

Implementing Innovation in European Language Education

**An Analysis of the Projects of the
2nd Medium-Term Programme of the ECML**

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Introduction

This thesis deals with the question of implementing innovation on a European level by focusing on the European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML) in Graz and more specifically on the projects of its 2nd Medium-Term Programme, *‘Languages for Social Cohesion. Language education in a multilingual and multicultural Europe’*, which ended in 2007. The thesis will take a holistic approach, moving away from single projects and considering the underlying principles and concepts and the overall impact of four selected concepts that feature strongly in the output (publications, websites, CD-ROMs) of the 2nd Medium-Term Programme: ‘interculturality’, ‘plurilingualism’, ‘learner autonomy’ and Council of Europe principles and values (e.g. social cohesion and democratic citizenship).

After a corpus and concordance analysis with WordSmith (Scott 1999) to obtain an overview of the most important concepts for the ECML (2004-2007) and thus its view on what is considered (and constructed as) innovative language teaching, the spotlight will move to the four concepts mentioned above.

This qualitative analysis will include research into the state of the art for these four concepts with reference to secondary literature and how (and whether) the ECML projects define and implement these innovative concepts. In this analysis I will lay special emphasis on looking beyond the boundaries of single projects and will attempt to provide the general picture that these 21 projects collectively present, identify similarities and differences, opportunities and challenges for the present and the future.

This thesis moves from the general to the specific. After the research question, the material and the method (Chapter 1) that are the basis for the following research have been explained, the background concerning the Council of Europe and the European Centre for Modern Languages (Chapter 2) is discussed. This is followed by an introduction into theoretical aspects of innovation in general (Chapter 3), addressing three differing but interlinked issues: innovation studies in general, innovation in education and more specifically innovation in language teaching and learning.

The subsequent part will be my analysis of the primary material, the projects of the ECML’s 2nd Medium-Term Programme. Chapter 4 presents my findings of the corpus analysis (concordance searches and frequency list analyses), and provides an overview of the frequently occurring issues in ECML projects. This leads on to the qualitative analysis in Chapter 5, which is the main part of this thesis in which I will examine aspects of the meaning and use of the terms ‘intercultural’, ‘plurilingual’, ‘learner autonomy’ and the principles and

values of the Council of Europe in the ECML projects. I will also include a theoretical background to these four concepts. A summary and a conclusion mark the end of my thesis.

1. Research and Methodological Background

1.1. Research Question

The aim of this thesis is to investigate by which linguistic means innovation is constructed through the publications of the ECML projects and how and to what extent the concepts are transferred into actual practise. In order to achieve this aim I shall analyse the projects of the 2nd Medium-Term Programme of the European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML), which ran from 2004 to 2007, regarding the question of innovation in European language education. This entails finding unifying aspects in the different projects. Here I shall distinguish between concepts which are merely mentioned in the publication and concepts that actually represent a thematic focus of the projects and of the ideas, plans, thoughts, activities which form part of them.

1.2. Material and Method

In order to analyse the ECML projects I have employed two different but interlinked linguistic research methods, namely corpus analysis and qualitative/textual analysis. A corpus in linguistic research is a “collection of texts (‘body’ of language) stored in an electronic database” (Baker, Hardie, McEnery 2006: 48). These “texts have been selected so that they can be said to be representative of a particular language variety or genre” (Baker, Hardie, McEnery 2006: 48). In this case my corpus consists of the final project publications of the 2nd Medium-Term Programme of the ECML. Therefore my corpus is representative of the current discourse of the projects that took place at the ECML between 2004 and 2007. A corpus analysis is a computer-based empirical analysis that enables the use of different kinds of statistical background information for the textual analysis that follows.

In general the corpus consists of all the projects of the 2nd Medium-Term Programme of the ECML; however, no material could be found online for the project D4: Language Case Studies (at the time of writing), which is therefore not included in my analysis. Thus the actual corpus consists of the publications of 20 projects. In this corpus I have included the written publications (i.e. books or reports, in electronic format) and the materials on the CD-

ROMs or on the various project websites, excluding references to documents like the European Language Portfolio. The corpus contains 1,143,615 tokens (total number of words) and 35,768 types (number of different words), which results in a type/token ratio of 3.13%. This shows, not surprisingly, that these are texts for specialists. In some cases technical problems hindered the inclusion of texts in the corpus, details of which can be found in the following table:

	Name	Material	Technical Details
A1	VALEUR	Book (report) and Folder	
A2	ENSEMBLE	Book and CD-ROM	Some PowerPoint Presentations: technical problems
A3	LDL	Book	
A4	chagal_setup	CD-ROM /project website	Some documents (final reports on projects 3, 4, 5, Armenia): technical problems, not the whole Chagal guidelines-booklet
B1	ICCIinTE	Book and CD-ROM	
B2	LEA	Book and CD-ROM	Some PowerPoint Presentations: technical problems
B3	ICOPROMO	Book and CD-ROM	
B4	Gulliver	CD-ROM / project website	
C1	CoCoCoP	Book	
C2	QualiTraining	Book and CD-ROM	
C3	FTE/EPOSTL	Book	
C4	ALC	Book (report)	
C5	impel	project website	Some PowerPoint Presentations: technical problems
C6	ELP_TT	Book and CD-ROM / project website	Some PowerPoint Presentations: technical problems, no reference documents
C7	TrainEd	Book and CD-ROM / project website	No PowerPoint Presentations, chapter 3.1.: not able to access homepage for activities (wrong links)
C8	GroupLead	CD-ROM / project website	Video not included
D1	BLOGS	Book and CD-ROM	CD-ROM is a static copy of BLOGS, was not included
D2	TEMOLAYOLE	Book	
D3	CLILMatrix	Book, Flyer and project website	
D5	LQuest	project website	

Table 1: ECML projects in the corpus

All the documents were converted into text files in order to feed them into the *WordSmith* programme (Version 3.0, Scott 1999). I first conducted a frequency analysis with the word list tool of the *WordSmith* concordance program, which produced numerous key words. These were then analysed through the concordance program. This led to the textual (qualitative) analysis which helped me answer my research question concerning the discursive construction of innovation in the publications of the ECML and the implementation of these concepts in practise (e.g. in the exercises provided).

A word list is “compiled by frequency counts of each word in a corpus [and] can be used in order to derive key word lists” (Baker, Hardie, McEnery 2006: 76). Baker, Hardie and McEnery (2006: 76) state, however, that frequency lists alone “do not explain themselves”. Conrad (2005: 395f) also warns about using frequency list analysis alone, because “numbers [i.e. word counts, frequency lists] alone tell us little about language”. This is why a concordance analysis is necessary. “A concordance is a list of all the occurrences of a particular search term in a corpus, presented within the context in which they occur” (Baker, Hardie, McEnery 2006: 42). A concordance analysis thus extends the results of a frequency analysis to include the context surrounding a search word for its occurrences in the corpus.

One of the big advantages of corpus analysis is that it “has made it possible to conduct studies with more data and more variables than was previously feasible” (Conrad 2005: 393) and, as McEnery and Wilson (1996: 62f) explain, the other main advantage of the quantitative method is that it provides “statistically reliable and generalisable results”. The advantage of a qualitative analysis, on the other hand, is that it “offer[s] a rich and detailed perspective on the data” (McEnery, Wilson 1996: 62f). The authors also agree that it is very helpful to combine both methods to tackle the same research questions, as will be the case in this paper.

Uniting qualitative and quantitative methods can be very rewarding. One of the reasons are pointed out by Lazaraton (2005: 219): “[...] I would also hope that we would see more studies that combine qualitative and quantitative research methods, since each highlights “reality” in a different yet complementary, way”. The quantitative study looks at the global picture and is necessary for processing large quantities of texts, whereas the qualitative analysis looks more closely at the content and the context of individual excerpts. Together they provide a more complete picture than each of the methods could have, when used separately. Conrad (2005: 396) agrees as can be seen from this quotation: “Corpus analysis is thus particularly helpful in providing “big picture” perspectives. [...] It provides a complimentary perspective to (and has never been meant to replace) approaches that give a more intensive analysis of particular situations, [...]”.

The ECML projects have to be seen in the context of their publication; the educational, political, social, cultural and scientific system in which Europeans currently live has to be taken into account. Their texts are not just arbitrary pieces of language but examples of discourse integrated in a specific context, time and place. The research question of this paper deals with the implementation of innovation and the publications of the projects are part of the discourse concerning innovation and part of its construction as well. On the one hand, the projects discuss innovative issues, but on the other hand they also make issues innovative by discussing them.

