



Changing contexts, evolving competences: 25 years of inspiring innovation in language education

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**Changing contexts,
evolving competences:
25 years of inspiring innovation
in language education**

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inspirer l'innovation dans l'éducation aux langues depuis 25 ans

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PREFACE

David Newby, Frank Heyworth, Marisa Cavalli (editors)

This publication celebrates a momentous stage in the history of the European Centre for Modern Languages: its 25th anniversary. Its central aims are to review and showcase the achievements of the ECML, as reflected in its many projects and publications, and to put its achievements in the context of the broader work of the Council of Europe, which this year celebrates its 70th anniversary. It includes contributions from international experts working at the cutting edge of language education as well as stakeholders responsible for supporting and implementing the outcomes of ECML projects. The publication is divided into four sections.

Section A: Milestones in inspiring innovation provides a detailed account of the development of the ECML over its first 25 years, and indicates how its activities are located within the work of Council of Europe as a whole and work in tandem with it. Further it charts how the nature of its projects is continually changing to keep step with ongoing societal changes in which language education is embedded.

Section B: Evolving competences provides a discussion of the nine thematic areas which are at the core of the work of the ECML. The authors, each of whom has considerable experience of co-ordinating ECML projects, provide a state-of-the-art discussion of key issues in the respective areas and outline how the work of the ECML has contributed to the development of the theme and to making important aspects accessible to language learners and teachers. They also outline possible directions for future development.

Section C: Impact and networks considers, on the one hand, how the work of the ECML has impacted on language education in member states, and on the other, how Europe-wide co-operation and partnerships between the ECML and other political and professional bodies have enhanced work in this field and optimised common resources. In addition, representatives of member states provide concrete examples of how the work of the ECML has influenced language education in their country.

In the Conclusion, *25 years of success: a solid base for the future*, the Executive Director of the ECML adds a future perspective to the success story of the Centre by providing a preview of the new programme to be launched in 2020 and discussing how the enduring underlying principles of the Council of Europe will be channelled into innovative directions.

SECTION A
MILESTONES IN
INSPIRING INNOVATION

THE EUROPEAN CENTRE FOR MODERN LANGUAGES

Michael Armstrong

When the European Centre for Modern Languages was founded in Graz as an institution of the Council of Europe on 8 April 1994, the world was a very different place compared to today. Bill Clinton had been President of the United States for just over a year, Nelson Mandela would take office as South Africa's President one month later, bringing to a close the dark era of apartheid. François Mitterrand, Helmut Kohl, Václav Havel and Lech Wałęsa, all key actors in the political transformation of the continent of Europe, less than five years after the fall of the Berlin wall, were in power. On a technological level, walls were also being torn down and barriers removed at the dawn of the "information age". Although fax was still considered almost as important as e-mail and Google and social media did not yet exist, an exciting new era of openness and opportunities was clearly on the horizon. In contrast, less than 500 km away from Graz, Sarajevo was under siege and a war was raging in Bosnia and Herzegovina, with the horrors of Srebrenica still over a year away.

It was against this background that a European centre was established with the mission to develop innovative approaches to language teaching and support the implementation of language policies within its member states.

The impetus for the creation of such a centre had come in the early 1990s, on the one hand from ongoing uncertainty regarding the funding of the Council of Europe's intergovernmental programmes and, on the other, from the dramatic political developments which had led to a new situation in terms of the focus of language education in Europe. Suddenly the possibilities for co-operation between formerly isolated neighbouring countries had opened up and the potential benefits of working together on common approaches were evident.

Social, demographic, economic and political changes associated with globalisation were making language issues a central, yet problematic, aspect of national and international policy, particularly in the educational field. The Council of Europe's Modern Languages Division was already in the process of developing major policy instruments such as the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* and the *European Language Portfolio*, and it was clear that the language policy expertise needed to assist decision makers in addressing the new reality was already present in Strasbourg. However, it was felt that the continuing need for close support to member states in the development of modern language provision to meet the requirements of an increasingly interactive European society would best be achieved by a permanent, dedicated Centre.

In 1992 Austria, the Netherlands, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland discussed possibilities for supporting educational reforms in Central and Eastern Europe. It was at this point that the idea of a regional centre was born. Following a feasibility study in June 1992 the Austrian Government, as part of its policy of outreach towards the new Council of Europe member states, went beyond previous proposals for a European modern languages centre and offered both to host and part finance the institution. The decision on the Centre's final structure and launch date emerged from informal talks held at the 1994 Council of Europe Standing Conference of Ministers of Education in Madrid. The concrete support of France and the Netherlands ensured the viability of the Enlarged Partial Agreement¹ needed to launch the Centre.

The formal act followed in the form of the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers' Resolution (94)10 of 8 April 1994. The Resolution set up the Enlarged Partial Agreement on the European Centre for Modern Languages for an initial trial period expiring on 31 December 1997. Austria, France, Greece, Liechtenstein, Malta, the Netherlands, Slovenia and Switzerland were the initial signatories who took the decisive step founding the ECML. The "Austrian Association", *Verein Europäisches Fremdsprachenzentrum in Österreich*, was established to manage the Centre's infrastructure and promote visibility at national, regional and local level.

Austria, which itself borders onto eight different countries, provided the perfect setting for a pan-European institution like the ECML and the city of Graz represented an inspired choice as seat of the Partial Agreement. The city, traditionally regarded as the gateway to South Eastern Europe, had, as a result of the political upheavals,

1 A Partial Agreement is defined by the Council of Europe glossary as: "a form of co-operation allowing to pursue certain activities not supported by all member states of the Council of Europe. Consequently, only interested member states participate in such an Agreement and bear the costs. (...)". It is "enlarged" insofar as new states, also non-member states of the Council, can join at any time.

now found itself at the very heart of the New Europe. An international centre was thus established, based on a partnership of member states of the Council of Europe and supported generously by a national partnership comprising the Austrian state, the province of Styria and the city of Graz.

Dagmar Heindler, the first Chair of the ECML Governing Board, recalls the early formative discussions between the city of Graz and the province of Styria:

“The then Mayor of Graz, Alfred Stingl, was straight away fascinated by the idea of the work that the Centre would be doing, and that Graz would be considered for the seat of a Council of Europe institution. Without hesitation he pledged his support for the idea and led me through the city hall into the adjoining Landhaus, the provincial government building, to make initial contacts. These really took shape when Peter Bierbaumer, University of Graz, proposed the idea to Josef Krainer, the then Governor of the province of Styria. Both the city and the province agreed to back the initiative – and forged the strong bond of support between the city of Graz and the province of Styria, which provides one of the cornerstones of the Centre and enables the ECML to flourish today...”

The inauguration of the ECML on Europe Day, 9 May 1995, represented the culmination of international negotiations and a lasting milestone in the development of modern language learning and teaching in Europe.

Member states had demonstrated a clear willingness to invest in setting up and running an institution under the umbrella of the Council of Europe. This represented a commitment above and beyond what they were already contributing to the organisation as a whole and a desire to develop additional capabilities and add value to the ground-breaking work already achieved in the field of languages. The ECML was conceived to answer a perceived need for more.

The annual programmes of the early years of the ECML, a mixture of training seminars and awareness-raising workshops and colloquies, were mainly held at the Centre’s charming Mozarthof premises in the university quarter of Graz. They focused upon areas such as bilingual education, learner autonomy, teacher education, ICT, intercultural awareness and early language learning.

With an initial priority of supporting change in the new democracies through innovation in language teaching methodology, and in order to promote future accessions, 10 “partner states” from Central and Eastern Europe were invited to

take part in the workshops in Graz at the cost of the founder members. The rapid increase in the number of members of the Partial Agreement (from 9 to 24 between 1995 and 1998) reflected growing interest in the work of the Centre.

The ECML's early colloquies, in particular, played a key role in determining future orientations, establishing co-operation with cultural and linguistic institutions and laying the foundations for future collaboration with the European Commission, as well as serving to raise the profile of the Centre.

The granting of a permanent status to the institution in July 1998 (Committee of Ministers' Resolution (98)11) represented a confirmation that the Centre was successfully fulfilling its mandate.

With calls emerging for greater presence within the signatory states, to increase the impact of ECML activities at member state level and respond to specific training needs within a given country or region of countries, the ECML moved to a framework of four-year project-based programmes in 2000.

From the outset, this format, taking as its starting point the priorities of member states in language education, proved both popular and successful – leading to new accessions to the Partial Agreement, and its current membership of 33 states. With each project generating concrete outputs, over 100 publications and online resources have since been developed within the programmes. These principally address key target groups, such as decision makers (curriculum developers, head-teachers, policy-makers), teacher educators and classroom teachers. This format also facilitates co-operation among the units of the Council of Europe directly involved in the area of languages: with what is now the Language Policy Programme in Strasbourg on issues involving both policy and practice, thereby mutually reinforcing each other's programmes and generating powerful synergies; and with the Secretariat of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages on topics of mutual concern.

The balance and composition of the programmes have been refined over several iterations to offer high quality and sustainable support in addressing member states' priorities in language education. For example, the Centre has been organising Training and Consultancy activities since 2012, which are based on the results of successful ECML projects and help build the competences of national multipliers. In this way the Centre acts as "mediator" between European developments and national implementation. In the next chapter, the Centre's mediating function will be explored in more detail.

Another impact of the project-based format has been to promote network-building at an international level. As each project directly involves well over 100 professionals, the Centre has proved successful in developing active communities of practice in its areas of expertise. The ECML is in ongoing dialogue at all levels of language education, with ministry representatives, researchers, inspectors, education administrators, teachers, teacher educators, parents or community workers. In this way the ECML acts as a platform for gathering and disseminating information, for stimulating discussion and mutual learning, for the forging of new and enriching partnerships. The ECML is the only European institution in the field of language education to operate on so many different levels.

This effect has been greatly enhanced through further co-operation partnerships, notably with the European Commission, since 2013, in areas such as relating examinations to the levels of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*, supporting multilingual classrooms and the use of ICT in support of language teaching and learning. The establishment of a Professional Network Forum on language education, representing civil society and comprising international associations and institutions with common values and expertise in the field of language education and assessment, has also significantly boosted the outreach and networking role of the Centre, as well as helping to identify and respond rapidly to new “burning issues”.

Although the Centre primarily focuses on a specialist public, its work on the European Day of Languages targets a much wider audience. Since the Day was initiated by the Council of Europe and the European Commission, following on from the European Year of Languages in 2001, its popularity has grown exponentially. The ECML’s role in co-ordinating the Day at an international level, from relatively modest beginnings, now involves raising awareness of Europe’s rich linguistic and cultural diversity and promoting the importance of and encouraging language learning to hundreds of thousands across the continent, by, among others, developing creative new initiatives and “feeding” a website in 39 languages that receives around 7 million page views annually.

Over its first quarter century the ECML has successfully established itself as a centre for excellence and innovation in language education with a key role to play in building inclusive, democratic societies and in safe-guarding human rights in multilingual environments.

Michael Armstrong is Head of Administration at the European Centre for Modern Languages and has been working at the ECML since it started operating in 1995.

THE MEDIATION ROLE OF THE ECML

Marisa Cavalli

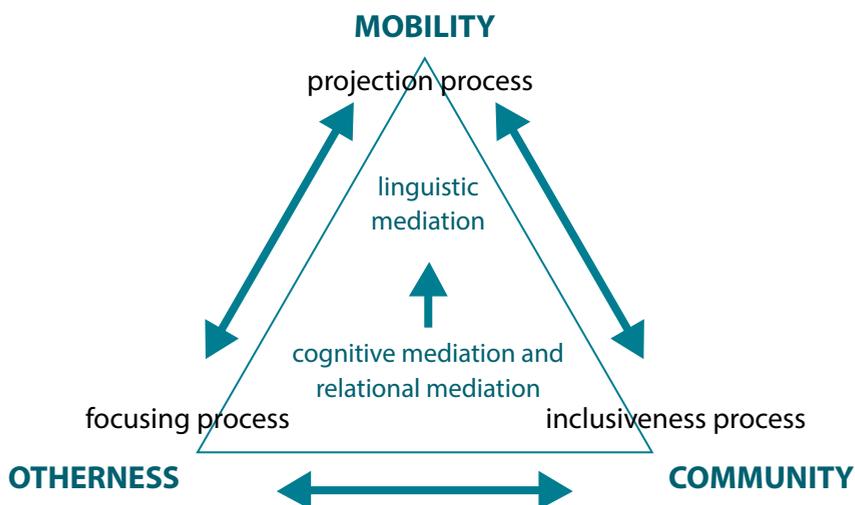
The ECML has a special role among the different European institutions which are concerned with education. It is an institution which mediates in many ways within Europe; its specific function is to deal with languages from a perspective which traverses the whole spectrum of education, responding to the needs expressed by the member countries of the Council of Europe, in the spirit of its values and principles.

This mediation takes place at different levels:

- within the Governing Board where representatives of member countries decide on what priorities should be established for the ECML's 4-year programmes;
- between the members in the Professional Network Forum, a group of international associations and institutions which work in the field of languages;
- in the context of various partnerships, for example, that of the ECML's with the European Union.

However, the kind of mediation which is certainly the most fruitful is that which happens in the heart of the Centre's programmes, as part of the complex workings which govern the implementation of projects and the Training and Consultancy (TaC) activities and other partnerships.

A theoretical model developed in the work of the Intergovernmental programme on language policy (cf. Coste & Cavalli 2015, Coste 2019, Cavalli & Coste 2019 and figure below) provides a framework for the analysis of these mediation activities.



ECML projects are one example of this; in each project, teams of four experts coming from four different countries develop ideas and resources for language education. These teams do not work in isolation: their task includes the creation of collaborative networks with experts representing member countries, which meet regularly throughout the life of a project taking part in various kinds of event (*workshops*, where participants from all the member countries of the ECML, or smaller *network meetings*). These experts are in turn expected to mediate the work of the projects in their professional environments.

Working in an international environment involves *symbolic mobility*, in which there is both *real mobility* (physical movement, travel) and virtual mobility (working together at a distance).

The *process of projection* is facilitated by the ECML, which helps teams in the preparation of this mobility; it provides documents, logistical and technical support and organises meetings of project co-ordinators. The project teams take the projection process into account as they prepare the different events in the course of their work. In the Training and Consultancy activities, the mobility is that of the ECML teams towards the countries which make the request; each workshop is designed on the basis of the information available about the member country (for

example, where it stands in relation to the topic of the TaC), as well as by including national initiatives and finding out about the specific context there.

Joining an international project team involves taking part in a **community of practice**, based on the ECML rules which govern the way projects operate:

- *for teams* – the different roles in the project are shared out according to the tasks to be performed and the particular skills of the team members; the tasks include the creation of the different outputs and developing processes according to the formats and practices of the ECML, while meeting deadlines and ensuring the good progress of the project, etc.;
- *for events* – such as expert meetings and workshops – which provide opportunities to create European networks of language professionals and the shared development of innovative practices and resources, and *for TaC activities* the teams are required to plan activities and tasks, to prepare documents and materials which enable the participants to play an active role and make practical contributions to the implementation of projects and adapting proposals to specific national contexts;
- *for participants in events and TaC activities* – those taking part act as multipliers when they return to their home countries or their usual professional environments by presenting their experiences to colleagues and writing reports and articles in professional journals.

Inclusiveness processes – the ECML Secretariat, assisted by the consultants, the project teams, TaC experts and trainers pay constant attention (and mediate in the case of issues) to the need for inclusiveness.

Everyone who takes part in a project or training activities is confronted with perceptions of **otherness**, of new ideas or practices which need to be assimilated if the project and activities are to be successful. These perceptions are at different levels:

- *at a general level*: national histories and, occasionally, educational cultures;
- *at the level of educational systems*: their structures and the way they function as well as the principles which underlie them; traditional teaching formats and epistemological models;
- *at an academic level*: academic references and theoretical background and the organisation of university teacher education;
- *at the organisational level*: conceptions and experience of teamwork.

These perceptions can be both a potential (and real) source of conflict and a subject for debate; they are nonetheless one of the treasures of working at the ECML because they favour cross-fertilization of ideas and experience.

Focusing processes help those involved to assess where they stand in relation to these aspects and are a means by which teams can reach compromise solutions and even in some cases find a synthesis between differing viewpoints. Focusing facilitates the assimilation of what is “new” into each participant’s traditional schema of knowledge and practice, and even – at a different level – into a common European heritage. The ECML Secretariat, the consultants, the project teams, the TaC trainers all act as mediators in this process; they provide support with new knowledge, information and the kind of scaffolding provided (*cognitive mediation*) and, by building dialogue interaction and co-operation into project tasks and activities, they stimulate the relational aspects of project work (*relational mediation*).

Languages are at the core of the ECML’s mission and they are also the principal instrument for the **linguistic mediation** practised by everyone working with the ECML. Projects are usually conducted in the two official languages of the ECML (English and French) and this means that most participants have to express themselves in a language which is not their first language; as a result of this everyone carries out a range of language mediation activities – by dispelling misunderstandings, reformulating what has been said, paraphrasing in one language or from one language to another one. The other languages present in the group are also used in various ways (German or sign languages, and the languages of participants other than “mother tongue” English or French). This adds a further dimension to linguistic mediation and the practice of bi- and plurilingual communication stimulates new ideas and creativity.

Conclusion

Mediation in the ECML is addressed to various stakeholders, including the primary recipients of its work: multipliers of diverse kinds, such as teacher educators or inspectors and representatives of ministries (and through these, to decision-takers). However, the final target group consists of the learners themselves, their families, their teachers and heads of schools. It is because of this diversity of end-users that the ECML encourages the use of understandable language, the preparation of user-friendly resources and clearly designed activities. The transversal nature of its operations means that for the ECML **mediation** is at the very heart of its daily work, of its working methods and the way it functions. The various mediation

processes imbue all its operations and seek to lead to practical, usable outputs and to the development of transformational processes that are just as important as its products. It is a European institution whose mission – in all its projects, activities, events and partnerships – is mediation. In this way it makes a very real contribution to the collaborative construction of a Europe of education through languages.

Marisa Cavalli was a teacher-researcher at the former Regional Institute for Educational Research (IRRE) for the Aosta Valley in Italy and she is now a consultant to the European Centre for Modern Languages of the Council of Europe. She has taken part in activities and projects of the former Language Policy Division (later the Language Policy Unit) of the Council of Europe. Her field of work is bi-/ plurilingual education in relation to the construction of knowledge in the context of linguistic policies seeking to preserve minority languages.

THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE AND LANGUAGE EDUCATION – SEVENTY YEARS, THREE DEFINING PRINCIPLES AND NINE MILESTONES

David Little

Introduction

Founded in 1949, the Council of Europe has 47 member states, including all members of the European Union. Its core values are human rights, democratic governance and the rule of law. Starting with the European Cultural Convention (1954), the Council has always emphasized the rich diversity of Europe’s cultural heritage, and it attaches great importance to effective language teaching as a means of providing access to that heritage as well as facilitating mobility and promoting international understanding.

This chapter begins by summarizing three principles that between them have shaped the Council of Europe’s distinctive contribution to language education. It then identifies nine milestones that mark a path of continuous development from the 1960s to the present day. For more detail the reader is referred to John Trim’s history of the Council of Europe’s work in modern languages from 1954 to 1997 (Trim 2002), and to the “milestones” section of the organisation’s language policy website (www.coe.int/en/web/language-policy/home). Many of the documents and instruments referred to in what follows can be downloaded from the website.

Three defining principles

1. The individual learner/citizen is an autonomous social agent with rights and responsibilities

This principle arises directly from the Council of Europe's foundational document, the European Convention on Human Rights (1950). In Trim's summary, the Organisation's key educational aim is to "promote the personal development of the individual, with growing self-awareness, self-confidence and independence of thought and action combined with social responsibility as an active agent in a participatory, pluralist democratic society" (Trim 2002: 18). In pursuit of this aim, successive language education projects have set out to "make the process of learning itself more democratic by providing the conceptual tools for the planning, construction, conduct and evaluation of courses closely geared to the needs, motivations and characteristics of learners and enabling them so far as possible to steer and control their own progress" (ibid.).

2. Communicative purpose is prior to linguistic content

The Council of Europe's focus on the individual learner/citizen gives rise to the second principle, that in programme development learners' needs and communicative purposes should have priority over the specification of linguistic content. This principle turned language teaching on its head. Traditionally, curricula and language teaching programmes had focused on items of language to be taught – vocabulary, grammatical rules, the conjugation of verbs, and so on. The assumption was that learners would gradually assemble a mental toolkit that in due course could be put to communicative use in the world outside the classroom. In the Council of Europe's approach, the first step is to analyse learners' needs and specify the tasks they want to perform; only then is it appropriate to focus on the linguistic resources required for successful task performance.

3. Language education should be plurilingual and intercultural

The second principle leads to the third. Although learners may be complete beginners in their target language, they already know how to communicate in their first and any other languages they have acquired. Learning a new language is a matter of learning new ways of doing things we can already do in the language(s) we use every day. It entails learning a new code but also learning new ways of

behaving in language, and that inevitably introduces an intercultural dimension. These considerations underlie the concept of plurilingualism as “a communicative competence to which all knowledge and experience of language contributes and in which languages interrelate and interact” (CEFR, p. 4) and the Council of Europe’s goal of plurilingual and intercultural education.

Nine milestones

1. Resolution (69)2: language learning for all

The European Cultural Convention refers to the *study* of languages, which recalls the humanistic tradition of language education closely associated with literary study. The promotion of language learning for communicative purposes began to emerge clearly only towards the end of the 1950s. In 1961 the Council of Europe set up the Council for Cultural Co-operation, which began to prepare a programme of international co-operation in modern languages education. There was widespread recognition that progress would depend on appropriately focused research in applied linguistics, then a fledgling discipline, and in 1964 the Council of Europe was involved in the foundation of AILA (International Association of Applied Linguistics). The same year it launched a major Project in Modern Languages that ran for ten years and made a lasting contribution by establishing patterns of international co-operation and creating expert networks. From today’s perspective, the first milestone in the history of the Council of Europe’s work in modern language education is Resolution 69(2) of the Committee of Ministers, “On an intensified modern language teaching programme for Europe”. This recommended language teaching for all and briefly sketched the role to be played by different educational sectors in achieving this goal. It stressed the need to develop new approaches to teaching and assessment, create up-to-date learning materials, provide schools with appropriate facilities and resources, exploit the potential of radio and television, and undertake a wide range of research.

2. A systems-development approach to language programme design and new ways of specifying language learning objectives

The Council of Europe’s work in modern languages began to take its distinctive shape in 1971 at an intergovernmental symposium held in Rüschiikon, Switzerland. The focus was adult education and the challenge was to develop an approach to language learning that would support mobility. A small group of experts was

charged with the task of establishing a unit/credit system that would facilitate language learning for more or less immediate use. The expert group adopted a systems-development approach that has remained foundational. The principal elements of the approach are: analysis of needs; specification of objectives; development of communicative methods; materials development; evaluation and testing; language learning, with a particular focus on learner autonomy; teacher training. Each of these is elaborated on at length in the report *Modern Languages* (1971-1981). Through the 1970s the expert group defined the unit/credit scheme and developed innovative approaches to the analysis of learners' needs and the definition of linguistic content. *The Threshold Level* (1975), *Un niveau-seuil* (1976) and *Kontaktschwelle* (1980) played a major role in the communicative turn taken by foreign language education in Europe in the 1980s and 1990s. In due course functional-notional repertoires following the model of *The Threshold Level* were compiled for many other languages; some of them came to play an important role in the language planning activities of states that joined the Council of Europe after 1990.

3. Into the school sector

Designed to meet the language learning needs of adult learners, the unit/credit system was never implemented, but from the first it aroused great interest in other educational sectors. In 1977 responsibility for modern languages projects was transferred from the Committee for Out-of-School Education to the Committee for School Education. This change was marked by the launch of Project 4, *Modern languages: improving and intensifying language learning as factors making for European understanding, co-operation and mobility* (1978-1981). The instruments produced with adults in mind were adapted for the school sector and a programme of school visits was introduced for member states that requested them.

4. International teacher training workshops

Project 4 was succeeded by Project 12, *Learning and teaching modern languages for communication* (1981-1988), and in 1982 the Committee of Ministers adopted Recommendation R(82)18, which called for a general reform of modern language teaching. The school visits undertaken in Project 4 had been advisory: small teams of experts discussed the Council of Europe's goals for the teaching of modern languages with stakeholders nominated by the national authority that had requested the visit. Project 12 adopted a more direct approach, organising a series of workshops aimed principally at language teacher educators. The workshops took place at the invitation

of different member states and gave local participants an opportunity to interact with peers from other countries. The success of the workshops showed how badly they were needed, and they were continued in the next project, *Language learning for European citizenship* (1990-1997). But by the early 1990s it was clear that this kind of activity could not be sustained indefinitely by the Strasbourg Secretariat, and so the idea of establishing a European Centre for Modern Languages was conceived. Once established, the ECML developed a wide range of activities that bring all language education stakeholders into contact with Council of Europe principles and policy, and their implications for educational practice.

5. The Common European Framework of Reference and the European Language Portfolio

The early 1990s were marked by the rapid enlargement of the Council of Europe, and this increased the need for an instrument that would help language educators to compare curricula and examinations and further promote language learning for communicative purposes. In 1991 an intergovernmental symposium hosted by the federal Swiss authorities, again at Rüslikon, recommended that the Council of Europe should develop what became the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)* and its companion piece, the *European Language Portfolio (ELP)* – two instruments that reinforce the Council of Europe's concern with the language user/learner as an autonomous social agent.

In 1997 the next project, *Language policies for a multilingual and multicultural Europe* (1997-2001), began with an intergovernmental conference at which the second draft of the *CEFR* was presented for discussion and consultation and preliminary studies of possible forms and functions of a *European Language Portfolio* were introduced. The project pursued activities designed to help national authorities to promote plurilingualism as an overarching educational goal and to raise awareness of the role played by languages in forging a European identity. These activities culminated in the European Day of Languages, introduced in 2001 as a joint initiative of the Council of Europe and the European Union.

In the course of this project the *CEFR* was prepared for publication and the *ELP* was developed and trialled in pilot projects carried out in fifteen countries and by three INGOs. In 2000 the Language Policy Division established an *ELP* Validation Committee that for the next decade met at least twice a year to receive, analyse, validate and accredit *ELPs* submitted from the member states. Altogether 118 *ELPs* were validated and accredited by 2010, when validation was replaced by registration; 23 *ELPs* were registered between 2011 and 2014, when registration came to an

end. Between 2004 and 2011 five ECML projects supported the dissemination and implementation of the *ELP: ELP implementation support (Impel)*, *Preparing teachers to use the European Language Portfolio – arguments, materials and resources (ELP-TT)*, *Training teachers to use the ELP (ELP-TT2)*, *Using the European Language Portfolio (ELP-TT3)*, *The European Language Portfolio: A guide to the planning, implementation and evaluation of whole-school projects (ELP-WSU)*. Despite all these efforts, the *ELP* failed to take root in European education systems. The much greater impact of the *CEFR* is confirmed by its continued prominence in the ECML's programmes.

