shared cultural identity amongst its people. Exchange and study programmes in particular are aimed at fostering the intercultural dimension of education and contributing to a linguistically diverse, equal society as reflected in the European Union aspiration of 'Unity in diversity'.

With a budget of nearly €7 billion for 2007 to 2013, the Lifelong Learning Programme funds a variety of actions including exchanges, study visits and networking activities. Projects are aimed at individual students and learners, teachers, trainers and all others involved in education and training.

There are now four main sub-programmes which fund projects at different levels of education and training with a remit to support language learning and multilingualism:

Comenius supports school partnerships, projects for teacher development, and school education networks. The overall objectives of Comenius are to enhance the quality and reinforce the European dimension of school education, in particular by encouraging transnational cooperation between schools, contributing to the improved professional development of staff directly involved in the school education sector, and promoting the learning of languages and intercultural awareness.

Erasmus is the EU higher education exchange programme, enabling students, teachers and other university staff to study and work abroad. In addition to exchange actions Erasmus helps higher education institutions to work together through intensive programmes, networks and multilateral projects.

Leonardo da Vinci enables organisations in the vocational education sector to work with partners from across Europe, exchange best practices, and increase their staff's expertise, especially concerning foreign languages and cultural knowledge. It is aimed at trainees in initial vocational training as well as people who have already qualified and are interested in exchanging experiences abroad to improve their skills and knowledge.

Grundvig aims to provide adults with more ways to improve their knowledge and skills by encouraging them into lifelong language learning initiatives (including language and intercultural related projects). The programme funds a range of activities, including particularly those supporting adult learning staff to travel abroad for learning experiences, through exchanges and various other professional experiences. Other larger scale initiatives involve, for instance, networking and partnerships between organisations in different countries.

Other EU initiatives include the **Jean Monnet** programme which sets out to stimulate teaching, research and reflection on European integration in higher education institutions worldwide.

Impact of the Programmes

The Erasmus programme is probably one of the most well known educational funding streams promoted by the EU Commission and has been a major contributor to increased student and teacher mobility in EU and associated member states.

The Commission states on its website about the Erasmus programme[14]:

> Few, if any, programmes launched by the European Union have had a similar Europe-wide reach as the **ERASMUS Programme**. The vast majority of European universities take part in ERASMUS. More than 2.2 million students have participated since it started in 1987, as well as 250 000 higher education teachers and other staff since 1997. The annual budget is in excess of 450 million euro; more than 4 000 higher education institutions in 33 countries participate, and more are waiting to join.

There have been a number of evaluations of sub-actions[15] and in 2000, the EU DG EAC commissioned an evaluation of the Socrates programme[16]. There has also been a detailed report on the impact of the Socrates programme (phase 2) in the UK[17], commissioned by the Department for Education and Skills (now DfE), published in 2004. Both reports come to the conclusion that the Socrates programme has been a success in terms of individual enrichment for everyone involved, but address problems concerning bureaucracy and long term sustainability. Most Schools agreed that participating in EU projects under the Comenius stream helped to introduce the 'European Dimension' into the classroom and open up intercultural discussion.

The EU evaluation report states: *'participants have developed policies and implemented strategies with encouragement from the 'bigger' idea out there and feel they have benefited from a transnational and comparative perspective.'*

A major issue when looking at the impact of the Socrates and Lifelong Learning Programme is whether this way of funding localised actions can ever address a large enough number of participants to make a direct impact on education systems and how far the central idea of cultural diversity is embedded in the activities of schools, universities and other institutions to continue after the end of the European funding.

European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML)

The European Centre for Modern Languages[18] was set up as a 'partial agreement' of the Council of Europe in 1994 to promote language education in Europe. The ECML has a close working relationship with the EU Commission.

Over the years, the ECML has sought to establish itself as a centre of innovation in language teaching delivering its strategic objectives through a series of projects and workshops, bringing together teacher trainers, researchers and language professionals. As well as promoting language education, the ECML supports the implementation of language policies, basing its work on the underlying values of the CoE. It has provided support to thousands of language professionals. As with the programmes of the EU however, the question of long term impact is one that is legitimately raised, and it is not clear to what extent such projects effect change in the member states. What can be said for certain is that both in the EU and CoE/ECML the existence of such arenas for reflection and development are potential drivers of new thinking in response to the demands of the communication age. The question is how well we make use of such opportunities (and to what extent we will be allowed to in the current economic climate).

THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF EUROPEAN LANGUAGE POLICY

Policy at European level has been relatively constant over the last 20-30 years. Despite differences of emphasis between the two main European Institutions, due in part to their different origins and functions, they have shared a view over the importance of multilingualism, both for functional reasons (mutual understanding, communication) and for reasons of principle (whether the democratic citizenship of the Council of Europe or the Unity in Diversity of the European Union). There has also been development, both in terms of increasing levels of intervention and support for multilingualism and in the scope of its potential impact.

The main common threads have been:

- A view that languages are a necessary condition for communication and mobility
- An aspiration for multilingualism to flourish through the creation of conditions in which citizens acquire greater language competence (for example Mother Tongue plus 2)
- An assumption that all European languages are equal
- A belief that mutual understanding will be developed through learning languages and understanding about other cultures
- A conviction that greater language competence will lead to greater competitiveness and improvements in trading opportunities (and so prosperity).

It would be premature to give a definitive statement on the success of this project. Some things, however, do appear to be clear. All the evidence suggests that progress has been made in both provision and proficiency. Such indicators as Eurobarometer and Eurostat show consistent increases in provision at school level and in claimed levels of language competence, although we shall probably have to await the implementation of the planned languages 'indicator' before there can be a more definitive objective statement about competence levels. There has also been significant development of instruments to support multilingualism, most notably the Common European Framework of Reference, but also a wide range of literature and materials on language teaching and learning.

Less certain is the impact of the various multilingual projects, training programmes and networks funded by the Life Long Learning programme and its predecessors, as well as the rather more modest Council of Europe/ECML programmes. These have undoubtedly benefitted many thousands of participants, but more evidence is needed in relation to their long term effect. Intuitively we might sense that the very existence of such programmes creates a positive climate for multilingualism, but specific outcomes are more difficult to track. One area for further investigation here is the way in which such funding has gradually expanded its sphere of influence, for example from support for multilateral partnerships and the development of learning and teaching materials to awareness raising, extending the range of stakeholders, and seeking to develop greater language expertise; how too funding has been applied to ever wider groups of languages. Such changes in what appear to be simply implementation priorities are actually a major instrument of language policy.

We also need to identify areas where currently accepted European level policy may be insufficient, either because it is too simplistic a model for a range of national contexts – one example of this being the rather linear interpretation of Mother Tongue plus 2, or because the complexities and tensions of globalisation in 2010 require new solutions which do not fit the progressive model described in our golden threads. Of particular importance here might be the question of how linguistic complexity – the plurilingual repertoire – is supported through policy and concrete practice.

Before considering these potential areas for change in more detail we will briefly review language policy at the level of the nation state.

[1] Although the European Union generally uses only the term 'multilingualism' we have preferred the Council of Europe distinction between multilingualism as a characteristic of societies and elements within society (for example The City) and plurilingualism as a description of an individual's linguistic repertoire.
[2] The Arfe Resolution (EP 16th October 1981) calls for a Community Charter for the regional languages and cultures. As a result the European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages is established in Dublin. 1983 EP created a budget for Community Action for linguistic and cultural minorities for funding measures in support of linguistic minorities (publications, research projects, etc.). 1987 MERCATOR network for information and documentation in autochthonous minority languages was set up by the Commission.
[3] 89/489/EEC: Council Decision of 28 July 1989 establishing an action programme to promote foreign language competence in the European Community (Lingua) OJ L 239, 16.8.1989, p. 24–32.
[4] The Council of Europe objectives were slightly different but similar
[5] See Appendix on Priorities of 2004
[6] Multilingualism: an asset for Europe and a shared commitment Communication from The Commission to the European Parliament, The Council, The European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions Com (2008) 566 final
[7] European Parliament resolution of 24 March 2009 on Multilingualism: an asset for Europe and a shared commitment (2008/2225(INI))
[8] www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Historique_EN.asp
[9] CEFR Section 1.2 'The aims and objectives of Council of Europe language policy'
[10] Armenia, Austria, Cyprus, Estonia, Hungary, Ireland, Lithuania, Lombardy, Luxemburg, Norway, Poland, Sheffield, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Val d'Aosta (and Ukraine in progress).
[11] 'The role of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages in Teacher Education' Lecture Graz 2005
[12] For example S Canagarajah – The plurilingual tradition and the English language in South Asia (AILA 22.1 2009)
[13] Geneva Conference, Oct 2010
[14] ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/doc80_en.htm
[15] ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/evaluation/evaluation_en.html
[16] ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/evaluation/global_en.html
[17] dspace.gla.ac.uk/bitstream/1905/212/1/116.pdf
[18] www.ecml.at

4   ASPECTS OF NATIONAL LANGUAGE POLICIES

One of the main objectives of the LETTP project was to provide a forum for discussion on current languages policies in Europe at state level. The following analysis is based on the valuable and detailed inputs to the project seminars, the discussions in the working groups, the carousel session and the main keynote presentations at the International Conference in April 2010. Additionally, members of CERCLES and FIPLV as associated partners of the project were invited to complete a specially designed questionnaire on language policies at national or regional level. In this way information was collected concerning language policies or other policies relevant to languages from 16 countries[1] (14 European, Australia and China). We also examined some of the issues discussed in the Transversal Analysis of the Language Education Policy Profiles[2] carried out under the auspices of the Council of Europe between 2003-9 and presented at the International Conference.

Although we cannot claim that this was a comprehensive review of language policies in Europe (and beyond), there is nevertheless sufficient data to make some tentative conclusions about current reality and likely future developments.

AN OVERVIEW FROM THE POLICY PROFILES

The Transversal Analysis of the Language Education Policy Profiles identifies trends and provides an overview of current issues in the 16 member States which have so far engaged in the Profile process. Although the profiles are specific to each country it is perhaps significant that a number of themes emerge consistently and, taken together, they provide an overview of some key current issues. Of particular importance are the following:

- The effects of language education on social policy and the significance of linguistic competences for individuals and their careers
- The impact of language education on national (and regional) identities
- The potential for plurilingualism – it is not an exceptional condition but one which is found in most countries in Europe and in large numbers of people
- The impact (positive and negative) of English on multilingualism
- The tension between the instrumental and educational purposes of language learning
- The importance of quality and standards in language teaching and learning
- The search for coherence in language curricula

Many of these themes correspond to the issues emerging from our analysis and discussions, in particular when one adds what the CoE describes as 'Other significant themes'[3] addressed in the profiles such as New/immigrant languages and the Role of universities. It is also interesting to speculate about the differences of emphasis between the descriptions in the Profiles and the official policy statements of the various countries and regions. Perhaps not surprisingly the actual policy statements and practices tend to be less rounded and reflective (rarely for example addressing issues of identity in other than a simplistic way) than the profile which has been considered over months by a large number of stakeholders.

SOME KEY POLICY ISSUES

The content of the CoE Profiles informed and supplemented our discussions during the course of 2010. In addition the debates at the three LETPP events and the on line responses and discussions raised a number of critical issues concerning the implementation of policy and the possible future direction of policy. The main issues to emerge were the following:

- What is a Language Policy? Language Policy or Language Planning?
- Which languages are relevant to language policy?
- English in the context of plurilingual education
- Lack of coherence in languages education
- Language learning and the acquisition of competence
- Broadening the Concept of language policy
- Issues of Implementation
- New loci for language policy

What is a Language Policy? Language Policy or Language Planning?