For text analysis Goatly (2000: 3f) distinguishes three different levels of analysis: “describing the text, interpreting discourse and explaining [the] ideology” behind the text. So we cannot consider the text alone, but also the intention of the author and finally ask the question: “What social and ideological forces underlie or determine text and discourse meanings?” (Goatly 2000: 3). These methods and the material mentioned will form the basis for my analysis, in which I try to look behind the scenes of individual projects and their publication to see if and in what ways the implementation of their concepts and ideals actually are reflected in the projects.

2. Background: The Council of Europe and the European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML)

2.1. The Council of Europe

This thesis is concerned with the question of innovation in the projects of the 2nd Medium-Term Programme of the European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML). Therefore it is essential to consider the background of and the basis for these projects, the aims and the mission of the ECML as an institution which is part of the *Council of Europe*. The *Council of Europe* has existed since 1949 and at present includes 47 member states. It mainly works in the areas of “human rights and legal affairs, democracy and political affairs, legal advice, international law, terrorism, social cohesion, education, culture and heritage, youth and sport” (<http://www.coe.int/defaultEN.asp> [19/09/2008]). The *Council of Europe* pursues the following aims:

- to protect human rights, pluralist democracy and the rule of law;

- to promote awareness and encourage the development of Europe's cultural identity and diversity
- to find common solutions to the challenges facing European society: such as discrimination against minorities, xenophobia, intolerance, bioethics and cloning, terrorism, trafficking in human beings, organised crime and corruption, cybercrime, violence against children;
- to consolidate democratic stability in Europe by backing political, legislative and constitutional reform (http://www.coe.int/T/e/Com/about_coe/ [17/09/2008]).

Concerning languages the *Council of Europe* aims at promoting plurilingualism, linguistic diversity, mutual understanding, democratic citizenship and social cohesion, according to the Language Policy Division Website (http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Division_EN.asp [19/09/2008]). Within the *Council of Europe* two separate but interacting institutions are responsible for languages: the Language Policy Division in Strasbourg (since 1957) and the ECML in Graz (since 1994). Both of them are assigned to the *Directorate General IV - Education, Culture and Heritage, Youth and Sport* and within this to the section of Education and Languages (as stated on the Council of Europe websites http://www.coe.int/T/E/Cultural_Co-operation/education/ [19/09/2008], http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/default_EN.asp? [19/09/2008]). Whereas “the Division is responsible for designing and implementing initiatives for the development and analysis of language education policies aimed at promoting linguistic diversity and plurilingualism” (http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Domaines_EN.asp#TopOfPage [19/09/2008]), the ECML’s mission is more practice-orientated:

- Within the framework of cultural co-operation and respecting the rich linguistic and cultural diversity in Europe, the Centre has as its mission:
- the implementation of language policies;
 - the promotion of innovative approaches to the learning and teaching of modern languages (http://www.ecml.at/documents/help/ECML_statute.pdf [19/09/2008]).

2.1.1. Values, Principles and Policies of the Council of Europe

The term ‘Europe’ is one of the most frequently used terms within the ECML projects, which is not surprising, considering that the ECML is part of the Council of Europe and that European and international agreement and harmony lie at the heart of Council of Europe policies. Nowadays, the European Union also plays a role in the development of the language education of its member states; however, I will focus on the policies and principles of the Council of Europe concerning the teaching and learning of languages. According to Christ (2006: 475), one basic aim for both institutions is that every citizen can communicate (in the wider sense of the word) in their mother tongue and two other foreign languages.

The Council of Europe was founded after the Second World War had devastated Europe, with the aim of establishing the principles of human rights and democracy throughout Europe (see <http://www.coe.int/defaultEN.asp> [19/09/2008]). In addition to that, the countries (and the citizens) of Europe should have a more harmonious, understanding relationship towards each other. From the beginning, languages and language learning have played an important role for the Council of Europe. The *Common European Framework of Reference* states that “the overall aim of the Council of Europe as defined in Recommendations R (82) 18 and R (98) 6 of the Committee of Ministers [is]: ‘to achieve greater unity among its members’ and to pursue this aim ‘by the adoption of common action in the cultural field’” (CEFR 2001: 2). The various projects and programmes, including the CEFR, aim to promote this greater goal.

In addition to this main aim, three further principles have been agreed upon in the preamble to Recommendation R (82) 18 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe:

- that the rich heritage of diverse languages and cultures in Europe is a valuable common resource to be protected and developed, and that a major educational effort is needed to convert that diversity from a barrier to communication into a source of mutual enrichment and understanding;
- that it is only through a better knowledge of European modern languages that it will be possible to facilitate communication and interaction among Europeans of different mother tongues in order to promote European mobility, mutual understanding and co-operation, and overcome prejudice and discrimination;
- that member states, when adopting or developing national policies in the field of modern language learning and teaching, may achieve greater convergence at the European level by means of appropriate arrangements for ongoing co-operation and co-ordination of policies (CEFR 2001: 2).

In this statement we again see the emphasis on unity, mutual understanding, and co-ordination, but also on valuing the diversity of the European language landscape and turning it from a problem to an advantage. It also highlights some of the challenges Europe has been facing and is still facing concerning cultural interaction: stereotypes, discrimination, xenophobia. The Council of Europe suggests that these problems could be reduced if the European citizens had a wider knowledge of foreign languages and thus a better insight into their cultures (their own and of others).

According to Christ (2006: 476), Europe is multilingual and multicultural, which is part of the European heritage that must be preserved. However, not only the preservation of European heritage is a reason for learning foreign languages. Language knowledge is also essential to ensure active political participation (e.g. a migrant needs to know the language of his/her country of residence to be included in the political discourse and to understand his/her

rights and duties). In addition, foreign language learning is considered relevant as a basis of democracy, the rule of law and human rights. However, plurilingualism is also important for the intercultural contact and understanding between its citizens, as Christ (2006: 476) points out: “Denn Fremdsprachenkenntnisse ermöglichen Begegnung, Annäherung und Zusammenwachsen ohne Verlust der Identität. Sprachenkenntnisse können dazu verhelfen, Fremdenhass, Vorurteile und Intoleranz zu überwinden“.

The Language Policy Division of the Council of Europe has the following aims:

- **Plurilingualism:** all are entitled to develop a degree of communicative ability in a number of languages over their lifetime in accordance with their needs
- **Linguistic diversity:** Europe is multilingual and all its languages are equally valuable modes of communication and expressions of identity; the right to use and to learn one’s language(s) is protected in Council of Europe Conventions
- **Mutual understanding:** the opportunity to learn other languages is an essential condition for intercultural communication and acceptance of cultural differences
- **Democratic citizenship:** participation in democratic and social processes in multilingual societies is facilitated by the plurilingual competence of individuals
- **Social cohesion:** equality of opportunity for personal development, education, employment, mobility, access to information and cultural enrichment depends on access to language learning throughout life (http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Division_EN.asp [29/03/2009]).

These five aspects are the principles of the Council of Europe language policy and of the ECML as one of its institutions and thus its projects should contribute to promoting these aims and principles.

2.1.2. The Common European Framework of Reference

One of the most influential publications of the Council of Europe’s Language Policy Division is the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*, published in English in 2001, which has subsequently been translated into 31 languages (March 2009).

According to Trim (2004: 122), the CEFR has three main aims: firstly, to encourage cooperation and communication between educational institutions across Europe, secondly, to have an acknowledged basic document to recognise language qualifications and thirdly, to help all stakeholders in language education to reflect on their status quo and coordinate their actions. On a more global scale the following aim is stated at the beginning of the CEFR: “The Common European Framework is intended to overcome the barriers to communication among professionals working in the field of modern languages arising from the different educational systems in Europe.” (CEFR 2001: 1). Again we see the general principle of

increasing understanding and cooperation between the different nations of Europe, which the Council of Europe tries to promote.

Morrow (2004: 7) considers the main aims of the CEFR to be “to act as a frame of reference in terms of which different qualifications can be described, different language learning objectives can be identified, and the basis of different achievement standards can be set out”. He thus highlights the possibility of using the CEFR as a point of reference for language education.

The question why languages should be learnt is also addressed (explicitly and implicitly) in the CEFR, and Heyworth (2004: 13) mentions the following reasons that the Council of Europe promotes in its policies: European citizenship, growing respect for different cultures, intellectual development, open-mindedness, flexibility, life-long language learning, gaining independence and autonomy as language learners.