Following the publication of the *CEFR* the Council of Europe came under pressure to set up procedures to certify the compliance of language tests with the *CEFR*'s proficiency levels, but this lay beyond the Organisation's functions and resources. Instead, the Language Policy Division commissioned the development of two manuals, one to support language testers who wished to link their tests to the *CEFR (Relating Language Examinations to the "Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment". A Manual)* and the other to guide *CEFR*-related language test development (*Manual for language test development and examining*).

6. Minorities and migrants

Concern at the use some governments were making of the *CEFR* to specify the language proficiency required of migrants for entry, residence and citizenship prompted the launch of the Linguistic Integration of Adult Migrants (LIAM) project in 2006. Over the next decade, this project organised three intergovernmental events, created a website (www.coe.int/lang-migrants) with a wide range of supports for the linguistic integration of adult migrants, and co-ordinated the development of a toolkit of resources to support adult refugees (www.coe.int/lang-refugees), launched in 2017.

7. Language Education Policy Profiles

The policy implications of the *CEFR*'s plurilingual approach to language education were explored in *From linguistic diversity to plurilingual education: Guide for the development of language education policies in Europe* (2007). On the basis of this document, the *CEFR* itself and the various tools developed to support the *CEFR*'s implementation, the Language Policy Division offered to support member states in the elaboration of Language Education Policy Profiles. Between 2002 and 2017 profiles were completed for fifteen countries, two regions and one city (www.coe.int/en/web/language-policy/list-of-language-education-policy-profiles).

8. Languages in and for education

Although the *CEFR* is concerned with foreign language learning, its plurilingual approach necessarily includes the learner's first language. This consideration lay behind the organisation in 2006 of a conference with the title "Towards a Common European Framework of Reference for Languages of School Education?". Out of this conference the project *Languages in education, languages for education* was born, with its twin focus on plurilingual and intercultural education and the languages of schooling. There was to be no *CEFR* for languages of school education, but this project produced a significant body of discussion papers, guides and manuals, notably a *Guide for the development and implementation of curricula for plurilingual and intercultural education* and a *Handbook for curriculum development and teacher training: The language dimension in all subjects*. The project also led to Recommendation Rec(2014)5, on the importance of competences in the language(s) of schooling for equity and quality in education and for educational success. Two further initiatives were linked to the work on language(s) of schooling. The first produced resources to support the linguistic integration of children and adolescents from migrant backgrounds, and the second developed a *Curriculum Framework for Romani*.

9. The *CEFR Companion Volume*

In 2017 the Council of Europe published the *CEFR Companion Volume*. Besides adding descriptors to the *CEFR's* illustrative scales and introducing a new proficiency level (pre-A1), the *Companion Volume* expands the *CEFR's* descriptive scheme by introducing a large number of new scales, including scales for mediation and plurilingual/pluricultural competences. Its substantial introduction provides an important supplement to the discursive sections of the *CEFR*.

Conclusion

The Council of Europe's language policy website offers a wealth of material on language education policy and practice. Inevitably, however, the emphasis is on more recent work, and there is a danger that the riches of the more distant past will be increasingly overlooked. This is a matter of more than historical interest. Most language educators know the Council of Europe's work via its principal instruments, especially the family of functional-notional specifications pioneered by *The Threshold Level* (1975) and the multidimensional description of language

proficiency in terms of language use provided by the *CEFR* (2001) and its *Companion Volume* (2017). Some language educators will also be familiar with the publications on the language of schooling and the plurilingual and intercultural curriculum. And, of course, the synergies between Strasbourg and Graz ensure that anyone who engages seriously with the work of the ECML becomes aware of the language education issues the Council of Europe has addressed over the past twenty-five years. But it is easy to miss the fact that all these projects and publications are animated by the three principles with which I began. In this regard it's a pity that the reports on the successive modern languages projects are not available on the Council of Europe's language policy website. The personal archive of John Trim, who was adviser to the projects for thirty years, is held by the ECML and freely available to researchers. This treasure trove has the capacity to forestall the reinvention of many wheels in a future that promises new synergies between the language policy work of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg and the multifarious projects of the ECML – beginning perhaps with an exploration of the relation between the *CEFR* and the *Competences for democratic culture* and the implications of that relation for language classrooms.

David Little retired in 2008 as Associate Professor of applied linguistics and Head of the School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Sciences at Trinity College Dublin. He has been actively involved in the Council of Europe's work on language education since the 1980s, with a particular focus on the *European Language Portfolio (ELP)*, the linguistic integration of adult migrants, and the teaching/learning of Romani. Between 2004 and 2011 he co-ordinated two ECML projects on the *ELP*, and he currently co-ordinates the ECML's *QualiRom* Training and Consultancy, *Quality education in Romani for Europe*.

THE CHANGING NATURE OF LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS IN 21ST CENTURY SOCIETY

Susanna Slivensky

“...we have schools from the XIX century, teachers from the XX century and pupils from the XXI century”

Eurydice report on Innovation at school (2016)

Changing societies – the role of language education

Education is not an island. Just as societies shape education so education is expected to shape future societies. To give just two examples of current trends impacting on teaching and learning: mobile phones are banned in some classrooms and embraced in others; migration is reflected in classrooms where children speak many different languages and teachers need to find professional responses to this diversity. These are learning environments characterised and challenged on the one hand by digitalisation, and on the other by growing diversity and globalisation. It is worth examining the role of languages in such contexts because languages can support mediation and communication both online and face-to-face and across languages and cultures. Considering the potential of language education for responding to newly arising needs in changing societies raises the question: Are language skills – both of teachers and of learners – “21st century skills” (Partnership for 21st Century Skills (P21), 2006)? If we accept the idea that plurilingual people play a vital role

in modern societies, is there a need for language education to proactively seek inspiring and innovative responses to changing environments? The following – by no means exhaustive – principles can be explored in this context.

Language education has been and remains an indicator for innovative and inclusive societies.

Giving access to language education based on equity and quality should be high on the agenda of educational decision makers who consider innovation and inclusion as desirable aspects of their societies because language education helps “to see that interaction with individuals with different social identities and cultures is an enriching experience” (Council of Europe 2008: 29). Therefore, one could argue, societies promoting language learning promote openness to otherness as well as a critical understanding of the use of languages. Such educational aims are all the more important as global and digital structures are being exploited by some to promote nationalist messages. The potential of education and language education in particular to counteract the spread of populism and radicalization has been highlighted in European policy documents (e.g. Council of Europe 2018, European Commission 2017a) and is compellingly illustrated in an Arabic proverb: “Learn a language and you will avoid a war!”

Language education cannot guarantee the development of democratic attitudes, but there is a close link.

The Council of Europe’s publication on *Competences for democratic culture* (CDC) highlights language competences as significant part of democratic competences: “The acquisition of CDC is also dependent on language competences” (Council of Europe 2018: 17). Plurilingual skills and attitudes such as valuing linguistic and cultural diversity are described as competence areas for democratic culture. Such competences are an integral component of any language curriculum.

Language education in Europe is more and more education through and for diversity.

In the context of growing migration and mobility, the wide variety of language profiles of students, including the home languages of migrants, sign languages, regional languages etc. is a challenge for curricula which focus more or less exclusively on foreign languages and on the language(s) of schooling. Plurilingual and intercultural education, a concept developed and promoted by the Council of

Europe since the late 1990s, encourages language learning across the curriculum “for an education in and through cultural and linguistic diversity in societies marked by increasing mobility, plurality and complexity” (Beacco *et al.* 2016: 15). The ECML and other Council of Europe publications offer ideas for putting plurilingual education into practice with a focus on strengthening competences for critical thinking, learning to learn and mediation between languages and cultures (e.g. *A framework of reference for pluralistic approaches to languages and cultures (FREPA)*, *Plurilingual and intercultural learning through mobility – Practical resources for teachers and teacher trainers (PluriMobil)*, *Inspiring language learning in the early years – Why it matters and what it looks like for children age 3-12 (ILLEY)*).

Are schools changing?

The learning environments that schools create in the form of physical conditions (e.g. libraries, group workplaces, technical devices) and with the selection of learning content, the opportunities for interaction, school policies for languages, etc., aim at empowering children to develop future-relevant knowledge, skills, attitudes and values. The following scenarios illustrate some of the choices that schools can make for their learners.

A scenario in a secondary school A: Student Lola especially likes the open space in the main hall of her school where both teachers and pupils can display their languages and the countries they have visited. In breaks or in free time all students can contribute to this space with texts in languages they are familiar with. All of her teachers know that she speaks a language at home with her mother that some of her teachers call a “lesser used language” even though she speaks it every day. In language and in subject classes the teachers invite their students to make links between the language of instruction and other languages, to identify subject-related terms in different languages and to do research about how selected topics are being presented in other languages and countries. Lola enjoys exploring the language side of content issues and thinks it helps her to get a deeper understanding of concepts and how people use them. Lola’s parents are informed about the language-sensitive cross-curricular approach the school pursues. A whole-school language policy document outlining research evidence, procedures and aims of the approach was handed out to all stakeholders of the school. The following quote appears on the school’s website: “Learning another language is not only learning different words for the same things, but learning another way to think about things”.

A scenario in a primary school B: Lola’s little sister Pola attends a school where about 80% of the students have a migrant background. Pola goes to remedial classes for

the language of schooling which are obligatory for children who failed a relevant test in the second week of the school year. The teacher of these classes is a specialist teacher for the language of schooling and teaches at three different schools. Her class teacher is nice but one day she heard a conversation among teachers where the following sentence caught her attention: “No wonder these kids make so little progress in (language X, the language of schooling). At home they only use their mother tongue”. Pola felt slightly embarrassed and concerned because that applied to her situation. She wondered why the teacher only referred to the languages spoken at home. Everywhere outside the classroom the children spoke languages other than the language of schooling. It was only during classes that these languages disappeared. Pola now feels that her mother tongue is an obstacle for her learning. At home she puts aside the books her mother gives her to learn to read in their home language.

These scenarios describe slightly different things but they reveal that the choices schools make have a deep impact on children. Learners benefit from language friendly schools which build bridges between all languages in the curriculum (European Commission 2017b: 21), consider planned but extra-curricular activities (non-formal learning) as well as unplanned, unintentional learning (informal learning) and involve parents for additional support.

On the other hand, there are language unfriendly learning environments where plurilingualism is seen as a disadvantage: “Sometimes we look at the children speaking only the language of schooling as the privileged children” (contribution to a discussion at an ECML workshop in 2018). Limiting languages to curricular languages only, displaying dismissive attitudes towards languages spoken by children in their families, assuming that there are more important and less important languages – such environments make it difficult for teachers and students to see language diversity as a source of cognitive, emotional and social growth.

It should be stressed that schooling reality in Europe is very diverse, complex and cannot be pictured in black and white. What matters is the commitment of schools to reflect on current practice and to adopt a culture of change. Schools are changing when they engage in whole-school language projects and structural developments with the aim of offering their students new pathways for learning: “... students are given insights into the structure of languages, study possibilities of positive transfer and interaction between the languages they use, train productive and receptive skills, and develop metalinguistic and cross-linguistic awareness, as well as language learning strategies and strategies of language use” (Beacco *et al.* 2016: 91).

Evolving European policy developments and national priorities

The publication of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)* in 2001 provided opportunities for embedding the learning of foreign languages in schools in the wider context of all languages in education. Looking at all languages relevant for each learner it becomes clear that the linguistic setting in schooling environments is complex. To give an example, for some students the learning of the mother tongue takes place in all subjects carried out in the language for schooling. For others it takes place in the foreign language classroom or in voluntary afternoon or Saturday classes. And some children never receive any mother tongue education at all.

Since 2005, the Council of Europe's Platform for Plurilingual and Intercultural Education has promoted a holistic perspective of language education taking into account the diverse language profiles of learners and their corresponding learning needs. In 2012, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe published a recommendation on ensuring quality education for all (Council of Europe 2012) which stresses even further that language teaching must respond to the needs of individual learners. As a consequence there is a strong case for decompartmentalization of languages in schools: the need to establishing links between the language(s) of schooling, home languages, foreign languages, sign languages, etc. as well as making links with language learning in subjects.

This gradual shift from an isolated perspective on the teaching of single, high status languages towards a learner-centred plurilingual and intercultural education is reflected at national levels in priorities of ECML member states. In the early 2000s the ECML member states were mainly concerned with issues related to foreign language teaching. Since 2014 priorities have diversified and now include topics such as globalisation, digitalisation and diversity which are increasingly seen as factors with significant impact on language education. There is an increasing demand for ECML national training events for *Pluralistic approaches to languages and culture (FREPA)* and for *Supporting multilingual classrooms*. Currently 10-15 countries request such a training each year. Also there is strong interest in developing learning scenarios bridging formal and non-formal/informal learning and exploiting social media and games for learning. As a most recent trend, in 2018 some countries explicitly mention language learning as a competence for democratic culture as an important issue in their national context.

Changing learning environments – connecting what belongs together

Connecting teacher education and innovation at school level has a potential for sustainable change processes: “Teacher training which often has broader structural freedom than the state schooling system, could become a driving force behind curricular change” (Beacco *et al.* 2016: 75). Teachers willing to reconsider an exclusive perspective on the language they teach report that language-aware approaches and open attitudes to all languages have an overall positive impact on language learning as well as on strengthening the commitment to learning particular languages.

Based on the experiences and perspectives of ECML stakeholders 21st century language learning environments tend to be:

- plurilingual, intercultural and inclusive;
- content based;
- authentic and anchored in real life;
- embedded in virtual and global contexts;
- complex, task-based and oriented towards problem-solving;
- creative, gamified and artistic;
- self-organised and autonomous;
- open, dynamic and with a lifelong language perspective.

To illustrate such learning environments in schools here are two examples gathered in the context of ECML activities in recent years:

Whole-school policy of a primary school in Ireland:

“...the school welcomes the diversity of its pupil population and acknowledges that each pupil has much to contribute to her own education ... No restrictions are placed on pupils’ use of their home languages at school, whether inside or outside the classroom... Home languages are treated as a resource for all learners” (Deirdre Kirwan 2016).

Experience of a teacher training event in Bosnia and Herzegovina:

“... we have encouraged teachers to develop interdisciplinary projects that involve students in a communication process online. The teachers documented the open day with their students on a platform and created opportunities for students from other language regions to give feedback... Unfortunately, the possibility of using the internet is very limited for us because our students are still very young and therefore not allowed to use open platforms. Nevertheless, we can implement the idea of real world tasks in the context of exchange programmes.”

(A participant of the *e-lang* workshop *Digital literacy for the teaching and learning of languages*, 2017)

These examples illustrate language learning experiences which are meaningful both inside and outside the classroom. In fact, establishing and consolidating strong links between formal and informal learning opportunities in order to cater for the learners’ needs could well be considered in any of the above mentioned learning environments. For further inspiration the ECML project *Learning environments where modern languages flourish* which offers a wide range of promising approaches and practice examples can be recommended.

In conclusion, it appears that learning environments adapted to the needs of students in 21st century societies promote the idea that the language learning experience all children bring with them into schools is unlimited. It is encouraging to see that the limits schools set are being reconsidered which is supported by an aphorism of the Bengali poet and Nobel prize laureate Rabindranath Tagore:

*“Don’t limit a child to your own learning,
for he was born in another time.”*

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SECTION B
EVOLVING COMPETENCES –
THEMATIC AREAS

INTRODUCTION

Frank Heyworth

In the second section of the book, *Evolving Competences*, we explore nine themes addressed by the ECML in its first twenty-five years of activity. In each of nine chapters the authors situate a theme in its educational context and in the context of Council of Europe policy in the area. They provide an outline of the theoretical background and a summary of the state of the art in the field. They examine didactic, pedagogic and societal issues addressed by the work of the ECML, describing how the Centre's work has provided practical ways forward. Finally, in each chapter they look to future challenges and possible fields for further development.

The presentation of the nine themes does not, of course, include all the ECML's work, but it provides a taste of some of the topics where significant contributions have been made. Three of the themes – *Teacher and Learner Competences*, *Plurilingual and Intercultural Education*, *Evaluation and Assessment* – are related to major, key aspects of language education. Three other topics examine challenges and developments with regard to specific groups of learners; these are *Early Language Learning*, *Sign Languages*, *Migrant Education*. All three, in different ways, are concerned with issues related to social inclusion. The chapters on the *Languages of Schooling* and *CLIL* reflect the increasing focus on the role of languages in the general educational process, especially in relation to successful learning for all in schools. In almost every area of the ECML's work, the applications of the internet and information technology, including computer-generated language and translation, are influencing language

education and it is natural that reflection on New Media in Language Education should be one of our themes.

In the publication the projects will be referred to by the title of the project or of the resulting output. A list of the projects can be found on page 155, together with links to relevant websites.

25 years / 4 medium-term programmes / 81 projects

Since the year 2000 the ECML has carried out a series of 4-year programmes comprising a total of 81 different projects. All except the first of these programmes have had titles encapsulating an overall objective:

- *Languages for social cohesion* (2004-2007);
- *Empowering language professionals – Competences, networks, impact, quality* (2008-2011);
- *Learning through languages – Promoting inclusive, plurilingual and intercultural education* (2012-2015);
- *Languages at the heart of learning* (2016-2019).

The changes in emphasis of these titles are an indication of the complex challenges faced by the Centre and the need to adapt to the expectations of its stakeholders. They illustrate three interlinking focuses – languages in society, languages in education and teachers as professionals. In fact, these three aspects have been present in all the programmes, although the emphasis of the two more recent programmes has been increasingly on the place of *language in the educational process* and less on *foreign* languages.

All the programmes, however, share underlying aims, anchored in a conviction that language education should contribute to the development of democratic citizenship and fulfilment of individual potential; that inclusive, plurilingual, co-operative approaches to languages and language education are essential features in achieving these aims.

Evolving themes

There has been both continuity and change in the themes addressed in ECML projects. In a publication of *Thematic Collections : Presentation and Evaluation of Work carried out by the ECML from 1995 to 1999* (Newby 2003), the Centre's work in its first four years from 1995 was presented and evaluated. Three of the themes in this collection – *Early Language Learning, Information and Communication Media, Bilingual Education* – are revisited in the present volume, whereas the three other topics *Intercultural Awareness, Learner Autonomy and Teacher Education* which were related more to the exploration of methodological approaches are not present as separate themes. This does not mean that such methodological and pedagogical aspects are not addressed, but it is probably true that the focus in recent years has been increasingly placed on societal issues. This reflects the strategic objectives of the Council of Europe and the ECML. The topics chosen also reflect the concerns of professionals in the field and the areas where innovation and creativity are needed and feasible as well as the requirements of migrants and other socially excluded groups have been given priority.

What competences? How have they evolved?

The question of “competence” has been a central theme of the Council of Europe's work for the last 50 years. The introduction of functional / notional approaches in the 1970s led to a general consensus that a major aim of language education is the acquisition by learners of “communicative competence”. The idea that this competence can be defined by “can do” statements permeates the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)*. In 2012, in the ECML project *FREPA, A Framework of reference for pluralistic approaches to languages and cultures*, competences were defined as follows:

“For us competences are ... units of **a certain complexity**, implicating the whole of the individual and linked to **socially relevant tasks** in the context of which they are **activated**; ... and the mobilisation of different **resources** which may be internal (... **knowledge, skills, or attitudes**) or external (the use of a dictionary, resorting to a mediator...)” (*FREPA*, p. 11)

The terms in bold summarise well much of the content of the ECML's work – the concentration on socially relevant tasks and on identifying resources which can be activated in a practical way to carry out the tasks. Many of the projects are directed

towards changing attitudes (of parents, head teachers, employers, for example), towards developing skills (using new media, organising exchange programmes, carrying out action research) or increasing a knowledge base (e.g. the language skills needed in subject areas in schools). In almost all the projects, banks of external resources have been created to provide practical examples which teachers can use or adapt in their teaching.

In the Council of Europe publication, *Competences for democratic culture* (2016), the definition of competences is broader: “the ability to mobilise and deploy relevant **values**, attitudes, skills, knowledge and/or **understanding** in order to respond **appropriately** and **effectively** to the demands, challenges and opportunities that are presented by a given type of **context**” (p. 23). Here there is an additional focus on the interaction between the competence and the context and on the need for effective responses to social needs.

When the ECML was founded in 1994, the *CEFR* was in its first draft version and the concept of competence descriptors was not yet so fully accepted as it is 2019. An important “evolution” in language education has been the development of competence descriptors for different areas of activity. David Newby’s chapter deals specifically with the notion of competences and its application in language education and in initial and continuous teacher education. Other chapters make reference to the development of competence descriptors for signed languages, teachers of young children, for migrants, and different school subject areas.

It is, of course, not enough to produce competence descriptors; ECML projects address the question of how a competence approach can be applied to improve teaching and teacher education. Portfolios for teachers of young children, for student teachers, for users of sign languages have been created to encourage reflective practice as a step towards individual and communal empowerment and responding “**appropriately** and **effectively** to the demands, challenges and opportunities that are presented by a given type of context” (see *Competences for democratic culture* 2016 above). Different matrices, for example *A quality assurance matrix for CEFR use*, enabling teachers to analyse their own practice through questionnaires have sought to provide guidance for applying competence descriptors. And in all the projects the final aim is to promote inclusive language education of quality for all.

Conclusion

In 2005 to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the ECML the task of the centre was defined as follows:

Although different priorities will impose themselves at different times, adapting curricula, reviewing methodology and assessment, ensuring quality, reviewing practice to increase efficiency and motivation, exploring new media and technical support are aspects which will always require attention. (ECML 2005: 19)

These practical aspects have indeed been constant in the activities of the Centre. While the projects in the 2000-2004 programme were mainly concerned with issues related to foreign language teaching, the ECML's work has increasingly addressed the **evolving needs** for language use in society, especially in the languages of schooling; these needs encompass all the languages used – that of school subjects, of learners for whom this is not the first or home language, and the increasing presence of bilingual and plurilingual education.

The nature of the activities undertaken in the Centre's projects and of their outcomes also reflects the theme of *Evolving Competences*. The projects have developed common approaches and methodologies which include practical ways in which to address issues in language education and the creation of networks of communities of practice. They are an important contribution to the development of language education and social cohesion. Teacher and learner competences.

Frank Heyworth was formerly a Director of the Eurocentres Foundation in Switzerland and was a Founder of Eaquls (Evaluation and Accreditation of Quality Language Services). He has co-ordinated a number of ECML projects and has been a consultant to the ECML since 2004.



TEACHER AND LEARNER COMPETENCES

David Newby

Introduction

The term “**competence**” has played an important role in language education since the 1970s, when applied linguists provided definitions of **communicative competence** which were subsequently taken up by designers of curricula and materials for modern language teaching. Specifications of language as a skill, rather than just knowledge, and defining the aims of learning and teaching accordingly, opened up the door to teaching approaches which became known collectively as **Communicative Language Teaching** and which have remained at the heart of many language classrooms.

In recent years, competences have been examined from various perspectives. In addition to exploring communicative competence as a system of language use, language professionals have approached the topic through the eyes of the learners as they progress towards acquiring language – i.e. **learner competences**. This perspective focuses on the one hand on what it is that learners need to acquire and, on the other, how they acquire language and related skills. Conversely, competences can be seen in terms of **teacher competences**, which focus on what teachers need to know and do to support the development of their learners’ competences, and on *how* they acquire these didactic skills. It follows that competences must be seen both as part of an educational *process* and as a *product* or outcome of learning. All three competence perspectives – language, learner, teacher – have featured strongly in the work of the Council of Europe and in the projects of the ECML.

Key issues

What are competences?

The *Common European Framework of Reference* defines competences as “the sum of knowledge, skills and characteristics that allow a person to perform actions” (p. 9). Since the word “competence” was first used by Noam Chomsky (1965) as a synonym for (unconscious) knowledge of language systems, the term has taken on additional dimensions which distinguish it from knowledge. First, it includes a use-based, “**action-oriented**” perspective (*CEFR*, p. 9) – what the linguist Halliday (1978: 38) referred to as “behaviour potential”: language is used to achieve a communicative purpose. Second, competence is not limited to knowledge stored, and locked away in the mind of language users, as Chomsky conceived it, but recognises the **social dimension** of language: that language is a form of social interaction between human beings, which takes place in specific contexts and which reflects the norms and values systems of speech communities of which they are members. Third, language competence is embedded in a composite of more **general competences**, which comprise knowledge and skills, but also “attitudes, motivations, values, beliefs, cognitive styles and personality types” (*CEFR*, p.105). These language-related dimensions allow communicative competence to be embedded within a general **social constructivist** view of learning, which situates knowledge acquisition within existing cognitive structures and explores how new knowledge and skills are constructed through interaction with others (see, for example, Vygotsky, 1962). This view is relevant both to understanding and supporting the language acquisition of **learners of languages** and the development of pedagogical skills by **teachers of languages**. (For further definitions of competences, see Frank Heyworth’s introduction to this section.)

The central question posed when taking a competence orientation is: what do language users/learners/teachers *need to know and be able to do* in order to optimise language use/learning/teaching? In the past two decades, a variety of competence models, frameworks and portfolios have been compiled which provide competence specifications of language, learning and teaching. Such frameworks address three general issues:

- What do competences *consist of* and how can they be *categorised and described*?
- How are competences *developed and acquired*?
- How can competences be *assessed*?

In order to support language education all three aspects need to be brought together into a coherent whole. If competence frameworks are to fulfil not merely a **summative** role in language education, that is to say, to evaluate and assess a learner's or teacher's competence, but are also to play a **formative** role, close attention must be paid to how they can best support the development of learners' and teachers' competences.

Communicative competence

Since the 1960s, various applied linguists have proposed models and theories of communicative competence. An important step was taken by the Council of Europe's *Threshold Level* (1975-1991), which provided an inventory of categories of communication as a basis for modern language syllabus design: language functions, notions, verbal exchange patterns, compensation strategies etc. However, it was not until the arrival of the *Common European Framework of Reference* in 2001 that not just categories of communicative competence were established but a comprehensive specification of what individual competences consist of, described in transparent metalanguage. The formulation of competences in terms of action-oriented, "**can do**" descriptors based on explicit criteria, together with a division of competences into **proficiency levels** provided an important framework for the description and assessment of a wide range of communication-related competences.

Learner competences

In recent years teacher educators and researchers have increasingly taken a **learner-centred** perspective to language education. This perspective can be summed up in the statement that "the Council of Europe encourages all those concerned with the organisation of language learning to base their work on the needs, motivations, characteristics and resources of learners" (*CEFR*, p. xii). In the earlier programmes of the ECML, several projects focused on the "characteristics and resources" of learners and explored measures that could be taken in language education to support **autonomous learning** and **learning strategies**. The competence specifications of the *CEFR* provided a valuable basis for fostering a further aspect of learner-centredness: that learners should be aware of, and therefore able to set and evaluate, the aims and outcomes of their learning. The potential for transforming the "can do" competences of the *CEFR* into "**I can**" statements to be used by students for reflection and self-assessment, embedded within a general rationale of supporting autonomous learning, was the impulse for the Council of Europe's *European Language Portfolio (ELP)*, which provides a means for language learners to record their language learning achievements and to reflect on their experience

of learning and using languages. It thus fulfils both a summative and formative learning function. (For more details of the *ELP*, see David Little's chapter on the Council of Europe in Section A of this publication.)