There is an assumption in many existing policies – whether explicit or implicit – that a language policy/ strategy is essentially about provision, in particular the aim of increasing the number of speakers of a given language, and the measures needed to bring this about, usually through formal education. This was certainly the case with the English National Strategy with its core proposal to introduce language teaching into primary schools by 2010. It is also the kind of policy that is described in our response from Poland which refers solely to matters of provision (the number of hours and starting age for first and second foreign language) and describes success in terms of increased proficiency. This is a logical and broadly understood view of language policy (=language planning). It is summed up on p8 as the "conventional and necessary steps for a systematic and reviewable process of bringing about change in some area of language, involving intervention by governments and public authorities to change the actual state of affairs." It is also suggested that reality is somewhat different from this idealised formal picture and this too is confirmed by our survey.

Which languages are relevant to language policy?

The question of which languages come into the sphere of language policy is significant and reveals a great deal about the content and scope of its application. Despite the good intentions (for example of the Council of Europe profiles) we did not find much evidence of a comprehensive approach to integrating mother tongues, languages of schooling and foreign languages in the implementation of language policy. What we did discover, however, might form a good basis for structuring the envisaged constellation of languages as a desirable or efficient means of societal communication.

The data collected shows that most often within the scope of developed language policies come:

- The Languages of schooling. This can be children's mother tongues but more often involves the prescription of national and official languages in particular for children of migrant origin.
- The major European languages traditionally taught
- English as the language of wider communication and the facto lingua mundi
- World languages which are increasingly an issue for language policy concern
- Languages corresponding and related to favoured Erasmus exchange destinations
- Neighbouring languages (although in very specific contexts and as a priority area of non-governmental and other civil society or charity organisations).

Immigrant languages are increasingly referred to in presenting the complexity of multilingualism in Europe (numbers of languages spoken in a State, City, School etc). However they are rarely targeted in explicit form in language policy statements. The basic European documents (Charter, programmes)[4] did

not include them in the area of monitoring and specific actions. Only in the last two years have they become eligible for European programme funding under LLP. Although many countries and cities offer linguistic and educational support for the children of immigrants these are rarely conceived as explicit language policy components.

It is also noteworthy that diversification is not a major topic on the agenda of individual states' language policy development (despite its importance at European level). The response to issues of supply and demand in language learning and language skills by the educational system and institutions is not predominantly being solved by increasing the offer of languages, whether widely or lesser used ones. The commonly agreed goal of maximising educational and employment opportunities is more commonly resolved by offering the necessary minimum by statute. In many cases this means English. In some countries English is the only language taught at school and in most it is the compulsory first foreign language taught at school.[5] It should be noted that this does not always represent the belief that 'English is enough'. It is as likely to be a reflection of a view that education can only offer a minimum in this area to enhance educational and employment prospects.

English in the context of plurilingual education

This last point relates to the dominance of English and its effect on plurilingualism, which is not a simple matter. The Transversal analysis and some of the conference presentations highlight some complicated and diverse aspects in this respect. The pre-eminence of English in the school and higher education curriculum is noted in a number of Profiles and questionnaires. (Italy, Hungary, Finland and others). There is evidence that many education authorities consider that English alone is crucial in economic policy, and that this is part of the minimalist approach to provision already mentioned. It suggests a focus on the instrumentality of English and the dominance of instrumental attitudes both among learners and policy makers. Even in national contexts where there is a major world language and where policy statements uphold both that language and the importance of a diversified offer, English remains in practice the language of choice.

At University level where language policies are increasingly on the agenda (see below) the role of English is also significant and things are not always what they appear to be. For example one of the main issues informing and influencing language policy at university level has been the issue of internationalism. Yet the concept of internationalisation may be more related to attracting international students and maximising educational opportunities for the home university students through exchange programmes than to developing a truly international and multicultural ethos of learning. 'Internationalism' may indeed militate against the diversification of languages on offer because the aim of increasing educational opportunities and mobility is met through teaching in a language of wider communication – actually English. This is realised through the introduction of English as the language in instruction widely at tertiary level – for BA, MA (mainly) and PhD programmes.

At the same time we have also noted that there is an increasing potential for supporting plurilingualism through the vehicle of English, whether as a language through which other languages can be learned, or – as was pointed out by colleagues in Holland, Finland and Slovenia among others – simply because the existence of English as a lingua franca (and language of academic discourse) facilitates exchange and international recruitment.

These are some critical issues to which we return in Chapter 6.

Lack of coherence in languages education

Although the dominant mode of language policy appears to be a kind of state-driven language planning for increasing competence and capability in a (relatively limited) number of 'foreign' languages, there are examples of explicit language policies which link national languages, regional and minority languages, and foreign or second languages. Most commonly this is a matter of what is 'permitted' and of the

division of resources including curricular time. In the area of early language learning, for example, there is a clear need to correlate national or official languages and foreign languages. This correlation is exemplified in terms of teaching hours, the start of first foreign and second foreign languages in school education, and introduction of early language learning only with certain skills (e.g. oral and not written). The application of the CEFR to scaling the skills of national languages taught as second languages has also opened new opportunities for correlation between types of languages. Such correlation does not, however, go beyond a discussion on resource and provision – there is for example little explicit policy (or indeed practice) which seeks to coordinate curricula, activities and methodologies in these different areas of language learning.

Similarly there is a common issue of disjunction between different phases of languages education. We have a distinct impression that the links between higher and secondary education in particular are not always immediate. Universities do not readily fall under the scope of what is included in language education policy at secondary school level. This, of course, reinforces their specific and significant role as a factor of language policy implementation, since specific requirements for university admissions or calculation of the admissions score can have strong influence on the language outcomes related to studied languages and the level of competence.

Language learning and the acquisition of competence

Traditionally the goals of language policy are interpreted in political terms as maintaining the status quo, as planning to reform or transform, as the selection of languages for particular domains, and in general as a means of political development. Other specific goals of language policy are associated with ideas of modernisation and are expressed in terms of democratic values such as human equality, the rule of law, human rights on grounds of language and culture, and equality of access to education.

However, there is an aspect that is often considered as language specific which has not always come to the surface in discussion of language policies, exactly because it has been considered too language specific. It is the conceptualisation of language policy as the acquisition of competence. It would not be an exaggeration to say that this has in many ways been the driving force and the core of explicit and implicit language policy. This does, however, contain the germs of a more coherent approach to different languages. In some cases systems are moving away from a generalised view of competence to setting goals for acquiring competence in particular languages. Through instruments such as the CEFR ways are being found to measure language competence that puts all languages on an equal footing and anticipates their use in all appropriate domains. This more neutral way of looking at languages opens the way to strategies for an easier construction of plurilingual repertoires as the possible language outcomes of language policies. This effectively narrows the distance between languages and opens doors for accommodation in one room even of languages that might previously have been in competition as international languages. Taken further it can even allow us to see language skills as part of the basic/key competences and as part of the concept of literacy.

Broadening the Concept of language policy

This already indicates that a broader concept of language policy may exist in practice (what people do and also what they think) than in official policy documentation. Certainly we heard how policies in various countries (England, France for example) were linked to wider issues of cohesion and cognitive development. In general the data presents a tendency towards broadening the notion of language policy – from its narrow content as language planning of the national or official language to a broader concept including a wider range of agents, types of activities, level of explicitness and concreteness of application.

In a number of presentations and reports/responses, language policy is viewed as an important tool for solving non-linguistic aims or problems which are so closely associated with other political, social, economic and cultural challenges that focusing on the language component would seem a rather gross simplification or narrowing of the discourse. These are mostly related to the challenges of social

cohesion, migrants, citizenship issues and governing a multilingual city. A major issue remains the relation between politics and language as a marker of identity. Social reality provides evidence that in an era of globalisation and mobility, language remains a robust and in many cases one of the few markers of national identity.

In his contribution to the Project seminar on Community Cohesion in December 2009, Sir Keith Ajegbo posed the question of the role that a school's languages policy plays in cohesion. The focus of his contribution was community cohesion by which:

> we mean working towards a society in which there is a common vision and sense of belonging by all communities; a society in which the diversity of people's backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and valued; a society in which similar life opportunities are available to all; and a society in which strong and positive relationships exist and continue to be developed in the workplace, in schools and in the wider community.

He presents a consistent argument of the significance of developing language policy at community and school level motivated by issues such as the changing pattern of immigration, the ever widening definition in England of what schools are for and "big themes of cohesion such as religion and non religion, ethnicity and culture and socio-economic status."

A related but slightly different kind of social cohesion is described by Hans Sakkers from Utrecht:

> Languages and ethnic tolerance are also among the main reasons for the programme for exploring multilingualism in the city by the Utrecht council authorities and reaching the conclusion that "People who speak more foreign languages tend to have more friends of other ethno-linguistic background" and that "People who speak more languages participate more in cultural events, such as festivals, concerts, theatre, cinema, exhibitions etc." As many of these events involve music or text in foreign languages, it is assumed that for multilingual people such events are more easily accessible.

Rather than the more common 'problem' of multilingualism, the Utrecht experience affirms the value and life affirming character of diversity – enabling the active participation of people in society and culture.

Issues of Implementation 1. *Centrist model*

Although there are a number of problems with the notion that one can easily categorise language policies, two basic models of implementation, each with their own practical implications, emerged from our overview. On the one hand, there is the centrist policy, that is, a policy decreed from above, handed down and controlled by a centralised state and authorities (for example France, Italy, Slovenia, Poland and to a certain extent Hungary).

France

Josée Kamoun in her presentation of the current language policy situation in France describes the implications on language education policy of a highly centralised system:

It is characterised by a 'rigid curricula allowing little flexibility and in most cases the same language is studied from year 2 to year 12 in secondary education.'

Italy

Italy has 'state curricula which are compulsory for both private and state schools, i.e. the language policy is decided directly by the Minister and voted by Parliament'.

Hungary

The National Core Curriculum describes the country's language policy, its objectives and desired outcome. The NCC was issued as a government decree in 2003, amended in 2007. The Core National Curriculum is to be revised every five years now. The present National Core Curriculum spells out the values and aspects of human knowledge that are essential today and that educators have to focus on and develop. The section on communication in foreign languages, which is the second after communication in the mother tongue,

describes foreign languages as a key competency area. It is fully in line with the recommendations of the Council of Europe. The NCC is designed to serve as a basis for elaborating local curricula and programmes for language teaching.

The specific implication of such a policy approach is a centralised mandatory curriculum with clear regulations concerning other aspects of language teaching and language use at national or regional level. As pointed out in one of the questionnaire responses there is little or no flexibility concerning the languages offered at school level or the language choice for learners. The schools are not free to decide what languages and how to teach them both in terms of number of hours and methodology. The assumption is that the national level, for example, is the appropriate level for taking decisions and subsequently offering solutions to problems related to languages. This does not imply that these decisions are valid or effective. Rather it concerns other important aspects of policy implementation such as optimal use of resources, teacher training, development of learning materials, issues related to employment, both current and future, and a view about the development of important sectors of society from economics and tourism to international relations and cultural exchanges.

Centralised decision making does not necessarily lead to clear implementation on the ground. In this respect an interesting insight into policy decisions in the area of language policy is provided in the contribution of Lucija Čok, University of Primorska, drawing upon her own experience as a researcher and a former member of the government of Slovenia in charge of education:

> I am speaking about language policy under two hats. I had the opportunity to decide on the best of policies for languages in Slovenia (the ex-Ministerial hat) and on putting them into practice (the academic one). The way from decision making to implementation is rather complicated. Usually the first is easy (or quite easy) provided there is a political will and professional knowledge. Following the strategies defined by agreements at the European and international level in forming national language policies (ministerial conferences with declarations, the Council of Europe with recommendations, different action plans and comparable documents of neighbouring and friendly countries, and examples of good practice) can provide a good Minister-Government team with a general orientation. Applied and targeted projects, studies and elaborates firstly form the base, and then also the incentive for change called for by parents, pupils, and especially students. At the pilot level of individual innovations there are no problems, but things get complicated when a certain legislation is being adopted in the Parliament and even more so in the phase of its implementation.