According to Trim (2004: 122), the CEFR sets out to be comprehensive, transparent, coherent, flexible, open, dynamic and non-dogmatic, in order to achieve the above-mentioned goals. It comprises numerous sections and can be divided into a main descriptive section (discussing the needs of communication, the role of texts, competences and strategies), a discussion of the different approaches to language education, a set of scales and levels for describing competence and proficiency and a guide for curriculum design (including plurilingualism). In addition, Heyworth (2004: 15) states that the CEFR sees language learning from a competence-based (and competences can be partial), global, pluricultural and plurilingual viewpoint.

For most language learners and users the CEFR is best known for its general scales, ranging from A1-C2, but, as described above, it is much more than that. It includes detailed background knowledge about the linguistic, methodological and intercultural basis of language learning and teaching as it also shows the view the Council of Europe takes on language education and what this international organisation considers to be worth promoting in its member states. It is important to point out that the CEFR influences language teaching on many levels and is useful for all stakeholders, who can use it as a reflective stimulus on language teaching from a broader perspective, as a resource for all aspects of teaching and learning and as a “political statement of the value of language learning for individual development, and for social cohesion and for tolerance” (Heyworth 2005: 21).

2.1.3. The European Language Portfolio

Another important document is the *European Language Portfolio*, for which many countries have created validated versions (the number has almost reached 100). There are different versions corresponding to the age of the users. Austria, for instance, has three different versions: for primary school, 6-10 years, 10-15 years, 14-18 years and adult learners (http://www.coe.int/T/DG4/Portfolio/?L=E&M=/main_pages/portfolios.html [30/03/2009]).

As the ELP homepage explains (http://www.coe.int/T/DG4/Portfolio/?L=E&M=/main_pages/contents_portfolio.html [30/03/2009]), the ELP consists of three parts, the Language Passport (description of language competences, based on the CEFR levels, including formal- and self assessment), the Language Biography (personal experiences with languages in- and outside formal education, aims at personal reflection and planning) and the Dossier (sample work), which the user updates regularly, according to his/her current competences. One of the main aims of the ELP is to encourage plurilingualism and intercultural competence by making language and intercultural competence visible, and this includes not only languages taught at school, but any language experience the user might have had (e.g. migrant language, the language of one parent). The valuing of all languages is embedded in this idea.

The other language learning principle of importance for the ELP is learner autonomy, or giving responsibility to the learners themselves. The ELP makes it possible for learners to map and assess their progress, specify their competences and skills, chart their needs and plan their language learning future. It thus leads to a better understanding of the nature of language learning for learners and raises their language learning awareness, which in turn plays an important role for their life-long language learning and thus their potentially plurilingual future. It is important to point out that the portfolio belongs to the users, and not to their school or teachers.

The ELP has two main roles, the pedagogic function, which is to encourage learners to improve and diversify their linguistic and intercultural skills and to motivate them. The second function is the documentation and reporting one: “The European Language Portfolio aims to document its holder's plurilingual language proficiency and experiences in other languages in a comprehensive, informative, transparent and reliable way.” (http://www.coe.int/T/DG4/Portfolio/?L=E&M=/main_pages/introduction.html [30/03/2009]). The ELP can be used to inform others, but is also useful for the learner’s personal record. Christ (2006: 476) emphasises that these functions help European mobility, for which transparent qualifications are necessary.

2.1.4. Summary

The Council of Europe has made several important and lasting contributions to language education in Europe over the past six decades through promoting:

- languages for mutual understanding
- linguistic diversity
- plurilingualism
- languages for social cohesion
- the role of languages for democratic citizenship and human rights (working against racism, discrimination)
- promoting the European Language Portfolio
- promoting the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages
- life-long learning
- intercultural competence
- more cooperation, coordination and communication between the member states and its educational stakeholders
- increasing mobility between European member states.

2.2. The European Centre for Modern Languages

2.2.1. Policies and Aims

The ECML was established in 1994 by an “Enlarged Partial Agreement of the Council of Europe” (http://www.ecml.at/documents/help/ECML_statute.pdf [19/09/2008]) and, as published on its ‘News’ website (<http://www.ecml.at/news/NewsDetails.asp?n=330> [19/09/2008]), has had 34 member states since Montenegro joined on August 7, 2008. The mission statement (see Chapter 2.1) makes it clear that innovation and its promotion lie at the heart of the aims of the ECML. This is underlined by two quotations from the ECML homepage, where the ECML is described as “a unique institution whose mission is to encourage **excellence** and **innovation** in language teaching and to help Europeans learn languages more efficiently” (<http://www.ecml.at/aboutus/aboutus.asp?t=mission> [19/09/2008]). In addition to that it states that “[b]asing its work on the underlying values of the Council of Europe and its pioneering work in language education, the ECML is ideally equipped to act as a **catalyst for reform** in the teaching and learning of languages.”

(<http://www.ecml.at/aboutus/aboutus.asp?t=mission> [19/09/2008]). It is therefore clearly apparent that innovation and reform are of vital importance to the self-perception and self-representation of the ECML. To fulfil this rather general mission of innovation and implementation of language policies the ECML has identified the following strategic objectives:

The ECML's Strategic Objectives are to help its member states implement effective language teaching policies by:

- focusing on the practice of the learning and teaching of languages
- promoting dialogue and exchange among those active in the field
- training multipliers
- supporting programme-related networks and research projects

(<http://www.ecml.at/aboutus/aboutus.asp?t=mission> [17/09/2008]).

2.2.2. Programmes and Projects

To achieve these aims projects are selected, which run for two, or in most cases four years, in so-called medium-term programmes. The 2nd medium-term programme (2004-2007) was concerned with the general topic of *Languages for Social Cohesion. Language education in a multilingual and multicultural Europe*. It aimed at highlighting that “language education has a vital role to play in the quest for better understanding and mutual respect among the citizens of greater Europe” (<http://www.ecml.at/milestones/2mtp.htm> [19/09/2008]). Within this programme 22 projects were conducted by experts from all over Europe. The projects were categorized into four major areas:

- Coping with linguistic and social diversity – provisions, profiles, materials (A)
- Communication in a multicultural society: the development of intercultural communicative competence (B)
- Professional development and reference tools for language educators (C)
- Innovative approaches and new technologies in the teaching and learning of languages (D) (<http://www.ecml.at/documents/mtp2E.pdf> [07/01/2008]).

According to the ECML's *Programme of Activities 2004-2007* (<http://www.ecml.at/documents/mtp2E.pdf> [07/01/2008]), the programme also aimed at highlighting the value of linguistic and cultural diversity and the importance of teaching new strategies for living, working and communicating within today's plurilingual and multicultural society. Two other aspects that played an important role in the projects are the general political concepts and values that the *Council of Europe* seeks to promote (e.g. democracy, active citizenship, human rights, respect, diversity) and the European Language Portfolio.

Of the 22 projects that comprised the 2nd Medium-Term Programme one was still unfinished at the time that this paper was written (A5. LangSEN: Languages for People with Special Education Needs), and the materials of “D4. LCas: Language Case Studies” had not yet been put online. They are therefore not included in the material for analysis. The following table comprises a list of all 21 ECML projects that were carried out between 2004 and 2007:

Abbreviation	Name	Coordination	Materials
A Coping with linguistic and social diversity – provisions, profiles, materials			
A1. VALEUR	VALEUR - Valuing all languages in Europe	Joanna McPake and Teresa Tinsley	Abstract, flyer, leaflet, report, project website
A2. ENSEMBLE	ENSEMBLE - Whole-school language profiles and policies.	Antoinette Camilleri Grima	Abstract, flyer, book + CD-ROM, project website
A3. LDL	LDL - Linguistic diversity and literacy in a global perspective.	Brigitta Busch	Abstract, flyer, book, project website
A4. Chagal - setup	Chagal - setup. European curriculum guidelines for access programmes into higher education for under-represented adult learners	Grete Kernegger	Abstract, flyer, CD-ROM information, project website
B Communication in a multicultural society: the development of intercultural communicative competence			
B1. ICCinTE	ICCinTE – Intercultural communication training in teacher education	Ildikó Lázár	Abstract, flyer, book + CD-ROM, project website
B2. LEA	LEA – Language educator awareness	Mercè Bernaus	Abstract, flyer, book + CD-ROM, project website
B3 ICOPROMO	ICOPROMO – Intercultural competence for professional mobility	Evelyne Glaser	Abstract, flyer, book + CD-ROM, project website
B4. Gulliver	Gulliver – To get to know each other leads to better mutual understanding	Magdalena Bedynska	Abstract, flyer, brochure + CD-ROM, project website
C Professional development and reference tools for language educators			
C1. CoCoCop	CoCoCop – Coherence of principles, cohesion of competences	Anne-Brit Fenner	Abstract, flyer, book, project website
C2. QualiTraining	QualiTraining – A training guide for quality assurance	Laura Muresan	Abstract, flyer, book + CD-ROM, project website
C3. FTE (EPOSTL)	FTE – From Profile to Portfolio: A framework	David Newby	Abstract, flyer, book, project website