Teacher competences

Throughout the history of language teaching, the various methods and techniques that teachers can use to support learning processes have been a central topic of discussion, often subsumed under the term "**pedagogy**". In recent years, there has been a growing tendency in teacher education to see methodology not merely as an external body of practices, guidelines, tips, recipes etc, but to approach teaching methods from the *perspective of the teachers* who use these methods. This entails taking as a starting point what teachers can, or need to be able to *know and do* in order to support learning – that is to say, a specification of *didactic and professional competences* – and, following from this, to consider the role specific methods may play within the overall spectrum of a teacher's *mental constructs* – their knowledge, values, beliefs, experiences of teaching etc. – which drive both the application and acquisition of didactic skills.

As with learner competences, the surface manifestation of a specification of teacher competences may be a catalogue of "can do" descriptors. Whereas descriptors of learner competences will focus on language competences – e.g. "*I can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with other speakers quite possible*" (CEFR, p. 27) – the focus of teacher competences will be on didactic knowledge and skills – "*I can evaluate and select a range of meaningful speaking and interactional activities to develop fluency*" (EPOSTL, p. 21). However, there is more to a competence approach than merely compiling lists of skill-based descriptors. A crucial issue concerns how teachers *engage with* and *acquire* didactic competences. This entails focusing on the process of how competences may be developed through, among others, *reflection, dialogue, practice* and *self-assessment*. This area of enquiry brings with it a strongly *formative* component.

A wide range of **teacher competence models** and **frameworks** have been elaborated in recent years which share the overall aim of listing and describing what these competences should consist of. However, they differ in aspects such as who is the intended user and what the overall aim of applying the model may be. The *European Profile for Language Teacher Education* (Grenfell, Kelly 2004), a project initiated by the European Union, is aimed principally at "national and institutional policy makers in the field of teacher education", as well as teacher educators; its taxonomy of 40 "indicators" lists structural provisions, aims and outcomes of teacher

education programmes which provide a top-down framework for evaluating and designing such programmes. The *European Profiling Grid*, initiated by the EAQUALS organisation, provides a comprehensive framework of “qualifications, competences, enabling skills and professionalism”, the main purpose of which is “to enable language teachers to assess themselves and to reflect on their individual professional development, and also to help managers and teacher trainers assess teachers” (Rossner 2017: 54). The ECML’s *European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages (EPOSTL)* focuses on a specific target group – student teachers – and pursues a specific aim; its “I can” descriptors of didactic competences have the purely formative function of fostering the development of competences through a process of reflection, dialogue and self-assessment.

Underlying any framework of teacher competences are two general design features: a *categorised list* of competences – *what* teachers need to be able to do – and *indicators* of competence, practices which provide *evidence* of how well a competence may have been acquired. A crucial difference between the educational purpose of teacher competence frameworks concerns the latter category. If a framework is to be used for the purpose of summative assessment of teaching, these indicators will be stipulated by the assessor of teaching – the teacher educator, examiner, employee etc. In keeping with its formative function, an instrument such as the *EPOSTL* provides lists of competences but it is left to student teachers themselves to arrive at indicators of good practice by means of reflection and dialogue with other students and with teacher educators. It follows from this that descriptors are used not for external assessment but for *self-assessment*.

Complementarity of Council of Europe competence frameworks

The competence approach of the *Common European Framework of Reference, the European Language Portfolio*, and the *European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages* shares an underlying rationale. Many of the principles relating to language and language learning underlying the *CEFR*, and implemented in the *ELP*, apply equally to language teaching and are implemented in the *EPOSTL* (see Newby 2012 for further discussion). These include:

- a reflective mode of learning and teaching;
- “I can” self-assessment competence descriptors;
- an aim to support greater autonomy of learning/teaching by fostering reflection and principled decision-making;
- an “action-oriented” approach, which sees language in terms of a system of use and learners/teachers as “social agents” (*CEFR*, p. 9);

- Life-long learning – a recognition that both learning and teaching represent a continuous and ongoing process of development.

How the work of the ECML contributes to the development of language learner and teacher competences

Learner competences

ECML projects have focused on two main areas: projects related to learner autonomy and learning strategies, such as *Introducing learner autonomy in teacher education*, and those which provide resources to support the use of the *European Language Portfolio*, such as *Impel – ELP implementation support*. The ECML also hosts a dedicated website for the *ELP*, in collaboration with the Language Policy Portal of the Council of Europe, to promote the pedagogical benefits of this instrument and to facilitate its use in practice.

Teacher competences

In its earlier programmes, the ECML initiated a variety of projects concerned with the content and practice of teacher education, such as *QualiTraining – A training guide for quality assurance in language education*. A further contribution to this general area is the recently completed project *Action research communities for language teachers (ARC)*, which takes an action-oriented approach to quality enhancement in the language classroom by encouraging teachers to carry out their own research projects. The focus of other projects has been teacher competence frameworks, two projects having developed original portfolios, which are now widely used. The *European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages (EPOSTL)* is a tool for reflection and self-assessment, which includes a taxonomy of 196 descriptors of didactic knowledge and skills necessary to teach language. The *European portfolio for pre-primary educators (PEPELINO)* is designed for educators and teachers in the pre-primary sector. It encourages personal reflection on the professional skills related to the linguistic and intercultural dimension of working with children. The recently concluded project, *Towards a Common European Framework of Reference for language teachers (CEFRILT)*, provides a comprehensive description and discussion of over 50 frameworks developed by a variety of international institutions as well as a user guide to instruments developed by the Council of Europe.

Case study – EPOSTL

The success of an ECML project can be gauged by means of a variety of indicators. One of these is the extent of its international uptake. Since its conception in 2006, *EPOSTL* has been translated into 14 languages, which include versions in non-European language such as Japanese, Arabic and Persian. A further indicator is how well it is integrated into national teacher education programmes. A follow-up *EPOSTL* project and accompanying publication, *EPOSTL in Use*, provided practical examples of how it is applied in teacher education programmes across Europe, including comments by students and teachers. “It [*EPOSTL*] turned out to be really useful – I could spot my progress and, actually, it was the first time when I really went deep into details about my teaching style. (...) it worked like a diary of self development in TEFL, I could check my skills” (Latvian student). The impact of the *EPOSTL* was investigated in a study carried out by Frank Heyworth on behalf of the ECML, “How an ECML publication can make a difference”, which lists various indicators which are evidence of the success of the *EPOSTL*. These include the following:

- It is based solidly within the policy and achievements of the Council of Europe in language education.
- It is based on coherent theories of learning and teaching.
- At the same time, it is closely based on practice. The descriptors are recognisably close to the practical methodological issues that teachers meet.
- It is the result of a long-term commitment to the development of the project – 8 years of work in ECML projects, continued development generated by its usefulness, so that a body of experience, expertise and research has been built up around it.

Conclusions and future perspectives

Competence approaches, as outlined in this chapter, have made valuable contributions to language education on several levels. First, by focusing on *actions and outcomes* they complement principles of communicative language teaching. Second, the explicit *specifications of competences* have provided instruments and frameworks which make aspects of language, learning and teaching *explicit* to all stakeholders. This has on the one hand provided a valuable tool for those involved in the summative assessment and grading of proficiency of language and teaching. Third, its underlying rationale has lent support to *formative educational practices*

which foster autonomy of both learners and teachers, for example, through the potential for reflection and self-assessment.

However, a crucial question arises in connection with these complementary roles: how can the summative assessment of proficiency, be it related to language, learning or teaching, be harmonised with the formative implementation of competence-related pedagogy? Whilst the summative role has tended to attract more discussion among experts and language educators, it is the latter formative role which should be paramount and which should be at the forefront of the design of language pedagogy and teacher education programmes. Guilherme (2012: 366) expresses the view that “[d]uring the first decade of the twenty-first century, the notion of ‘pedagogies’ has in fact been supplanted by the requirements of ‘standards’ and, therefore, the focus on process has been replaced by a concern for results, seen as a product.” She further states that “standards should be used within a wider framework of a critical pedagogy, and not the other way round” (ibid.). It follows that any framework of learner or teacher competences must be embedded in a *didactic concept of use* which supports competence development. The danger that competence frameworks and portfolios be reduced to a checklist is considerable if they are not integrated within an overall educational conception.

This chapter has focused on specific types of competences – communicative language competences and didactic competences which support their development. However, competence approaches can also be applied to other language-related areas such as *first-language teaching*, *subject teaching* as well as the development of *plurilingual competences*, areas which have been strongly in the focus of ECML projects. Issues relating to these competence areas will be dealt with in following chapters.

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PLURILINGUAL AND INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

Michel Candelier

Introduction

The concept of plurilingual and intercultural education has been developed over the last twenty years in the Language Policy Unit of the Council of Europe. It is an approach to language education which is both **global** and **transversal** since it is concerned not just with the teaching of languages (all languages), although this continues to be primordial, but also the teaching of the linguistic varieties which learners encounter in subjects other than languages (see F. Goullier's contribution in this collection). So plurilingual and intercultural education involves the learning of a number of languages or language varieties and developing the ability to cope with cultural differences. In order to achieve this we need to develop and put into practice specific approaches to teaching and learning that treat plurilingual and intercultural competence from a holistic perspective. These approaches are presented in the article.

Aims and purposes

The principal concern of plurilingual and intercultural education is in the context of overarching educational *aims* – it seeks to make explicit how *languages in and through education* can contribute to social construction in accord with the *values* preconised by the Council of Europe – social cohesion and inclusion, equal access for all to take part in social, economic and democratic life, and openness to diversity

(cf. also Council of Europe 2018). This means that plurilingual and intercultural education has a dual aim: as well as enabling learners to acquire linguistic and cultural competences, it must further their general development as individuals (Beacco *et al.* 2016: 15-16). And it is a reminder to language teachers of the contribution they make to the development of the whole person.

Putting the principles into practice

Plurilingual and intercultural education embodies a number of *principles* that are essential to approaches which seek to realise the goals we have described (*ibid.* 16-18). A key aspect is that we should *take account* of all the varieties of language and culture which each learner has at his/her disposal (*his/her repertoire*) at each step of acquiring linguistic and cultural competences so that they can be progressively extended and enriched. One should not reject existing achievements in language or culture, whether they have been acquired in or outside the school, since these are the foundations on which new competences must be built. Previous linguistic and cultural achievements should not be ignored or rejected, whether they are acquired within or outside school. They are the foundations on which new skills must be built. This also contributes to the goal of plurilingual education that the school should recognise the specific aspects of each individual and should help them to take advantage of what they already know and are able to do. It is of special importance when the results of previous learning do not fit with the culture of the school or mainstream society – as in the case of students who speak another language at home and/or come from disadvantaged socio-cultural backgrounds. The establishment of links between new learning and the existing repertoire considers the *CEFR's* conviction that each individual has an **overall plurilingual and pluricultural competence**, and not an addition of distinct and separate competences, language by language, culture by culture (Council of Europe 2001, 168). This conviction implies that we help to establish links between new knowledge / skill to be acquired and what is already there. For example, to help Italian learners to integrate the distinction between possessive *sein* and *ihr* in German into their existing knowledge, they must be helped to become aware of how the possessive functions in English, (which they have probably already learned *his and her*), in Italian, and perhaps even in another language spoken in the family.

These aims imply other didactic principles that are already applied in many existing approaches, for example: education seeking to develop responsibility and social commitment through the development of reflexivity in learning; reflection on linguistic and cultural phenomena and awareness of the learner's own experience of learning (Beacco *et al.* 2016: 11, 28, 38, 41).

Plurilingual and intercultural education and didactic approaches

In order to implement these didactic principles, practical methodologies aiming at developing language learning and cultural competence can make use of proposals made in *global approaches that were designed specifically to implement them*. There are several such approaches (e.g. didactics of plurilingualism, intercultural education, pluralistic approaches to languages and cultures) which often include similar practical methodologies over and above their particular features. Many of these methodologies were developed before the concept of plurilingual and intercultural education appeared; it provided a structured justification for the ideas which underlie them.

As will be seen below, the ECML has made a significant contribution to innovation in plurilingual and intercultural education. It is in ECML projects that a coherent concept of **plurilingual approaches to languages and cultures** has been developed. This is why the way in which these approaches apply the principles of plurilingual and intercultural education to classroom practice will be the common thread of this article.

Issues at stake

A number of issues influence how plurilingual and intercultural education can be put into practice

How to ensure a proper understanding of relevant terms and concepts

Too often the terms “plurilingual” and “plurilingualism” are used to refer to an “additive” idea of plurilingualism to maintain that plurilingualism in schools can be developed in schools simply by *multiplying the number of languages taught*. This takes no account of how creating links with the other languages and varieties of languages in a learner’s existing repertoire can enhance language learning. It helps learners to develop skills such as the ability to move between different languages either in the same conversation according to needs and to who is being addressed (*alternating languages*) or to mediate between speakers of different languages.

We need to cast aside the idea that in intercultural education (which is one of the pluralistic approaches) stereotyped representations of other cultures describe

something objectively real, and that the “cultures” have fixed and immutable visions of the world which are completely distinct from each other. This “reifying” way of thinking turns cultures and their characteristics into objects, such as “British phlegm” or “Mediterranean superficiality”. In fact, *cultures are always hybrid, interconnected and changing*. Individuals belong to several different cultural groups, and they switch both inside and between these groups (Blanchet & Coste 2010: 15-20).

Organisation of curricula

In order to make plurilingual education genuinely *transversal* – covering the teaching of all languages as well as the teaching of the linguistic aspects of school subjects – the curriculum must describe both *the way in which there is a convergence of educational goals across all school subjects* and the specific objectives of each one. This is the sine qua non for co-operation between teachers of different subjects; this can be achieved in a variety of ways (for example co-ordination of progress in different subjects, systematic links to what has already been covered in other subjects, shared teaching sequences, multidisciplinary projects...).

The implementation of plurilingual education also involves vertical co-ordination continuing throughout a learner’s schooling, as described in following examples of how different pluralistic methodologies are put into practice at different stages of school education.

For children in pre-school and primary education, the approach called **awakening to language** (*éveil aux langues* in French) does not aim to teach languages, but rather to make learners aware of their own plurilingualism and that of their peers, to encourage them to observe the differences and similarities between a number of languages and to explore how they work. This is a preparation for subsequent language learning, and it aims to help the children to develop a better acceptance of “otherness” – by becoming aware of the diversity of languages. When children begin to learn languages, the methodology called **integrated language didactics** puts the emphasis on the comparison between the different languages taught in schools and the synergies that the learner can establish while learning them. This helps learners to learn more effectively, with each new language learning experience reinforcing the acquisition of other languages. Later, at the end of secondary school or at university, based on similar competences, the **didactics of intercomprehension** can be applied to the learning of several languages of the same family (French, Italian, Spanish, Romanian, etc. for Romance languages). (For more details on these pluralistic methodologies, see the Key Ideas section on the FREPA website, *A framework of reference for pluralistic approaches to languages and cultures*).

Beyond the acquisition of communicative competence in languages and as a result of the process of learning them, the social and ethical goals of plurilingual and intercultural education should be clearly declared in curricula and in the frameworks for describing competences to be acquired, at least in as far as school education is concerned.

Practical implementation in the classroom

It is important to find *a balance between the different factors*. First of all by giving proper emphasis to *teaching methods which target language learning **and** cultural learning*. Approaches which establish links between them, by taking account of the comprehensive nature of linguistic and cultural competences should be used *in support*. Secondly it is important not to neglect either one of the aspects of an approach to education which is plurilingual and intercultural *at the same time*. Nowadays – and regrettably– many of the applications of “awakening to language” neglect work on language and adopt an approach to diversity which is mainly culture-based; conversely, methodologies based on “integrated language didactics” tend to neglect the cultural aspects of linguistic features. And finally, in integrated language didactics, there is often a *tendency to put an emphasis only on the similarities* between different languages or cultures, especially for lexical elements in related languages, even though becoming aware of differences is equally valuable. On the other hand, some approaches to intercultural learning tend to be limited to pointing out differences between cultures, ignoring what is similar, or even common in a world where exchanges and hegemonies of different kinds are present.

It is clear that the training of future and practising teachers for plurilingual and intercultural education has a crucial role to play, for it transforms existing certainties. Teachers have to understand the principles, be familiar with the resources available and develop new ways of teaching. The experience of many projects has shown that this does not work if they do not identify with the new values and goals (Cambra 2017: 240).

How the ECML contributes to this field

Ever since its first medium-term programme (2000-2003), the ECML has made a substantial contribution to the development of plurilingual and intercultural education (cf. Candelier 2003) through various conceptual and practical projects on intercultural education and others, more linguistically oriented, dealing with the teaching of German as a second foreign language or on awakening to language (*éveil aux langues*).

There has been a *steady growth* in the number and importance of ECML projects devoted to plurilingual and intercultural education in subsequent projects.

Some of the projects have focused on the global and transversal aspects of plurilingual and intercultural education, exploring how it can be put into practice. This has concentrated on establishing it in *schools* by providing practical and varied examples of implementing it. These include the *PlurCur* project, *Towards whole-school language curricula – Examples of practice in schools*, and, more recently the *EOL* project, *Learning environments where modern languages flourish*.

This emphasis on a transversal perspective can also be seen in projects which are concerned with the teaching of school subjects whose main purpose is not language learning or development. One of these worth mentioning is *Conbat+*, *Content based teaching + Plurilingual/cultural awareness*, which created teaching materials where plurilingual and pluricultural methods for teaching are used *to teach the content of different school subjects*. Whereas *Conbat+* emphasizes the diversity of languages, two other projects address the “internal” varieties of the language of schooling – the diverse language *registers used in different subjects* – and present teaching methodologies for dealing with this diversity. The projects are *Developing language awareness in school subjects* and *A roadmap for schools to support the language(s) of schooling* whose title indicates that the project is also concerned with whole school strategies for implementing plurilingual and intercultural education.

Other projects inspired by didactic approaches to linguistic and cultural diversity have focused on more traditionally established areas. In particular the projects *Marille* (*Majority language instruction as basis for plurilingual education*) and *Maledive* (*Diversity in majority language learning*), which recommend that in the teaching of the *language of schooling as a subject* schools should take account of the language repertoires of all learners, including those for whom the language of the school is not the first language; the *Plurimobil* project (*Plurilingual and intercultural learning through mobility*), which proposes methodologies and resources for developing plurilingual and intercultural competences through *school exchanges*; the *ICOPOMO* (*Intercultural competence for professional mobility*) project for intercultural competence and professional mobility; *Parents* (*Involving parents in plurilingual and intercultural education*) is mainly concerned with awakening to language; *EBP-ICI* (*Minority languages, collateral languages and bi-/plurilingual education*) which produced studies and practical activities in which plurilingual and intercultural are combined in the context of *regional and minority languages*.

The *EBP-ICI* project provides a very explicit example of the use of the concepts and descriptors proposed by *FREPA* (*A Framework of reference for pluralistic approaches*

to languages and cultures). FREPA provides an extensive and structured set of competence descriptors of *knowledge, attitudes and skills* that can be developed through pluralistic approaches. Here is an example of a descriptor for each of these three categories:

- *Knows that each language has its own, partly specific, way of « perceiving / organising » reality.*
- *Openness to the diversity of languages / people / culture of the world; to diversity as such (to difference itself), to alterity.*
- *Can use the knowledge and skills already mastered in one language in activities of comprehension / production in another language.*

These descriptors are not limited to the development of communication skills. They also include the diverse aspects of general education which plurilingual and intercultural education can foster. Thanks to the level of detail in the definitions, the descriptors provide not just benchmarks for what plurilingual and intercultural education can achieve, but equally a detailed analysis of the competences involved. The analysis gives explicit definitions of the nature of the knowledge, attitudes and skills that the learner needs to master, and in this way help to specify the content of classroom activities. The level of detail of these descriptors makes it possible to link them in a practical way with teaching materials on a database which is available on the FREPA website.

Other ECML projects have made practical proposals for teacher training and independent professional development for plurilingual and intercultural teaching (see *LEA – Language educator awareness* and *PEPELINO – European portfolio for pre-primary educators*). These proposals are all the more valuable since, except for the Austrian *Basiskompetenzen Sprachliche Bildung für alle Lehrenden* (“Basic skills for ‘language education’ for all teachers”, 2014, and *The skills reference data on multilingual communication in intercomprehension* (REFDIC 2015), multilingual and intercultural aspects are underrepresented in existing frameworks.

Conclusions and future prospects

In addition to the projects mentioned in this overview, there have been others concerning bilingual education and the CLIL approach – dealt with in another chapter; they illustrate that one of the merits of the ECML’s work has been a broad coverage of different areas of language education and languages for education.

Efforts should now focus not only on further exploration of these fields, but above all on the consolidation of a global vision that combines them in a single, overall educational project, in which convergence between different subject areas is encouraged.

In practical terms, for example, the definition of the competences for each subject area must make it possible for teachers of foreign languages and teachers of physics to realise that each one of them contributes, according to their role and needs, to the learner's ability to observe and compare linguistic forms – whether the task is to learn a foreign language or to learn to master the specific text types needed to understand and use academic discourse specific to physics. At the same time, we need further development of recommendations for the assessment of specific competences related to plurilingual and intercultural aspects and teachers need to know how to apply them (Beacco *et al.* 2016: 67-70). None of this will happen unless there is a vision of professional development that makes explicit the shared competences that teachers of all languages and all school subjects should acquire to meet the linguistic and cultural requirements of their profession. An ECML project *Towards a common European Framework of reference for language teachers* has outlined some of the bases of a reference framework for teaching competences which would describe comprehensively the domains of languages for education and cultural education.

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EARLY LANGUAGE LEARNING

Catherine Carré-Karlinger

Introduction

In a world in which demographic change, migration flows and increasing mobility have brought about large-scale social transformations, European education systems are having to undertake a fundamental rethink and constantly redefine their role as they face multiple fresh challenges. Urban areas are showing ever greater linguistic and cultural diversity, giving rise to language practices that are increasingly complex. Young children discover this patchwork of family and social experience from their very first years of socialisation in pre-school education, a stage which represents a critical time in the development of their language awareness and relationships to other people. The pedagogical choices made at this stage will inevitably have a decisive impact on their future development.

The European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML) of the Council of Europe has therefore deemed it part of its mandate to examine the social and educational challenges of good-quality early childhood education. The aim is to consider different countries' national needs while helping to take account of learners' linguistic plurality, with due regard for democratic values. This outlook entails

multiple teaching approaches focusing on the social impact of hierarchies between languages and cultures. It leads to the adoption of a joined-up approach to language teaching, which can encompass from the pre-school period onwards, the language knowledge that all the children derive from their families and prepare them for learning new languages in the future. ECML activities and projects focusing on early language learning are thus intended for all pre-primary and primary schools.

Challenges

Consideration of the challenges of early language learning means taking an interdisciplinary view of all the educational issues associated with the social transformations mentioned above and paying special attention to the specific characteristics, needs and potential of young children. Since young learners absorb their first universal knowledge and learn about social participation through language acquisition, it is necessary to consider their development in its entirety and adjust educational approaches to their language development. The period up to the age of seven is in fact an intensive phase of natural language acquisition. It differs from later explicit learning, when the ability to think metalinguistically requires greater cognitive maturity.

Early learning seeks to use language in all its forms to promote an understanding of the world, with the accent more on language awareness and oral communication in everyday life. The major educational challenge is to bring teaching alive through a playful approach and offer stimulating tasks that enlist children's curiosity and maintain their pleasure in exploring. For example, telling stories based on picture books stimulates young children's phonological awareness, gives them basic reading skills and introduces them to literacy. They follow the example of their teachers, who impart the wealth of language needed and prepare them to learn modern languages: in bilingual situations, it is important for teachers to be fluent in the target language or to team up with native speakers.

In a context of linguistic diversity, social interactions and access to knowledge of the world take place through an increasingly plurilingual repertoire. Informal learning within the family plays a key role here, especially for very young children. It is essential to take this into account in the teaching process and to build bridges between schools and families – as co-educators – based on mutual trust and co-operation. Teachers and educators also assume the role of managing intercultural relations and fostering positive attitudes to plurilingualism.

Diversifying the languages covered in school from the pre-primary level

All the languages used by children serve to construct their identities and develop their thinking and personalities. These languages are a precious resource, not only for the children and their future life plans but also for the communities in which they grow up. Whether they constitute a family legacy, a minority or majority language, simultaneous or additive bilingualism or a subject learned in school, languages all help to build children's plurilingual repertoire. For pre-primary and primary schools the priority is opening up to diversity and providing an enabling environment for all language learning.

It must, however, be said that many practices prevailing in pre-primary and primary education make it hard to link languages together and do little to incorporate them into other fields of learning, except in some bilingual border regions. For many schools, learning another language remains a secondary educational objective unless it is English, considered as the particularly prestigious lingua franca.

The European linguistic landscape, including languages contributed by immigrant populations, also raises the issue of the institutional difficulty of giving fair consideration to all languages. Whether they are languages of schooling, first languages or foreign languages, together they make up a child's language skills, have an impact on each other and ought to be taken into account in all learning experiences at school, in the light of the young learners' personal issues and environments.

Preparing teachers and educators for linguistic and cultural diversity

The many recommendations of the Council of Europe concerning plurilingualism, including those appearing in a 2016 book called *Competences for democratic culture – Living together as equals in culturally diverse democratic societies*, have met with a lack of understanding marked by a certain measure of resistance from teachers and educators themselves. For these people, most of whom are still generalists, specific training in the management of cultural and linguistic diversity would be a useful supplement to their language knowledge. Challenging traditional, normative, monolingual representations, which often stand in the way of a positive perception of children's diverse repertoires, would indeed help them to appreciate languages as an essential educational resource.

To that end, and given the extent of the needs, it is necessary to draw on a vast field of interdisciplinary knowledge and expand the interchange between praxis and research: it is through such cross-fertilisation that the didactic interplay of language and culture has gradually produced some innovative educational ideas. It has also endeavoured to develop strategies that could begin to carry these ideas over into school practice on a long-term basis – a very ambitious challenge.

Professionalising teachers and educators in pre-primary and primary education has thus become a major concern in the world of education. Taking into account the competences required would in any case entail remodelling their initial and in-service training, as demonstrated by the *Guide for the development and implementation of curricula for plurilingual and intercultural education* (2016). It is important to develop the ability to activate interior resources, that is, the knowledge, skills and attitudes enabling an individual to cope with the tasks required in specific social circumstances (*A Framework of reference for pluralistic approaches to languages and cultures*, FREPA, 2012). Activation of these resources requires the introduction of a reflective approach with effective support tools, a closer examination of the didactic models used as a reference in monolingual, bilingual and plurilingual situations, and development of appropriate teaching materials. The priority is providing support as early as the pre-primary stage so that teachers and educators make the most of plurilingualism and school education is opened up to different languages.