Issues of Implementation 2 *"We have no policy"*

At the other end of an imaginary continuum of types of language policies is the laissez-faire language policy or the language policy of benign neglect ('absence of policy' policy) where there are hardly any political or regulatory acts. Since language policy is often conceived as language education policy, this type of language policy is closely related to a particular liberal vision of how education should function and what is the appropriate level for decision making. In these contexts both general educational and language education policy refrain from imposing any explicit normative texts that can limit the freedom of the educational institutions to formulate local policies and instruments.

Other factors beyond the centralised state are considered of importance for implementing and applying quality education, e.g. specific local economic and social priorities, employment opportunities, parents associations, school governors, local councils, cultural traditions, etc. Because of its small scale the survey carried out does not provide us with enough data and insights into the dynamics of these factors. There are, however, some specific aspects that seem to be of growing interest for decision makers at national level in countries with this 'hands off' liberal tradition, notably a minimum 'core' or mandatory curriculum and local management of resources, including staffing[6].

Such an approach is particularly (but not exclusively) associated with the Anglophone countries. David Little, for example gives the following description of the language policy situation of Ireland entitled *'We don't do policy here: the case of Ireland'*:

Ireland and language education

- Ireland has policies regarding the Irish language, but it does not have a general languages policy, far less a language education policy
- There is no national curriculum
- Only three school subjects are compulsory: Irish, English, Mathematics
- Foreign languages survive in post-primary schools because the National University of Ireland requires a foreign language for matriculation
- There is no national policy forum at which issues of language and social cohesion/language and intercultural communication are under continuing review.

A consequence of such an 'absence of policy' policy is that there often seems to be some counter balancing pressure, mostly coming from researchers, language education experts and practitioners to include certain issues in the government agenda. This is often a reflection of a radically changed social environment in countries traditionally considered as monolingual but actually multilingual in reality, for whom the laissez-faire approach is no longer able to confront new realities in relation to the complex challenges of present day employment, economic and service needs and of the requirement to provide conditions for better equipping pupils and students in a world of increased mobility and internationalised everyday life.

New loci for language policy

Another considerable change in the concept of language policy implementation is the nature of its natural locus of implementation. There are now many examples of the ways in which it is no longer the state alone that can claim possession of language policy.

For example there is a clear need for language policy at university level, a message conveyed by the International conference in 2010 and by the response to the questionnaires.

Language policy at the University of Vienna

The University of Vienna's Strategic Development Plan (2009) stresses the fact that the University of Vienna as a European university must endeavour to strengthen the implementation of Europe-wide concepts like the promotion of multilingualism in Europe:

"Owing to its self-image as a European university the University of Vienna supports pan-European strategies of advancing multilingualism in Europe by offering more courses in the Bachelor programmes in languages other than German, by offering language courses for students pursuing non-philological study programmes, by better utilising the language skills of international students (e.g. through tandem learning) and teaching staff (e.g. for the supervision of non-German academic or research papers), as well as by participating in European research programmes and networking activities"

London School of Economics

According to Nick Byrne "There is a shared feeling by senior management and the language centre that LSE should have a language policy"[7]. He cited a UK Minister's remark in 2009: "A university without languages is a university without universality."

It is not only in universities that specific language policies are being developed 'beyond the state'. Smaller administrative or territorial divisions within them (regions, provinces, cantons, cities) are also creating fully-developed and applied language policies. Spain, with its developed regional structures is an instructive example:

> In a situation when "educated city dwellers usually speak 3 or 4 languages – Catalan, Spanish, English and French" separate cities have their own language policy provisions. The autonomous government of Madrid has a general educational policy with a special emphasis on bilingual education at primary and secondary level where the programme started at Primary level in 2004 and currently involves 206 state schools. A variety of subjects are taught through English. As of September 2010 the programme will include secondary schools[8].

This is very much a vision of how the future of language policy might develop, in regions or more commonly in the Multilingual City. The potential future role of the Multilingual City – other examples given were from the UK and Holland – was a major issue for discussion in LETPP and it is a question which we consider at greater length in our concluding chapter.

The concept of necessity and challenge

There are some key concepts that have recurred in these discussions. One of the most central is *necessity*: given the existence of different language communities in Europe, there has always been a need for multilingual facility. Multilingualism arises and is maintained through necessity and contact and it imposes another necessity – that of crossing language barriers. In the contemporary complex reality characterised as multilingualism at all societal levels, there are new imminent issues, which need to be addressed.

Some of these imminent challenges highlighted in the LETPP materials are the following:

- There is a continuing need for policy and resources on multilingualism to support mobility for work and education (perhaps not so significant for leisure activities since for that purpose English may provide sufficient resource)
- An appropriate language policy can strengthen inter-cultural understanding in a Europe of diversity in ever closer interaction
- There is a policy vacuum on some of the most pressing social challenges of our time and in particular at national and European level (at the level of the political community) – although relevant language policies at other (local, University) levels can compensate and contribute to resolving some of the specific challenges of the social context
- There is a tension between the standard view of language policy which addresses society as a whole, speech communities or the nation and the practice of applying specific language policies to smaller or more diverse types of groups of people
- There is a need for greater coherence in language policy across phases and most particularly in relation to different manifestations of 'language' (mother tongue, national, schooling, community, 'foreign' etc).

Overall our survey of the state of affairs in national language policies confirmed that the main issues discussed at the LETPP seminars and conference are relevant ones. They are strongly felt at national and indeed other levels of policy. It is this – and its future direction – which we will now consider in greater detail.

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[1]Belgium, Spain, Switzerland, Italy, Ireland, Germany, the Netherlands, Hungary, Poland, Bulgaria, Slovenia, the UK, France, Austria, Australia and China.

[2]www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Profils_en.asp

[3]The full list is as follows –
• New/immigrant languages
• Language education and education for democratic citizenship
• Rates of language acquisition and its assessment
• Role of universities
• Training for principals and other language policy makers
• Signed languages
• Role of the private sector in education

[4]E.g. Charter for Regional and Minority Languages (1992); Lingua programme (1989), Socrates (1994)

[5]Eurydice Key Data on Teaching Languages at School in Europe 2008 Edition p.45

[6]A recent example of this is the 'White Paper' on education published by the new UK Government – Department of Education 'The Importance of Teaching' November 2010

[7]Actually launched at the final LETPP event October 2010

[8]Questionnaire response

5   NEW CONTEXTS, NEW CHALLENGES

We have suggested (Chapters 3 and 4) that by the end of the first decade of the 21st Century, European policies on languages were in a situation of flux, or even uncertainty. Between roughly 1985 and 2005 there had been a relatively smooth development – certainly at supranational level – characterised by an implicit and explicit commitment to multilingualism based on certain key assumptions: that language capability was a necessary condition for mutual understanding, a benefit for economic growth and skills development, and (increasingly) a source of social cohesion. More recently, however, things have appeared rather less clear cut, both internationally and in individual countries. Before considering some of the implications of this new situation, and proposing some possible new directions for policy on languages, it may be worth reviewing the factors which could underlie this change.

The New Economy and new forms of communication

In a series of reflections and studies on globalisation and its modes of organisation Manuel Castells has identified its links to the economy and more precisely the new economy. In his 2000 work, entitled 'The Information Age'[1] he identifies three features which characterise the new economy: first the distinctive ways in which new economic processes generate *information*; second how the activity of economic production takes on a global scale of *organisation*, arising from the lowering of national boundaries and the erosion of exclusive control of national economies, and third how in relation to production processes and forms, competition is organised in *networks* that are themselves located globally. These factors, which have certainly intensified and developed in ways not even imagined in the last decade, are having a major impact on the way we communicate, and thus on language, making possible a major destabilisation of what has always been assumed about 'community' and 'communication'.

Older models of economy, especially the classic Fordist mode of production, and its related distribution mechanisms, minimised, discouraged and even punished communication between workers. The organised form of labour required decisions taken by managers or directors to be implemented strictly following their rules and procedures. Modification would require discussion and agreement and these were discouraged. These traditional mechanisms linked production and communication vertically while the new economic processes are flatter, if not horizontal, and allocate decision making responsibilities to more local zones of production. This in turn requires local communication and discussion and involvement of workers.

It would not be true to imagine that all or even many workplaces are communicatively democratic, but the pattern of rigid imposition of procedures has been ruptured and local literacy and communication is needed to produce effective coordinated actions across large economic enterprises. In growing numbers of multilingual workplaces this necessitates multilingual communication. The new economy involves consistent interactions and exchanges of productive units linked across geographical locations. These exchanges and interactions are inconceivable without an instantaneous and effective process for communication and standardised forms for coding and receiving information. New economy forms of organisation are no less rigid or real than they were in its older forms; both the location and the segmentation of work involves not only hierarchical order, but also dictates how this is distributed according to the qualifications of workers, the languages they speak and the literacies they utilise. What distinguishes the new economy to a considerable extent is the hierarchy of multilingualism and also the centre/periphery structure of its organisation.

The technologies to facilitate communication dovetail with and facilitate the globalisation of both economies and communication. This means that local sites are linked in networks, introducing multilingualism

and therefore the need to agree on how to organise talk and to distribute functionally different languages, and the role of the lingua franca, and at the same time local sites are themselves multilingual through migration. So both the extended reality of networks and increasing numbers of nodes within such networks aggregate people together across their national, cultural, and linguistic differences. The potential of technologies to transcend physical distance also gives rise to the whole question of the spatial distribution of language as it did in the ideology of the national state, with its bounded territory over which a single standardised language would prevail. The significant difference with the monolingual nation state is of course that this spatial distribution can be across national borders (between sites, universities and cities for example) and that the mode of operation is increasingly multi rather than monolingual. This does not, however, remove the increased utility and power of linguae francae.

The power of the Internet

The most striking manifestation of this communication shift is in the development of electronically mediated communication (EMC), most obviously but not exclusively the Internet. The phenomenal speed (and unpredictability) of this change over the last 20 years is vividly illustrated by David Crystal:[2]

> In 1990 there was no World Wide Web: that arrived in 1991. Although email had been available for some years, most people did not send their first email until the mid-90s. Chatrooms and online games developed at roughly the same time. Google arrived in 1999. Mobile phones, with associated text-messaging, at about the same time (at least, in the UK – the USA was a few years later). The word weblog was created in 1997, but blogging as a genre didn't take off until the arrival of easy-to-use software, such as Blogger, in the early 2000s. Instant messaging is another development of the early 2000s, soon to be followed by social networking (Facebook, YouTube, Hi5, and over 100 other networks) around 2003-5. In 2006 we encounter Twitter. And next year, we will encounter – what?
>
> The point of this chronology is to draw attention to its recency, diversity, and unpredictability. If someone had said to me, in 2005, that the next EMC development was going to be a system where you were given an online prompt, 'What are you doing?', and a limit of 140 characters for your reply, I would have written them off as deluded. But Twitter, a microblogging platform, has proved to be one of the most successful EMC developments to date, the fastest growing Web brand in 2009.

It is in no way surprising that educational policy, social policy, policy in general lag behind these unprecedented developments in the practice of global communication. The traditional development of policy based on evidence of some kind and seeking to reach defined and agreed goals is disrupted by the unpredictability of EMC. There is probably also an age factor – EMC is the world of the young in particular, which is generally not the case for policy development.

New mobility

In the new economy not only does technology make possible networking across distance, but the populations making up local spaces are increasingly diverse. Castells' *Information Age* is matched by Castles and Miller's *Age of Migration (2009)*[3], in which they document population mobility. Focusing on the challenge posed to sovereign national states they show that not only are the flows of population greater, indeed unprecedented, but also the types and consequences of people movement are multiplying, with male and female, marital status, citizen status, duration of stay, age, professional category, differentiating flows; also different are the directions, so that nations whose recent image is of emigration now are solidly nations of immigration. Ireland and Italy are classic cases of this, but there are many others.