	for reflection in language teacher education. (European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages).		
C4. ALC	ALC – Across languages and cultures	Michel Candelier	Abstract, flyer, report, project website
C5. Impel	Impel – ELP implementation support	Hans Ulrich Bosshard	Abstract, flyer, leaflet, project website
C6. ELP_TT	ELP_TT – Training teachers to use the European Language Portfolio	David Little	Abstract, flyer, leaflet, book + CD-ROM, project website
C7. TrainEd	TrainEd – Training teacher educators	Gabriela S. Matei	Abstract, flyer, book + CD-ROM, project website
C8. GroupLead	GroupLead – Group facilitation in language teacher education	Margit Szesztay	Abstract, flyer + CD-ROM, project website
D Innovative approaches and new technologies in the teaching and learning of languages			
D1. BLOGS	BLOGS – Web journals in language education	Mario Camilleri	Abstract, flyer, book + CD-ROM, project website
D2. TEMOLAYOLE	TEMOLAYOLE – Developing teachers of modern languages to young learners.	Marianne Nikolov	Abstract, flyer, book, project website
D3. CLIL matrix	CLIL matrix – The CLIL quality matrix.	David Marsh	Abstract, flyer, project website
D4. LCaS	LCaS – Language case studies	Johann Fischer	Abstract, flyer, project website (not online yet)
D5. LQuest	LQuest – LanguageQuests.	Ton Koenraad	Abstract, flyer, project website

Table 2: Overview of the ECML projects (2nd Medium Term Programme)

These projects were carried out by international experts in the field of languages and language education and “primarily target multipliers in language education” (ECML *Programme of Activities 2008-2011* 2008: 4). A project usually goes through five different steps in these three to four years, as the ECML *Programme of Activities 2008-2011* (2008: 4) explains: after a period of research the project team holds a workshop with participants from all ECML member states which is followed by a piloting or research phase. Finally the results are published in a book, on a CD or a project website which, among other measures, leads to the dissemination of the project results. The final event of the last medium-term programme was a conference held in Graz from September 27 to 29, 2007 during which the next four-year

programme was launched with the title '*Empowering language professionals – Competences – Networks – Impact – Quality*' (cf. ECML Conference Programme 2007: 3ff).

2.2.3. The ECML and Innovation

In the case of the ECML the creation of innovative procedures (through expert projects) and its diffusion or dissemination processes (through workshops, web-presence and publications) are very important considering the role the centre plays in language education in Europe. These two aspects correspond to the twofold mission of the ECML: “promoting innovative approaches and disseminating good practice in the learning and teaching of modern languages” (ECML, *Programme of Activities 2004-2007*: 4). Concerning the projects, the ECML has the role of a supervisor and a resource and tool provider, but it is the coordinators who are responsible for implementing and monitoring innovation with the participants’ support. In these roles the ECML promotes the adoption of innovation but it cannot ensure that a school or a teacher embraces the innovation, or to what extent they adapt it to their own needs.

3. Innovation in Theory

3.1. General Aspects of Innovation, its Diffusion and Adoption

Nowadays, “[i]nnovation has become a fundamental and all-pervasive feature of society” (Karavas-Doukas 1998: 25), and thus it is not just education or language teaching that experience innovative processes. Innovation can be defined as “an idea, practice, or object that is perceived as new by an individual or other unit of adoption” (Rogers 2003: 12). As Rogers (2003: 12ff) points out, the emphasis here lies on the *perceived* newness, as innovation must always be seen in the context of its introduction. What is innovative in one area, could be commonplace in another. Like Rogers (2003), Markee (2001: 120) stresses the *perceived* newness in her definition of innovation as “proposals for qualitative change in pedagogical materials, approaches, and values that are perceived as new by individuals who comprise a formal (language) education system”. Interestingly, she mentions three levels: materials, approaches and values that educational innovation can embrace.

Heyworth (2003: 10) defines ‘innovation’ as “planned or managed change”, thus differentiating it from a spontaneous new idea that might be used. He therefore stresses the

importance of the organisational aspect behind innovation in language teaching and in general. Hamilton (1996: 8) emphasises the aspects of ‘work’ and ‘analysis’ that are needed for planning and implementing innovation, claiming that “[i]nnovation is hard work. It is pragmatic, modest and advances often quite slowly”. The ECML projects are also aware of the challenges implementers of an innovation may face, as they refer to this concern in their publications.

The aim of any innovation is to be disseminated and implemented by a number of people. Rogers (2003:5) uses the term ‘diffusion’ in this context (the ECML refers to ‘dissemination’) to talk about “the process in which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system”, which for him is a special kind of communication based on information exchange. The channels through which an innovation is disseminated include mass media, the internet or face-to-face communication, all of which have advantages and disadvantages. According to Rogers (2003: 205), the most effective form of diffusion is through personal contacts, and the ECML uses this interpersonal channel through workshops, which form a vital part of each project. They are effective because they allow the individual promoting the innovation to respond to the fears and doubts of the potential adopter, which is something mass media cannot do. However, mass media are useful for spreading information and basic knowledge about an innovation. Rogers (2003: 215f) points out that the internet is a special form of communication as it is potentially a mass medium and at the same time e-mailing can be used as a form of interpersonal communication between two individuals.

As mentioned above, the ECML uses interpersonal communication (workshops) to disseminate the innovative ideas that are developed during the projects and expert meetings. The workshop participants should act as multipliers in their own countries and thus form part of a network. In addition, the ECML also employs mass media and the internet by publishing the results and examples of good practice in books, CD-ROMs and online. Dissemination seems to be at the heart of the innovative procedures of the ECML. Through the selection of one participant from each member state who becomes a project member and then disseminates its innovative aspects in his/her own country (snowball effect) the dissemination automatically has an international, European dimension.

After the dissemination stage, an innovation may be adopted and implemented, which is the fundamental aim of innovation processes. For most educational innovations it is the teachers who are responsible for the implementation and individuals from this professional group are not always in favour of such processes. Karavas-Doukas (1998: 26) puts it quite

drastically, declaring that “change and innovation have become words that policy makers seem to love and teachers seem to dread”. Karavas-Doukas (1998: 26f) further estimates that in the area of education only around one fifth of innovations are successfully implemented, the other 80% are rejected by the teachers and not implemented in their everyday classroom practice. This statistic may not be valid for the ECML, however, as the workshop participants of the ECML tend to comprise a group of people who are on the whole willing to change their language teaching, to adopt a new idea and to implement innovation.

From the above estimation it is clear that not all innovations are adopted. This leads to the question what qualities of an innovation influence the extent of adoption. Rogers (2003: 15f) claims that “[i]nnovations that are perceived by individuals as having greater relative advantage, compatibility, trialability and observability and less complexity will be adopted more rapidly than other innovations”.

According to Rogers (2003: 17f), adopting an innovation does not have to be a passive process, which leads to the concept of ‘re-invention’ of an innovation. Once an individual has decided to adopt an innovation he/she may change it or the way he/she uses it in relation to the version that has been disseminated. Fullan (2007: 31) explains that the users’ adaptation of an innovation often results in change and is valuable in its own rights. Hamilton (1996: 3) emphasises the role of the teacher in his/her own classroom, saying that “[t]eachers need to take control as ‘activists’, to have confidence in themselves, to reject ideologies and find their own solutions”. This means not blindly following new teaching approaches or course books, but relying on their own experience, knowledge and training as well and adapting innovations to their own circumstances. This view increases the importance of a professional pre- and in-service teacher education.

As a final point concerning the adoption of innovation, Rogers (2003: 26f) states that not every individual can independently decide whether to adopt an innovation or not (so called ‘optional innovation-decisions’), but there are also ‘collective innovation-decisions’ (an agreement is reached by members of a group that the innovation is adopted, then all members must accept this decision) and ‘authority innovation-decisions’ (the individual does not have a choice, but a few decision-makers in power decide for the members of a group who then must conform to it). In schools the latter two are most common.