Developing the language of schooling from primary education onwards

A number of comparative statistical studies for the OECD countries (PISA, TIMSS) provide information on learners' reading skills and academic performance in literacy and mathematics. They have shown that educational achievement in all subjects depends heavily on the level of development of the language of schooling. There is a clear correlation between the language of schooling, learners' socio-economic background and their degree of proficiency in their mother tongue or their second language, where the latter is the language of instruction at school. Such inequalities, unfortunately already apparent by the end of primary education, require that close attention be paid to early development of literacy skills in both monolingual and multilingual environments. The *Handbook for curriculum development and teacher training* published by the Council of Europe in 2016 and devoted to *The language dimension in all subjects* considers the language of schooling to be the key to effective learning and recommends this type of approach in Chapter 6 (pp. 53-59). This objective goes hand in hand with raising awareness of the differences between the

oral and written registers at an early stage. It is an incentive to encourage narrative elaboration and introduce the language of evocation from early childhood, that is to develop explicit and structured language allowing young children to express themselves clearly without regard to specific situations and later to acquire a more complex command of language, characterised by the ability to generalise and use abstraction. This competence, which is needed for learning, is considered to be a prerequisite for educational success.

To improve the performance of the education system in general, it is therefore advisable to initiate and support gradual acquisition of the language of schooling in all areas of learning from the pre-primary stage, thus fostering cognitive development. Assessing language resources regularly in order to determine personal progression, helping each child build up his or her learning and take it further, is therefore an essential step. It requires teachers to use appropriate diagnostic tools for the languages concerned.

How the ECML contributes in this field

Early language learning has been an integral part of all ECML programmes from the outset. In a major effort to create awareness of the paramount but often neglected importance of this educational field, successive teams have worked on a number of projects to develop innovative and flexible teaching materials, aiming to improve practice and empower teachers and educators. Each programme has highlighted a specific theme, such as intercultural awareness, the added value of plurilingualism in professional language teaching practices, and inclusive education putting languages at the heart of learning. In each programme it has been necessary to identify the specific learning conditions of young children. The following examples are therefore only a small selection of the work done by the ECML to tackle the key challenges of language teaching in pre-primary and primary education.

Building on plurilingualism in early learning practices

The project *Content-based teaching for young learners (EPLC, 2008-2011)* sought to ensure diversified language provision from primary school onwards. It offered modules based on new content belonging to non-language subjects, aimed particularly at children and raising their desire to learn foreign languages. It also conceptualised the relationship with other people in order to develop children's intercultural skills by using the "general/specific" concept. The methodological

approach was founded on task-based teaching geared to early learning which promotes maximum use of the target language. Portfolio support encouraged learner autonomy.

The project *Content and language integrated learning for languages other than English – Getting started!* (CLIL-LOTE-START, 2008-2011) adopted an interdisciplinary approach for bilingual educational environments. It offered information and material on the CLIL approach to promote its dissemination as from primary schooling.

The project *Assessment of young learner literacy linked to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (AYLLIT, 2008-2011) led to the publication of a handbook designed to help teachers assess reading and writing skills in primary-school modern language classes. It contains teaching material and guidelines for identifying the skills involved in reading stories and starting to write. Using pupils' texts with teachers' comments, it gives tips on how to get children to write, how to assess their writing and how to give constructive feedback.

Professionalising support for young language learners

The project *Developing teachers of modern languages to young learners* (TEMOLAYOLE, 2004-2007) dealt with issues relating to the design of innovative programmes for initial and in-service teacher training. This research-based project led to the publication of a book providing an overview of the basic principles of teaching modern languages to young children and recommended various types of materials, tasks and assessment practices.

The project *European portfolio for pre-primary educators – The plurilingual and intercultural dimension* (PEPELINO, 2012-2015) was primarily intended to support all those involved in pre-primary teaching in their task of introducing young children to the plurality of languages and cultures. Exposure to otherness was used to foster the social and emotional development of young learners and boost their confidence for constructing their identities. In preparing young learners for school, pre-primary educators also have to manage the development of implicit metalinguistic knowledge and acquisition of specific language skills. This tool encouraged them to think about their own professional and language trajectories but was also entirely relevant to the needs of primary school teachers confronted with growing cultural and linguistic diversity. It provided a structure for continuous self-appraisal based on descriptors covering key competences in a number of fields. It could be used for better management of the main tasks inherent in work with young children – work

which includes co-operation with parents and other people influencing language learning. Note may also be taken of the project *Involving parents in plurilingual and intercultural education (IPPIE, 2012-2015)*, which was aimed directly at parents and sought to meet their needs by providing specific resources.

Promoting educational achievement through a comprehensive approach to language education

Implementation of a comprehensive approach designed to ensure consistency and continuity in early language education is rooted in a holistic view that considers language learning to be a dynamic and continuous process. In its current programme, the ECML is focusing on co-ordination of the different stages of lifelong learning from early childhood and seeking to optimise the quality of education by extending co-operation to all stakeholders, beyond institutional barriers.

A very recent project, *Inspiring language learning in the early years: Why it matters and what it looks like for children age 3-12 (ILLEY, 2017-2019)*, offers a website providing trainers, educators and classroom teachers with classroom tools based on existing educational resources. Among its key objectives are the provision of support for schools in implementing a comprehensive approach to language learning. The website brings together practices exemplifying professionals' linguistic attitudes and representations and offers learning scenarios for culturally and linguistically diverse situations. To ensure better planning of support for children building their language skills, it is also concerned with assessment of their language resources.

With regard to social cohesion in Europe, integration of all children and adolescents remains one of the most urgent educational challenges, as underlined by a document in the series *The linguistic and educational integration of children and adolescents from migrant backgrounds called Language(s) of schooling: Focusing on vulnerable learners* (Council of Europe, 2010). To help address this, training and advice has been offered to ECML member countries since 2015. *Young migrants: Supporting multilingual classrooms* is a mediation initiative drawing on a wide range of ECML projects and resources, all of which focus on inclusive, plurilingual and intercultural approaches. It assists in ensuring access to quality education and bridging the attainment gap that can be observed in our plural societies between learners from early childhood onwards.

Conclusions and outlook

The new 2020-2023 programme, *Inspiring innovation in language education: changing contexts, evolving competences*, is based on the member states' present priorities. It carries on from the current programme and emphasises the role of pluralistic approaches, bilingual/plurilingual education and institutional organisation of language education. Its key educational objectives remain promoting equity and reducing the risk of early school leaving by ensuring that all children, regardless of their origin or first language, acquire a high level of proficiency in the language of schooling, if necessary through appropriate support.

To make progress in this direction it would seem advisable to continue developing systemic approaches covering early language learning, under the responsibility of school leaders and authorities. This entails perceiving educators, and all language and subject teachers, as agents of change. Training them in linguistic and cultural mediation is a major challenge but one that has become an absolute necessity.

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LANGUAGES OF SCHOOLING

Francis Goullier

Introduction

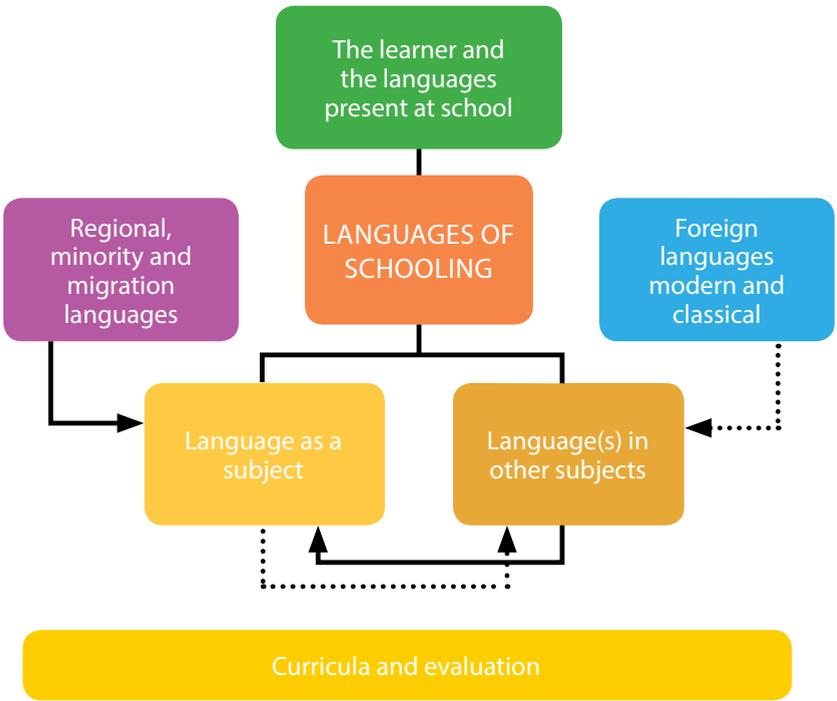
It may seem strange, for those who have not followed developments in the Council of Europe's thinking in recent years, to see "languages of schooling" included among the nine thematic areas at the heart of the European Centre for Modern Languages' projects.

Their inclusion is essentially the result of a meeting between two axes of the Council's educational policy: the search for quality in education for the academic success of the greatest number of people and taking into account the pedagogical and didactic challenges posed by the diversity of the languages present, used and learned in schools.

It can also be seen as a result of the development of the way educational issues are considered: learning and teaching are seen as complementary but different. Taking notice of learners' experiences, the wealth of knowledge and competences they possess, and their specific needs involved going beyond the framework of the modern languages classroom in isolation to addressing the role of languages in each learner's experience and in his or her educational pathway.

Issues at stake

The contours of the Council of Europe’s vision of the theme *Languages in education, languages for education* are well illustrated by the *Platform of resources and references for plurilingual and intercultural education* on the Council of Europe website:



It is clear from this diagram that the languages of schooling are at the heart of each learner’s experience during their school life: it is clear, too, that the languages of schooling have many links to the other languages in learners’ linguistic repertoires – as well as to other languages taught in school, whether they are foreign or classical languages, regional, minority or migration languages, when these are part of the school curriculum. It is therefore no longer possible to examine the field of language acquisition without including the language or languages of schooling.

This means that in plurilingual and intercultural approaches to education the language(s) of schooling, foreign languages, classical languages, regional or minority languages, first languages, all interact with each other in different ways.

The project *Competences for a culture of democracy – Living together as equals in culturally diverse democratic societies* (2016) of the Council of Europe Education Department illustrates how this interaction gives rise to political challenges. Of the twenty skills identified in the project as central to active participation in democratic life, two are related to language skills:

- linguistic, communicative and plurilingual skills;
- knowledge and critical understanding of language and communication.

Helping learners acquire progressive mastery of the language(s) of schooling and the discourse registers of the different subjects enables them to succeed in their education and, consequently, to participate in society and in social dialogue. Encouraging learners to use the full variety of their linguistic repertoire in order to carry out learning or communication tasks is a way for them to acquire metalinguistic skills, to become aware of the resources they possess and to be better able to interact responsibly with their environment. All these factors are preconditions for active participation in democracy.

Mastery of the languages of schooling and the fight against failure in school

The importance and particularity of the acquisition of the languages of schooling has been highlighted by the difficulties encountered by learners with first languages other than the main language used in the school. But it is essential to bear in mind that addressing these difficulties has revealed that mastery of the language and discourse of schooling is a challenge for all learners, especially those who do not benefit in their immediate environment from exposure to diversified and formally developed use of the first language.

The link between mastery of the language of schooling and the fight against school failure has been highlighted in a number of studies by the OECD, in UNESCO policy documents and programmes supported by the European Commission. The political dimension of this awareness has been specifically addressed by the Council of Europe, in a *Recommendation, adopted in 2014 by the Committee of Ministers of the member states, on the importance of competence in the language(s) of schooling for equity and quality in education and for educational success*. In this text, the Committee of Ministers stresses that “for the most vulnerable learners, those who use a different language for day-to-day communication and, especially, learners from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds, the acquisition of competences in the language of schooling is a major challenge”.

The *resource and reference platform* (see above) points out another important aspect of the question. The acquisition of the languages of schooling takes place in relation to other known or learned languages, but it cannot be considered just as a single issue. A double distinction must be drawn between, on the one hand, issues concerning the languages of schooling in school subjects – which should not be confused with mastery of the language used for the purposes of everyday communication between learners, between learners and teachers or for the functioning of the educational institution. On the other hand, mastery of the specific language(s) of school subjects is basically concerned with the academic discourse used in each subject.

The language requirements in the various subjects, often not described explicitly, concern not only the lexical expressions related to the subject concerned, but above all the discourse genres and types of texts used in teaching and for assessment. Defining and explaining these requirements constitutes an important aspect of the combat against social inequality, for neglecting them can be a cause of failure at school, if they are not specifically addressed.

Implications for teacher and teacher education

The recognition of the importance of these challenges and their links with the values promoted by the Council of Europe have led to further work. As early as 2016, on the basis of studies and documents available on the Council's Platform, a Guide was prepared: *The language dimension in all subjects – A handbook for curriculum development and teacher training* (2016). This text, intended for teachers, teacher educators and curriculum designers, addresses the role of the languages of schooling in the acquisition and use of knowledge and the nature of the linguistic requirements specific to the different subjects; it examines how to plan progression in the acquisition of academic language, from primary to secondary, as well as pedagogical approaches facilitating such acquisition. It also deals with the specific challenge of teaching the language of schooling as a subject and the consequences for the initial and in-service education of teachers in all subjects.

The challenge is not, of course, to make teachers of subjects other than languages become language teachers, but to make all teachers aware of the nature, sometimes still insufficiently perceived, of the language requirements linked to their subject – in order to make them more attentive to their learners' progression and to encourage communication and collaboration among teachers on the topic.

By setting these principles and objectives it then becomes essential to clarify their pedagogical and didactic consequences for education and to help education systems and teachers to implement them. This leads us directly to describe the role and mission of the European Centre for Modern Languages.

How the ECML contributes to this field

The rich variety of the ECML's projects and publications in the area of *languages of schooling* is an illustration of the priority that the ECML has for several years given to the developments outlined here, by making tools available to teachers and teacher educators. The number and great diversity of the contexts in which the principles developed in the documents mentioned above need to be implemented means that these tools, in order to be useful and effective, should not address the issue of languages of schooling just in a very general way but should focus on specific situations and/or objectives. A number examples, not taken in order of publication, illustrates this.

Raising awareness of the importance of the language factor

The first of these examples is provided by the *European portfolio for pre-primary educators (PEPELINO)*, produced as part of the 2012-2015 programme. The relevance of this tool is not in what it says about the language of schooling. In fact, the portfolio is aimed at those who work with children under six years of age – who are not yet confronted with the specific requirements of academic language, which they will only face gradually as they progress from primary education and beyond. The choice of this example is prompted more by the connections it makes between the training followed by these (future) teachers or teacher educators and by the emphasis in *PEPELINO* on the language factor in their interaction with children. The aim of this tool is not to replace existing teacher education but to supplement it by raising teachers' and future teachers' awareness of the importance of the language dimension and of the pedagogical value of respecting the diversity of the linguistic resources of the children in their care.

The aim of raising awareness of the role of the language dimension in education in this portfolio is to encourage a reflective approach in which education professionals are attentive to indicators of learners' success or problems and to the diverse ways in which their language competence develops. Teachers using the portfolio are asked to reflect on their practice, with opportunities to share their responses with colleagues; the responses can be complemented and improved as more experience is gained.

Languages of schooling and plurilingual competence

Other projects conducted as part of ECML programmes address more directly the issue of the languages of schooling in secondary schools, in relation to addressing the linguistic diversity present in the classroom.

Two of them are very complementary to each other: *Language skills for successful subject learning (Language descriptors)* and *Developing language awareness in subject classes (Language in subjects)*. They have been developed with a view to facilitating the academic success of learners for whom the language of schooling is not the first language.

The first of these two projects identifies the expected language requirements in history, civic education and mathematics for learners aged 12-13 and 15-16. These competences are defined in competency descriptors related to levels A2, B1 and B2 of the *CEFR*. The lists of descriptors have been developed to help teachers of these subjects to take into account the proficiency needed in the language of instruction when they do their assessment of learner achievement. They are also, perhaps fundamentally, designed as pedagogical tools which enable learners to take stock of their progress and set objectives. Discussion of the descriptors between learners and teachers provides opportunities to specify the way the competences in the descriptors can be expressed in a particular language and, in this way, provide an efficient way of setting objectives for progress in the use of the language of schooling.

The second project builds explicitly on the results of the previous one and complements them with practical resources for mathematics, history and science teachers to identify the linguistic needs of learners in their subject area and proposes teaching materials illustrating different scaffolding techniques to help students achieve the desired objectives.

Two other projects address this relationship between languages of schooling and plurilingualism from another angle: *Maledive (Teaching the language of schooling in the context of diversity)* and *Marille (Majority language instruction as basis for plurilingual education)*. Plurilingualism in the classroom is indeed a pedagogical challenge, but it is at the same time a resource for all learners that is still too little used. These two projects aim to use the plurilingualism of learners to promote both the development of their competences in the language of instruction and their plurilingual and intercultural competence.

The first of these, for example, provides trainers with study materials for pre- and in-service teacher education, as well as activities to promote transversal competences based on learners' plural language repertoires, to help the acquisition of the language of schooling.

A whole-school approach to language acquisition

Most of these projects stress the fact that the success of approaches to the acquisition of the languages of schooling depends on co-operation between all the teachers concerned. A Think Tank was organised at the ECML when the 2016-2019 programme on *Whole-school approaches to the language/s of schooling* was launched. The outcome of the think tank was the setting up of a specific project: *A roadmap for schools to support the language(s) of schooling*. This project has created a number of complementary tools that enable school communities to reflect collectively on the role played by language in all subjects and to develop the most appropriate strategies to meet the challenges.

On the project website there is a self-assessment tool, with which the development of a strategic plan can be visualised, including examples of how heads of schools can establish such plans; in addition, there is a guide for the implementation of the school's roadmap.

Conclusion and future prospects

As we have seen, issues related to the languages of schooling for the success of all learners are at the heart of several projects in ECML programmes, which contribute to the practical application of the Council of Europe's work in this domain: the importance of the creation of links between the languages of schooling and other languages present or learned, the need to diversify approaches according to contexts in order to take into account the opportunities provided by the plurilingualism of individual learners and of the multilingualism present in school classes. ECML projects contribute, too, to raising awareness of the advantages of whole school approaches, which can treat issues related to different subject areas in a coherent way and thus guarantee greater effectiveness.

The exploration of these different aspects of the languages of schooling opens up many perspectives for future work. At the same time, it raises the issue of the kind of profile those carrying out projects in this area should have. Since exploration of the topic will involve going beyond the field of just foreign modern languages it will

also involve a redefinition of the competences and fields of responsibility of those taking part in the projects.

This aspect is, among other things, addressed in a final project that is relevant to the topic: *Towards a common European Framework of reference for language teachers (CEFRLT)*. The objective of this project in the 2016-2019 programme was to explore the usefulness and feasibility of a reference framework of competence for teachers. When the issue was examined the project team soon saw the need to pose the following question: does the reality in terms of needs not require us to work towards a common resource for all language-related teaching, including, with respect for the specific aspects of each of them, foreign, regional or minority languages, as well as the languages of migrants and those of schooling?

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CONTENT AND LANGUAGE INTEGRATED LEARNING

Do Coyle

Introduction

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) started to gain momentum in the 1990s as part of the move towards developing a more united multilingual, multicultural European community. CLIL is underpinned by the aspiration that all European citizens should be able to communicate in three languages – the local and/or national language and two others. It can be defined as:

“A dual-focused educational approach in which an additional language is used for learning and teaching of both content and language. That is, in the teaching and learning process, there is a focus not only on language and not only on content.” (Coyle, Hood, Marsh, 2010)

In line with a more holistic concept of the Council of Europe’s Languages of Schooling (Schleppegrell, 2004), CLIL was seen as a means of connecting the learning not only of foreign languages but also other regional, minority, migration and second languages, with the learning of school subjects. For example, students in Germany could learn their Geography or History through the medium of English; students in the UK might learn their Science through French; students in the Basque country, educated in Basque, might learn their Social Studies in Spanish and English. Thematic studies, especially in primary schools, based on interdisciplinary

learning, also flourished such as project work on “food chains” or “migration” using language/s other than the regular language of schooling.

By the turn of the century, foundations were laid for a more integrated approach to using as well as learning languages across the school curriculum. Noting the successes of bilingual programmes elsewhere, and in particular the Canadian immersion programmes, CLIL was and continues to be perceived as having the potential to make a significant contribution to developing linguistic and cultural capital. It provides additional experiences to language learning other than as a discrete subject, through offering pathways towards bilingual education. And yet bringing together language learning and subject learning at the same time is a highly complex phenomenon.

Key issues in the development of CLIL

Looking back over the last few decades which plot the rapid and sometimes controversial evolution of CLIL – initially in European then global contexts – three periods are identifiable. The stages demonstrate how from the start, CLIL teachers have had to grapple with complex processes involved in learning subject content through a language, itself also the focus of learning. CLIL approaches had to guard against detrimental effects on the learners’ linguistic competence or their subject knowledge. If 11-year-old novice English learners are studying a topic on the *causes and effects of avalanches* in CLIL geography, their understanding of the topic cannot be limited to key words such as layers, snow, avalanche and evaporation. This reduces the cognitive level of their learning to the level of their English. In CLIL settings, the cognitive level of the topic has to be at the same level as it would be were the learning taking place in the first language or the main language of the school. This presents immediate challenges to ways in which CLIL topics and subjects are designed, resourced, developed and assessed.

Teaching in a language implies using a language as the medium of instruction (as in first language classrooms) without paying explicit attention to its development. In these cases, translation is often used to overcome comprehension barriers. Teaching through a language, however, draws learner attention to the language needed to learn the subject matter i.e. not only the key terms and vocabulary, but crucially, ways in which specific concepts are expressed in a particular subject. For example, writing a report in History requires different types of language to those needed for writing a report in Science. Learners need access to specific tenses which do not necessarily follow the sequencing of grammatical syllabuses typical

of language learning textbooks. In other words, writing about the *causes and effects of avalanches* meaningfully requires learners to engage in tasks and activities which are not common in either regular language lessons or first language geography lessons. Integrating language learning and subject learning does not lie in the repertoires of either subject teachers or language teachers. It demands a rethink of ways in which languages are learned in CLIL classrooms, which emphasises their role as both a communication *and* a learning tool.

In the earlier stages of CLIL development, the debate centred around the importance of finding an appropriate balance between subject knowledge and language competence. The tension between a focus on meaning and a focus on form, led Swain (1998: 68) to emphasize that “content teaching needs to guide students’ progressive use of the full functional range of language, and to support their understanding how language form is related to meaning in subject area material”. This foregrounded the need for new and shared pedagogic practices for CLIL teachers. Alternative strategies and techniques drawing on both subject and language areas of expertise were needed alongside new approaches to planning for bilingual classroom learning.

The next stage turned attention to ways in which subject learning (content) and language learning (language) could be *integrated* i.e. learned together. Different approaches to CLIL began to emerge along a continuum – some more subject-oriented and others more language-oriented – depending on the school context and the teachers’ experiences. Subject teachers tended to place greater emphasis on subject knowledge and less on highlighting the underlying language needed and vice versa for language teachers. Whilst language teachers were familiar with making language accessible, questions were raised about their capacity as subject “experts” especially at secondary level. The dilemma is typified in the balance between “learning to use languages and using languages to learn”. Few teachers had professional training in using CLIL approaches which went into uncharted territory for both language and subject teachers. Such complexity led to constant debate and different interpretations across national and regional boundaries (Cenoz, Genesee and Gorter, 2014).

Pedagogic tools were developed. For example, the 4Cs Framework (Coyle, Hood and Marsh, 2010) outlined four “key components” for CLIL planning – Content (subject-specific knowledge and skills), Cognition (thinking skills), Communication (the language needed to deal with the content and thinking processes) and Culture (different disciplinary traditions and ways of doing things). Each “C” is interconnected. Planning units of work had to address ways in which the 4Cs interacted but also

ways in which individual “C”s might need specific attention. Whilst some of these elements coincide with communicative approaches familiar to language teachers, in CLIL lessons, language needing to be taught and learned is determined by the subject content. In other words, linguistic competence in CLIL requires subject-embedded practice and authentic application for quality learning to happen.

Another tool (Coyle, Hood and Marsh, 2010) – the Language Triptych – is also used extensively by CLIL teachers. It provides a reminder of the different kinds of language learners need to access according to the demands of the content matter. The Language Triptych defines three types of language needed by CLIL learners: the language *of* learning is the essential language needed to express specific context and skills, including vocabulary, phrases and grammar; language *for* learning is needed to participate in and carry out classroom tasks (language of problem-solving, the language of discussion, the language of writing a scientific report); language *through* learning is the language that emerges during the learning process as learners deepen and internalise their learning. It cannot be predicted beforehand. This language is needed by individual learners as they put into their own words what they think they have learned. It is also known as *linguaging* – the process of meaning-making and shaping knowledge through language. It is fundamental for “quality” learning.

During the second stage, fundamental questions about who could teach CLIL – language teachers, subject teachers or generalists – were debated. Essentially, teachers with a pedagogic understanding of *integrated learning* were a priority since neither language teachers nor subject teachers alone usually had an extensive CLIL pedagogic repertoire. There was an urgent need for schools and educational leaders to invest in professional development and context-relevant guidance, underpinned by theoretical principles. Interestingly, the move for greater professional development tended to be led by language teachers who recognised that urgent attention needed to be given to enabling learners to access appropriate types of language.

As teachers became more involved in researching their classroom practices, small-scale studies documented increased learner motivation and language competence (Bruton 2013) in CLIL classes. However, concerns were also raised. Some studies suggested that CLIL seems more appropriate for privileged learners or those with higher levels of linguistic competence (Cenoz *et al.* 2014) – in many cases, CLIL learners tended to be “selected”. Other studies suggested greater attention needed to be paid to the quality of writing focussing on subject-specific literacies (e.g. the language of science) and ways in which learners could be supported in *linguaging*

or expressing their learning at an appropriate level *through* another language (Dalton-Puffer 2013).

The current stage signifies a shift from CLIL being very much a language-related phenomenon to one which is gaining increasing attention in the broader *learning* agenda. In line with a focus globally on literacies skills and PISA results, influential research studies (e.g. Llinares, Morton and Whittaker 2012; Dalton-Puffer *et al.* 2014; Meyer *et al.* 2017), emphasised the importance of disciplinary literacies. The studies suggest that disciplinary literacies enhance the quality not only of the language itself but essentially of the depth of conceptual understanding in different subjects. Literacies, in this sense, go beyond learning to read and write at a basic level and shift towards increasingly academic style of disciplinary literacies. These identify, for example, the linguistic features of the types of text used in different subjects in increasingly sophisticated ways as learners progress. When literacies development occurs in more than one language, *pluriliteracy practices* emerge. These practices move away from focussing on differences between L1 and L2 learning, emphasizing instead that language and literacy practices across languages are interrelated and flexible. For example, texts which use the language of explanation may be regularly part of L1 learning in Geography – e.g. causes and effect of avalanches – and the need for language conventions in History, such as use of the passive voice, noun clauses and nominalisation (changing *allied* to *alliance*, *invaded* to *invasion*), require explicit teaching. By transferring literacy awareness to another language, CLIL makes transparent literary practices *across* languages and enables learners to use languages appropriately.