While the vast transfer of populations is highly differentiated, the authors note some common tendencies, which mean that virtually all parts of the globe are engaged in and affected by the movement of peoples, and that this movement is taking place at an accelerating rate. It is highly differentiated so that many different kinds of population transfer occur, for different periods of time, different reasons

and with different kinds of legal status. One major characteristic of this is that a noticeably growing proportion involves female led and single female movements, which is a significant departure from previous patterns. Migration also has a significant impact on general policy – both the idea of migration as well as its rate and numbers provoke political response, from planning and integration policies to rejection and hostility.

In the phase of national consolidation most European states experienced extensive internal movements of peoples, as their populations moved away from the country to the city. Rural to urban migration is both a precursor to urban consolidation and a precursor to the establishment of consolidated and dominant national languages. All modern European states have seen these movements of population now supplemented by cross-European mobility and extra-continental migration. In these ways family links have become distributed across vast spaces so the information networks noted by Castells are supplemented by family networks in cities and communities that transcend national boundaries.

The impact of this movement of people is that borders are more porous, but are linked closely to those who have moved, and are themselves engaged in temporary movement of various kinds throughout their lives. In this context we have also witnessed the emergence of two vast types of population movement which are temporary or multi-stage rather than permanent. These are tourism and study, although there is also a tendency to blur the distinction between migration and tourism and migration and study, since in many cases what starts out as one kind of movement turns into another.

Much of the period of the consolidation of national states involved making internal cultural patterns homogenous, but the combined effects of the Age of Migration with the Information Age, both motivated by the new economy, have produced more communication rich workplaces, linked across multilingual spaces and themselves more communication dependent and multilingual.

The emergence of a Lingua Franca

If the new economy enables the proliferation of multilingual communication, it also greatly encourages and is in turn facilitated by the development of a Lingua Franca. It is this paradox also which European language policy will need to address more systematically.

Most observers now agree that English has effectively become that lingua franca and that its role is an unprecedented one in world history. There is of course debate about why this has happened and about the extent to which this is or will be to the detriment of other languages[4]. Without stepping far into that particular discussion, we could agree that English has acquired this 'hyper-centralist' role not because it is a 'superior' or intrinsically 'more useful' language. It is certainly a reflection of geo-political realities – English colonialism and US Superpower status for example. It is also possible that the rapid changes which take place in a Global age mean that other languages – Spanish, Arabic, Chinese are obvious contenders – could play a similar hyper centralist role in the future.

Nevertheless it is the reality of English as a lingua franca that we must confront today. This reality is shown most clearly by the language choices being made both in Europe (Chapter 4) and worldwide. According to Eurostat, already in 2006/7 in the school system within the countries of the European Union "In the great majority of cases, English is the language that all pupils have to learn"[5] and that tendency was growing. In the survey of Bulgarian students carried out in connection with LETPP, English was by far the dominant language even in cases where it was not their first choice of language[6]. Globally China and India are competing to invest in the teaching and learning of English[7] and across Asia English is the first foreign language in 100% of secondary curricula and there are also major initiatives to make English the language of schooling[8].

The issue then is not whether (or even why) English is a lingua franca, but how we understand and respond to that reality. In terms of the question we discussed at the seminars and on line, does this hinder or help multilingualism? This also is a question to be addressed in Chapter 6.

Current economic and social realities

These factors relating to globalisation – the 'new economy', new kinds of communication and the emergence of a lingua franca represent long term shifts in the economy and in society and their impact on language policy is as yet only imperfectly understood. During the past year we have also considered other – it is to be hoped more short term – factors, which should not be ignored. Of particular significance has been the economic downturn since 2008. The effect of this has been at one level to reduce public support for various kinds of policy intervention, one of which is extremely likely to be policy on multilingualism, given the ambiguous nature of the relationship between multilingualism and general social and educational policy (Chapter 2). In blunt terms those responsible for public finances will not necessarily see the point of funding multilingual development at a time of crisis.

At a deeper level such economic pressures also impact on the social fabric, and this is likely to exacerbate the tensions inherent in the longer term social and cultural changes associated with the new economy. Mobility in particular – and more specifically immigration – is becoming a major area of political controversy. Many of the accepted liberal consensual views about multiculturalism and the role of the state in promoting inclusive education are being called into question. Access to support or learning of 'mother tongues' is for example no longer the norm in countries where this has long been a tradition, and in general there has been a move at both national and European level away from valuing, respecting and supporting immigrant languages towards more single minded concentration on learning the national language of the various states. At European level the Council of Ministers has pulled back from some of the more overtly liberal statements of support for migrant languages and cultures[9] and this retrenchment is reflected in the new priorities for languages in the Life Long Learning programme which stress the importance of national rather than immigrant languages[10]. This new or revived conservatism is paralleled in the nation states, which have developed a more overtly nationalistic focus linked to debate about single national identities and the search for national certainties. This has been characteristic even of apparently mature Western democracies, and leading politicians in both France and the UK for example have headed campaigns to 'reaffirm' or define French identity or 'Britishness', while the German Chancellor has pronounced that Multiculturalism does not work[11].

This observable lack of confidence and conservative retrenchment raises a number of critical questions which we will attempt to address in the final Chapter.

[1]Castells, M. (2000), The information Age. The rise of the network society, Oxford: Blackwell.

[2]David Crystal paper – Multilingualism and the Internet delivered at LETPP Conference April 2010 www.letpp.eu/images/stories/docs/conference/david_crystal_multilingualism_and_the_internet.pdf

[3]Castles, S. and Miller, M. (2009), The Age of Migration. International Population Movements in the Modern World. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave MacMillan

[4]See for example Phillipson, Robert 2004. English as threat or resource in continental Europe. In Globalisation and the future of German, ed. Andreas Gardt and Bernd Hüppauf, Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 47-64.
De Swaan, A. (2004), 'Endangered languages, sociolinguistics, and linguistic sentimentalism', European Review, 12, (4), (October), 567–580.)

[5]Eurydice – Key Data on Teaching Languages at School in Europe 2008 p.45

[6]Stoicheva, M. (ed.) (2011). Language Policies. Bulgaria - Europe. Sofia University Publishing House. (forthcoming)

[7]Lo Bianco Orton Gao China and English: Globalisation and the Dilemmas of Identity (Critical Language and Literacy Studies) 2009

[8]Lo Bianco talk to LETPP Conference 2010

[9]See below on the 2008 Maalouf Report – 'A Rewarding Challenge'

[10]Lifelong Learning Programme General Call for Proposals 2011-2013 Strategic Priorities KA2 Languages – 2.1.4 (on strengthening social inclusion) – 'Projects will develop innovative language learning methods enabling immigrants to learn the language of the host country' p.37

[11]www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-11559451

6   NEW DIRECTIONS FOR MULTILINGUAL POLICY?

We have concluded that the European vision (more accurately visions) and European policies on multilingualism are in the process of quite substantial change. Although it can be said that much has been achieved in this area – in particular widespread public acceptance of the importance of multilingualism, the development of a range of instruments and resources supporting language learning and measurable improvements in proficiency levels – there is now a degree of uncertainty as we are faced with ever more complex challenges. Some would even say that European and national policies on multilingualism are at risk. This is made no easier by an unprecedentedly difficult economic situation where no country or supranational institution is likely to have the resources for any major new initiatives.

In this chapter we will attempt to suggest some future directions for language policy in Europe, in the hope that this may be of some help for policy makers, as well as providing the basis for further investigation and reflection in this area.

THE 'COMMON THREADS' OF EUROPEAN POLICY

What we have seen in the policy/policies of the last 25 years in Europe is on one level a definite development – a move from the mainly operational and pragmatic support for international communication to a more sophisticated understanding of multilingualism as a key marker of identity and culture, and a more complex view of a fluid and multicultural world.

At the same time there are certain common threads, which although they may have varied in perceived importance over this period, have remained relatively constant elements in the rationale for multilingualism, whether in the European Union as a whole or in individual states. They are:

- **Communication and mobility**
  Languages/multilingualism are seen as necessary conditions for operating within the multilingual European space, and increasingly for interacting with the rest of the world (both in and outside Europe). Language competence therefore becomes a fundamental skill for employability.

- **Acquisition of competences**
  The accepted model for increasing multilingualism, as well as the measure of success (and the target for support and incentives, from Lingua to the Life Long Learning programme) has been the acquisition of new linguistic competences by citizens of a particular language group, largely through national education and training, supported by bilateral and multilateral agreements.

- **Equality of (European) languages**
  The assumption on which European policy is based is that all languages are of equal status, although the reality may be rather more nuanced, as there are significant practical distinctions between 'official', 'working' and 'operational' languages. The status of 'non-European' immigrant or world languages is also less clear.

- **Mutual understanding**
  Through learning languages and understanding about other cultures, it is believed that European citizens will understand each other better and Europe will become a more tolerant place where there is mutual respect and the creation of a multifaceted 'European' identity.

- **Trade and prosperity**
  Increased multilingualism will also facilitate exchange and trade within the single market and with the rest of the world and this will be a major contributing factor to Europe's competitiveness and prosperity.

In our discussions many questions were raised about these assumptions. Before considering some of the detail of this, however, there is perhaps one fundamental issue on which we need to reflect. The European model as summarised above is in essence a *symmetrical and linear model*. It is about progress – supported by education and training – leading from monolingualism to multilingualism enabling better communication and resulting in greater mutual understanding and benefit.

It is a heroic model and it has had some significant successes.

Given the complexity of our current age, however, it may be time to re-scope this model. Faced with new contexts (the new economy, mobility, electronically mediated communication) and new challenges (the articulation of complex identities, the emergence of a lingua franca) we may now need some different approaches and more subtle solutions.

VOICES OF THE FUTURE – A 2020 VISION.

Inevitably much language policy is developed in the context of the past (and by the middle-aged!). As we move towards a new conceptualisation of language policy in Europe for the 2020s it seems appropriate also to solicit the views of rather younger citizens, the ones who will actually be creating this new Europe. In the course of a short project we cannot claim to have carried out a systematic or comprehensive analysis, but through questionnaires in 4 countries, more detailed discussions in two and the participation of 11 students in the International Conference we can already point to some interesting aspects of the attitudes of young people, at least among the relatively elite section of university students.

Instrumental Arguments for Languages predominate

In the autumn of 2009 a survey was carried out at the University of Sofia 'St. Kliment Ohridski' among students who were not specialising in languages. One of the clearest findings is that these young people have very high levels of competence in English, in particular spoken interaction and reading. Perhaps more interesting are their 'other language' choices which show a degree of volatility, with a decline in interest in French, growth in Spanish and increasingly good levels of German and Russian. In discussions, as well as in the survey itself, students explained that their main motivations were unashamedly instrumental. A new language of communication was seen as vital for access to Higher Studies or employment, the main sources of which were thought to be English speaking countries and Germany. There is also a tendency to add more languages (1-3 and more) for better employment and study opportunities.

Not surprisingly such clearly instrumental arguments have rather less resonance with native speakers of English, for whom languages were often regarded an 'extra' benefit, giving access to new cultures or experiences, or a way of affirming an international identity, rather than a *sine qua non* of professional and personal life.

The Importance of mobility

Linked to this instrumentality is the question of mobility, which for this particular target group is a key aspiration, indeed almost a condition of their future plans. Multilingual competence is seen as critical to realising this goal. It is as though the territory on which they conceive their lives has widened immensely, both as real territory but also in their conceptualisation of the world. Again there may be some important differentiation between the students from the new accession countries, (100% commitment to mobility of which multilingualism is a condition), 'main language countries' where this is 'important but not so critical' and the UK and Ireland where even our committed young people may view multilingualism more as a bonus and desirable additional benefit. That is *until they acquire it*: one student presenter from London described how she only realised the importance of another language when she had spent time in Egypt and learned Arabic. Before then, languages learned in school had been seen as a desirable but optional extra.