Heyworth (2003: 15) states that before introducing an innovation the following aspects will have to be considered: utility (purpose of the innovation), feasibility (practicability of implementing the innovation), economy (cost), acceptability (reaction of stakeholders), measurability (possibility of evaluating the outcome), opportunity cost (comparing the effect

with other options), sustainability (feasibility of the implementation without project resources), manageability (availability of necessary management tools) and impact (effect on language learning and achievement).

The ECML projects follow the innovation-development process that Rogers (203: 137ff) describes as consisting of six main steps: (1) recognition of a problem or a need, (2) research, (3) development, (4) diffusion, (5) adoption of the innovation (in the case of the ECML projects, the participants are the adopters) and (6) its consequences, which Rogers (2003: 436) defines as “the changes that occur in an individual or a social system as a result of the adoption or rejection of an innovation”. Heyworth (2003: 32) additionally mentions the step of evaluation, which he considers as essential. At this stage the whole change process and the innovation itself are evaluated, which leads to the decision of whether or not the innovation in question should become institutionalised.

3.2. Innovation in Education

3.2.1. General Aspects to Consider

This section focuses on innovations in education. These “[...] are planned to bring about improvement in classroom practice with the ultimate aim of enhancing student achievement” (Karavas-Doukas 1998: 28). Of course not all innovations in education deal solely or directly with the classroom, but even if the innovations are concerned with other educational aspects, such as teacher training, student welfare, or others, they will most probably influence the classroom and hopefully improve the teaching and learning atmosphere in it.

In educational reform it is not only the innovation or idea that counts but more importantly “what really happens in practice” (Fullan 2007: 12), the implementation. In his book Fullan (2007: 13) starts off with a rather negative note, stating that “planned change attempts rarely succeed as intended”. Karavas-Doukas (1998: 25) shares this opinion, stating that „[t]he history of educational reform is a rather gloomy one with innovations proposing changes in teachers’ practices and beliefs failing many more times than they succeed“. The aspect of the teachers’ beliefs will accompany the following theoretical discussion, being one of the focuses of implementation studies concerning educational change.

According to Fullan (2007: 12), changes in education can be widespread and can influence and be influenced by areas as diverse as general teacher education, new technology, new ideas in specific curriculum aspects, time frames, classrooms, reforms on the level of the school, the region or even the country. The main aspect for Fullan (2007: 12ff) is the actual

implementation of change in the classrooms because this essentially decides the fate of the specific innovation. Heyworth (2003: 10) also stresses this fact when stating that

[a]ny discussion of change in language education cannot restrict itself to consideration of what is desirable, but must address the question of whether a proposal is feasible (and useful) and, if so, how it can be organised in the most economical and efficient way possible.

This quotation highlights two aspects of an innovation: a desirable outcome and a feasible proposal so that the innovation can be implemented in practise. However, according to Heyworth (2003: 35) there are some more aspects that have an effect on the positive (or negative) outcome of an innovation: (1) motivation, (2) involvement, (3) communication, (4) commitment, (5) realistic evaluation and (6) institutionalisation.

Motivation is one of the keys to the success of an innovation and is based on a “feeling of self-worth and achievement” (Heyworth 2003: 36). It refers to the question whether success can be expected and whether (and how strongly) this success is valued by the people involved. Various theories lay different emphasis on the diverse aspects involved, however, having a clear goal, the possibility for choice and high levels of autonomy increase the motivation. A project that is owned by the people involved has higher chances of success. Sustaining the often initial burst of motivation is important for innovations that include a long process, like language teaching. In such long term projects it is essential to have an action plan with clear timeframes (cf. Heyworth 2003: 36f).

Concerning involvement, Heyworth (2007: 37f) discusses three organisational approaches: the top-down approach (researched by experts, developed centrally and then diffused to teachers), the social interaction model (collaboration between experts and teachers is highlighted) and the bottom-up method (an action research model initiated by the teachers). Whereas all the above possibilities can be argued for, it is essential to have the teachers (who are after all the people who will actually implement the innovation) involved from the very beginning.

Heyworth (2003: 38f) emphasises that successful innovations need committed individuals who are willing to act towards its goals, adhere to the action plan and use their own time and energy for it. Heyworth (2003: 40f) also claims that it is communication that lies at the heart of the innovation and implementation process, and together with school support it plays an essential role for the success of an innovation, especially during the early implementation stages. The goals of an innovation must be communicated clearly to the teachers and there should be a good communication policy with features such as: regular meetings, possibility for feedback and re-invention of the innovation throughout the process.

According to Heyworth (2003: 41f), a vital part of an innovation is evaluation, be it at the end of the innovatory project to see whether or not it has succeeded and should be institutionalised or be it as an ongoing process during the course of the project and with the possibility of changing it. The outline of the evaluation should be discussed and prepared at the beginning of the project and should provide a realistic outlook, considering aspects such as wider and immediate objectives, outputs and inputs and how the necessary data can be collected. Evaluation should not be purely judgmental but should open ways of improvement and to an alteration of the projects to better achieve its goals.

Norris (2009: 7-13) also emphasises the importance of evaluation in his article; however he gives a word of warning that, although it is an important step towards better language teaching in general, it has been mismanaged frequently in the past. Evaluation is often done by outside testers and therefore mistrusted by language teachers, especially because of their method (standardised tests) and the fact that they later use the results for political purposes. However, “these perceptions belie the potential value that evaluation can contribute to understanding and improving language teaching practices and programs” (Norris 2009: 7). He sees evaluation as an important first step to improving language education and its effectiveness in a specific setting. It is equally important, however, to share useful information and insights that originated from evaluation attempts with other language teachers or researchers. A public, international discourse is helpful and necessary.

Norris (2009: 11f) sees evaluation not necessarily as part of the innovation circle, but also as a valuable exercise on its own, with the possibility of leading towards an improvement in language teaching. Evaluation can be successful and useful if the following points are observed: as many education stakeholders as possible should be included (especially teachers, as it is their task to implement the change afterwards), various methods of data collection should be employed, the findings need to be contextualised and cross analysed to avoid inaccuracy and finally the outcome must be communicated not only to the people involved immediately but to a wider group (most likely consisting of fellow researchers and teachers), not only to raise awareness for the findings of the evaluations but also as a possibility to use evaluation as an instrument for improving language programs. Before conducting an evaluation it is essential that the evaluators “engage in considerable learning about the language program and its learners, teachers, social circumstances, and educational approach” (Norris 2009: 12). This is to ensure that their framework and their evaluation findings make sense and correspond to the needs and problems of a certain language education programme in a specific situation.

At the end of an innovative process a successful innovation may be institutionalised. This can mean changes on the levels of programmes, organisation, teaching methodology and teachers' beliefs as Heyworth (2003: 43) concludes, but he (2003: 43) warns that "educational institutions and language teachers should beware of the trend towards continuous change where nothing ever becomes established enough to have lasting effect". This is why an innovation should end in institutionalisation (if successful) and not in a new innovation as soon as one project has come to an end.

Successful innovations in the contexts of language teaching and learning have, according to Heyworth (2003: 43f), the following characteristics: a clear desired goal, good dual communication, accepting people's anxiety towards change, involving as many stakeholders as possible during the planning of the project, and passing on ownership of the project to them, long-term commitment and motivation, introducing a change in teachers' beliefs and attitudes, using reactions to improve the initial plan and finally deciding whether or not to institutionalise the innovation.

3.2.2. Problematic Issues

Fullan (2007: 21) believes that "[m]oral purpose and knowledge are the two main change forces that drive success". Fullan (2007: 23) further states that change and innovation is not an easy process especially if it involves a change in attitudes and beliefs held by teachers (e.g. about the best teaching technique). If the innovation succeeds, it results in personal growth and confidence, but before that there is a period of uncertainty that has to be.

In the context of innovations teachers are thus "[...] asked to change their habits and routines for the sake of outcomes which are not guaranteed" (Karavas-Doukas 1998: 49) and which are uncertain, as there are no absolute rules about when an innovation proves successful and when not. This can be seen as an explanation why some teachers are rather unwilling to change, to adopt an innovation. It is a risky path to take, but most of the times, a worthwhile one.

Heyworth (2003: 9) presents a formula for the willingness of stakeholders to change that takes the issues discussed above into account:

$C = (abd) > x$	C= change
	a= level of dissatisfaction with the status quo
	b= clear or understood desired outcome
	d= identified practical first steps to achieving the desired outcome
	x= the cost of changing

Table 3: Formula of Readiness for Change (Heyworth 2003: 9)

De Cilia et al. (2005: 68f) discuss this formula in their book and what the formula expresses in an abbreviated form is the idea that the cost for the innovation must be smaller than the level of the dissatisfaction, the desired outcome and the practical first steps.