It could be argued that CLIL is at a crucial stage in its development in realising its potential to enrich learning when using more than one language. It provides a bridge between L1 as the medium of instruction and L2 learning and using, by making explicit the literacy and language practices embedded in subject disciplines. Drawing learners' attention to these practices in the CLIL language strengthens the bond between an understanding of their first and other languages – particularly important in our multilingual, multicultural classrooms. Whilst there is still some way to go, the pluriliteracies agenda – where our young people become literate across languages and disciplines – resonates with our changing world and our social responsibilities as educators.

ECML contribution to the development of language learner and teacher competences

Over the last twenty-five years, the ECML has played a fundamental role in providing opportunities for CLIL educators and researchers across nations to explore putting new thinking into practice. The ECML has responded to the pioneering spirit of teachers by identifying professional needs. Indeed, the programme “Languages at the heart of learning” (2016-2019) is especially supportive of CLIL approaches reflecting key ideas presented in this chapter. Practical examples include a *European Framework for CLIL teacher education (CLIL-CD, 2008-2011)*, which provides a set of principles and ideas for designing curricula for professional subject and language teacher development in CLIL. The project *Developing language awareness in subject classes (2016-2019)* links descriptors for mathematics and history with CEFR language descriptors. These resources help teachers cross boundaries to identify the linguistic needs of their learners and provide tailored support.

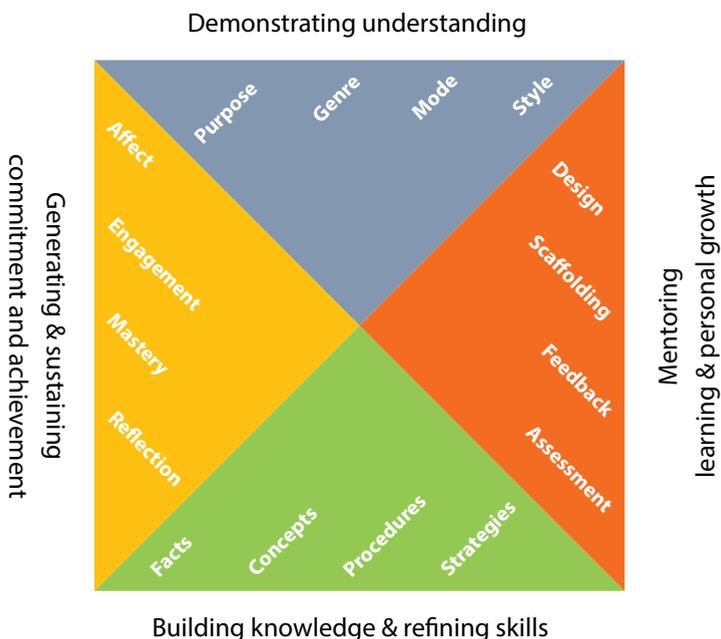
Interestingly, in the ECML projects the growth of CLIL has shifted far beyond language learning settings, beyond content-based language learning and beyond more language-oriented CLIL. Instead, embracing more subject-oriented bilingual and plurilingual classrooms has been the catalyst for rethinking language learning and using from different perspectives. The ECML has also facilitated CLIL projects focussing on language(s) of instruction other than English (*CLIL-LOTE-START* in French and German) and *CLIL-LOTE-GO* developing further resources for skills needed by CLIL teachers working in languages other than English. Together with the case study below, initiatives such as these mark crucial milestones in the evolution of a complex and dynamic approach to learning across disciplines, languages and cultures, which is accessible for all learners – any age, any stage.

Case study

The ECML project *Literacies through Content and Language Integrated Learning: effective learning across subjects and languages (2013-2015)* led to the formation of the trans-European *Graz Group* of researchers, teacher educators and teachers working together to construct a model for learning across curricula, languages and cultures called *Pluriliteracies Teaching for Deeper Learning* (www.ecml.at/pluriliteracies). *PTDL* prioritizes the development of learners’ disciplinary literacies and conceptual understanding as well as the automatic internalised use of disciplinary procedures, skills and strategies. Disciplinary literacies develop when learners actively engage

in subject-specific ways of constructing new knowledge and when they language their understanding using increasingly complex language, i.e. pluriliteracies. *PTDL* provides learners with appropriate language building blocks, referred to as cognitive discourse functions or CDFs, for completing subject tasks, e.g. the language needed for classifying, defining, describing, evaluating, explaining, exploring and reporting, as demanded by *subject-specific tasks*. However, this does not exclude specific attention being drawn to the associated linguistic elements including vocabulary, grammatical structures and so on. *PTDL* also draws on literacy practices in English as an Additional Language, and first language literacies.

There are four dimensions to the *PTDL* (see figure below): demonstrating subject specific understanding (communicating using appropriate language/s); building knowledge and refining skills (conceptual development); mentoring learning and personal growth (teacher scaffolding learning in very different ways depending on individual needs); and generating and sustaining commitment and achievement (encouraging learner motivation and growth). The communicating and conceptual development dimensions focus on the development of subject specific literacies and the language required to demonstrate understanding. The personal growth and mentoring dimensions focus on the changing roles of learners and teachers working in partnership.



The Model for Pluriliteracies Teaching for Deeper Learning

The *PTDL* model brings all the dimensions of learning together into one conceptual space using what might be considered a more *ecological* view of classroom learning across languages. In sum, *PTDL* promotes pluriliteracies, disciplines and cultures – with the ultimate goal of developing future pluriliterate global citizens.

Conclusions and future perspectives

The shift towards language-rich literacy practices required to develop subject-specific knowledge and skills reinstates, in my view, the critical role of language and languages as fundamental in education. It highlights the need to include further the expertise and skills of language teachers in partnership with their subject colleagues for further development and sustainability. Lessons learned from earlier stages in the evolution of CLIL include: a focus on language, without making transparent its connections to subject-specific conceptual understanding, is not enough; learner development from basic literacy skills to subject specific literacies in the language of instruction is essential and needs explicit attention; the depth of conceptual learning cannot be limited by the extent of a learner’s linguistic skills – instead new ways of building language competence embedded in subject disciplinary literacies need attention; and building learner resilience suggests that cognitive challenge is the norm.

Drawing on the main threads of this chapter, some key future directions for CLIL may be:

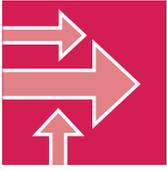
- funded longitudinal scientific research and practitioner inquiry which focus on classroom practices over time;
- reappraisal of the role of language teachers in CLIL and related settings such as EAL;
- focus on pluriliteracies practices for all learners where learners are valued for their linguistic and cultural resources;
- review of the role of languages other than English as the medium of CLIL instruction;
- networks for sharing principled digital resources and exemplars to “grow” stronger CLIL teacher professional learning communities.

To conclude, the position adopted in this chapter explores CLIL through a pluriliteracies lens which demonstrates its increasingly important role as a transferable feature of foreign language teaching and learning, and as an element

of bilingual and plurilingual education. It positions language/s at the core of *all* learning not only language learning and suggests an urgent need for wider exploration of subject discipline learning through more than one language in multilingual, multicultural classrooms. It repositions language learning across wider contexts in our schools and demands a re-think in professional development and opportunities for CLIL partnerships – schools need confident CLIL teachers to redesign learning pathways in their schools.

There are no panaceas in education. However, building on the accumulated wealth of professional and academic understanding over three decades and reframing the constant challenges as opportunities may well strengthen *integrated pathways* for transforming multilingual practices beyond CLIL.

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MIGRANT EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

Matilde Grünhage-Monetti and Alexander Braddell

Introduction

Elsewhere in this volume, David Newby's chapter "Teacher and learner competences" discusses the concept of language as a skill. This chapter looks at that concept in relation to majority language (L2) learning by adult migrants for vocational purposes. This is an aspect of language education born of and shaped by major socio-political and economic phenomena operating in Europe over the second half of the 20th century. Migration, structural changes in the economy, digitalisation, and globalisation have all impacted on work-related communication, requiring new and higher level language skills for employment. Different approaches and practices to support L2 learning for and at work have emerged across Europe, making new professional demands on teachers, learning providers and workplace actors, and posing questions for policy makers and funding agencies.

Key issues

Language and the industrial revolutions

There is a high degree of interdependence between technology, work organisation and communication. Technological innovation has always transformed not only work activity and its organisation, but also the use of language(s) at work.

In the 20th century, a new economic and industrial model based on mass production was introduced in the more highly industrialised European countries. Organisational models of production associated with the management theorist F. W. Taylor and the industrialist Henry Ford took hold, introducing a dichotomy in the workplace between work and communication: in the Fordist work order “Work should be specified in writing, then carried out in silence” (Boutet 2001: 20) (translation). At management level, where work was organised, written communication was considered acceptable. But on the shop floor, “Speaking and working were seen as antagonistic activities. Talking wastes time, distracts, prevents focus on the actions to be done” (ibid.). This dichotomy characterised communication in services as well: non-professional staff had no responsibility for documentation. The heyday of Fordism in Europe – the 1950s and 60s – coincided with the heyday of a form of migration: the managed importation of labour.

In the 1970s, the development of information and communication technology ushered in a second industrial revolution, characterised by the rise of service industries (such as financial services, logistics, facilities management, hospitality, etc.), customised production, globalised economic systems, and rapidly changing technological innovations. As a result of this development, work activity, organisation and communication have changed radically: communication and language have become central elements of work. Literacy skills for so called mother-tongue and second-language speakers have become vocational skills, and, in France, officially recognised as such in law (Assemblée nationale 2004).

The following examples illustrate how work organisation, legislation and new technologies have created new communicative practices in the so-called “post Fordist” workplace (Grünhage-Monetti and Kimmelman 2012).

Work organisation	Communicative practices	Those concerned say ...
Decentralised forms of work organisation	Communicating and explaining decisions and solutions to colleagues and management	<i>"The worker has to make independent decisions at night. He also needs to justify his decisions."</i> (Operation manager)
Quality assurance	Communicating changes in work processes	<i>"We have so-called 'five-minute-talks' every morning in the kitchen to discuss quality assurance."</i> (Operation manager)
	Reading and writing documentation	<i>"Every handshake [detail] has to be documented"</i> (Worker)
Certification / auditing	Describing and explaining own error management	<i>"The auditor... addresses the worker, points to the defect-catalogue and asks: 'What do you do in case of such an error?'"</i> (Head of personnel)
Automation, robotisation, new technologies	Reading displays Communicating changes/ errors	<i>"You cannot rely on work routines. Sometimes there's a minor change – you have to read it thoroughly every time."</i> (Skilled worker)
	Reporting and recording	<i>"We upload reports on all our client contacts to an online system."</i> (Social care worker)
Health and safety	Reading and writing short records	<i>"The cleaning and disinfection of the kitchen are also written down by the workers and signed."</i> (Catering worker)
	Understanding training (compulsory and legally binding)	<i>"Staff have to sign that they have received training and understand their responsibilities."</i> (Facilities manager)

The technological developments which triggered this second revolution, in particular the development of digital technology, are now transforming our societies at an ever-accelerating pace. A third industrial revolution is underway: information and communication technology are changing production and services through the use of microelectronics, new technologies and digital media. Modern work is characterised by the online networking of machines, equipment and logistics systems in Cyber-Physical Systems (CPS). People, machines, means of production, services and products communicate directly with each other. The CPS connect the virtual computer world with the physical world. (Dehnbostel 2018a)

The new literacy skills required present a challenge and hurdle for many workers in low-paid roles, particularly for L2 speakers. The unprecedented dimension of today's migration within and to Europa gives urgency to the issue of work-related L2.

Migration, employment and language

Migration, always important in Europe's history, has acquired a new salience in recent decades. A rise in immigration has considerably changed the socio-demographic and economic structure of many European countries, posing great challenges in the context of changing work structures and requirements.

In 2017, Europe's population included just under 78 million international migrants – that is, people who were living in a country other than their country of birth. In the world ranking, Germany takes third place with 12 m; the UK fifth with 9 m; France seventh with 8 m; followed not far behind by Spain and Italy, each with 6 m (United Nations 2017: 6). The large majority of these migrants are of working age. Work is typically the first context that migrants mention when asked about their use of L2 (ISTAT 2014; Braddell and Miller 2017). Many European economies now have a structural reliance on migrant labour. This is linked in part to ageing populations, but also to globalisation, with high-skilled sectors competing for talent and low-skilled sectors for cheap labour.

Taking into consideration the language requirements of today's workplaces, this reliance on migrant labour, particularly in lower-paid sectors, is problematic. Labour market shortages in the less attractive sectors often lead to the recruitment of migrants with quite limited L2 skills. Yet, in most cases, formal support for language learning ends when migrants gain employment. For many, particularly those with limited, interrupted or no formal education, long hours and low pay discourage further participation in formal language learning, leaving many in what is effectively a low-pay, limited-language trap, with negative consequences for the

individuals and the economy of the country of residence (Sterling 2015). Improved goods and services through better language skills are an asset for the whole of society, not only for employees and employers, as a Swedish resource points out: “Better language skills, better care” (Stockholm Gerontology Research Centre 2012).

Reconceptualising language: the social turn

Not only have language requirements changed, but so too have understandings of language, language acquisition and learning. Language has come to be understood as more than a formal system of grammar and lexis to be learnt in the classroom. It is an instrument, created by humans as social beings, to construct and participate in social realities, including vocational/work-related knowledge and know-how.

In order to help learners acquire the L2 skills required to act professionally in their jobs, a wider approach to L2 development is needed. The focus lies on the use of the language to participate in work and not primarily on grammatical structures or technical vocabulary. Social norms around work play a much greater role than grammatical correctness to create meaning and enable communication. Language use is interpersonal. Shared understandings are based not so much on formal correctness, but on mutual negotiations and competences. In the context of migration and work, responsibility for understanding does not lie exclusively on the newcomers. Employers and colleagues are also responsible for effective and efficient communication at work.

How the work of the ECML contributes to migrant education and employment

The Council of Europe has been concerned with migrant language learning since 1968 with the passing of Resolution (Res(68)18) on the teaching of languages to migrant workers by the Committee of Ministers. Since the end of the Second World War, the more industrialised countries in Western Europe had been attracting workers from less industrialised regions through programmes of managed labour importation. At first, these migrants were largely left to fend for themselves, including L2 acquisition. But, as the Swiss playwright and novelist, Max Frisch, put it: “Man hat Arbeitskräfte gerufen, und es kommen Menschen” (We wanted a labour force, but human beings came) (Frisch 1965). And human beings have needs, including educational needs. In 1973 the Council of Europe responded with *The language needs of adult immigrants* (Wilkins 1973), investigating the language needs

of migrant workers, and describing existing L2 provision including accreditation and relevant research, and making suggestions for future developments.

A crucial contribution of the Council of Europe Language Policy Unit to promote L2 learning is the large-scale initiative *Linguistic integration of adult migrants (LIAM)*. *LIAM* was launched in 2006 to support member states develop language-related policy and practice “based on a clear recognition of adult migrants’ human rights” (Thalgott 2017: V). Recognizing the key role of adults in the integration process of families, and their contribution to Europe’s societies and economies, the project has focused on L2 development as an instrument for integration in civil society, for social cohesion and full participation in democratic processes, in line with the Council’s core values. Drawing on decades of experience of language learning and teaching, the *LIAM* group of experts have, in consultation with the member states, developed a range of resources on language policies and their development, language learning programmes, and the assessment of learning outcomes addressing policy makers, language providers, and actors in charge of testing, available from its website (www.coe.int/lang-migrants). To the issue of work-related L2, the 2016 *LIAM* Symposium dedicated the section Language and the workplace (Beacco *et al.* 2017). Most recently, *LIAM* has focused on the development of a literacy framework for migrants.

The European Centre for Modern Languages has dedicated four innovative projects to professionals supporting work-related L2 learning.

The key role of work-related L2 development towards social and economic integration and participation for migrants and ethnic communities inspired the project *Second language at the workplace – Language needs of migrant workers: organising language learning for the vocational/workplace context (Odysseus)* (ECML 2000) and the project *A European learning network for professionals supporting work-related second language development (Language for Work)* (ECML 2012-2015). These projects explored the notions that work is crucial in the life of adults (migrants and non-migrants alike), and language is crucial in today’s workplace. On the one hand, work can be a powerful vehicle of integration; on the other, work-related L2 seems to be more effective than general language courses (Benton 2013), meeting the needs voiced by migrants and employers.

The results of the *Odysseus* project, published in co-operation with the European Commission, addressed language practitioners offering or planning workplace provision as well as company personnel, unions and policy makers. Over 15 years later, the guidelines it produced for the development of vocational and workplace language, based on the understanding of language as social practice, remain

relevant and useful. From an historical point of view, it is a source of information on vocational language development in several European countries.

Odysseus widened the target audience beyond the “traditional” groups of teachers, educational providers and policymakers, to include labour market actors. This extension was based on the underlying idea that effective communication is the result of a bi-/multilateral effort and that sustainable language learning needs the know-how and support of all parties involved.

A decade later, *Language for Work 1: Developing migrants’ language competences at work* (2012-2015) and *Language for Work 2: Tools for professional development* (2016-2018) revisited the issue of work-related L2 in the light of contemporary developments in work, research and practice. These projects resulted in the creation of a European professional development network with a web-based resource centre, as well as a range of tools and other resources, including an outline of the competences helpful to different types of practitioner when supporting work-related L2 development, and the *Quick Guide – How to help adult migrants develop work-related language skills* (ECML 2018), available in 16 languages.

Between the *Odysseus* and *Language for Work* projects, the ECML supported the *E-VOLLution* project *Exploring cutting edge applications of networked technologies in Vocationally Oriented Language Learning*. Overcoming the traditional division in mother tongue, L2, and foreign language, *E-VOLLution* (2008-2009) explored the basic E-skills (electronic skills) that 21st century workers need and the use of new media in *Vocational Oriented Language Learning (VOLL)*. The title echoes the revolutions and continuous evolution of workplace communication through information and communication technology (ICT). The website provides examples of how ICT can be integrated into training courses for VOLL and assists teachers in creating materials, whilst the publication furnishes theoretical frameworks combined with practical examples to guide further developments (ECML 2011).

Theoretically, the project built on the output hypothesis (Swain 2000, 2005): language learning proves to be particularly effective when learners actively engage in the negotiation and creation of “comprehensible output”, promoting the development of linguistic and cognitive skills. In formal educational settings, project-based and task-oriented scenarios are proven techniques. The project linked these to information and communication technology and to show how the internet can be used to extend learning opportunities beyond the classroom and the learner’s immediate environment. The digital skills of teachers and learners were coupled with critical media literacy in the spirit of the ECML.

Conclusions and further perspectives

Under such headings as *Zukunft der Arbeit, Zukunft des Lernens / The future of work, The future of learning*, researchers are investigating the rapidly changing nature of work, in order to identify the competences and learning forms most appropriate to meeting future developments. Communication in mixed virtual and real workplaces will continue to evolve. Literacy and cognitive skills such as reflective practice are of growing importance for all employees, including those in low-skilled positions (Dehnbostel 2018b). There is evidence that non-formal and informal learning is more effective when built into work, if professionally supported. Digitalization offers new chances for blended and hybrid forms of learning in virtual spaces. Less optimistic prognoses envisage a loss of jobs and/or dramatic changes with risks of de-skilling and remote working, such as the couriers who support internet retail, and the domestic workers and or live-in carers employed informally (*interna* in Spain, *badanti* in Italy).

Let us recognise that support for migrants to acquire the language of their new country is an issue of human rights, social justice and cohesion, as well as an economic benefit for Europe. Let language policymakers make it a high priority to create the necessary conditions; and researchers to investigate the changes in workplace communication, providing sound empirical evidence for didactical and methodological resources. Let employers accept that they have a social responsibility to foster their employees' language and literacy development. Let language practitioners recognise the value of learning how they can support non-formal and informal learning, co-operate with new actors, and reach out to the most vulnerable workers.

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NEW MEDIA IN LANGUAGE EDUCATION

Pauline Ernest, Joseph Hopkins, Martina Emke, Aline Germain-Rutherford, Sarah Heiser, Jackie Robbins, Ursula Stickler

Introduction

Technological advances, globalisation, migration and mobility have had a major impact on language needs and language education. The labour market has become increasingly internationalised, meaning that proficiency in a second or in other languages has become a priority for many, and those working in the field of language education are under continual pressure to provide courses which make optimum use of the opportunities that technology offers. In this chapter we outline how continuing professional development, with regard to new media, has evolved, and reflect on the ways that ECML programmes and policies have impacted the changing landscape of professional development for language teachers.

Key issues

Changing nature of continuing professional development in relation to new media

Just twenty-five years ago, technology in language learning meant using audio cassettes for listening to different voices; preparing worksheets with Windows 95,

possibly having previously consulted the Web using a browser such as Netscape; or creating an online exercise using an application such as Hot Potatoes if teachers were lucky enough to have access to computers in their schools. Today, anyone can create a website, teachers and learners have access to a huge variety of online applications and social networks, and we talk to family, friends and colleagues around the world every day.

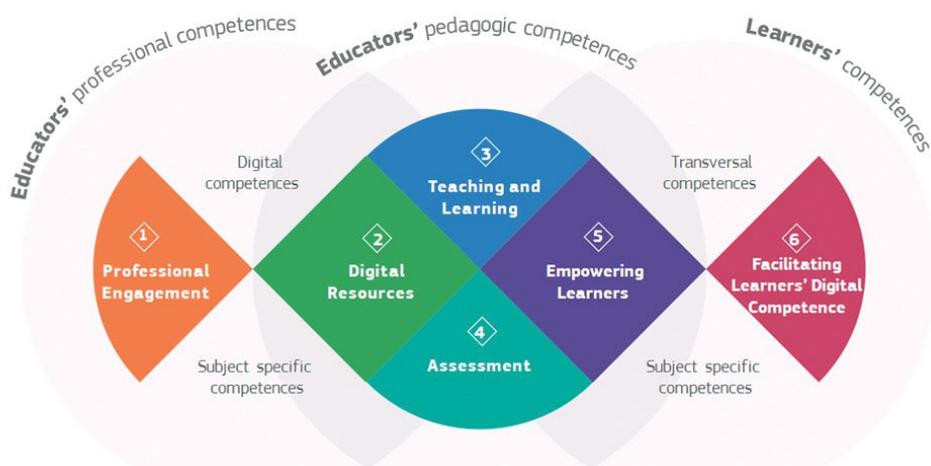
In the early days of the internet, opportunities were scarce for formal continuing professional development (CPD), focusing on the use of new technologies for language learning and teaching. However, there were a growing number of practitioners of self-directed approaches (Nunan 1996; Richards & Lockhart 1994; Wajnryb 1992) who recognised the affordances of incorporating Information and Communication Technology (ICT) into their teaching. These largely self-taught teachers made use of online tools and resources, such as discussion forums, html editors, blogs and wikis, to create activities designed to enhance their students' learning. These keen early adopters, often working in isolation, used technology despite a lack of any explicit requirement, encouragement or support from their institutions to do so. Gradually, however, thanks to the vision, perseverance and enthusiasm of these "lone rangers" (Taylor 1998), policymakers began to become aware of the potential of technology for language teaching and learning.

Thus, institutions began to organise workshops, conferences and other CPD events, with talks and hands-on sessions devoted to the use of technology in language education. Audiences grew as teachers started to overcome their fear of losing their jobs to automation. Indeed, initial reservations were replaced by overt enthusiasm, and the next phase of teacher engagement saw an overwhelmingly tool-centred approach to training; every new gadget and application found its way into training workshops – often only for a short time. These sessions tended to focus on introducing specific tools with prescribed ways of using them in order to keep learners engaged, instead of developing language professionals' awareness and understanding of the ways in which technology can support the learning process. In some instances, this has led to a sense of frustration and disillusionment with technology, with teachers feeling they are constantly playing catch-up and that without the "right" technology, they may as well not use it at all.

The UNESCO *ICT competency framework for teachers* (2011) is an important milestone in highlighting the need to go beyond basic digital literacy skills for teachers' professional development. The three developmental phases of the framework, **technology literacy**, **knowledge deepening** and **knowledge creation**, seek to help countries develop comprehensive national teacher ICT competency policies

and standards and integrate these in overarching proposals for incorporating ICT in language education. More recently, there has been an increased awareness of the need for teacher development to go beyond basic digital literacy skills, or the mere “how-to” of using various technological tools. The latest approaches, therefore, aim to increase teachers’ ability to incorporate technology not for technology’s sake, but rather in a way that provides true added value to their teaching and their students’ learning. However, whereas technology is evolving at an extremely rapid pace, the underlying pedagogical principles behind sound teaching practice, whether it be with or without technology, remain largely unchanged.

Also along these lines, the *European Framework for the Digital Competence of Educators* (DigCompEdu; Redecker & Punie 2017) provides a model for teacher development which details specific competences in the following six areas: **professional engagement, digital resources, teaching and learning, assessment, empowering learners, and facilitating learners’ digital competence** – as shown in the figure below. In stark contrast to earlier “how-to” approaches to CPD regarding the incorporation of technology in teaching, the DigCompEdu website states: “The focus is not on technical skills. Rather, the framework aims to detail how digital technologies can be used to enhance and innovate education and training.” (<https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/digcompedu>)



The European Framework for the Digital Competence of Educators (DigCompEdu), areas and scope (Redecker & Punie 2017: 15)

Training needs: teachers, trainers, policy makers

A changing landscape

Increasing opportunities for formal and informal language learning, development of digital skills, and the growing affordances provided by technology contrast with the crucial question of whether the training of language teachers has been able to keep up with these developments, and whether it provides them with appropriate pre- and in-service programmes for their professional development. As stated by Siemens and Collis and Moonen:

“The last decade of technological innovation – mobile phones, social media, software agents – has created new opportunities for learners. Learners are capable of forming global learning networks, creating permeable classroom walls. While networks have altered much of society, teaching, and learning, systemic change has been minimal.” (Siemens 2008: 1)

“Among the many analyses of factors that influence the use of technology for pedagogical change in formal education, common problems have emerged: the pedagogies, supported by new technologies, that could lead to innovation are not enough known to instructors, not enough valued, and are perceived by instructors as too difficult to implement in practice.” (Collis & Moonen 2008: 96)

Lack of adequate training for language teachers results in a mismatch between the affordances offered by technology and its restricted uses in many educational institutions. In addition, changes in our education systems are too slow to keep up with the “exponential progress” of technology and the needs of an agile and entrepreneurial workforce, according to Johan Andreson (quoted by Radosavljevic 2018).