No question about the key role of English

This pragmatic view is confirmed in relation to the students' attitude towards English. For them the predominance of English is not even a question, and the long debates in European institutions may appear rather baffling. Indeed a number of students/young workers have no problem with the idea of English as the 'main' language of Europe – one even said it should be made the 'official supranational language'. Significantly, however, there was little sense that, for this particular group at least, the existence of a Lingua Franca would undermine national languages or the desirability of a broader multilingual repertoire. It is interesting to speculate whether this issue which has occupied so many hours of discussion is actually becoming a 'non-issue' in the 2010s.

So far then so straightforward. These students seem to have a fairly pragmatic view of multilingualism as something which is both essential and non-controversial in their lives – a way of accessing new opportunities and of living in a diverse and globalised world. They also addressed some rather more problematic areas, which were to occupy much of our discussion during 2010.

Languages for mutual understanding

This is also a strong motivating factor among our young people, both those from the East and from the West. It seems to be something to do with their aspirations to be citizens of a new kind of world. As one of the Bulgarian students put it rather eloquently:

> Secondary education should aim at helping students explore the world; it should show them that there really are other people out there, people with different culture and way of thinking, people worth knowing. It should teach them how to discover the world and perceive travelling as a normal thing, not an extraordinary, difficult and rarely done exercise. (Maria)

Such statements are naturally encouraging, as they reinforce, probably unconsciously, some of the Council of Europe ideals of mutual understanding, or the EU formulation of unity in diversity.

Languages and identity

This essentially liberal world view of multilingualism creating mutual understanding, was, however, rather more nuanced when it came to reflections on the impact of language on identity. The potential for complexity in this area was well captured by Keith Ajegbo in his description of the overlapping identities of a London teenager:

> I'm black I live in London – that's my home. My parents are from the Caribbean but I'm really African. I'm a Christian, but I'm E7 – that's where I hang they're my people. That's who I am.
>
> *(E7 is a postal district of East London)*

Even our rather more privileged young people expressed some concerns about maintaining a sense of national identity in the face of Globalisation and the increasing use of English as a lingua franca. By contrast they mainly saw the possibilities for developing multiple identities as both positive and unproblematic:

> The most crucial part today and in ten years will be to make people understand that speaking multiple languages and having interest and respect for other cultures is very important. Even though every country in Europe has its own identity, Europe has to develop an identity for its own to become a unity, comparable to one single country with a lot of official languages. (Tamara)

Many saw a range of languages as adding to their sense of self:

> Sports, music, visual art, acting, philosophical contemplation, logical reasoning, poetry, prose, etc., all of the stated above and many others are areas that constitute a sphere of activities through which an individual can express his own identity. If someone is familiar, let's say, with one language, he can take part in all previously mentioned areas, but only inside the cultural spectrum of the mastered language. Let's further assume that the individual in question masters another language, quite different and belonging to another ethnic or cultural group. At this point a whole new paradigm opens and the potential for his individual expression virtually doubles. (Hrvatin)

New kinds of communication

Although not asked a question about the internet the students made the assumption that new communication technologies were both a stimulus and a support mechanism for multilingualism:

> In 10 years our languages will become far more flexible as a result of the impact of the unlimited power of internet, mass media and new technologies. This will lead to a kind of 'cohesion' between languages. (Violetta)

Motivation and Education

Our target group also had a surprising amount to say about teaching and learning and in particular the importance of motivating learners. Almost counter-intuitively the importance of this was felt as strongly by the students with strong instrumental reasons for learning languages.

> But I think that one of the most important topical issues is the lack of motivation among students to learn languages. (Toteva)

That this is not a partial view of young people's thinking is confirmed by many other studies of language learner motivation, most recently perhaps contained in the ACER report[1] which summarises student (in this case school student) opinion as follows –

> When consulted about language education as they experience it students, both at primary and secondary level, show an acute sensitivity as to the level of seriousness of what is offered to them. In research undertaken between 2005 and 2008 in Melbourne with students taking Italian and Japanese (Lo Bianco & Aliani, 2008), a considerable number expressed clear preferences for more academically serious programs, for more evidence of school and system commitment and for a more diverse curriculum linked to 'actually using the language'. (p.7)

The significance of this cannot be summed up more succinctly than by one of our student group:

> It is vital for decision-makers in this area to realise one thing: nobody can be forced into learning a language. If there is no motivation and genuine interest to it, it just doesn't work. Personally I have been studying Russian for ten years, English for eight and Spanish for three years but I'm fluent only in English. On the other hand, I study Swedish on my own. That is due to the fact that I have had the chance to visit the USA and I've been all over the United Kingdom. I've also been to Sweden – a magnificent country, which inspired me to learn its language. (Boryana)

Overall 'our' students are clearly influenced by current accepted wisdom, but they are also taking things forward. Some key conclusions from this might be that in the younger generation we can expect a more pragmatic acceptance of a lingua franca and common sense use of English, continued enthusiasm for mobility for academic, employment and personal reasons (with the crisis this is likely to be accentuated), questioning and some confusion about new kinds of identity, examination and development of how education and training systems serve the needs of the people and much greater use of/participation in new technologies than is currently the case in educational institutions.

This leads us to further reflection on three issues:

- **The parameters of European language policy**
  Whether and how to re-scope the current model

- **Key Implications for education systems**
  New pedagogies, new approaches, different organisational models

- **The drivers and contexts for multilingualism**
  Networks and Multilingual Cities

RE-SCOPING THE MODEL

Our understanding of past policy, of practice in many countries and of the opinions of academics, policy makers and practitioners, including these young practitioners, now leads us to some conclusions and suggestions about the European model for multilingualism.

Revisiting Mother Tongue plus 2

If policy is both 'what is written down' and 'what people do' then there is a case for saying that the reality of 'Mother Tongue plus 2' is somewhat different from the script. Just as 'every Armenian mother knows'[2] that her child needs English (and computer skills and a University degree) and most of us are aware that English is effectively a lingua franca in the EU Institutions so the current reality of this aspiration is in most cases MT plus English plus 1. This is the uncontroversial view of our students, and in all of our discussions in 2009/2010 there was little evidence of a different reality. According to one of our discussion groups:

> participants from other countries (i.e. outside the UK) explained what is 'taken for granted' about language learning in their education systems, including the self-evident choice of English as a foreign language, with high motivation from learners – who in fact learn much of their English outside school. Further language learning builds on this experience although it has to be said that the pleasures and problems of teaching languages other than English mirror those of teaching foreign languages in British schools.

Whether the fact that English has acquired this 'hyper-centralist' role is 'desirable' or not[3], it would appear to be a fact of reality and a determinant of policy. We could therefore conclude that there is a need to stop regarding English as the problem. We could instead welcome the emergence of an effective lingua franca which means that all educated, employable people have a first language and a language for international communication. This is fast becoming a self-chosen reality among young upwardly mobile people internationally (and that incidentally is where UK monolinguals become the poor cousins of the rest of the educated world). The question then is not "what should we do about English", but what are the implications of this (for the present) dominant role? How do we encourage real multi/plurilingualism (and how can the ubiquitousness of English assist this process)? What, indeed, does it mean for our present and future identities?

The Competitiveness Issue

A major strand – sometimes *the* major strand – in the past and current rationale for multilingualism has been the argument that multilingualism improves competitiveness.[4] At the same time it has always proved difficult to elicit significant actual support from employers for increased multilingualism. Although businesses are thought to be concerned to have plurilingual employees, with notable exceptions they have not shown a willingness to participate: perhaps because of lack of time or resources but also for fear of exposing their strengths and weaknesses in this area to competitors.

The fact that over the past year we have not been able to articulate a very clear and convincing 'business case', even in the seminar devoted mainly to that question, and that the response from employers (especially outside the state and public sectors) to languages remains ambiguous, leads us at least to question current orthodoxy in this area. At this stage we do no more than ask questions:

- Is it the role of business to educate the workforce?

If not – and our assumption is that by and large it is not, then

- If business or employers in general need multilingual competences, will not the market – international labour mobility supported by the freedom of movement in the EU – solve the problem?
- Indeed, do not most businesses already operate with a concept of 'good employee' that includes language skills, whom they will employ regardless of the source of those skills?

If we think that this is the case, then it might follow that the 'economic competitiveness case' – (more languages means greater competitiveness) – as opposed to the skills/mobility case which is indisputably true (people who work need languages and intercultural skills) – may be something of a policy 'cul de sac', or at least a 'problem' which the market can already solve?

The Identity Issue

The interplay between language and identity is not a new issue. It does however take on particular significance in the mobile, interconnected world of the 21st century, creating new and in some respects uncomfortable challenges. In 2008 *Amin Maalouf* presented the report of the 'Group of Intellectuals for Intercultural Dialogue' – A Rewarding Challenge.[5] This makes one of the most eloquent recent statements about both the complexity and the importance of a diversified European identity.

> While most of the European nations have been built on the platform of their language of identity, the European Union can only build on a platform of linguistic diversity. This, from our point of view, is particularly comforting. A common sense of belonging based on linguistic and cultural diversity is a powerful antidote against the various types of fanaticism towards which all too often the assertion of identity has slipped in Europe and elsewhere, in previous years as today.

The report also addresses head-on the issue of languages other than the national European languages, as a legitimate part of the European space, something which had begun with the Framework Document on multilingualism. It suggests both that immigrants should have access to their languages of origin[6] and that Europeans "should learn non-European languages including 'immigrants' languages of identity".

> Just as immigrants would be encouraged to fully adopt the language of the host country and the culture it carries, it would be fair and useful for the immigrants' languages of identity to also be part of the languages which Europeans themselves would be encouraged to adopt. We have to gradually get out of this one-way relationship in which people from elsewhere are getting better and better at learning European languages, while very few Europeans take the trouble to learn the languages of the immigrants.

The central concrete proposal of the report is the idea that Europeans should learn at least two new languages, one that is called 'A language of international communication', which in current circumstances would be mainly but not exclusively English, and the other a 'personal adoptive' language, which they would choose for a variety of reasons: bilateral relations, family tradition or personal aspirations. The idea was not fully developed – although interestingly in 2008 it struck a chord with many non-linguist politicians, but it is a less symmetrical way of envisaging the MT +2 aspiration, and one which does reflect something of the ELF[7] reality. It would also seem to chime with the ways of thinking of our student cohort.

It is of interest and undoubted significance to note that these ideas of the group of intellectuals have not been further developed at a policy level since 2008. This coincides with what we have characterised a 'lack of confidence and conservative retrenchment'.

Towards an asymmetric plurilingual model

Maalouf and his colleagues (among others) add to our 'common threads' a new idea – the concept of a complex identity based on diversity. They also suggest a different and less symmetrical way of envisaging the relationships between languages (underlining as reasons for language choice factors which better reflect the decisions taken by real citizens). This lack of symmetry could have significant implications for policy at both national and international level.

This also relates to the concept of Plurilingualism proposed by the Council of Europe. If as this model suggests the future belongs to those who have a range of linguistic and cultural capabilities – including mother tongue/s, learned languages, used languages and even particles of acquired languages – a model incidentally which corresponds to the instinctive perceptions of our student contingent – this poses challenges both to formal education systems and to the arenas in which cultural and linguistic discourse is actually taking place. It challenges the central assumption that language policy is fundamentally about the (symmetrical) acquisition of one or two new languages through education and training. It asks questions about the places in which multilingualism actually develops, in particular places of high population concentration – the multilingual cities, and the informal settings for learning which are characteristic of the 21st century, mainly but not exclusively cyberspace.