One problematic issue that Fullan (2007: 24f) highlights is the time shortage that teachers are faced with in their everyday routine as it makes serious and thus time-intensive reflection on what is happening in the classroom difficult. However, reflection alone is not enough to initiate change, “infrastructures and processes that engage teacher in developing new knowledge, skills and understandings” (Fullan 2007: 29) are also necessary. Fullan (2007: 30f) sees change in itself as multilayered, including (1) materials, (2) approaches and (3) beliefs, which together aim for specific goals in education. Unless all of these three components are affected by the change, it has little chance to be of any lasting impact. What also needs to be considered is that students should participate in the innovative process and not just be bystanders who (hopefully) benefit from the result later.

Real change is difficult and can, according to Fullan (2007: 21f) result in feelings of uncertainty and anxiety because, as mentioned, it does or should not only affect the materials a teacher uses, but also change their beliefs about language teaching, which are part of their teaching personality and inherent value system. What makes change even more difficult is that it often happens on a subconscious or at least not outspoken level; nevertheless if the innovation should bring lasting change, all three dimensions need to be addressed. However, the effect on student learning is even greater if it moves from the level of an individual teacher to a common meaning and goal of a larger entity, a group of teachers in a school or the school as a whole (cf. Fullan 2007: 36ff). In view of innovation in education two interacting aspects need to be considered: “what changes to implement (theories of education) and how to implement them (theories of change)” (Fullan 2007: 40).

3.2.3. Teacher Involvement

Over the last chapter it has become clear that implementing innovation successfully is a difficult, yet worthwhile path to take and one of the basic needs before going on such a journey is motivation. The people involved (in this case teachers, language educators, school officials) need to be motivated to start the process and to carry it through (interaction between all members of an organization is one of the key aspects for motivation). Fullan (2007: 41) also stresses the importance of “reflective action” as people need to be “thinking about their new doing”. Any innovation needs an accompanying reflective process to see whether the new procedures have a positive effect or what needs to be changed or improved in order to

achieve the desired goal. The question is how this reflection is to be structured to be helpful and informative. Interestingly, Fullan (2007: 43) attaches great importance to the feeling that teachers (or whoever practices the innovation) have about the change. To be successful, innovation must make them feel better, not just have good educational arguments in favour of it. In the case of educational innovation it is clear that it must not only make teachers feel better but all participants, including the students, who are the main but not the sole profiteers of the new developments.

According to Bosenius (2008: 5), “teachers in English Language Teaching are confronted with innovation in a variety of forms”. I would like to challenge the choice of language here, as the usage of the term ‘confronted’ here clearly implies that change and innovation is something that (maybe even unfortunately) happens to teachers. This portrays teachers as being on the passive end of the innovation process. Bosenius (2008: 5) continues, explaining that “[o]ne might assume that teachers perceive changes in English language teaching as measures that are being forced upon them by the authorities in charge”. She stresses the importance of collaborating with the teachers and taking their individual views into account. Again, the use of the phrase ‘forced upon’ puts the teachers into a very passive, almost defensive position. Many researchers have portrayed teachers’ beliefs as hard to change and resistant to innovation. It is clearly an over-generalisation to consider all teachers to be opposed to any innovation. In addition to that, it should go without saying that teachers should be included in the decision making process and the implementation of an innovation.

In initial teacher training the skills that are needed to deal with innovations must be passed on to future teachers. However, as Newby (2003: 79) points out in his study on Austrian universities, “research and innovation in language teaching has not been afforded a great deal of focus”. It is vital though that teacher training should (and does) not end once the teachers are employed in a school. Karavas-Doukas (1998: 31) considers the following factors as influencing the success of the innovation implementation process in education: “(1) teachers’ attitudes, (2) clarity of the innovation proposal, (3) teacher training, (4) communications and support during implementation and (5) compatibility of the innovation with the contingencies of the classroom and the wider education context”.

Continuous and long-term teacher training is, according to Karavas-Doukas (1998: 35ff), a prerequisite for a successful innovation implementation process. It should be able to change the teachers’ attitude, take into consideration the teachers’ background knowledge and professional experience and turn teachers into change agents themselves so that they are not passive addressees of change proposals. The long lasting effect of such a teacher training

would be that teachers “actively seek to experiment and improve their teaching practises and their students’ learning” (Karavas-Doukas 1998: 50).

3.3. Innovation in Language Teaching and Learning

3.3.1. Innovative Practices in Language Teaching

In this chapter the educational background of innovations in language teaching will be discussed. The question to be addressed is what is perceived to be innovative in European language education at the moment. In the late 1970s and 1980s communicative language teaching represented the state of the art, but today, according to Jantscher (2004: 24), the focus of attention has, among others, shifted to intercultural awareness, technology/ICT in the classroom, early and life-long language learning and plurilingualism. In the following chapters a close examination of the ECML’s role in innovative language teaching in Europe will be made.

Innovation in language teaching has not only been encouraged by the Council of Europe and the ECML, but also by the European Commission through various projects, programmes and initiatives (e.g. “Europasiegel für innovative Sprachenprojekte [ESIS]” since 1997, as it is called in Austria, administered by the ÖSZ, Österreichisches Sprachenkompetenzzentrum, or the “European Award for Languages” in Great Britain, administered by CILT, The National Centre for Languages). Jantscher (2004: 21) states that one of the main aims of ESIS is to make innovative projects known as widely as possible in order to encourage others to be innovative or to help the innovative ideas being implemented on a wider scale. Again, we see the importance of diffusion and implementation that lies at the core of the interest in innovation. A good idea is not enough, it needs to be implemented and used in actual practise.

Jantscher (2004: 39) points out that in order to make good use of an innovation in language teaching the necessary support structures and resources must be in place on the different levels of educational policy (school, district, national, international), otherwise the innovation may not succeed. This, in terms of an innovative (and successful) project, means that it may not be institutionalised (the final step an innovation can take).

The *European Award for Languages*, which is awarded independently in every EU member state but is based on a common set of principles and criteria, is meant to be “[eine] Anerkennung und Ermutigung für kreative Neuerungen im Bereich des Sprachenlernens, die vor dem jeweiligen Hintergrund als vorbildlich und richtungsweisend angesehen werden” (de

Cilia et al. 2005: 12). According to de Cilia et al. (2005: 12f), the innovative character of the projects is assessed in terms of the mobilisation of partnerships and resources, new ways of increasing motivation and new ideas for learning languages. The common principles upon which the innovativeness of the projects are judged are: the projects should have a wide scope and include as many people and resources as possible, should motivate language learners and teachers, should mean a qualitative or a quantitative improvement of teaching or learning a language, should be creative and original, should include a European dimension and should be transferable to other situations or countries. These guidelines were decided upon by the European commission (October 2nd, 2003). For de Cilia et al. (2005: 67) innovation can either be defined in the organisational or the methodological-didactic context.

The criteria mentioned in the “European Award for Languages – How to apply” - booklet for 2009, produced by CILT, are innovativeness (e.g. a new method, approach or resource), effectiveness (i.e. there must be evidence of improvement) and replicability (i.e. use of the project as a model for further development). The Award looks for innovative language projects that use “creative ways to improve the quality of language teaching, motivate students and make the best of available resources” (CILT, European Award for Languages – How to apply, 2008: 2).

Although such awards are a relatively new development, the nature of language teaching has changed throughout its history; new ideas have surfaced, new technologies have been invented and new theories have been considered. At the present time there are voices that demand “[a] re-examin[ation of] the so-called communicative approach to foreign language teaching and learning” (Field 2000: xvii).

Bogenreiter-Feigl (2008: 6) sees developments over the last decade, such as CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning), CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) und WELL (Web Enhanced Language Learning), as having changed the nature of teaching paradigms fundamentally. She believes that numerous teaching and learning approaches and methods exist simultaneously, such as “kommunikativen und handlungsorientierten Unterrichtskonzepten [...], Ansätzen, die sich auf Erkenntnisse des Konstruktivismus berufen, Spielarten von CALL und Interpretationen von LernerInnenautonomie sowie [...] eher traditionellen grammatikorientierten Ansätzen“ (Bogenreiter-Feigl 2008: 7). She also mentions the CEFR and the ELP, intercultural education and learner autonomy. These are ongoing trends that redefine the roles of teachers, the needs of students and the teaching requirements.