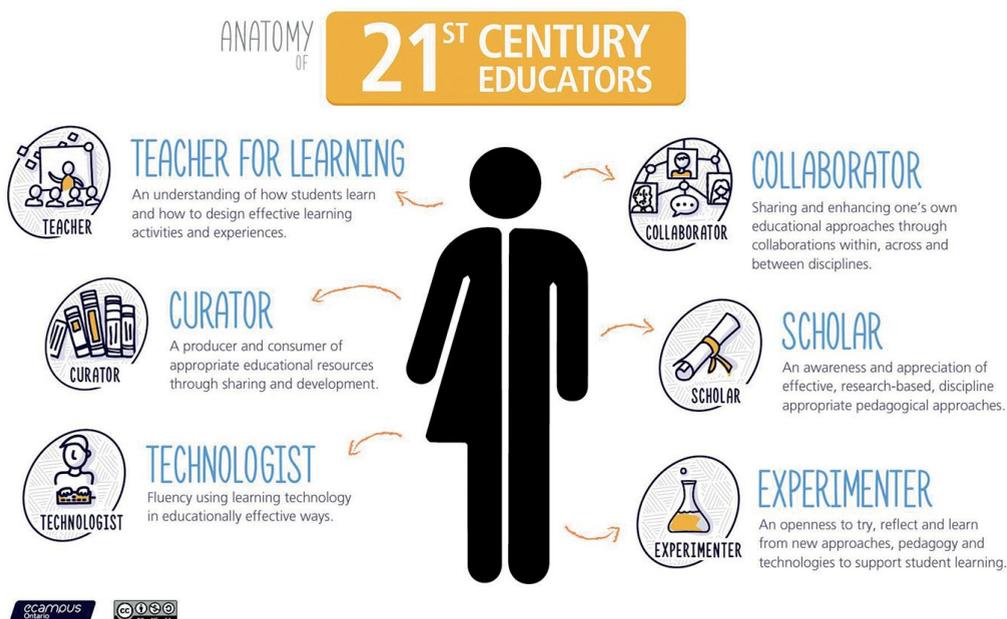
A mind shift

In the 21st century, we need to move beyond formal and discipline-centred education models. Given the important role of technology in our social and professional lives nowadays, we need to seriously rethink our educational practices and teacher education. As part of this reflective process, language teachers may also find that they need to shift their mindset towards interconnected and global education

models, where inquiry-based, collaborative, inclusive, experiential and community-based learning, often using technology, is at the heart of the pedagogical thinking process. “Learning is knowledge networking rather than knowledge acquisition, internalization, or construction” (Siemens 2005: n.p.)

Curricula should focus on helping learners develop new skills as critical thinkers and communicators and collaborators, civically engaged and globally aware. Today’s students need skills which will ensure a responsible and critical use of media. In addition to fostering communicative competence, language educators should help instil an increased awareness amongst learners of global issues such as the emerging digital divide, digital harassment, and hate speech. Along these lines, Byram (2010) proposes that language teachers can explicitly draw on global citizenship education “enriching it with attention to intercultural communicative competence” (p. 320).

Similarly, teachers also need to explore new roles and develop new expertise to support this new generation of learners. The 21st century educator needs to be multi-skilled: understanding the added value of educational technology; designing effective learning environments and activities; curating relevant learning resources; collaborating with peers to improve skills and knowledge; researching and assessing pedagogical approaches; and experimenting constantly. (See figure below)



The Anatomy of 21st Century Educators
(eCampus Ontario: <https://extend.ecampusontario.ca>)

Rethinking professional development

Professional development should be viewed “as a career-long, context-specific, continuous endeavour that is guided by standards, grounded in the teacher’s own work, focused on student learning, and tailored to the teacher’s stage of career development” (Slager & Fusco 2004: 124). It is not just a succession of workshops and training courses. Nor is it only a question of mastering different digital tools and applications, since the latter are developing at an unstoppable speed and learner expectations vary accordingly. Instead, professional development should be seen as a reflective process that involves consideration of our own experiences in applying knowledge to practice (Argyris & Schön 1996), where teachers ensure that they keep up to date with the myriad changes inherent nowadays in all areas of communication. It is a journey embedded in practice.

A sound example of these principles in action is the workshop format developed in the ECML *DOTS*, *MoreDOTS* and *ICT-REV* projects (see Hampel & Stickler (2015) for a comprehensive description of activities related to these projects), which provides a space for participants to actively engage in the creation of their own learning journey before, during and after each workshop. Grounded in participatory pedagogy (Askins 2008; Siemens 2008), and based on research undertaken in distance teaching institutions (Hampel & Stickler 2005; Ernest & Hopkins 2006), the workshops are experiential and participant-focused, the emphasis of the training is not on technology for technology’s sake but on pedagogical principles and the added value of integrating ICT in language learning. During the workshops, participants discuss their own professional journey in relation to technology use in their classrooms; they reflect on the benefits and challenges of using new media, critically evaluate offline versus online activities, and design new learning activities using technology that they can then cascade in their own professional context. They engage in a succession of tasks:

- practical, hands-on tasks completed before, during, and after the workshop;
- collaborative reflection on the affordances & challenges of ICT in language learning and teaching;
- discussion of pedagogical principles relevant for designing learning tasks;
- exploration, development of knowledge of different ICT tools and learning applications;
- designing of learning activities appropriate for participants’ professional context;

- establishment/reinforcement of synergies among bulletparticipants;
- promotion of dissemination and cascading among participants' colleagues.

Participants are also surveyed 6 months after the workshop in order to monitor the impact of the above on their teaching practice.

How the work of the ECML addresses changing teacher education needs

Looking back

The ECML's programme has included projects dealing with ICT since 1996. While one of the first, the *Stars project (Information and communication technologies and young language learners)* created a website to facilitate communication in the second language for young learners, two other ICT-related projects had at their core the realisation that teachers in the 21st century would need to understand and employ technologies in the classroom. The project *Exploring Cutting edge applications of networked technologies in Vocationally Oriented Language Learning (E-VOLLution)* focused on vocational education while the project *Information and communication technologies and distance language learning* highlighted distance teaching and the consequences of a lack of face-to-face communication.

The following years brought digital competences and the training needs for language teachers increasingly to the attention of teacher trainers and policy makers, as evidenced by the success of the *Developing online teaching skills (DOTS)* project and its successors: *Using open resources to develop online teaching skills (MoreDOTS)* and *Use of ICT in support of language teaching and learning (ICT-REV)*. A ground-breaking initiative starting in 2011, which linked the ECML with project funding from the European Commission, focused on just two areas of language education: technology and assessment.

The need of language teachers for in-service training in the use of ICT in language teaching has led to over 45 workshops (*DOTS, MoreDOTS, ICT-REV*) conducted in 28 countries and involving more than 840 teachers. Based on a unique, participant-centred model, workshops have been tailor-made and adapted to the needs of teachers at different educational levels (from kindergarten to university), in different modes (distance and face-to-face teaching), and different technological

affordances (from highly equipped classrooms to teachers struggling with lack of internet connection and occasional loss of electricity).

The latest offers from the ECML in the area of new media for language teaching include an ongoing support for *Training and Consultancy (TaC)* workshops at the request of member states, and a task-based project providing information on digital literacy for language teachers (*E-LANG*).

Commonality and diversity among ECML projects

All the new-media-related projects supported by the ECML share the view that ICT can be integrated into language teaching as a learning aid, but should not dominate whatever teaching style has been chosen. However, there are certain differences between projects: many focus on one particular tool (*BLOGS*) or way of using the internet (*LanguageQuests*); on one section of education (*E-VOLLution*) or on a specific age or social group of learners (*Stars, EducoMigrant*).

Five projects differ in their attempts to encompass all levels and use a wide variety of tools and different pedagogies. *Information and communication technologies and distance language learning* started by providing insights from individual teachers on how experiencing language teaching in the 21st century differs from previous times. *DOTS* then analysed teachers' views on the tools, skills, and pedagogies they felt they needed to successfully teach with ICT. This was followed, in *MoreDOTS*, by extending the audience beyond "formal" language teachers and offering training to language mediators, and informal language teachers, such as social workers and volunteers. Both *ICT-REV* and *E-LANG* are intended for teachers at different levels. Whereas *E-LANG* provides information and encouragement for reflection through reading and visual materials, *ICT-REV* continues to engage practitioners in workshops. The *ICT-REV* project has also developed the *ECML Inventory of ICT tools and open educational resources*. This online repository of tools suitable for language teaching includes tools that are available for free or at least offer a free version. In this way the Inventory acknowledges the diverse economic working conditions of language teachers throughout Europe and supports the human right and equal access to education (<https://en.unesco.org/themes/right-to-education>).

Conclusions and future perspectives

We cannot foresee a time when language teachers will not request opportunities to be brought up-to-date on using new media in their professional practice. Indeed, according to a survey conducted by the OECD, a majority of teachers still feel ill-prepared for the use of new media in their teaching (OECD 2019). Challenges for language teachers in the future will no doubt include the following: use of learning analytics to guide and also constrain teachers' choices; integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into teaching tasks; increasing sophistication of online translation engines, and greater availability of Open Educational Resources (OERs) and Open Educational Practices (OEPs).

This is not to say that language educators will no longer be needed in the future. On the contrary, new, exciting challenges are no doubt on the horizon, with the ECML playing a crucial role in continuing to defend the diverse and individualised approach to learning languages they have always pioneered. There might be a role for the advocacy of AI and online translation, where the control by and even the rights of humans can best be supported by digital means. There is definitely a need for the potential of OERs to provide equal access to educational materials to be fulfilled, given that most OER materials are currently only available in English. Professional translation, text simplification, and Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) can also be employed to these ends. And the ECML is already in a crucial position to develop and disseminate these initiatives.

Since its inception 25 years ago, the ECML has provided a space where language educators have developed educational projects dedicated to the use of ICT for language learning, teaching and teachers' professional development. While initial projects focused on specific tools, target groups or areas of education, recent projects favour a networked approach. This seeks to connect already existing resources from previous ECML projects with new technologies and environments in order to address challenges in the landscape of language education that arise from rapid technological changes and global trends towards learning analytics, learner assessment, individualised learning and open education. Against this background, the continued support of the ECML is of vital importance for language educators in their daily struggles to meet these challenges and to prepare students for living and working in the 21st century.

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SIGN LANGUAGES

Lorraine Leeson and Beppie van den Bogaerde

Introduction

In 2018, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe passed a resolution on “Protecting and promoting sign languages in Europe” (Resolution 2247). This recognises the thirty plus indigenous sign languages of Europe as natural languages but also acknowledges that few states have recognised sign languages as official languages to date (see also Wheatley and Pabsch 2012 for an overview on sign language recognition in Europe). As a result, access to education and public services using sign languages remains limited. The challenges faced in acquiring a sign language as a first language, learning it as a second or subsequent language, or accessing information through sign languages are well documented. Most recently, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Finland, published a report that looks at sign language rights within the framework of the Council of Europe and its member states (Tupi 2019), noting that sign language issues tend to be viewed via a disability lens, rather than seen from a cultural and linguistic perspective.

Key issues

Plurilingual and cultural education

The right to education is an established human right. However, to access education, one needs to know the language/s of education, of instruction. For deaf signers,

this is challenging because there are still far too few opportunities to access their national curriculum through a sign language, or to study a sign language as a language of the curriculum, or indeed, as a foreign language (Leeson 2006, Snoddon and Murray 2019). Part of the reason for this is that sign languages are too frequently considered as “communication tools” rather than as core to our collective cultural and linguistic capital. This has contributed to the marginalisation of signing communities. Visibility of sign languages is essential to shifting this status quo. This can happen through the inclusion of indigenous sign languages as languages of the curriculum, and/or as languages of instruction; through greater representation of sign language users in the media and online, and through the facilitation and promotion of sign languages, as per the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), for example.

There is a need to consider the proficiency of teachers who can deliver curricula in a sign language as well as cultural considerations around the need for peers who are also using a sign language across the school years. That is, there is a need for young deaf sign language users to have access to teachers who are also sign language users, and particularly, access to teachers who are also themselves deaf (UNCRPD 2006). This facilitates the transmission of language and culture from generation to generation. We talk about “Deaf culture” which encapsulates reference to the norms, practices and behaviours associated with being a member of a Deaf community (See Ladd 2003 for detailed discussion of this).

Further, there is an insufficient supply of professional sign language interpreters in most member states. This requires investment in the delivery of high-level interpreter education with linguistic and cultural proficiency being central in this regard (Leeson and Calle 2013, European Parliament 2016). At the same time, there is a need to note that the provision of sign language interpreters in educational settings is not sufficient to guarantee inclusive educational goals – direct communication with peers and teachers via a sign language is essential to this, and one of the reasons why documents like the UN’s Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities make explicit reference to the need for deaf teachers.

Increased visibility of sign languages in the public domain has certainly led to an increase in demand for sign language classes for hearing learners who are “second language, second modality” learners (L2M2). That is, they are learning a new language (an L2) but, unlike the auditory-verbal languages they have previously been exposed to, sign languages are expressed in the visual gestural modality, an M2 for learners. Evening courses in sign languages have been offered in many countries since the late 1970s and 1980s, but opportunities for sign language teachers to

secure professional teaching qualifications are still too rare, and, even when they do so, employment opportunities are scarce (Danielsson and Leeson 2017).

Across the continent, many countries now offer university-based sign language interpreter education, which, in turn, has facilitated the growth of networks of interpreter educators, including sign language teachers. Work in this regard has led to the establishment of CEFR-aligned minimal competency recommendations for graduation from bachelor programmes, which emerged in parallel with work on the ECML *Pro-Sign* project *Sign languages and the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages – Descriptors and approaches to assessment*, published by the European Forum of Sign Language Interpreters (efsl) in 2013. This work has spilled over into curricula for sign language teaching more generally, but there is a significant body of work that needs to be tackled, with support from the ECML and member states in this regard.

Teacher and learner competencies

Teacher and learner competencies in the domain of spoken language pedagogy have been extensively researched and described (see Newby in this volume). For signed languages the field is still in its infancy. The ECML has played a major role in providing status to signed languages by including them as a thematic area, via two high impact projects, *Sign language and the CEFR – Descriptors and approaches to assessment (Pro-Sign 1)*, and *Promoting excellence in sign language instruction (Pro-Sign 2)*.

When teaching and learning a sign language, there are some unique features that we must take account of, for example, as mentioned above, the fact that sign languages are produced and perceived in a different modality, the historical and contemporary socio-cultural status of the many deaf communities across the continent of Europe, and the influence thereof on the dynamics of language learning and teaching.

Being an L2M2 learner (i.e. learning a new language articulated in a visual-gestural modality) is very challenging to hearing sign language learners with a spoken language background. Not much research has been done in this area to date, but what is known is that non-manual features (the use of specific facial expressions and movements of the head/torso) pose pragmatic and grammatical challenges to L2M2 learners, as does learning to navigate the use of signing space (the space around the signer where sign language is articulated). Further, there are challenges for new L2M2 learners around coming to terms with being constantly on view to their fellow learners and teacher, as they “perform” in their new language (Sheridan 2019).

While the *CEFR* (2001) became a central component in language teaching, learning and assessment, there was a significant lag in leveraging it for sign languages. In part, this was because of the lack of access to the *CEFR* for deaf sign language teachers – the documentation was not available in a sign language –, coupled with the extremely limited access to higher education and language teacher education programmes, factors which continue to impact on deaf sign language teachers (Danielsson and Leeson 2017).

Responding to this, the *Pro-Sign* project produced the ECML's first adaptation of the *CEFR* for sign languages (Leeson *et al.* 2016), drawing on earlier, local work in a small number of European countries (e.g. France, the Netherlands, Ireland, Germany, Sweden). Project related meetings and associated events (a series of conferences) generated significant impact across Europe, with many countries subsequently deciding to implement the *CEFR* with respect to their work with signed languages. What became apparent, however, was that the implementation process posed many challenges for sign language teachers and teacher trainers, which gave impetus to the *Pro-Sign 2* project.

Pro-Sign 2 focused on teacher competencies and assessment literacy in teachers. A survey amongst sign language teaching institutions delivering programmes across a range of levels (from conversation classes to formalised tertiary education pathways) revealed several important issues. First, there are only a handful of official programmes in Europe that educate sign language teachers (Danielsson and Leeson 2017). Second, no generic pan-national curriculum for the training of sign language teachers currently exists. Third, while individual universities had drafted competency descriptors for sign language teachers, there were no official national or pan-national descriptions of sign language teacher competencies that we could find internationally, with the exception of the American Sign Language Teachers Association (ASLTA) (USA) Qualified Certification.

The *Pro-Sign* team has been delighted to contribute to the development of a modality inclusive edition of the Companion Volume to the *CEFR*, that is, a version that presents descriptors for spoken and signed languages in a single, unified document. This reflects recognition of sign languages by the Council of Europe and member states, and will, we envisage, support the development of national policy and practice around the teaching, learning, and assessment of sign languages across the Council of Europe territories.

From experience, we knew that L2M2 learners were struggling with modality specific challenges during the language acquisition process. These include the

fluid management of articulators (e.g. in learning to articulate signs, in learning to fingerspell), management of eye-gaze patterns, essential for marking elements of focus and perspective marking in sign languages, amongst other things), and the development of non-manual features (including markers that have adverbial function).

Given this, it was paramount that the community of sign language teachers became aware of these challenges, and were equipped to meet them with robust *CEFR* aligned curricula and pedagogy. It was therefore very fortunate that, as we worked on *Pro-Sign 2*, the ECML's thematic focus on Teacher Competences was active, and the *Towards a common European Framework of Reference for language teachers* project ran alongside *Pro-Sign 2*. Building upon this framework and previous ECML deliverables, teachers and researchers from all over Europe came together to work on sign language teachers' competences (Rathmann *et al.* in prep.). Besides there being a lot of overlap with competencies for spoken language teaching, key elements for sign language teaching were discussed and identified. Assessment was identified as one of the main challenges.

Evaluation and assessment

There are numerous formalised tests in place for spoken language assessment, but only a few exist for sign languages and these have mainly been developed with a focus on first language assessment (See Tobias Haug's "Sign language assessment instruments" website, for example).

International discussion around how best to evaluate sign language development in L2M2 learners has only really commenced in the past twenty years or so. Here, while core elements of sign language testing is comparable to spoken language assessment, sign language test development has proven quite complicated for a number of reasons. For example, we cannot simply translate or adapt spoken language tests to sign languages because such approaches do not capture the significant modality differences discussed above. Further, we simply do not yet have complete linguistic descriptions of many national/regional sign languages. Fortunately, technology is facilitating the creation of innovative evaluation materials (e.g. Haug *et al.* 2019).

Today, secure investment in L2M2 test development is essential. In particular, this would support hearing parents of deaf children who deserve our support in their language learning so that they can provide a rich language environment for their deaf child (Salamanca Statement 1994; UNCRPD 2006). A range of assessment

approaches are currently being investigated, for instance the adaptation of the Sign Language Proficiency Interview (SLPI) (Newell and Caccamise 2008) for use with other sign languages.

The ECML *Pro-Sign 2* project also sought to support learners by exploring how we could accommodate the *European Language Portfolio (ELP)* for sign language learners. The results of our pilot *ELP* study in Germany and Ireland are very encouraging and we look forward to seeing the *ELP* implemented widely with sign language learners in order to enhance learner autonomy and, ultimately, language learner success.

How the ECML contributes to this area

The ECML has been central to supporting the professionalization pathway of sign language teachers across the continent through their support of the *Pro-Sign* projects and associated activities since 2012. With the impetus of ECML activity in this domain, sign language teachers have established the European Network of Sign Language Teachers (ENSLT). The financial support for engagement in meetings with peers from across the continent made possible the development of a community of practice, which had close engagement across an extended period of time. Indeed, at our national event, at the University of Belgrade in 2018, a deaf sign language teacher remarked that, as a community of practice, we had collectively come a very long way in our understanding, application, and evidence-based response to the teaching, learning and assessment of sign languages as a result of the ECML *Pro-Sign* projects.

The ECML connection also facilitates engagement with policy makers. Being able to say that there are *CEFR* aligned tools for sign languages opens up doors that have, for decades, been hard to budge. *CEFR* serves as a lingua franca when talking with government officials, and pointing to pan-European collaborative efforts endorsed by the ECML is, by extension, an endorsement of sign language recognition.

On a more practical, but fundamentally important level, the provision of content around the teaching, learning and assessment of sign languages in International Sign on the ECML's website meant that deaf signers from across the continent could engage in the *Pro-Sign* projects in ways that would have been absolutely impossible otherwise. We would encourage investment in the provision of International Sign versions of key ECML texts to ensure accessibility, which, in turn, supports the goals of the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly (2018) and the UNCRPD.

The ECML's engagement with the *Pro-Sign* community has allowed for flourishing in our linguistic diversity, enriched our collective understanding of the status quo for sign language teaching across the continent, and facilitated the development of a common set of goals for future development. The endorsement of sign language related projects by the ECML can also be considered as a contribution to recognising the status of Europe's sign languages as modern languages that should be nourished and which require investment. The work on sign languages, in turn, enriches the ECML's broader goals of nurturing plurilingualism and diversity.

Conclusions and future perspectives

Sign languages have greater recognition in Europe today than ever before. However, legal recognition does not automatically ensure that signers are afforded access to the same range of educational opportunity as their speaking counterparts. This is something we need to diligently address. The ECML is essential to this process, functioning as the point of reference for expertise around modern languages, folding in the fledgling field of sign language teaching, learning and assessment.

At our last *Pro-Sign 2* workshop, a deaf sign language teacher noted that sign language teaching was at least 30 years behind. We need to play catch up – fast. We need accessible content (i.e. presented in sign languages) and we need to ensure that sign language teaching and learning continues to be folded in to the work of the ECML, that they are visible in the work of the ECML, and, by extension, ECML member states. This means that they are explicitly referenced in projects, that signers are encouraged and facilitated to engage in ECML events, and that sign language versions of key documents are available. This, maps fully to the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly resolution, which calls upon Council of Europe member states “to support the Council of Europe's European Centre for Modern Languages, in particular its activities concerning sign languages”.

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EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT

José Noijons

Introduction

Evaluation and assessment have always played an important role in foreign language education at every stage in the learning and teaching process. Assessment, however, has often been seen as a separate activity that follows teaching and learning, when in fact it is an integral part of education. Assessment can play a role at the start of an educational track, assigning students to a particular course. It can support teachers and students by identifying strengths and weaknesses in the processes of both learning and teaching. And indeed, at the end of a school career evaluation and assessment may indicate to what extent the teaching and the learning have been successful in reaching the desired learning objectives.

Because assessment is often associated with controlling the learning and teaching process it has had some negative connotations. Indeed, teachers have complained that it may stand in the way of students acquiring the necessary language skills, certainly when assessment is not focussed on the individual student's needs. In the projects of the ECML, materials have been developed to help teachers and students to produce and use assessment instruments in a positive way: assessment in the service of learning. But whatever their function or their context, we want the assessment instruments to be relevant and to show us results that we can rely upon.

Key issues

What do we mean by evaluation and assessment?

Evaluation has been – perhaps narrowly – defined as the systematic process of collecting, analysing and interpreting information to determine the extent to which learners have achieved instructional objectives. Evaluation is a comprehensive term, including assessment and testing. It much depends on the function of the evaluation what format assessments and tests will have. Typically, in a classroom setting the information collected on student performance may be less standardized and systematic than in end-of-school examinations.

The term evaluation is often used to refer to the quality of an educational programme, a language course, textbooks or teacher performance. But strictly speaking it may just as well refer to an individual student's performance. In this article it refers to *language* performance and even more specific: *foreign language* performance. From a pluricultural and plurilingual point of view, as promoted by the Council of Europe, we should evaluate language performance as an integral part of a student's ability to function in a plurilingual society in which citizens are free and able to use the languages of their choice. As the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching and Assessment (CEFR)* is now at the heart of most of the evaluation of student performance in a foreign language, we will relate the discussion of evaluation and assessment to relevant sections in that document.

In the *CEFR* the overall term **assessment** is used to refer to the proficiency of the language user. There are numerous contexts and numerous ways in which students can be asked to show this proficiency. The assessment may provide opportunities for the teachers to gather evidence about how students achieve in relation to syllabus outcomes. The assessment should be accessible to the students themselves as well; it may be helpful for them in understanding what they can do and what they cannot do, how they can move forward towards the goals they have set themselves or that have been set for them. But there are other stakeholders who, for different reasons, may be interested in the results of an assessment, such as parents, school directors, employers and ultimately the government.

It cannot be emphasised enough that the instruments, such as questionnaires, tests and examinations that are used in assessment need to be *valid*: they should assess the proficiency or skill that they are supposed to test. To give an example: in a reading test we may want to find out if a student has understood a text. If that student can give correct answers to questions on the text only by applying his or

her knowledge of the world, then we are not testing reading comprehension, even though it may be helpful to know that the student has such relevant knowledge of the world. On the other hand, if we broaden the goal of the test and we want to know if students can use such a text to survive in a particular situation, then of course the responses to these questions do give relevant information and the questions are indeed valid.

Formative assessment

Formative assessment is assessment carried out during the instructional process for the purpose of improving teaching or learning. As the *CEFR* puts it (p. 186), “it is an ongoing process of gathering information on the extent of learning, on strengths and weaknesses, which the teacher can feed back into their course planning and the actual feedback they give learners”. Through formative assessment teachers can find out if their support of the learning process has been effective. It is important though that students themselves understand this monitoring process and take responsibility for it themselves. Formative assessment may take the form of questions, tasks, quizzes or more formal assessments. Feedback from formative assessment only works if the student is motivated and familiar with the form in which the feedback is given and is in a position to interpret and understand the feedback. Students must be encouraged to apply the feedback to what they are learning, the way in which they are learning and the purpose they are learning for. Typically, tasks and feedback may work best that are action oriented as in the *CEFR*: *read* a text, *listen* to a passage, *write* a note and *say* a few words. The formative learning-assessment process can be summarized in these three questions: Where are you now? Where are you trying to go? How can you get there? Formative assessment must aim at monitoring a student’s own learning process.

Self-assessment

It is a logical step from formative assessment to self-assessment, which is essentially a judgement by the learners themselves about their own proficiency. Self-assessment has various purposes comparable to those in formative assessment. These include assessment of the mastering of content, presentation of what learners have (already) achieved and an indication of their results in terms of what their goals are. These three aspects of self-assessment are all interrelated and different emphasis may be placed on them within the learning process at different times.

In order to be able to self-assess learners have to understand the assessment criteria. Since the level of language that is used in the formulation of these criteria may be

less comprehensible to young students, it is necessary to present the criteria in a clear way. In addition, it is essential that learners are provided with feedback on their self-assessment, either by the assessment procedure/system itself or by an external advisor, such as the teacher.

As the *CEFR* indicates, several advantages related to self-assessment have been identified in the literature. In particular, self-assessment enhances learning, including deep and lifelong learning, prepares students for their participation in a democratic society, makes students feel they have control over their assessment, develops autonomy, cognitive skills and metacognitive engagement, promotes better understanding and improves the quality of work. Moreover, self-assessment reduces stress and enhances personal and intellectual development and social skills. Both the *CEFR* and the *European Language Portfolio (ELP)*, with the latter's emphasis on supporting the development of learner autonomy, provide ample possibilities for self-assessment.

Summative assessment

Summative assessment relates to what students have achieved at the end of a period of time (learning unit, school term, school year, school track) in terms of the learning objectives and the relevant national standards. A summative assessment may be a written examination, an observation, an oral interview, a conversation or a task. In addition to giving information on the progress of students, summative assessment can provide an essential benchmark to check the progress of institutions and the educational programme of a country as a whole. Summative assessment may contribute to improving overall curriculum planning. Summative assessment data may point at differences between what students can do in practice and what they should be able to do in terms of national standards.