EDUCATION FOR MULTILINGUAL SOCIETIES

The provision of education and training is almost entirely the responsibility of individual nation states. Even so there is considerable convergence in the stated educational priorities of most developed countries, as we have seen from our overview in Chapter 4. There is also a significant (if inconsistent) influence from the supra national European bodies, not least in the development of an accepted discourse about languages education. The importance of 'communicative competence', 'learner autonomy' and 'CLIL' are obvious examples relating to the processes of language learning, while the almost universal acceptance of early language learning as in some sense 'better' or even 'more natural' underpins Europe-wide programmes to introduce primary languages.

How then might we wish to influence the direction of languages education in the next decade?

Firstly it seems to us that education takes place increasingly in both formal (school, University) and informal (home and community, cinema, and especially cyberspace) settings. This is true also for languages education.

Challenges for Formal Education

Our discussions identified three major issues in formal education settings:
- Motivation of learners (teaching and learning)
- Organisation of learning (issues about where learning takes place and how time is organised). This also interfaces with the Informal context.
- Content (the nature of a multilingual curriculum)

These issues also have significant implications for methodology and teacher training which are rather beyond our current remit and they are of course informed – and possibly shaped – by the new technologies.

At this stage, our discussions and consultations lead us to believe that there is a need to articulate a clearer vision on what formal education for multilingualism/plurilingualism could look like. It is for example suggested that "we need to break away from the traditional insistence on learning four skills" (linear, symmetric model), and "take a more pragmatic approach to the different uses of languages; we should learn more about the ways in which plurilingual learners draw on their whole linguistic expertise in order to communicate. This could include a consideration of the ways in which multilingual groups can use a range of languages… for example in multilingual meetings". This entails greater linguistic flexibility, including use of code-switching or translanguage as the norm. Perhaps the key theme is the relationship between 'culture, languages and identity'; not 'languages' conceived of as a solely competence-based area of knowledge acquisition.

Some implications of such an approach for the practice of teaching and learning were identified as follows:

- New pedagogies need to be developed to adapt to the modern multilingual languages classroom where there is no one dominant language. Models from TEFL and FLE, could provide a stimulus, as can the practice in many 'community' language classrooms where bilingual and multilingual communication is quite standard.

- Wider implications for pedagogy include ways in which we value the multilingual reality of European society. Understanding mother tongues, their stories and linguistic connections, can promote a positive attitudinal shift towards learning another language. We could be educating children to help them shape a national identity that embraces their multilingual/cultural heritage.

- Language teacher education should enable teachers to recognise that they are both teachers of a specific language as well as general languages teachers. They need to value all languages and linguistic expertise and consider ways of promoting linguistic diversity whichever language they are teaching. Teachers in mainstream schools should be enabled to work with complementary or community schools too, bringing together formal and informal learning, and making languages more visible.

- The nature of language teaching and learning across the whole curriculum needs further research and development. Teachers should be aware of their learners' individual linguistic repertoires and how to use them as a resource. This could build on current CoE work on the languages of education.

- Teachers need to be aware of learning progression through sectors, valuing what colleagues in other sectors do and the learning which takes place there.

In organisational terms Keith Ajegbo gave a strong steer about how schools might respond to the needs of a multilingual multicultural educational experience, in particular through better understanding of student needs and capabilities. This would begin to provide a more appropriate curriculum, enabling access to:

- Language for national and regional communication
- Language for international communication
- Language for community cohesion/mutual understanding (link to Maalouf)
- Personal linguistic/communicative development.

There is an urgent need for study and dissemination of possible models, which could take place at European level.

The Opportunities offered by Informal Learning

Much learning and use of languages takes place in informal settings outside school or college. This is likely to become increasingly the case.

Immigrant Multilingualism

A significant part of the existing multilingual capability in Europe has come about not as a result of educational provision but through population movements and settlement. This phenomenon is analysed by LoBianco and Slaughter in relation to the (slightly different) Australian context:

> If we trace the sources of the nation's bilingual capability today, it is clear that Australia relies principally on the language maintenance activities of its immigrant communities... While education and training and especially universities are indispensable for generating high-literate and discipline-based knowledge of language, and along with diverse private providers generate most of the new language competencies in society, overall they contribute relatively little of the total stocks of national bilingual capability.[8]

Yet this 'immigrant' capability is very often ignored or regarded as a problem by policy makers. Indeed there has been a historical tendency for communities to 'lose' their bilingual capabilities. There is clearly a challenge but also an enormous potential benefit to be found in more systematic support for language competences in our communities. To quote the ACER report again:

> If Australia were able to articulate the public 'donation' of bilingualism offered by minority communities with the focused and instructed language skills produced in public institutions, the nation could generate a widespread, effective and less wasteful distribution of bilingual human capital.[9]

This is equally if not even more the case for Europe, where users of significant language groups from across the world have settled in different countries – Chinese, Portuguese, Turkish, Arabic and Indian languages are the most obvious but by no means sole examples. Parallel to this, the increased and more volatile movement within the European space adds to the bilingual 'donation'. It should therefore be inconceivable that future language policy does not include Europe's existing multi-linguistic and multi-cultural capital as a major resource.

Communities and Networks

We also need to broaden the discussion about multilingualism in other ways, reaching out into the communities where languages are used, involving local government, and local structures, creating easy, accessible and comprehensive sources of information which can provide resources for individuals to fashion 'learning' in line with their needs. Many people 'need' languages in specific social and civic settings – law, hospital, social services, or for leisure activities (film, music, social gatherings). The reality is that both language use and language learning are no longer confined to educational establishments. It will also be important to harness relevant resources to exploit broadcast media and to create access to languages in high intensity areas of use (such as airlines).

And of course, as our students reminded us, the highly volatile and creative world of the Internet is giving a whole new impetus to this informal learning. This was discussed at length by David Crystal at the LETPP Conference. He described our era as the dawn of "a genuinely multilingual internet age" where there was a huge gap "between the political agenda, the technological possibilities, and the educational realities." He pointed out how the Internet may be providing a context for new concepts of citizenship and social identity.

> It is not possible to tell, simply by looking at someone's Internet name, what their nationality, age, or gender is, or even whether they are native-speakers or non-native-speakers of the language they are using. User profile information is sometimes provided, as on Facebook or LinkedIn, but there is no guarantee that it is truthful. As the Peter Steiner cartoon caption said (The New Yorker, 5 July 1993), showing one dog in front of a computer talking to another dog nearby: 'On the Internet, nobody knows you're a dog'... The participants in a website forum, likewise, could be from any part of the world. Many of those who are frequent users of the Internet say that they think of themselves as members of an online community first and of their national community second. They call themselves Netizens – citizens of the Internet.

We consider below in more detail what the significance of such new communities might be for multilingualism, but in a small way the spontaneous development of such flexible communities can be illustrated by an anecdote relating to the English National Languages Strategy. In 2008 the then DCSF funded a publicity campaign to support language learning in secondary schools – 'Try Life in another language'. Among other things this involved the production of 5 publicity spots in French, German and Spanish showing young people doing exciting things (music, dance, sport) but in 'another language' hence the strapline. In 2010 the TV advertisements and the website fell victim to spending cuts. However, thanks to YouTube the spots now have their own internet existence, complete with commentaries such as:

> I failed German twice but i love this song

European and national bodies have already provided some support for informal language learning. Examples include – European projects on storytelling, language acquisition in Supermarkets, work with Adult learners, and national programmes to support cooperation between mainstream and community schools ('Our Languages'). But given the potential of this range of learning opportunities, one might justifiably consider that more resources and greater coherence are needed, in particular to link education and community bilingualism. This would undoubtedly lead to rapid and significant progress in increasing the linguistic capital of communities, countries and the European Union.

New Contexts – The City and the Worldwide Web.

The model which we are seeking to redefine is a model which has been based on national and supranational policy development. There will undoubtedly still need to be policy at national and international levels, but the realities of the 21st century mean that they will interface with important new contexts or terrains for multilingual development, in particular the multilingual city and the internet.

The city, which almost by definition in the 21st Century is multilingual and multicultural, has emerged as a key driver of the multilingual future. It is not that multilingualism does not exist elsewhere – even in rural areas where the new mobility has its effects – but the city is a concentration of different, changing cultures which somehow manage to create a new identity. London, New York, Madrid, Johannesburg, Delhi are paradigms of Maalouf's 'common sense of belonging based on cultural and linguistic diversity'. Most importantly, cities are NOT national. They can indeed be 'beyond the nation'.

We believe that they are important for a number of core reasons:
* They are a working model and a mode of persuasion.
* They are places where policy discourse can be created more easily.
* They are places where the constraints of national policies and constraints of national discourse can be modified or overcome.
* The city (as a multicultural therefore multilingual reality) is the locus for multilingualism in all its functions – learning and using – and in all its sites – institutional, commercial, educational, and governmental. It therefore provides a great opportunity to bring together policymakers at both local and national levels, including head teachers, parents, governing bodies, national associations of language teachers and representatives of business.
* Cities also link to other cities, and provide the space where the articulate young are creating their new reality.

Something similar could be said of cyberspace, which creates a new spatial reality independent of national boundaries.

In David Crystal's words:

> Once an attractive online multilingual presence is established, we can forget about the need to persuade young people to explore it. They will do so, of their own accord… We need to work towards presenting children with an enticing online multilingual experience, with plenty of age-appropriate material – an experience where good role models (the celebrities they admire) affirm that languages are cool, where characters in their favourite games act out their roles in different languages, where forums happily switch between different languages, where code-mixing is seen to be expressively enriching, where errors are thought of as natural and not criminal, and, in short, where all the good things we have noted as good practice in European linguistic decision-making are seen enacted online in Facebook forums, on Twitter, in YouTube videos, and in Second Life. These are the domains whose gates we need to unlock, and the route whereby we create 'the best future for language learning'.

It may be that Professor Crystal's view occupies the more idealist end of the policy spectrum, but the point is a powerful one. We have – certainly in the post World War 2 period if not actually for centuries, cultivated a vision which assumes that progress in learning and understanding is a linear process which takes place in educational institutions. Even our models (metaphors?) of progress – Frameworks and levels – reinforce this view. Yet we are seeing with language that progress is becoming asymmetric and that the domains for the application of language use and the affirmation of complex identities are no longer solely the innately hierarchical ones connected with school and university. Communities, in particular in the city and in cyberspace, may now be at the forefront of change. Any policy development will inevitably need to take account of this vastly changed context.

CONCLUSION AND SOME MODEST PROPOSALS

So where does this tentative overview take us? We have said that since the 1980s there have been significant advances in the articulation of a multilingual reality in Europe. Many practical innovations – instruments, methodologies, frameworks – have supported the increasing plurilingualism of European citizens; there has been broad ideological support for the idea of 'unity in diversity'; the European space has operated as a voluntarily multilingual political entity. These are major achievements.

We have also concluded that we now face new conditions and new challenges rooted in new types of work and ways of living and communicating in the 21st century and in the extraordinary scope of contemporary population movement. Such major changes, combined with pressing economic and social challenges – in particular the credit crisis and current threats to social cohesion – make our policy and practice on multilingualism more than an educational priority. In Neville Alexander's words (speaking of multiculturalism) it is 'a matter of survival on earth'. Even a less apocalyptic analyst might agree that language in europe is about more than education – it is of social, economic and cultural significance. If we are to continue to make progress then there are many questions still to be answered – some of them identified in the preceding pages. Of particular importance, we believe, are the following 6 broad areas which could set an agenda for future discussion and development:

1. **Re-scoping the Lisbon model**

   How do we agree a more asymmetric model which better corresponds to current reality, providing a framework in which specific national, regional and local policies may flourish, and Languages for international and national/regional communication, for community cohesion and personal linguistic development may be supported?

2. **Exploring the potential benefits of a Lingua Franca**

   Can we benefit from the particular status of English to improve communication and mutual understanding within Europe and to support increased multilingualism?

3. **Identification of good practice in multilingual education**

   How do we focus support on the most appropriate kinds of resource, teacher training, pedagogies for the realities of the multilingual classroom and the development of plurilingual repertoires?