Jantscher (2004: 24) mentions the following topics that were considered innovative in the period from 1999 to 2001, based on the ESIS projects:

Thema	Häufigkeit
Interkulturelles Bewusstsein	89
Technologisch orientiertes Sprachenlernen	78
Qualitätsverbesserung	62
Austausch (virtuell, physisch)	61
Fremdsprache als Arbeitssprache (integriertes Lernen von Inhalten und Sprache)	60
Berufsbezogenes Sprachenlernen	50
Fremdsprachlicher Frühbeginn	39
Lebenslanges Sprachenlernen	35
Mehrsprachigkeit und sprachliche Vielfalt	29

Table 4: Main topics of the projects that were awarded the ESIS from 1999 to 2001 (total of 306 projects, every project could be allocated to a maximum of three topics), taken from Jantscher (2004: 24, who adapted it from a report by the European Commission 2002).

This table shows that intercultural awareness plays a significant role in innovative language teaching today and that a lot of projects, teachers and researchers take up this issue when innovating their language teaching programme. However, some of these topics are overlapping, e.g. “virtueller Austausch” is only able to work through using new technology and may also have an impact on the “interkulturelles Bewusstsein”. “Qualitätsverbesserung” should be the aim of any innovative project. Jantscher (2004: 28) makes a very important point in stating that innovation is always relative. What is innovative in one context, in one school or country might be usual practice in another. Nevertheless, an innovative project should have the quality to be disseminated and adapted in other schools or regions, even if they have very different standards.

In their study of the Austrian projects that had been entered in the competition of the *Europäisches Gütesiegel für innovative Sprachprojekte* de Cilia et al. (2005) found the following topics as considered innovative in Austria at the turn of the century:

Mehrsprachigkeit, Interkulturelles Lernen (IKL), die direkte Begegnung mit SprecherInnen der Zielsprache, der Einsatz einer Fremdsprache als Arbeitssprache und bilingualer Unterricht, eine andere Organisation der Zeitdauer des Sprachenlernens als üblich, Informationsaustausch und Zusammenarbeit mit andren Institutionen und die verstärkte Zusammenarbeit der Lehrenden innerhalb einer Institution in Projekten (de Cilia et al. 2005: 182).

Again, some of these topics are overlapping as contact with a native speaker will almost automatically trigger intercultural learning and the school will have to work together with another institution which provides native speakers. Plurilingualism is also one of the declared

aims of the Council of Europe and in Austria it is deemed especially innovative if students also study neighbouring or minority languages from an early age onwards. Intercultural learning is on the one hand innovative, on the other it has already entered national curricula as well, as the following quotation from the new National Curriculum of England for Modern Foreign Languages (for Key Stage 3) shows, in which the Qualification and Curriculum Authority states intercultural awareness as one of their key concepts:

Intercultural understanding:

- Appreciating the richness and diversity of other cultures.
 - Recognising that there are different ways of seeing the world, and developing an international outlook
- <http://curriculum.qca.org.uk/key-stages-3-and-4/subjects/modern-foreign-languages/index.aspx?return=/key-stages-3-and-4/subjects/index.aspx> [08/02/2009].

De Cilia et al. (2005: 182ff) further discuss the points mentioned above, stating that the contacts with native speakers can be realised in various ways, for example through a native speaker at the school, a language exchange programme or virtual contact via internet; the main aim, however, is to provide authentic language use and input for the students. A foreign language can also be used to teach other subject areas through bilingual education. This can be a school-wide policy or be restricted to a certain subject. Changing the time frame in school is also a possible innovation. Networking becomes increasingly important for schools as well, and partnerships with other schools or institutions can be very helpful and are also innovative. The same applies when teachers of a school work together and try out new ideas, e.g. team teaching.

It is interesting that the CEFR also emphasises some of the recurring issues in language learning that have been mentioned throughout this chapter. Heyworth (2004: 13) lists the following aims, present in the CEFR:

- gaining respect and knowledge about many cultures and nationalities, leading to European citizenship (intercultural awareness)
- improving intellectual development, creating an open-mind and flexibility
- life-long language learning, general language learning skills
- encouraging independence and learner autonomy (this idea has been further developed through the European Language Portfolio).

According to Heyworth (2004: 15ff), the CEFR also stresses the importance of a needs analysis, learner involvement and motivation, a realistic approach to the outcomes, the learners' objectives and the idea of partial and incomplete competences. It is also essential to consider the multiple competences that language speakers need in order to communicate

meaningfully and successfully. For this, linguistic competence is not enough, they also need pragmatic, sociolinguistic, intercultural, strategic and existential competences.

3.3.2. Summary

From the discussion of the opinions of various experts on innovation in the chapters above, the following aspects emerge as innovative practices in European modern foreign language teaching today:

- intercultural awareness/competence
- plurilingualism
- usage of technology and the media (especially the internet and all its services)
- learner autonomy and individualisation (usage of portfolios, e.g. the European Language Portfolio)
- usage of the CEFR (in syllabi, curricula, for the definition of objectives, assessment, comparability)
- adhering to a functional/notional/communicative syllabus, importance of diverse competences and skills, based on learners' needs
- early language learning
- life-long learning
- networking and cooperation within a school, between schools and between schools and other institutions
- innovative usage of the variables time, place and resources
- language learning as a skill for life (open-mindedness, independence, mobility, values)
- native speakers, student exchanges, travels, etc.
- bilingual education, teaching contents with a foreign language
- the new role of the teacher (e.g. as a mediator, trainer) and a focus on teacher education

Naturally this list raises questions about its completeness and its relativity (e.g. in some areas the involvement of native speakers may not be seen as innovative); nevertheless these issues are in the forefront of today's methodological and didactic research and innovative practices.

In this chapter I have identified a number of issues and topics that define language teaching today and others that are considered as innovative and are promoted by various institutions, professionals and initiatives. As far as the areas of interest of the ECML are

concerned, Heyworth (2003: 13) states that the ECML focuses on the following aspects in language education:

- learner autonomy
- new ICT technology
- life-long learning
- intercultural awareness
- training of language teachers
- dissemination of the ECML's project results
- creation of networks for language educators.

Apart from the last but one point (dissemination), which is obviously not an innovative concept, we see that the ECML's focal points correspond with the innovative issues mentioned above. The issue of the "training of language teachers" is also not an innovative concept *per se*, but is necessary to disseminate innovations and to increase the quality of language teaching. In my next chapter I will use a corpus analysis to examine whether these main interests have remained the same in the latest medium-term programme and what innovative concept the projects of the ECML focus upon and promote. Part of the ECML's mission is to support innovation. It follows that whatever topic the projects deal with is considered to be innovative by the ECML and is promoted as such. This is the assumption the following analyses are based upon.

4. Corpus Analysis

As described in Chapter 1.2 I used the programme Word Smith Version 3.0 (Scott 1999) for analysing my corpus of the written output of the 2nd Medium-Term Programme of the ECML (2003-2007) *Languages for Social Cohesion. Language education in a multilingual and multicultural Europe*, including booklets, CD-ROMs and websites¹. In this chapter the research findings will be presented and discussed; these include three different quantitative methods, a frequency list analysis, and a concordance and collocation analysis.

¹ see in detail: Chapter 1.2

4.1 Frequency Lists² and Concordance Analysis

The frequency list of a corpus provides a first overview of the language used in a corpus and thus a first insight into its contents. Without knowing anything about the ECML or its projects anybody would know that it deals with languages and language education simply from looking at the first few words in the frequency analysis. However, it must be noted that the words with the highest frequency in all corpora are function words that are needed to create a grammatically meaningful text. This means that the most frequent words in the ECML corpus are ‘the’, ‘of’, ‘and’, ‘to’, ‘in’, ‘a’, ‘is’ and ‘for’ (see Appendix 1), which, however, is not significant for this paper. The 9th most frequent word in the total corpus is a content word, namely ‘language’ with 10,738 occurrences (0.94% of the total corpus). The term ‘language’ is followed by some more function words until the following content words appear, starting off at number 21:

N	Word	Freq.	%
9	LANGUAGE	10,738	0.94
21	LEARNING	4,484	0.39
24	TEACHERS	4,186	0.37
29	LANGUAGES	3,856	0.34
35	TEACHING	3,140	0.27
36	EDUCATION	3,124	0.27
37	STUDENTS	3,077	0.27
41	TEACHER	2,902	0.25
44	SCHOOL	2,819	0.25
45	PROJECT	2,541	0.22
48	TRAINING	2,391	0.21
50	USE	2,357	0.21

Table 5: Extract from the total corpus in Appendix 1, showing the frequency of the 12 most frequent content words, which are within its 50 most frequent words in general.