Typically, student performance in summative assessment is expressed in terms of a grade. In the case of foreign language education in Europe this grade is often related to or identical to a *CEFR* performance-level ranging from the lowest level A1 to the highest level C2. For such a *CEFR*-based grade to be valid both the curriculum and the assessment should be *CEFR*-based. Links must have been shown between attainment targets in the curriculum and the descriptor scales in the *CEFR*. Similarly, in the assessment students must have been asked to perform tasks that relate to these descriptor scales. There may be correlations between the *CEFR*-levels and the grades in an examination that is not *CEFR*-based, but such correlations are not always valid, especially if such an examination focuses on skills that do not link up with the action-oriented construct of language use in the *CEFR*.

International assessment

Countries tend to be interested in comparing educational results among each other. When countries score high in such assessments, less successful countries will try find out why others are more successful and may adapt their educational systems to these findings. This explains the popularity of such international assessments as PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment). Most of these assessments focus on skills in the Mother Tongue, Mathematics and Science. Relatively little has been undertaken in the area of international assessment of foreign language skills. Attempts have been made to compare foreign language performance in a group of European countries in such languages as English, French, German, Italian and Spanish. The problem encountered in such projects has been to develop tests that function alike in all the participating countries. It is sometimes found that students' responses must be ascribed to (un)familiarity with a test type and (un)familiarity with the (sub)skill that is tested. A national curriculum may simply not provide for (sub)skills that are tapped in an international test. This is one reason also why it is difficult to compare countries' performance on the basis of the results on tests produced by international commercial test providers. What is tested there may not be part of the school curriculum and may have to be trained for outside school.

The EU is considering to provide benchmarks for member states in foreign language competence. Learning objectives would then need to be shared by all EU countries. For countries to be able to relate student performances to such benchmarks and compare them with other countries international assessment will be necessary: tests will need to be developed that are valid in any member state. It is important that results should be reported in terms of the *CEFR* scales. In light of the fact that the *CEFR* is now the framework that is at the heart of nearly all national curricula in Europe countries, there would be little point in comparing countries on the basis of some other less accessible scale, even if the scaling itself is in order.

How the work of the ECML contributes to evaluation and assessment

Publications

The growing acceptance and use of the Common Reference Levels of language proficiency presented in the *CEFR* has created a situation in which, all over Europe, public bodies, examination institutes, language schools and university departments

concerned with the teaching and testing of languages seek to relate their curricula and examinations to the Common Reference Levels. Several publications provide guidelines and tools to accompany the *CEFR*, such as the ECML publication *Relating language examinations to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment (CEFR) – Highlights from the Manual* (see below). It assists users to cope with the complexities of language assessment and to align tests and examinations to the *CEFR*. The handbook *Assessment of young learner literacy linked to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (AYLLIT)* is designed to assist in the assessment of reading and writing in the primary language classroom on the basis of *CEFR* descriptors. Another ECML publication, *Pathways through assessing, learning and teaching in the CEFR*, provides support to professionals at all levels to get acquainted with the philosophy of assessment, learning and teaching in line with the *CEFR*. The common thread in the guide is assessing in a manner consistent with the basic approach of the *CEFR*. Other publications relate to the *European Language Portfolio (ELP)*; for example: *The European Language Portfolio – A guide to the planning, implementation and evaluation of whole-school projects*.

The RELANG project

The RELANG project *Relating language curricula, tests and examinations to the Common European Framework of Reference* is part of the joint action “Innovative methodologies and assessment in language learning” between the ECML and the European Commission. Since 2012 RELANG has co-ordinated a series of workshops in EU and ECML member states. At present a series of five RELANG workshops is being offered, ranging from linking curricula to the *CEFR* to linking foreign/second language examinations to the *CEFR*. All RELANG workshops base their linking procedures on those developed in the Council of Europe’s Manual for *Relating language examinations to the CEFR* (2009). The steps in the linking process for examinations – *Familiarisation, Specification, Standardization & Benchmarking, Standard setting and Validation* – also prove useful when linking *curricula* to the *CEFR*.

One of the impact benefits of the RELANG workshops is that foreign/second language curricula and examinations in member states are now being revised in light of their links to the *CEFR*. This is an ongoing process that will result in the implementation of new curricula, examination syllabi and examinations. Even if the main goal of the RELANG activities is to relate curricula, tests and examinations to the *CEFR*, it is found that bringing together stakeholders with various backgrounds is a side effect that many of the participants have remarked upon as extremely fruitful.

Conclusions and future perspectives

The publication of the *CEFR* has had an important impact on the development of curricula, teaching materials, tests and examinations in most European countries. The *CEFR* model of language use with its emphasis on communicative competence is now at the heart of most curricula and examinations. The ECML has assisted language professional in applying the *CEFR* to their teaching and testing through numerous publications, projects and workshops. In the area of evaluation and assessment the emphasis has been on tailoring the *CEFR* to the needs of the individual learner on the one hand and producing valid assessment instruments on the other.

A number of ECML activities may need to be undertaken in the area of assessment, some of these as a continuation of work already started upon, such as exploring ways to relate existing curricula to the *CEFR* and/or to initiate curriculum reform in relation to the *CEFR* model of language use; applying the *CEFR* to the development of tests of second language competence and the further development of benchmarks and standards as examples for examinations that need to be linked to the *CEFR*. Also, in the area of formative assessment, adapting *CEFR*-based testing objectives to the needs of individual learners, such as immigrants and refugees, would be most relevant to the work of the ECML.

In the area of summative assessment continued attention to quality assurance is needed, focusing on validity and reliability in testing and on item construction. Also, ECML workshops in EU and ECML member states on combining the requirements of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) with the need to link examinations to the *CEFR* would be very useful. Furthermore, ECML workshops for statisticians at examination centres on data collection, data analysis and data interpretation would contribute to the validity of examinations to be linked to the *CEFR*.

Lastly, in the area of international assessment the ECML is in an excellent position to contribute to the development of an assessment framework that is based on or linked to the *CEFR*. The ECML's experience with curriculum and test development in ECML and EU member states will be of great use in establishing assessment procedures that will be acceptable to all member states, when these procedures are shown to take into account the individual needs of countries.

José Noijons is a former staff member at Cito, the Dutch National Institute for Educational Measurement. He is the co-ordinator of the *RELANG* project, *Relating language curricula, tests and examinations to the Common European Framework of Reference*, a co-operation between the EU Commission and the ECML on linking curricula and examinations to the *CEFR*. He is the co-editor of the ECML publication *Relating language examinations to the CEFR: Highlights from the Manual*.

SECTION C
IMPACT AND NETWORKS

IMPACT OF THE ECML IN MEMBER STATES

Ursula Newby

Thirty years ago the opening of borders in Europe created a window of opportunity for a new form of co-operation in the field of language education. Responding to this challenge, the ECML established a forum under the auspices of the Council of Europe, which, over the 25 years of its existence, has more than lived up to the initial expectations and developed into a central meeting point for language educators in 33 member states and beyond, which promotes dialogue and exchange among those active in the field. In its workshops and meetings a unique atmosphere is created in which participants from different backgrounds and educational cultures pool their experiences and knowledge and gain fresh insights which serve to intensify, optimize and diversify quality language education in member states. This has led to both harmonisation and diversification of approaches and practices, which has in turn enriched language learning and teaching and, thanks to the co-operation between the ECML and the European Commission in specific Training and Consultancy areas, now encompasses both ECML and EU member states.

An important role in shaping the direction and outlook of the ECML is played by the Governing Board, which represent all member states. At its meetings representatives both monitor the work of the ECML and provide suggestions and advice to the Secretariat on the main focus of the programme and how to move forward, taking into account priorities and developments on a national and an international level. Thereby member states can rest assured that their membership in the ECML is justified and beneficial. By means of this very fruitful co-operation between the Governing Board members and the Secretariat medium-term programmes are established which reflect the priorities and needs of all countries.

Member states only fully benefit from their involvement with the ECML if structures are in place to support dissemination of innovative ideas at national level. In recent years many countries have set up such national and local structures, both through the top-down support of Ministries of Education and through the involvement of practitioners acting as multipliers, all of which supports implementation of innovation at a practical level and facilitates a reflection of practices. The ECML has responded to the need to support national dissemination and recognised the importance of concrete measures at local level with the creation of the Training and Consultancy programme, which has proved extremely valuable.

The successful formula of high-quality projects and activities provided by the ECML supported by dissemination and implementation measures taken at local level is witnessed in the testimonies from individual member states which follow. These provide evidence of a wide palette of locally organised events and of the high number of teachers and teacher educators who consequently have access to the innovative themes at the core of ECML projects. Amongst the advantages of the collaboration with the ECML the following are cited:

- Collaborative work: local participants are not only recipients of information but through their role as project team members actively contribute to ongoing innovative work.
- ECML themes can be matched to local priorities and thus support current national trends – e.g. CLIL, early language learning, plurilingual education.
- Support for the development of local instruments such as national curricula or assessment modes.
- Support in using Council of Europe language policy instruments such as the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* and the *European Language Portfolio*.
- Support in implementing ECML instruments such as *Framework of reference for plurilingual approaches to languages and cultures* and the *European Portfolio for student teachers of languages*.

The above-mentioned benefits provide convincing arguments for membership in the ECML community. It is to be hoped that in the coming years even more countries can be encouraged to consider joining this innovative and practice-oriented centre of excellence.

Ursula Newby is the Chair of the Governing Board of the ECML

CO-OPERATION BETWEEN THE ECML AND THE EUROPEAN UNION

Themis Christophidou

Europe's rich linguistic diversity is impressive. It is a mark of a continent that used to be fragmented – separate communities sharing a common space. But as this common space urged interactions, increased contacts and ultimately removed borders, it became clear that the cultural and linguistic diversity was not only a heritage to be protected, but also a valuable resource for the European project: by learning foreign languages Europeans can speak to each other, know more about each other, empathise with each other. They can build bridges between their communities and foster dialogue. Multilingualism is at the heart of the European project, truly allowing Europe to become a community united in diversity.

This is why the European Union is pleased to co-operate with the European Centre for Modern Languages. Besides other projects we have undertaken together, the European Year of Languages, in 2001, was an important milestone for the co-operation between our two institutions. The European Year left behind the legacy of the European Day of Languages, celebrated in September every year since then. Today, the European Day of Languages is an opportunity for schools, teachers, cultural institutes and other interest groups at grassroots level to celebrate linguistic diversity and to promote language learning.

With co-financing through Erasmus+, the European Union's funding programme for education, training, youth and sport, the European Centre for Modern Languages has put in place an excellent programme of workshops and professional

development opportunities for language teachers. Among other areas, the Centre does impressive work with regard to language curricula, tests and examinations, it explores avenues for ICT-supported language teaching, and multilingual classrooms. These actions alone have already benefited more than 2000 language professionals in 29 countries.

The EU member states understand the value of language learning – which is why, in May 2019, the Council of Ministers of the EU adopted a Recommendation on a comprehensive approach to the teaching and learning of languages, proposing a number of ways to boost language learning across the EU. We count on continued strong co-operation with the Centre in implementing the Recommendation, particularly when it comes to the development of innovative methods in teaching and learning of languages.

The mission of the European Centre for Modern Languages is inextricably bound to the primary goal of the European Union, and Europe at large. To foster peace on our continent, we have to understand each other. I would like to congratulate the European Centre for Modern Languages for building up and maintaining its unique expertise in the field of language teaching and learning over a quarter of a century. Looking towards the future, I very much hope that the fruitful co-operation between the ECML and the European Union will continue, for the benefit of language learners and teachers, in our increasingly interweaved multilingual community.

Themis Christophidou, Director-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture of the European Commission

CO-OPERATION BETWEEN THE ECML AND THE PROFESSIONAL NETWORK FORUM

Peter Brown

The Professional Network Forum (PNF) is formed of renowned international associations and institutions that share common values and have overlapping expertise in the field of quality language education and assessment. Under the auspices of the ECML, the members of the Forum pool their know-how and have committed themselves to working together on areas of common interest in the service of quality language education for all.

Planning for the future PNF was undertaken in 2009 and it was formally launched on 7th January 2010 at the ECML in Graz. It had eight founder members who co-drafted the “Graz Declaration” of general principles, published in 2010 as a policy statement of “what we all stand for”. Currently there are 16 members of the PNF.

What were the initial objectives of the PNF?

The members of the PNF have worked together on various key initiatives, including the strategically important areas of, inter alia:

- identifying the professional competences needed by language teaching professionals working in different contexts;
- seeking common approaches to the assurance and enhancement of the quality of support for language learning, across all ages and sectors;

- improving mutual recognition of language qualifications;
- sharing and applying relevant research and research tools.

Opening out to the wider world of languages

Of equal importance is the implementation of relevant Council of Europe recommendations, and the ongoing development, application and dissemination of Council of Europe tools. However, it soon became apparent that there are other aspects of the PNF that provide significant benefits for all concerned:

- outreach – capillary dissemination of the work of the ECML, and of each partner;
- input – in helping determine and shape future project areas for the ECML;
- radar – flagging up potential strategic issues well in advance, and debating them;
- cross pollination – of new ideas, research outcomes, voices from stakeholders;
- joint projects – among members, severally and collectively.

Seeing the future with new eyes

The PNF has been one of the prime movers in generating ever-increasing numbers of applications for participation in ECML projects. It has also fostered several important bi-lateral and multi-lateral projects amongst its own members. It will continue to engage with the ECML as an “appreciative critical friend”. To misquote a statement attributed to Christopher Columbus: “the true Explorer is not the one who discovers new lands, but the one who see the world with new eyes”. The PNF has contributed in bringing new eyes to the ECML. And all credit to the ECML for having given the PNF the opportunity to do so for the benefit of all language learners.

Peter Brown, Representative of the Professional Network Forum (EAQUALS)

Current members of the PNF:

ACTFL, American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages

AILA, International Association of Applied Linguistics

ALTE, Association of Language Testers in Europe

CercleS, European Confederation of Language Centres in Higher Education

EALTA, European Association for Language Testing and Assessment

EAQUALS, Association for Evaluation and Accreditation of Quality in Language Services

ECSPM, European Civil Society Platform for Multilingualism

ECML, European Centre for Modern Languages of the Council of Europe

EDiLiC, Education, Cultural and Linguistic Diversity

EFNIL, European Federation of National Institutions for Language

CEL/ELC, Conseil Européen pour les Langues/ European Language Council

EPA, European Parents' Association

EUNIC, European Union National Institutes for Culture

FIPLV, Fédération Internationale des Professeurs de Langues Vivantes

ICC, International Certificate Conference e.V.

OLBI, Official Languages and Bilingualism Institute of the University of Ottawa, Canada

For a summary of the "Graz Declaration", see:

www.ecml.at/Portals/1/documents/PNF/leaflet-PNF-EN.pdf

For the 10 initial objectives of the PNF, see

www.ecml.at/professionalnetworkforum

IMPACT OF THE ECML IN MEMBER STATES – TESTIMONIES



Impact of the ECML in Armenia

On the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the ECML it is our pleasure to highlight the benefits Armenia has had during all the years of its co-operation with the Centre and express our strong willingness to go on with building new bridges with its member states in the future.

Armenia joined the ECML Partial Agreement in 2001 immediately after the accession of the country to the Council of Europe and became a pioneer in promoting European fundamental values through the quality language education in the post-Soviet space. Together with other member states we started to encourage excellence and innovation in language teaching and supported our language educators and teacher trainers to implement effective language education tools and policies in their daily practice. It became possible through the wide participation of the Armenian experts in the workshops and Training and Consultancy events. Approximately 100 Armenian teachers and teacher trainers participated in the ECML workshops and became multipliers of the Centre's policy and practice in the country. Over the years around 400 local experts were trained in 15 Training and Consultancy workshops under the guidance of the ECML experts.

Through calls for proposals, international expert teams from the member states were invited to submit and carry out projects, and among them were Armenian experts who contributed to such projects as *Using the European portfolio for student teachers of languages (EPOSTL)*, *Languages as an indicator of corporate quality (LINCQ)*, *Developing language awareness in subject classes (Language in subjects)* through the wide range of project-related activities. The free access to all the ECML publications has enabled us to translate thousands of pages of documents and adapt them to our national learning environments and professional needs.

With the help of the ECML we utilized the concepts which are relevant to foreign languages: languages of schooling, minority languages, as well as resolving the linguistic problems of the refugees. We are keen to go on with protecting sign languages, promoting digital literacy for teaching and learning of languages, boosting language teaching competences of subject teachers, encouraging work-

related language-learning, supporting the local education institutions to build an innovative curriculum which will ensure the success of all the language learners. In order to maximize the impact of the ECML we developed our own products, and the *Reference level descriptors for Armenian as a foreign language* is one of the most successful instruments based on the methodology of *CEFR*, which was highly estimated by the national education authorities.

Within the years to come Armenia is expecting to reach a better synergy between language curriculum, teaching and testing, to better equip its citizens with the communicative and intercultural competences necessary to participate fully in the global and complex world, and for it we need a stronger networking and more intensive collaborative work with the ECML experts within different projects and initiatives.

In our friendly ECML family of 33 member states there is enough space for new member states and we shall be delighted to make new connections to new partners, launch new activities as well as help the newcomers to implement and disseminate diverse ECML tools.

Lusine Fljyan, ECML Governing Board member



Impact of the ECML in Austria

The impact of ECML activities on Austrian language education encompasses all the thematic areas of the ECML, however, to varying degrees and with different outcomes. This testimony will outline some of the success factors relevant for the implementation of ECML results in Austria and give examples of fields with more prominent impact.

Three main factors showing the influence on Austrian language education can be identified. First, involving experts and practitioners at different stages and in varying roles is important. In addition to Austrian project co-ordinators and team members, more than 80 experts have participated in over 100 workshops, network meetings and conferences, adding their expertise and bringing developments back into practice and research.

The second factor concerns matching thematic areas of the ECML programmes to current national priorities in language policy, aligned with the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research.

Third, practical measures are relevant to raise visibility in Austria, for instance the publication of ECML products in German and the selection and dissemination of relevant results to language experts.

The following examples of ECML activities in Austria outline the different ways in which impact has been made:

1) Austrian project co-ordinators or team members:

- *EPOSTL* (2008-2011, co-ordinator: David Newby): *The European Portfolio for student teachers of languages* is currently being used as a reflection tool in teacher training courses and teaching practice at several Austrian universities and universities of teacher education.
- *MARILLE* (2009-2011, co-ordinator: Klaus-Börge Boeckmann): Along with the project *Maledive (Diversity in majority language learning – Supporting teacher*

education), *MARILLE* (Majority language instruction as basis for plurilingual education) has paved the way for addressing plurilingual education in the context of the languages of schooling, which is currently high on the Austrian language education policy agenda.

2) Influence of projects corresponding to national priorities: in Austria, CLIL, language-sensitive teaching (based on the *Languages for schooling* project of the Council of Europe) and digital tools and competencies in (language) learning have particularly grown in importance in recent years. CLIL projects at the ECML had a consolidating effect on an already growing number of grassroots-activities and projects in Austria. The idea of language-sensitive teaching is now starting to be implemented on a broader basis, for example in (initial) teacher training courses and materials design. ECML Training and Consultancy activities in the field of ICT in language learning have added value to the current national focus.

3) The third success factor of ECML project implementation is linked to the work of the National Contact Point (NCP) for Austria, situated at the Austrian Centre for Language Competence. It oversees the dissemination of products and results through its networks of teacher training institutions, universities and school authorities. The Austrian NCP has developed materials showcasing ECML results, ranging from analysis papers and information materials on results with relevance to Austrian priorities, to hands-on publications for regional or local implementation.

The main future challenges will consist of further increasing the visibility of ECML projects and activities through meaningful selection, presentation and dissemination in Austria and continuously involving experts in all phases of ECML project development.

An overview of publications on ECML project results can be found on the website of the Austrian NCP: www.oesz.at/ncp.

Elisabeth Görsdorf-Léchevin, ECML National Contact Point



Impact of the ECML in the Czech Republic

Although the Czech Republic was not a founding member, it very soon realised the potential the ECML offers and joined the founding countries in 1995. Being a small country with the language that does not belong among those which are widely spoken or spread, we have always been aware of the importance of language knowledge and language learning for different purposes such as internationalisation of education, intercultural dialogue, business communication, personal growth etc.

What we consider the most positive and important influence and impact of the ECML:

- The ECML has provided invaluable support to the implementation of the Council of Europe language policy, be it in the area of foreign languages or recently, and more broadly, in all the aspects of languages of schooling policy.
- The ECML has managed to fulfil one of its main aims in adequately responding to the needs and requests of its member states focusing on the areas they have declared as their priorities.

From the point of view of the Czech Republic, the ECML support and the impact of its work and products have included above all:

- Access to the ECML developed materials which were instrumental in the implementation of Council of Europe language policy, such as in the fields of the use of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*, autonomous learning and self-evaluation (the *European Language Portfolio*), teacher training (*European Portfolio of student teachers of languages – EPOSTL*), *use of ICT in language learning and teaching*, bilingual education, CLIL (in its broadest sense covering integration of content and language learning), Framework of descriptors for sign language, Roma language etc.;
- Training Czech teachers and teacher trainers to use the developed materials and to work with them effectively;
- Offering experts to provide relevant input at national events;

- Responding to the national needs through the offer of regional and national seminars and workshops, e.g.
 - *RELANG seminar – “Relating language examinations to the common European reference levels of language proficiency”* (26-28 March 2014, Prague). Participants were trained in the development of valid language tests related to the CEFR for the use in testing migrants in the Czech Republic.
 - *RELANG workshop – “Relating existing tests and examinations to the CEFR”* (12-13 October 2017, Prague). The follow-up workshop of the seminar held in 2014. The workshop was specially designed for the test developers of the examination of the Czech language for permanent residence in the Czech Republic.
 - Seminar *“Supporting multilingual classrooms – Education in linguistically and culturally diverse classrooms”* (14-15 April 2016, Prague). The two-day workshop was focused on practical ways to approach multilingualism within classrooms and schools.
 - Seminar *“Supporting multilingual classrooms – Language development of migrant pupils”* (27-28 April 2017, Prague). In this two-day workshop the experts tried to mediate mainly: how to support teachers’ awareness about the role that language of schooling plays in order to promote educational success for all learners, good practices for teaching and learning in multilingual settings with Czech as the language of schooling, how to promote a positive attitude to linguistic and cultural diversity.

In addition to these national events tailored to suit our needs and requirements, we have also greatly benefited from the regular central workshops organised in Graz where we had an opportunity to send a participant. Recently, the central workshop which covered the theme *“Towards a common European Framework of reference for language teachers”* was especially relevant to our situation since it has nicely coincided with our local project in this respect.

Ladislav Bánovec, ECML Governing Board member



Impact of the ECML in Finland

Finland introduced the twin concept of language awareness and language education into the national core curricula of general education between 2014 and 2016. The core curricula are norms, so the new linguistically aware elements implied a change in how key actors in education were to understand and deal with the languages of teaching and learning, and the plurilingualism of every individual in Finnish schools.

This change didn't take place in a vacuum but was inspired by a discussion on a European level, where the Council of Europe and the ECML played a major part. Several Finnish researchers and educators contributed to the formulation of the enormously significant Council of Europe tools of *CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages)* and *ELP (European Language Portfolio)*. The pioneering work of these influential Finns – the late Professor Sauli Takala especially – opened up a direct dialogue with the ECML from the very beginning of the Centre's activities. This collaboration helped bring language awareness and plurilingualism to the forefront of the Finnish language education agenda combining an insightful approach to human rights, democracy and rule of law with the introduction of the *CEFR* and the *ELP*.

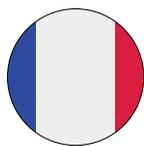
Finland was long considered a rather secluded niche in Europe with globalisation only gradually bringing migrants with varying linguistic and cultural backgrounds into the society. When preparing the 2014 Core Curriculum, it was understood that students from immigrant or disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds or with learning disabilities could be particularly challenged, if their school was not linguistically supportive. The strong advocacy from the Council of Europe to promote the role of language awareness in the quality and equity of education was taken on board. In the new Core Curriculum, every school community and its members are assumed to be plurilingual. Different languages are valued and used side by side as natural elements of school culture. Teachers are required to act as linguistic models, teachers of the language of their subject and providers of an environment where languages flourish. This probably sounds familiar to anyone

who is acquainted with ECML programmes – and may well be the result of a fruitful exchange of ideas and expertise at European level.

Another aspect of the collaboration between the ECML and Finland is more concrete as it is directly based on our growing knowledge of the Centre's programmes and resources and how they can be utilized as building blocks of the Finnish language education expertise. Over the past few years, Finland has been the target and partner of two ECML workshops held annually in Finland. The workshops have been of varying origin and content, from the use of ICT in language teaching and learning to promoting the next ECML programme. This is low-bureaucracy, low-budget, well-tailored in-service capacity building for Finnish language education stakeholders.

And the collaboration will go on – I envisage the importance of languages, plurilingualism and pluriculturalism will only increase in Europe and globally. We are very pleased to be able to rely on the hub of learning and working together that we as a member state have in Graz.

Paula Mattila, ECML Governing Board member



Impact of the ECML in France

The ECML makes an essential contribution to European co-operation in the field of language teaching, in the context of plurilingual and intercultural education promoted by the Council of Europe, and in a European area characterised by plurilingualism which has inspired the Barcelona model (speaking the language of schooling and two foreign languages). Being aware of the challenges of proactive action to promote plurilingualism in Europe, France supported the creation of the ECML a quarter of a century ago, alongside the seven other states that joined the Enlarged Partial Agreement. France hereby renews its full support of this unique institution.

For the French steering committee, which comprises the Ministry of National Education and Youth and the Ministry of Culture, as well as the International Centre for Educational Studies (CIEP), the interrelationship between the ECML's work and national priorities has been a key objective in recent years. The other objective is to improve the dissemination of this work at the French level in order to strengthen its impact on stakeholders in language teaching.

Thus, the French Ministry of National Education and Youth has sought to propose projects in line with its priorities. The *PEPELINO* project (*European portfolio for pre-primary educators*), the co-ordination of which was entrusted in 2012-2015 to Francis Goullier, Inspector General of National Education, is one example. This is also the case for the *EOL* project (*Learning environments where modern languages flourish*) co-ordinated in 2016-2019 by Jonas Erin, Inspector General of National Education. This project is referred in the report, *Propositions pour une meilleure maîtrise des langues vivantes étrangères, oser dire le nouveau monde / Proposals for improving foreign language proficiency, in an ever changing world*, submitted in 2018 to the Minister of Education: "Let us cite as an example the EOL project [...which] is developing a European network of pioneering partner institutions from fifteen European countries that are working to set up dynamic models to promote foreign language learning". Indicators have been foreseen to enable teaching staff and school authorities to measure the impact of language teaching practices at school level. The investigation of the impact involves promoting the ECML's work

among stakeholders involved in language teaching. This is also the aim of the ECML seminar organised each year at the CIEP. It is also worth mentioning CIEP's electronic journal, the *Courriel européen des langues*, which is published biannually. In 2019, the seminar focused on the call for proposals for the 2020-2023 programme and brought together 9 speakers and 75 participants. The November 2018 edition of the *Courriel* highlighted the project *A roadmap for schools to support the language(s) of schooling* and language teaching in Finland (interview with the national contact point). This issue has been downloaded more than 2000 times from the CIEP website and the LISEO documentary portal.