4. **Support for language use and language learning 'beyond school'**

   Can we find ways to link formal and informal learning not necessarily systematically (it may be chaotic) but as a major part of educational provision, so harnessing existing linguistic capital in particular of immigrant communities as well as competences which are currently often dismissed.

5. **Making more sense of the Worldwide Web**

   What can be done to facilitate the multilingual use of the worldwide web? Supporting transnational links? Provoking interest? Feeding enthusiasm for real content?

6. **City networks**

   How do we understand better the multilingual city and its impact on change – beyond the nation? How do we support better networking and global understanding?

There may of course be other issues to discuss. And as always there will be those challenges and opportunities which we have not yet imagined... but this could be a good beginning.

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[1]Lo Bianco and Slaughter: Second Languages and Australian Schooling ACER 2009

[2]A comment heard many times during the discussions leading to the CoE Language Education Policy Profile of Armenia

[3]See Chapter 5 on The Emergence of a Lingua Franca

[4]See Chapter 3 on European policies (White Paper, Lisbon, Barcelona) and reviews such as ELAN

[5]ec.europa.eu/education/languages/pdf/doc1646_en.pdf

[6]To allow migrants, European and non-European alike, to gain access easily to their language of origin and allow them to maintain what we could term their linguistic and cultural dignity, to us once again seems a powerful antidote against fanaticism. A sense of belonging, in the religious and linguistic sense, is patently one of the most powerful components of identity.

[7]English as a Lingua Franca

[8]Second Languages and Australian Schooling p.4

[9]Ibid

POSTSCRIPT

The project concluded with a seminar at which the key ideas were discussed and refined with some of those who had been involved in the journey from the beginning and some who had joined us later in the day. The 6 key proposals were presented and broadly accepted by participants. As is the way with such things, new themes already began to emerge relating to linked issues of choice and autonomy and the power of the human spirit.

We did not answer the central question of whether the multilingual dream was losing its power. We did agree on its crucial importance for the 21st Century. None put it better than Hans Sakkers from Utrecht in what was probably the last contribution of the project:

> Europeans are slowly being squeezed between the tensions of two cultures: between openness and closure, between the challenge of diversity and the attraction of uniformity; between inclusion and exclusion; between learning by exchange and learning by introspection and self-absorption; between the joy of curiosity and the safety of home; between reaching out and holding on to what is known.
>
> Perhaps we could learn something from those cultures which have a tradition of combining innovation with legacy – there are no dead traditions. In Europe, multilingualism could play an important role in calming emotions and tensions. Perhaps it is a hopeful sign of congruency that (as the Utrecht survey shows) multilingual people do not feel less connected with the culture they grew up in than do monolinguals. It could mean that multilingualism could help us to reach out to the other without losing a sense of who we are.

APPENDICES

1. INITIAL SCOPING DOCUMENT

LETPP
Languages in Europe
Theory Policy Practice

Overview and Rationale

Multilingualism has been described as an 'asset for Europe and a shared commitment'. This may, however, be more a vision of what might be than a description of reality. Reality is mediated not only by the vision (what people think), but by policy decisions (laws and regulations) and by performance (what we actually do).

We therefore want to identify the conditions which allow good ideas on multilingualism to develop into coherent policy and practice, and also the obstacles to that happening. By policy we mean explicit strategies at European, national and regional level which can promote or inhibit linguistic diversity in social and economic life – for example the European Commission's Action Plan or the English National Languages Strategy. We also mean implicit or unstated policies on languages – assumptions about social or educational priorities which have an impact on multilingualism, for example decisions about core subjects in school or the funding priorities for community cohesion. Finally we want to consider specific measures which may support linguistic diversity, such as the EU's Lifelong Learning Programme, the work of the ECML and national initiatives on language teaching.

Within this framework we will examine languages and language policy from two key perspectives, one of which takes as its starting point the needs of the individual and the community (Cohesion argument), and one which relates more to the priorities of states and societies (issues of Intercultural Communication). Although often viewed separately we do not think that these are alternative or opposing views of multilingualism. In fact taken together they underpin the aspiration to create a viable, democratic society based on principles of diversity, inclusiveness and mutual respect.

Context

We must ask the question – Why is the policy and practice of multilingualism so important now? Language has always been a crucial, evolutionary and often subversive determinant of humanity. It is by far the most important indicator of identity/identities; it is the means by which we access knowledge and it shapes our understanding of that knowledge; it is the main vehicle for communication and mutual understanding (or misunderstanding and deception). The impact of learning another language has long been recognised as revolutionary in terms of its effect on the way that people see the world and in the opportunities that it brings. So what is new?

The answers are well known – indeed almost a commonplace.

A shrinking world

We live in a period of unprecedented movement – of capital, of goods and of people. Contact between people and countries has never been easier or more frequent. Communication, information exchange and knowledge acquisition are all pervasive, not least through the power of the internet.

New power relations

Post war certainties (stable power blocks, US hegemony) are undermined by a rapidly changing world economy and new power relations. This is reflected in particular in the rise of Asian powers and the relative decline of the United States.

Mass mobility

For the whole of human history until our lifetime, real freedom of mobility was the preserve of the elite, even in the richest countries of the world. Most people travelled to other countries as a result of war or famine or in order to fight. In the 21st Century there is an extraordinary degree of people movement through choice – for work, study, leisure, curiosity, cultural enrichment and personal fulfilment.

International Communication and the Lingua Mundi

In such a changing and volatile world communication across and between cultures becomes very high stakes. Such communication is indispensible for international relations; it underpins wealth creation; it enables individual mobility and employment. Communication – the mass media – is itself a major economic and cultural activity. New technologies have facilitated collaborative working and information exchange – some would say overload. The development of English as the first effective lingua mundi has greatly facilitated this 'communications revolution', while also posing key cultural, social and psychological challenges.

New perceptions of reality

As regional and national cultures interact more, inevitably they become less homogenous and more internationalised, more influenced by the mass media. Meanings and cultural realities are shared and there is a progressive shift from local and national to international and supra national realities

New identities

In such a complex world, simple indicators of identity – for example national citizenship or national culture – are challenged. People share allegiances to an ever widening range of social groups and cultural icons – local, national, religious, sporting, artistic... The combination of such allegiances, whether through choice or instinct – makes the concept of single identity increasingly redundant and complex identity the norm.

We have here identified some of the most significant (and sometimes it appears the most threatening) challenges to our contemporary society. In each case, language is a major factor. One obvious first question therefore is why language policy is not more central to national and international policy debates.

Our key issues

In seeking to answer this rather crucial question we will return to our doubtless slightly arbitrary distinction between language policy's effect on the individual and community (Social cohesion) and language policy's effect on the state and society (Intercultural Communication). At this stage we do not offer answers or solutions but rather seek to identify the key questions and issues for debate.

1   Languages and Social Cohesion

- How do languages – and more specifically multilingualism – impact on Individual Identity?
- What is the effect of multilingualism on communities and community cohesion? Are we seeing the emergence of new concepts of citizenship and social identity?
- What is the importance of multilingualism as an intellectual and cultural resource both for individuals and societies?
- Multilingualism/plurilingualism is not a single social phenomenon. There is (and has been for centuries) a multilingualism for the elite and a multilingualism of the 'excluded'. How do we understand the social stratification of multilingualism in 2009?
- If there is multilingual elite, is there also a potentially excluded monolingual class? Why does this matter?
- Are all languages equal – in practice and policy terms as well as in theory?
- How can we and why should we support language maintenance among minorities?

2 Languages and Inter Cultural Communication

- Which languages particularly enhance intercultural communication? What does this mean for the relationships between languages and cultures?
- What is the nature of multilingualism as an economic and social resource?
- How do we best promote the multilingualism and intercultural competence which are indispensible for mobility (issues of language teaching and learning)?
- Are there solutions to be found through 'alternative' forms of communication – vivo ICT Bilingual?
- If intercultural communication is so important, what effect does this have on people's access to wealth and opportunities?
- What is the role of language in what has been described as the 'educational arms race'?
- How do languages impact on some of the key challenges for educational systems – quality, range, coherence, internationalism for example?

2. LETPP CONFERENCE PROGRAMME, APRIL 2010

LETPP
Languages in Europe
Theory Policy Practice

CONFERENCE – UNLOCKING THE GATES OF LANGUAGES
London School of Economics, April 15-16 2010

PROGRAMME

9.00 Registration. Coffee, Tea

9.30 **Introduction and Welcome**
Dr. Lid King, National Director for Languages
Nick Byrne, London School of Economics

9.40 **Plenary** **THE EUROPEAN POLICY CONTEXT**
Chair *Baroness Jean Coussins*

Speakers: *Teresa Condeço, European Commission*
Dr Waldemar Martyniuk, the Council of Europe

10.15 **What have we learned? Summaries from the Seminars**
Chair *Itesh Sachdev, School of Oriental and African Studies*

Questions to a round table –
Panel: *David Myerscough, Bouygues UK*
Dr Lucija Čok, University of Primorska
Hans Sakkers, Department of Public International & Subsidy Affairs, Utrecht
Professor Mike Kelly, Southampton University
Francesca Washtell, London School of Economics

11.30 **Discussion.** **Thinking about issues and themes**
6 groups will debate the main themes emerging

13.00 LUNCH

14.15 **Plenary   MULTILINGUALISM AND THE INTERNET**
Professor David Crystal
Followed by questions and Discussion

15.15 **Multilingual Practice – Workshops and Presentations**
A carousel of 8 initiatives from across Europe – past, present and future – including projects funded by the Lifelong Learning Programme where participants will have an opportunity to reflect on what is happening in reality. Each participant will be able to attend at least 2 sessions
Refreshments available

16.45 **Feedback and summary**
Where are we now?
Presentation of student voice from across Europe and beyond
Speakers: *Alejandra Cruz, Complutense University of Madrid*
Jan Hrvatin, University of Primorska
Hristo Iliev, University of Sofia
Tamara Schabunow, University of Gottingen
Sam Duckett, London School of Economics
Emanuela Tenca, Universita degli Studi di Parma
Boryana Terzieva, University of Sofia
Francesca Washtell, London School of Economics
Eszter Wirth, Complutense University of Madrid
Jānis Zaikovskis, London School of Economics

17.30	CLOSE	
19.00	*Pre Dinner Entertainment – Jazz Band* *Senior Dining Room, 5th Floor, Old Building, Houghton Street*	
20.00	*Conference Dinner* *Senior Dining Room, 5th Floor, Old Building, Houghton Street*	
21.00	*Post Dinner Entertainment – "Shanghai"* *Senior Common Room, 5th Floor, Old Building, Houghton Street*	
	DAY 2	
9.00	Opening and Presentation of Key Issues *Dr Lid King, National Director for Languages*	
9.15	**Plenary**	**LANGUAGE POLICIES FOR THE 21ST CENTURY** *Professor Joseph LoBianco, University of Melbourne*
	Satellite link and Discussion	
10.15	**Discussion**	**Reality and Dreams Prioritising objectives**
11.15	Coffee	
11.30	**Discussion**	**Deciding – Key proposals for 2020**
13.00	Lunch	
14.30	**Plenary**	**FEEDBACK AND DEBATE** *Professor Janet Hartley, Pro-Director, Teaching and Learning, LSE*
	Discussion	Report back from Student group meeting
15.30	Break (with Entertainment)	
16.00	**Launch of a Manifesto – What do we want in 2020?** The organisers	

KEY THEMES EMERGING

The scoping document has asked some searching questions.

The seminars have thrown up some which are the same, some which are developments and some which are new.