Claire Extramiana, General Delegation for the French Language and the Languages of France, Ministry of Culture

Benoît Gobin, Directorate-General for School Education, and **Mélanie Tournier**, Delegation for European and International Relations and Co-operation, Ministry of National Education and Youth and Ministry of Higher Education and Research

Marion Latour and **Bernadette Plumelle**, CIEP (Centre international d'études pédagogiques / International Centre for Pedagogical Studies, France Education International as of 4 July 2019)



Impact of the ECML in Germany

Germany, represented by the Goethe-Institut and the Kultusministerkonferenz (the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education of the Länder) congratulates the ECML on supporting teaching practice over the last 25 years in the area of learning and teaching languages. Its projects take account of the development of European societies and the challenges they are facing and highlight the key role of quality language education in promoting intercultural dialogue, democratic citizenship and social cohesion.

The *FREPA* project (*A framework of reference for pluralistic approaches to languages and cultures*) offers an example of this approach. Since its launch in 2012, *FREPA* has been presented and discussed with the heads of training institutes. Anna Schröder-Sura, one of the authors, works at Rostock University and regularly gives presentations at workshops around Germany together with Michel Candelier, the project co-ordinator. This work is bearing fruit!

From the beginning of the 2019/2020 academic year, a new subject will be introduced in secondary schools in Thuringia (one of 16 *Länder*): “Languages and language learning”. This is an elective that pupils in the 9th grade will be able to choose to study for two hours a week over a year and that aims at promoting, facilitating and creating favourable conditions for the learning of all the languages, including new languages taken up by learners in upper secondary school.

The course content that has been developed by the institute responsible for programme planning in Thuringia (Thuringian Institute for Teacher Training, Curriculum Development and Media (ThILLM)) is presented in modules covering the topics such as “multilingualism and plurilingualism in Europe”, “culture, language and identity”, “strategies for better learning”, “reflecting on language, its use and language learning”. The institute has taken its inspiration from the *Framework of reference for pluralistic approaches to languages and cultures (FREPA)*.

It is also worth mentioning other ECML projects that have influenced language policy in Germany:

The two successive projects on *Language for Work* coupled with their network and their website are currently having a significant impact (see chapter on *Migrant education and employment* in this publication). An international platform has been created, which brings together and disseminates innovative approaches to work-related second language development.

The participants in these projects have contributed to the content of the events related to the Federal Ministry for Labour and Social Affairs' programme "Integration through qualification" and have given a fresh impetus to the programme through their experience with non-formal learning activities, such as mentoring and professional coaching. The core idea of these projects is that the promotion of the second language related to a particular professional activity and workplace represents a tool for inclusion and very much reflects the regulation adopted by the Ministry on promotion of Business German (published in May 2016).

Two brochures produced as a result of these projects have proved very popular with professionals (language trainers and representatives of public services, for example) and were integrated into continuous education programmes:

- *Language for work – a quick guide. How to help adult migrants develop work-related language skills;*
- *Communicating with migrants – Guide for staff in job centres and public services.*

Other outcomes, such as the description of competences required of key education and business stakeholders working in this field will be published soon, and we will continue to monitor their impact.

Andrea Schäfer, ECML Governing Board member



Impact of the ECML in Greece

Greece, a founding member of the European Centre for Modern Languages re-joined the ECML in 2016. The country's accession aim is to stay up-to-date with innovation in language education, recognizing the importance of quality language education in contemporary European societies, characterized by multiple challenges.

The contribution of the ECML to the teaching and learning of foreign languages as well as to foreign language teacher training continues to be very important. From the school year 2016-2017, a new study programme, the "Joint study programme for foreign languages studies (Ενιαίο Πρόγραμμα Σπουδών – Ξένων Γλωσσών)" is being implemented in the country's education system. Through the new curriculum, foreign language teaching and learning objectives, content, methodology, and evaluation have been organised according to the competence levels of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)* of the Council of Europe. This enables the adaptation of foreign language teaching to current needs and practices within specific educational, social and cultural contexts.

Participation in the ECML also involved participation under the common Council of Europe – European Commission agreement "*Innovative methodologies and assessment in language learning*". This entailed training centred on the following two projects: *Relating language curricula, tests, and examinations to the Common European Framework of Reference (RELANG)* and *Supporting multilingual classrooms*. In the framework of the ECML's Training and Consultancy programme, both topics were offered to a significant number of education practitioners, in collaboration with local organisers, to respond to specific needs of providing modern didactic approaches on which teachers can reflect and may use in their work.

With the project *Supporting multilingual classrooms*, a significant number of training workshops took place in various regions of the country, with special emphasis on those facing urgent challenges due to the presence of large numbers of migrant students in schools. The contribution of the ECML experts to the highly demanding work of local teachers helped to achieve better learning for all students, bridge the

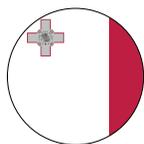
attainment gap between Greek and migrant pupils and offer quality education to all learners in multilingual and multicultural classes. The overall aim of this training is to increase employability perspectives and contribute to social cohesion.

In the context of the current ECML programme and projects, many foreign language teachers and other language education professionals throughout the country have received training through the organisation of workshops on different thematic fields. Some examples are the following: *Plurilingual and intercultural competences: descriptors and teaching materials (FREPA)*, *Learning environments where languages flourish: placing languages at the heart of learning*, *Plurilingual and intercultural learning through mobility – Practical resources for teachers and teacher trainers (Plurimobil)*, *A pluriliteracies approach to teaching and learning*, *Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)*. Additionally, through training offered by the ECML in Graz, language teachers, policy-makers, school advisors, etc., have received training in languages (including sign language).

During these years, the education community of the country had the chance to get to know the ECML and its multifaceted work, showing an ever-increasing interest in all its activities (workshops in the country, training in Graz, thematic publications).

Finally, special mention should be made of the celebration of the European Day of Languages in schools, which is a widely known and popular activity supported by the Centre.

Aikaterini Bompetsi, ECML National Nominating Authority



Impact of the ECML in Malta

Over the past years Malta has participated in a number of ECML initiatives that have set the ball rolling in a wide range of areas in language teaching, learning and assessment. Projects specifically addressed issues related to FL/L2 curricula and assessment as well as other areas of national priority on a variety of themes ranging from the language of schooling, approaches within multilingual classrooms, plurilingual approaches as well as sign language in education. These projects brought together stakeholders from areas of policy, teacher development and training, school management, as well as teachers and other practitioners working across Maltese educational sectors.

The shift in pedagogy and assessment propagated through the Learning Outcome curriculum reform at national level was well supported by Malta's participation in the *RELANG* ECML initiative: *Relating language examinations to the CEFR*. The timely collaboration with the *RELANG* team led to the identification of needs and requirements to further align FL and L2 curricula at national level to the *CEFR*. Local curricular reform was supported through *RELANG* Training and Consultancy, bringing together experienced educators in FL and Maltese as L2 at various levels and sectors within the Maltese educational system. Such a process involved training on valid and reliable class-based and summative assessment. The *RELANG* initiative enabled FL and Maltese as L2 Departments within the Directorate for Learning and Assessment Programmes to critically evaluate and align their curricula to the *CEFR* approach of language learning and language use. Is your B1 my B1? This question tied in with concerns regarding difficulty level of end of year exams of secondary education in the various foreign languages. This resonated with workshop participants and set the ball rolling for several workshops that discussed issues that ranged from types of tasks within the *CEFR* approach to validity and reliability issues in assessment practices.

Participation in ECML projects involved consultancy meetings that respected the underpinning principle of collaboration as a two-way process that sustains goals set. Malta's participation in the *RELANG* project, *Relating language curricula, tests and examinations to the Common European Framework of Reference*, is a fine

example of how ECML projects provide the space for participant countries to not only address their specific needs but to also contribute in the evolution of the project itself. Malta's participation entailed identifying to what extent local foreign language curricula relate to the *CEFR* to be better able to link attainment targets within the curriculum to the *CEFR* framework. This was an area the *RELANG* team included in the modules on offer within the *RELANG* initiative and a clear example of how identification of needs and recommendations from one project were shared with local organisers in other member states.

Alice Micallef, ECML Governing Board member



Impact of the ECML in Montenegro

Montenegro became a member of the European Centre for Modern Languages with the aim to benefit from “its mission to support the implementation of language policies” at a practitioner’s level. It was also important to become the member of such an institution and keep up to date with latest developments, having in mind the importance of languages in the provision of quality education and the fact there was a major gap between the educational system needs and the current practice. And it was the opportunity for teachers, teacher trainers and advisors from educational institutions in Montenegro to experience and contribute to various ECML activities that may affect their teaching practice. These activities covered different areas needed in today’s language classroom and enabled the participants to reflect on their practices, to network and to exchange ideas, new approaches and best practice.

The impact of ECML activities within Montenegro has become particularly evident in the context of Training and Consultancy format of support. The workshops offered through the ECML Training and Consultancy for member states cover a range of topics related to contemporary trends in language teaching and learning. Moreover, training and consultancy events have increased involvement at the national level and opened the effective ways of disseminating.

The international expertise of the ECML expert teams was of immense help in the process of developing the first Montenegrin model of the *European Language Portfolio (ELP)*. The expert help provided by the ECML accelerated the process of finalizing the *ELP* model and designing a teacher training programme.

In addition, the cohort of teacher trainers was trained in developing *CEFR*-related language tests. This training was particularly useful for the item writers engaged by the Examination Centre, a public institution responsible for external evaluation exams in the Montenegrin education system.

The role of communication and information technologies in improving teaching and learning was presented to Montenegrin language teachers from a completely

new perspective through the *ICT-REV* project *Use of ICT in support of language teaching and learning*. The training event was an excellent opportunity for language teachers to improve their digital skills but also provided them with an inventory of online tools and open educational resources for language teaching and learning.

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) has been recently introduced in the Montenegrin school system. Therefore, there was a need for training in effective methodologies for implementing CLIL in the classroom. The training and consultancy event and the CLIL team of experts offered a comprehensive training on how to develop CLIL lesson plans and implement them effectively.

Last, but not the least, language teachers in Montenegro are aware of the importance the ECML resource centre and its publications for their professional development. The ECML and its member states make every effort in the joint commitment to make language learning and teaching more effective and more interesting.

Ljiljana Subotić, ECML Governing Board member



Impact of the ECML in the Netherlands

The impact of the ECML in the Netherlands could be compared to a snowball, rolling down to us from the Austrian mountains. Slowly but quite surely the expertise, good practice and inspiration coming from Graz is reaching an exponentially growing number of teachers, experts and policy makers.

The Netherlands have established a “Graz Working Group”, which nominates candidates for the ECML workshops. The Working Group consists of representatives from different educational sectors, each with a wide professional network. It is the Group’s mission to ensure that the nominated experts have something to contribute to the workshop in question, and have, as well, a strong disseminating capability. The more Dutch experts come to Graz, the stronger its effects become, as more and more people become ambassadors of the ECML.

A number of projects have resonated particularly in the Netherlands, for instance *Pro-Sign (Sign languages and the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages – Descriptors and approaches to assessment and Promoting excellence in sign language instruction)*, *FREPA (A framework of reference for pluralistic approaches to languages and cultures)*, *the CLILmatrix (The CLIL quality matrix)* and the more recent *Pluriliteracies project (A pluriliteracies approach to teaching for learning)*.

Apart from the projects themselves, an important value of the ECML is its function as a platform for international co-operation. Each project workshop forms an opportunity for discussions with colleagues from a vast geographical area, providing fresh insights and interesting perspectives. The workshops are mini-conferences centred around one particular theme, and their frequent and continued occurrence really make the ECML unsurpassed as an institution. Through continued dialogue with the ECML via the Governing Board and the structural meetings of the National Nominating Authorities, the ECML becomes ever more relevant to our national situation, and through our Working Group we’re ensuring to send the right person to Graz at the right time.

The ECML is thus an expression of the European ideal of mutual understanding and co-operation, focussing on the very means of international co-operation: on language education.

Wendoline Timmerman, ECML Governing Board member



Impact of the ECML in Romania

Romania's member status to ECML represents a great asset in supporting the teaching and learning of languages at a national level. During the last 24 years, Romania has been participating in the activities promoted by the Centre, with a view to building on the resources and training and networking opportunities provided.

Year by year, language teachers and specialists from Romania have participated in the workshops organised in Graz, acting as multipliers upon their return, sharing the experience gained within their professional networks, engaging in peer-learning activities and disseminating the Centre's resources and initiatives in the field of language teaching and learning. The feedback received from our participants has demonstrated the relevance and positive impact of these participations at local and county level, generally materialized in an increased co-operation among teachers, grassroots level action and stimulation for initiating specific local projects.

Language teachers from Romania have also been part of ECML projects, as members or co-ordinators. Their involvement contributed to the exchange of national experience on specific topics, boosting work and co-operation with their European peers.

One strand of the ECML activities that has been particularly capitalized upon in the last years in Romania has been the Training and Consultancy component. Thus, in 2016 and 2019, Romania organised two workshops within the *Relating language curricula, tests and examinations to the Common European Framework of Reference (RELANG)* initiative with the support of the ECML. These two events were organised in the context of the national curricular reform, started in 2012, with the general aim of aligning both the new curricula and the assessment process in the field of foreign languages to the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)*. Both workshops targeted relevant stakeholders, such as general inspectors and county school inspectors for foreign languages, teacher trainers, teachers from both formal and non-formal educational sectors, experts specialized in assessment and curricular development.

During the 2016 workshop the participants were familiarised with the *CEFR* in view of fostering the alignment of the new curriculum to *CEFR* in terms of learning outcomes, relating the competence descriptors to the *CEFR* descriptors, ensuring the adequate competence progression and designing valid competence assessment. As a result, the present lower secondary curriculum for foreign languages is well articulated on the basis of the *CEFR*.

The 2019 *RELANG* workshop was a continuation of the previous one, focusing this time on the assessment aspects implied by the adoption of the new curriculum. The participants were trained to use the *CEFR* descriptors in the process of developing assessment items and tests, in line with the level of proficiency or the type of competences under consideration. The results of the workshop will equally contribute to the revision of the national assessment tests specific to the study of modern languages.

Alexandra Şandru, ECML Governing Board member



Impact of the ECML in Slovenia

Increasing mobility and the need to perform in a multilingual environment require a good command of different languages and intercultural competencies. With this in mind, pluralistic approaches to language teaching started to develop as early as 2000 within the ECML project *Janua Linguarum – The gateway to languages – The introduction of language awareness into the curriculum: Awakening to languages*, when first learning materials proposing plurilingual activities were produced. In Slovenia, work continued in the framework of the national projects *Developing early language learning* (2008-2010) and *Enriching foreign language learning* (2010-2015). Learning materials with these innovative approaches can also be found in Slovenian textbooks for English and German, in school grammars for Slovene from 2017, in the Slovenian *European Language Portfolios* and in the activities of the European Day of Languages.

Pluralistic approaches are included in the existing Slovenian foreign language curricula for primary and secondary education. Although various elements offering plurilingual experience have existed in language education related documents for a considerable time, “traditional” monolingual didactic approaches still persist in classroom practice, which informed the decision to hold the first international *FREPA* seminar on “*Plurilingual and intercultural competences: descriptors and teaching materials*” in Slovenia in the framework of the ECML Training and Consultancy in 2014. Two more seminars followed. Owing to the complexity of the practical implementation of the descriptors, which must be based on a deep understanding of the changing paradigm of learning processes, a translation of the descriptors into Slovene was provided in 2017. The implementation of pluralistic approaches supported by the descriptors is now being carried out within the six-year national project *Languages matter* (2017-2022), which also foresees a new teacher training programme.

Other ECML projects with an impact on language education in Slovenia:

- *Relating language curricula, tests and examinations to the Common European Framework of Reference (RELANG)*. The Slovenian National Examinations Centre organised three workshops. In 2016, the Rules on the issuance of certificates with the European reference level of foreign language knowledge were adopted, and now every student who passes the Matura examination in a foreign language and reaches the required number of points is automatically and free-of-charge awarded a publicly valid certificate.
- *Use of ICT in support of language teaching and learning (ICT-REV)*. Three workshops were organised, followed by a new training programme, piloted in August 2019.
- *Quality education in Romani for Europe (QualiRom)*. The two seminars (2014, 2019) serve as the basis for the National Education Institute to prepare the necessary documentation (including translation of the Council of Europe *Curriculum Framework for Romani*) to launch the teaching of Romani as a mother tongue.
- *Multilingual classrooms*. Two completed seminars contributed to the creation of integration models and to their improved implementation.
- *Sign languages and the Common European Framework of References for Languages – Descriptors and approaches to assessment (Pro-Sign)*: translation of materials and accelerated development of the Slovene sign language and its alignment with CEFR.
- *Language for work – Tools for professional development*: translation of materials and setting up a piloting environment in interested companies.

The ECML is the only intergovernmental institution specialised in the field of language learning and teaching in Europe and probably beyond, and it is a success story.

Bronka Straus, ECML Governing Board member

CONCLUSION

25 YEARS OF SUCCESS: A SOLID BASE FOR THE FUTURE

Sarah Breslin

Introduction

As Executive Director of the ECML, it has been a great pleasure for me to read all the texts that together make this publication so rich; by providing an overview of the wide array of themes in which 21st century language education is embedded, it has also been extremely informative. I am proud of the important contribution the ECML has made to the Council of Europe's work in language education, aptly referred to in *Section A* by David Little as a "treasure trove".

For me, this publication is much more than a simple exposé of the treasures produced by the ECML; it demonstrates that far from being relics of a different era, these are treasures which have continuously evolved in response to political, societal, technological and pedagogical developments in Europe. And that response has been at the level of both content and form: our innovative international projects result in research-informed, user-friendly tools for language professionals in different roles, while our Training and Consultancy activities provide in-country capacity-building, focused on the challenges of adaptation and implementation in specific contexts. It is a publication which bears witness to a quarter of a century dedicated to the betterment of language learning and teaching, summed up in the Centre's strapline – *promoting excellence in language education*.

Into the future: the ECML programme 2020-2023

*Learning and innovation go hand in hand.
The arrogance of success is to think that
what you did yesterday will be sufficient for tomorrow.*

(Pollard W. ca. 1860)

In today's increasingly fragmented Europe, and given the societal challenges outlined by my colleague Susanna Slivensky in *Section A*, it would be both self-indulgent and irresponsible to concentrate purely on the ECML's past success. That is why each of the chapters in *Section B: Evolving competences* concludes with some pointers for the way ahead. I believe these pointers are well reflected in the new ECML Programme 2020-2023, *Inspiring innovation in language education: changing contexts, evolving competences*, which is based on identified needs in member states. In addition to continued support for the European Day of Languages and other awareness-raising and dissemination activities for a wider public such as webinars and colloquia, the new programme consists of nine development projects and twelve Training and Consultancy offers.

This innovative and comprehensive programme will further support countries to develop quality language education, fit for the 21st century. As can be seen from the list of programme themes below, it not only addresses societal issues such as increased linguistic and cultural diversity, a phenomenon which makes the "why" of plurilingual education more pertinent than ever – but also the "what" and the "how" – that all-important focus on pedagogy and on the professional development of all those involved in language education, to support the implementation of plurilingual education through appropriate methodologies, differentiated according to context, learners and language.

The main themes of the forthcoming programme are:

- digital citizenship through language education;
- linguistic mediation;
- languages in vocational education;
- neighbouring languages;
- the use of CLIL to promote deep learning and to strengthen the diversification of languages from kindergarten to university;
- meaningful early language learning;
- the linguistic integration of children from a migrant or refugee background;

- teacher competences and whole-school approaches to support all languages in education;
- quality education in Romani;
- the *CEFR* and *CEFR Companion Volume* for learning, teaching and assessment;
- action research for language teachers;
- language for work in support of adult migrants.

Into the future: guiding principles

Over the 25 years of its existence, the ECML has grown from an Enlarged Partial Agreement of the Council of Europe with 8 founding member states to one that boasts 33 member states, a long-standing partnership with the European Commission and a Professional Network Forum comprising 16 non-governmental organisations from across Europe and beyond, actively engaged in the field of language education. Having borne witness to less than a quarter of this success story, I am all the more honoured to have the final word in this publication. I see this ending also as a beginning, an opportunity to review the wonderful achievements of the past 25 years in order to identify key success factors which can act as guiding beacons of light for the way ahead. Here are the three interrelated and interdependent factors which I consider to be fundamental and which together highlight the uniqueness of the ECML, sitting as it does at the interface of policy, research, teacher education and practice:

- We recognise not only the right of every individual to quality language education which is inclusive, plurilingual and intercultural and which begins with learners' needs, but we also openly acknowledge the challenges and the multiple influencing factors that can stand in the way. Through our direct engagement with and in member states, and through concrete support for implementation tailored to different contexts, we attempt to bridge the gap between the vision and the reality.
- We base our work on a thorough understanding of priorities in member states and on engagement with a broad range of stakeholders, all of whom are considered "appreciative, critical friends", to borrow a phrase from Peter Brown (*Section C*). We believe that without ownership and agency, it is not possible to bring about sustainable positive change.
- We operate as an international and dynamic community of practice, bringing together various actors in the field – across sectors, languages, disciplines and countries. We are an outward-facing, living, learning organisation, respectful of each individual voice within our community, willing to embrace constructive controversy (Achinstein 2002).

Our approach, therefore, reflects two of the key principles underpinning the Council’s work referred to in *Section A*: plurilingual, inclusive and intercultural, with each member of our learning community acting as an autonomous social agent with rights and responsibilities. These success factors, however, do not operate in a vacuum. Instead, they depend entirely on the ongoing commitment of all those associated with the Centre: member states at the levels of Governing Board, National Nominating Authorities and National Contact Points, experts, partner organisations, the Austrian Authorities who provide the seat of the ECML and give support at local, regional and national level, and, of course, the “mothership” in Strasbourg.

Closing remarks

I hope this publication will not only fill ECML stakeholders with a genuine sense of pride, but will be considered of particular value to all those working in the field of language education. I would like to take this opportunity to thank to all those involved in its production – editors, authors, proof-readers, translators and those responsible for publishing. I would also like to thank everyone engaged in the work of the ECML for their commitment to the values of the Council of Europe and unflinching belief in the importance of quality language education. And as the new decade dawns and the next ECML programme begins, I pledge my own personal commitment to realising the Centre’s mission:

*A Europe committed to linguistic and cultural diversity,
where the key role of quality language education
in achieving intercultural dialogue, democratic citizenship
and social cohesion is recognised and supported.*

(ECML 2019)

Sarah Breslin was formerly Director of SCILT, Scotland’s National Centre for Languages, and Director of the Confucius Institute for Scotland’s schools. Previous posts include Head of Modern Languages in the School of Tourism, associated to the University of Tarragona, Spain, and teacher of French, Spanish and English as both a second and foreign language. Since October 2013, she has been the Executive Director of the ECML.

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www.ecml.at/actionresearch

A Framework of Reference for Pluralistic Approaches to Languages and Cultures (FREPA)

www.ecml.at/carap

A pluriliteracies approach to teaching for learning

www.ecml.at/pluriliteracies

A Quality Assurance Matrix for CEFR Use (CEFR-QualiMatrix)

www.ecml.at/CEFRqualimatrix

A roadmap for schools to support the language(s) of schooling

www.ecml.at/roadmapforschools

Assessment of young learner literacy linked to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (AYLLIT)

www.ecml.at/ayllit

A training guide for quality assurance in language education (QualiTraining)

www.ecml.at/qualitraining

Blogs: web journals in language education

www.ecml.at/blogs

Content and language integrated learning through languages other than English (CLIL-LOTE-START)

www.ecml.at/clil-lote-start

Content-based teaching for young learners (EPLC)

www.ecml.at/eplc

Curriculum development for Content and Language Integrated Learning – European Framework for CLIL Teacher Education (CLIL-CD)

www.ecml.at/clil-cd

Developing language awareness in subject classes (Language in subjects)

www.ecml.at/languageinsubjects

Developing Online Teaching Skills (DOTS)

www.ecml.at/dots

Digital literacy for the teaching and learning of languages (E-LANG)

www.ecml.at/elang

ELP implementation support (Impel)

www.ecml.at/impel

Enseigner une discipline dans une autre langue : Méthodologie et pratiques professionnelles (CLIL-LOTE-GO)

www.ecml.at/clil-lote-go

European portfolio for pre-primary educators (PEPELINO)

www.ecml.at/pepelino

European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages (EPOSTL)

www.ecml.at/epostl

Exploring cutting edge applications of networked technologies in Vocationally Oriented Language Learning (E-VOLLution)

www.ecml.at/evollution

Inspiring language learning in the early years (ILLEY)

www.ecml.at/inspiringearlylearning

Intercultural competence for professional mobility (ICOPROMO)

www.ecml.at/icopromo

Inventory of ICT tools and open educational resources (ICT-REV)

www.ecml.at/ictinventory

Involving parents in plurilingual and intercultural education (PARENTS)
www.ecml.at/parents

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www.ecml.at/language-descriptors

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www.ecml.at/language-for-work

Language for Work (2): Tools for professional development
www.ecml.at/language-for-work

*Language for Work: How to help adult migrants develop work-related language skills
– a quick guide*
www.ecml.at/language-for-work

Learning environments where modern languages flourish (EOL)
www.ecml.at/learning-environments

Majority language in multilingual settings (MARILLE)
www.ecml.at/marille

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www.ecml.at/ecep

Plurilingual and intercultural learning through mobility (PluriMobil)
www.ecml.at/plurimobil

Plurilingualism and pluriculturalism in content teaching (ConBat+)
www.ecml.at/conbat

Promoting excellence in sign language instruction (Pro-Sign 2)
www.ecml.at/prosign

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for Language: Learning, teaching, assessment (CEFR) – Highlights from the Manual
(RELANG)*
www.ecml.at/relang

*Second language at the workplace – Language needs of migrant workers: Organising
language learning for the vocational/workplace context (ODYSSEUS)*
www.ecml.at/odysseus

Sign languages and the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages – Descriptors and approaches to assessment (Pro-Sign 1)

www.ecml.at/prosign

Teaching modern languages to young learners: teachers, curricula and materials (TEMOLAYOLE)

www.ecml.at/temolayole

Teaching the language of schooling in the context of diversity (Maledive)

www.ecml.at/maledive

The European Language Portfolio: A guide to the planning, implementation and evaluation of whole-school projects (ELP-WSU)

www.ecml.at/elp-wsu

Towards a Common European Framework of Reference for language teachers (CEFRTL)

www.ecml.at/guidetoteachercompetences

Towards whole-school language curricula (PlurCur)

www.ecml.at/plurcur

Training teachers to use the ELP (ELP-TT, ELP-TT2)

www.ecml.at/elp

Using open resources to develop online teaching skills (More DOTS)

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