In March 2010 the following seem to be some of the key issues -
- The Multilingual City as a driver of multilingual societies (is it Polis or Politics?)
- The views of the next generation – student voice show quite instrumental motivations and also some differences in different parts of Europe
- The languages of our new citizens – an undervalued resource
- Languages and class issues – Elite bilingualism and the bilingualism of the excluded ; the exclusion of the monolingual working class
- The particular case of English. Challenges to the consensus – Why can't it be enough? How can English be a driver for multilingualism?
- What are the most persuasive economic arguments for multilingualism? Does it increase trade, or does it help create flexible and so competitive workforces? Is it about employability? How can the social cohesion and the economic arguments converge? How does the credit crunch affect this
- Can Governments – Policy Bodies – do everything?   And in any case which Governments – International, National, Local? Who else is responsible for what?
- How do education systems need to adapt to promote Plurilingualism – diversification and the provision of different answers for different linguistic needs
- Language as a marker of identify, more complex ideas of citizenship…

AND FINALLY
- Is the European multilingual dream running out of steam, faced with cold economic and tough social realities? Or is it moving into new, more complex and exciting realms?

3. MAASTRICHT TREATY (EXTRACT)

ARTICLE 126

1. The Community shall contribute to the development of quality education by encouraging co-operation between Member States and, if necessary, by supporting and supplementing their action, while fully respecting the responsibility of the Member States for the content of teaching and the organisation of education systems and their cultural and linguistic diversity.

2. Community action shall be aimed at:

   developing the European dimension in education, particularly through the teaching and dissemination of the languages of the Member States; – encouraging mobility of students and teachers, inter alia by encouraging the academic recognition of diplomas and periods of study;

   promoting co-operation between educational establishments;

   developing exchanges of information and experience on issues common to the education systems of the Member States;

   encouraging the development of youth exchanges and of exchanges of socioeducational instructors; encouraging the development of distance education.

3. The Community and the Member States shall foster co-operation with third countries and the competent international organisations in the field of education, in particular the Council of Europe.

4. In order to contribute to the achievement of the objectives referred to in this Article, the Council:

   acting in accordance with the procedure referred to in Article 189b, after consulting the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, shall adopt incentive measures, excluding any harmonisation of the laws and regulations of the Member States;

   acting by a qualified majority on a proposal from the Commission, shall adopt recommendations.

4. EC PROGRAMME PRIORITIES 2004

- **Lifelong language learning:**
  Early language learning
  LL at schools
  LL at higher education
  Adult language learning
  LL for special needs
  Educational institutions – favourable environment for language learning

- **Better teaching**
  FL teachers
  FL classes
  Assessment of language skills

- **Language friendly environment**
  communities are in the focus
  acknowledgement of the increasing multilingual character of Europe
  language inclusion irrespective of their status and spread
  less used language – maintenance and support for that
  multilingual media

5. A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE LANGUAGES POLICY

Early initiatives (1963 – 1972)

Following initiatives to plan the development of modern language teaching in Europe in the late 1950s, the first major Project in Modern Languages (1963-1972) promoted international co-operation on audio-visual methods and the development of applied linguistics, including support for the founding of the International Association of Applied Linguistics (AILA).

Unit-credit scheme (1971 – 1977)

The feasibility of a unit-credit scheme for language learning in adult education was explored and this provided guiding principles for subsequent projects. A notional-functional model for specifying objectives was elaborated, and the concept was exemplified initially for English in Threshold Level in the mid-1970s. This was a specification in operational terms of what a learner should be able to do when using the language independently, and of the necessary knowledge and skills. The initial Threshold Level specification for English, together with the specification developed for French (Un Niveau-Seuil), provided the basic models which have been adapted for almost thirty other languages. The model has been extremely influential in the planning of language programmes, providing a basis for new national curricula, better textbooks, popular multimedia courses and more realistic and relevant forms of assessment. An intermediate objective (Waystage) and a higher level objective (Vantage) were developed in the 1990s.

Language Learning and Teaching for Communication (1981 –1988)

The guiding principles established in the first project were applied in a series of projects covering all sectors of education and Recommendation No. R(82) 18 served as a framework for the reform of curricula, methods and examinations throughout the 1980s. A schools interaction network played a major role in sharing expertise and experience between member states and in bringing innovation to classroom materials and methods. Teacher trainers were seen as key agents of this innovation and a series of international workshops on specific priority themes were hosted by countries for them and other multipliers.

Language learning for European Citizenship 1989 – 1997

This period witnessed the rapid enlargement of the Council of Europe and the enrichment of the programme by the participation of the newer member states from Central and Eastern Europe. A series of 'new-style' twinned workshops was organised on issues such as information and communication technologies, bilingual education, educational links and exchanges, learner autonomy, enriched models for specifying objectives. An initial co-ordinating workshop hosted by a member state launched a two year programme of development and the results were received, dissemination planned and recommendations made at a second follow-up workshop in a partner host country.

The results and the recommendations of a concluding conference in 1997 in Strasbourg led to Recommendation No. R (98) 6 of the Committee of Ministers concerning Modern Languages. This emphasises intercultural communication and plurilingualism as key policy goals and sets out concrete measures for each educational sector and for initial and in-service teacher education.

Language Policies for a Multilingual and Multicultural Europe' (1997-2000)

The orientations of this medium term project took into account the priorities of the Council of Europe, in particular the follow-up to the Second Summit of the Council of Europe held in October 1997.

Activities aimed at helping national authorities to promote plurilingualism and pluriculturalism and increase public awareness of the part played by languages in forging a European identity; this objective was realised by the preparation of the European Year of Languages 2001.

Approaches and strategies were developed to foster further the diversification of language learning and teaching, which was promoted from the very start of schooling, to make every pupil aware of Europe's linguistic and cultural diversity; several countries have consequently modified their programmes accordingly.

Common European reference instruments for the planning and assessment of language learning, mutual recognition of qualifications and co-ordination of policies were developed and implemented further.

The European Year of Languages2001 closed this project with the official launch of the Common European Framework of Reference and of the European Language Portfolio.

Pictured overleaf

Our thanks to Tim Casswell and Creative Connection www.creativeconnection.co.uk for a visual representation of the LETPP Conference. More examples can be seen on the LETPP website (www.letpp.eu)
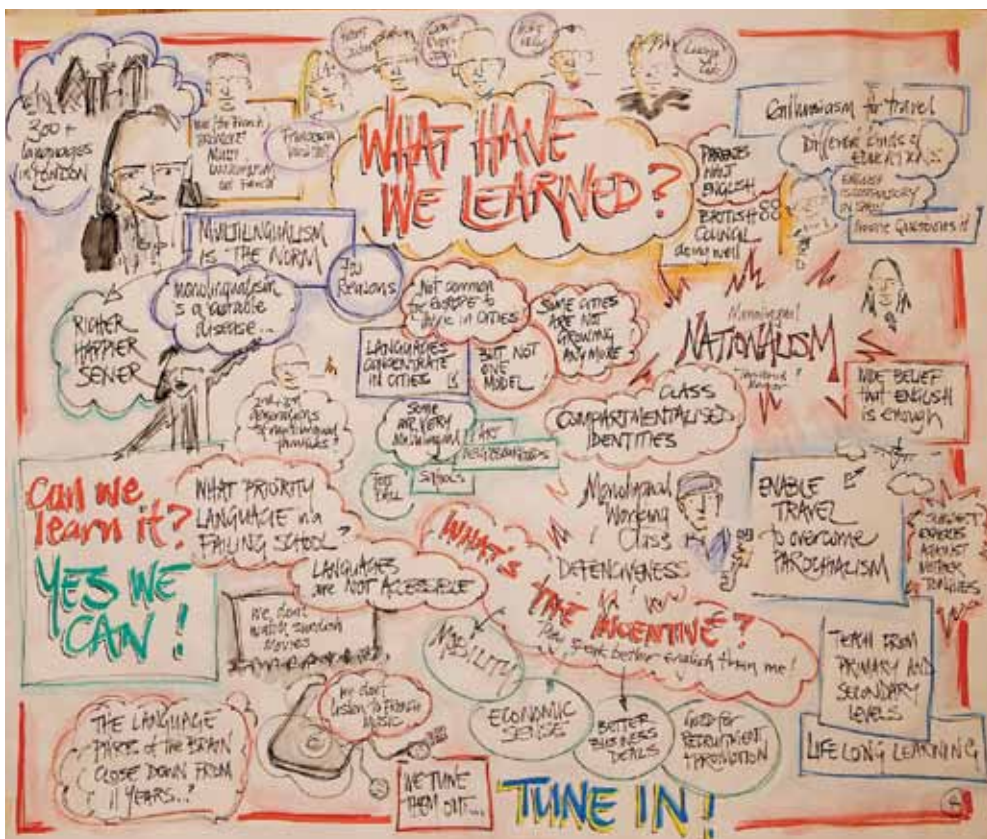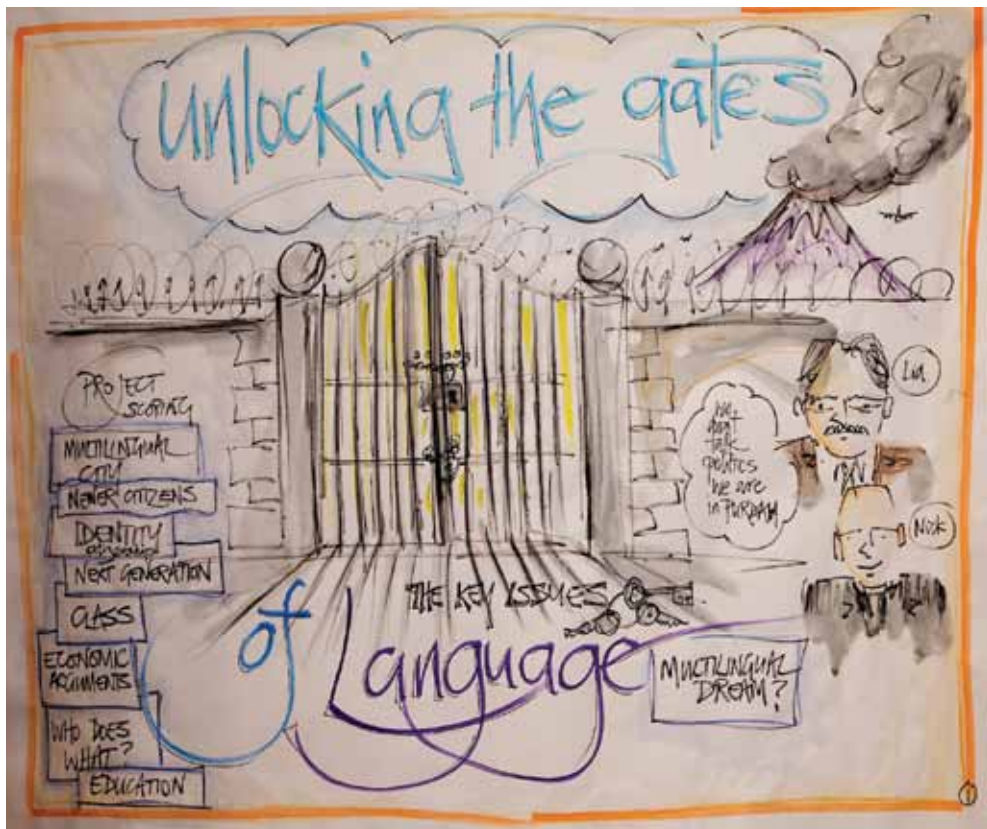
This document is the result of a one year project funded through the Life Long Learning programme of the European Union – 'Languages in Europe, Theory, Policy and Practice (LETPP)'. There is therefore an admirably democratic irony in the fact that a principal objective of our work has been to question some of the policy foundations of the European institutions and the states of Europe. We are of course grateful for the support of the European Union in enabling us to ask our questions, and to provide some possible answers.

At the very least it is our hope that this work may have provided a framework for further consideration and where necessary change in a fundamentally important area of future policy and practice.

Rethinking 'Mother tongue plus 2'   Languages 'beyond school'
The role of the Lingua Franca   Multilingualism and the Worldwide Web
Multilingual education   Multilingual Cities