This short list provides quite a few interesting insights into the work of the ECML. Of course any conclusions drawn from a frequency list are guided assumptions rather than scientific facts, as such a list is only the first step in the process of analysis. However, it can be noted that language education (learning, teaching, education) and its stakeholders (teacher[s], students, school) are at the forefront of interest for the ECML. The term ‘training’ can be seen in connection with teacher development, teacher training. It is also interesting but not surprising that the word ‘project’ features so strongly in the discourse of the ECML as the projects are at its heart and as the corpus consists of the project publications (in their wider

² for the total frequency list, see Appendix 1.

sense). The term ‘use’ points to the ECML’s mission to connect theory with practise and to put the projects and the innovative teaching and learning ideas into real use.

4.1.1. Teachers and Students

In analysing frequency lists one has to be careful not to make too hasty judgements; e.g. it could be argued that the term ‘teachers’ is used more often than ‘students’, which would mean that the ECML is not student or learning orientated but focuses on the teacher. This is not entirely true, though, as ‘teacher’ is the only word used frequently for the person teaching languages (other words may include ‘trainer’, ‘educator’, ‘mentor’, depending on what aspect of the teacher role the author wants to emphasise - these words do not show up in the 200 most frequent words in the total corpus). On the other hand, the people learning the language are not only called ‘students’ but also ‘learners’ (which appears as number 56 with 2,082 occurrences or 0.18%) or ‘children’ (n.143), ‘group’ (n.73) or ‘pupils’ (n.155), which all appear in the corpus. Furthermore, as an argument against this deduction it has to be noted that the term ‘learning’ appears more often than the term ‘teaching’, which could point to a more learner-centred approach. In addition to that, the use of singular and plural must be noted, as they are listed as separate words in the total corpus. ‘Teacher’ (n.41) and ‘teachers’ (n.21) both appear frequently, whereas the singular of ‘students’ is only n.178 in the total corpus, which could suggest that students are seen as a group rather than as single individuals.

N	Word	Freq.	%	Pl. & Sg.	Totals	
24	TEACHERS	4,186	0.37	7.088	8,264	
31	TEACHER	2,902	0.25			
416	TRAINER	361	0.03	740		
388	TRAINERS	379	0.03			
515	EDUCATORS	292	0.03	365		
1725	EDUCATOR	73	-			
2603	MENTORS	41	-	71		
3213	MENTOR	30	-			
<hr/>						
37	STUDENTS	3,077	0.27	3.874		11,833
178	STUDENT	797	0.07			
56	LEARNERS	2,082	0.18	3.118		
123	LEARNER	1,036	0.09			
1341	PUPIL	100	-	1.003		
155	PUPILS	903	0.08			
143	CHILDREN	950	0.08	1.084		
1063	CHILD	134	0.01			

73	GROUP	1,829	0.16	2.754	
147	GROUPS	925	0.08		

Table 6: Frequency of terms associated with teachers and students, including its added occurrences

This table shows that the term ‘learners’ and its synonyms has a higher frequency than that of ‘teachers’, which points towards a more learner-centred approach. The terms ‘trainer’, ‘educator’ and ‘mentor’ will most likely refer to teacher trainers and educators, rather than language teachers; the same can apply to the term ‘group’, which can also mean a group of teachers or a project group. This can be confirmed through a concordance and collocation analysis.

N	WORD	TOTAL	LEFT	RIGHT	L5	L4	L3	L2	L1	*	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5
5	TEACHER	280	254	26	10	10	18	15	201	0	0	11	3	6	6
7	TRAINING	122	61	61	12	14	15	12	8	0	30	1	8	7	15
8	TEACHERS	109	70	39	5	3	37	22	3	0	0	24	5	3	7
11	GUIDE	46	39	7	20	3	7	9	0	0	2	2	1	0	2
12	LANGUAGE	43	26	17	3	5	0	10	8	0	0	8	2	3	4

Table 7: extract from the collocations with the word ‘trainer*’, without function words

The table shows that by far the most frequent direct collocation is “teacher trainer*” with 201 occurrences. ‘Trainer’ is therefore less likely to be used for the person interacting with students than for the person training school teachers; thus it seems as if the concept of a trainer rather fits the idea of teaching adults, or better of training adults. Students are taught, but teachers are trained. The corpus strengthens the assumption that such a distinction exists, which is also part of our everyday language.

The following table looks at the collocations with ‘group*’, which is not as clear cut as ‘trainer*’.

N	WORD	TOTAL	LEFT	RIGHT	L5	L4	L3	L2	L1	*	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5
7	WORK	285	106	179	12	19	35	32	8	0	94	29	19	17	20
11	STUDENTS	136	59	77	15	28	9	6	1	0	0	36	18	11	12
15	SMALL	121	118	3	2	2	2	1	111	0	1	0	1	0	1
16	DISCUSSION	120	41	79	6	4	13	11	7	0	46	12	6	8	7
17	PROJECT	115	88	27	8	4	7	55	14	0	1	6	11	6	3
20	TARGET	108	107	1	1	0	1	5	100	0	0	1	0	0	0
21	FACILITATION	107	56	51	11	31	6	8	0	0	37	7	1	2	4
36	PARTICIPANTS	83	32	51	5	8	15	3	1	0	2	12	12	14	11
37	TEACHERS	83	18	65	11	5	2	0	0	0	2	24	14	17	8
38	ACTIVITY	82	44	38	11	17	7	9	0	0	11	5	7	3	12

Table 8: extract from the collocation table of the word ‘group*’, without function words

The most frequent collocation is ‘work’, which can refer to group work for students at school or teachers at training events. The next term ‘students’ however shows that the term ‘group’ frequently occurs in the school environment, especially as the collocation of suggesting to work in ‘small group*’ is the most frequent direct collocation (111 occurrences, 121 in

general). However, the ‘small group*’ often refers to the participants at an ECML workshop rather than to students in a classroom. The ratio is almost half, with 61 occurrences referring to project work and workshops and 52 to student groups, as a concordance analysis shows. This one example shows that the project publications deal with workshop issues and teacher training as much as with classroom situations, which is an interesting insight into the ECML.

Another frequent collocation is with the term ‘project’ (115 total occurrences) but only 14 of these occurrences are ‘project group*’. Groups are definitely used or suggested to be used (by the authors) in a very active and innovative way, with collocations such as ‘discussion’, ‘target’, ‘facilitation’ or ‘activity’. Interestingly nobody suggests teaching ‘grammar’ through group work. The term ‘grammar’, by the way, only occurs 501 times in total (n.305).

4.1.2. English

It is also interesting that the term ‘English’ (n.54, 2,171 occurrences and 0.19%) is used slightly more often than ‘foreign’ (n.60, 1,984 occurrences and 0.17%), as in ‘foreign language teaching’. It is well known (also looking at the social, political, economic and cultural situation in the world today) that English is the predominant foreign language taught in Europe and throughout the world. The ECML and the Council of Europe, however, try to promote the learning and the use of smaller (community or minority) languages as well, but many projects still seem to focus on the teaching of English, which stands in contradiction to the Council of Europe’s mission. French is the other official language of the ECML, but the term does not feature as strongly as English in the corpus (n.154, 906 occurrences and 0.08%).

A comparison of the collocation tables of both terms ‘foreign’ and ‘English’ shows, however, that the combination of ‘foreign language’ (1,220 times) and with ‘teaching’ (250 times) is much more common than the same collocations with the term ‘English’ (‘teaching English’ appears 36 times). ‘English language teaching’ occurs 21 times, but of this number 8 are genuine occurrences, whereas the rest are book titles or names of institutions. Therefore, it can be said that the term ‘English’ is used in a more general sense but not so much in the area of learning and teaching. A concordance analysis shows that the phrase ‘foreign language teaching’ appears 120 times in the corpus. ‘Learning’ is even more frequent than ‘teaching’ as a collocation with ‘foreign’, as the second word to the right with 161 occurrences.

N	WORD	TOTAL	LEFT	RIGHT	L5	L4	L3	L2	L1	*	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5
2	LANGUAGE	1,458	69	1,389	23	20	21	4	1	0	1,220	122	13	15	19
5	LANGUAGES	383	27	356	10	9	2	5	1	0	318	24	7	3	4
6	LEARNING	348	136	212	18	24	22	55	17	0	1	161	17	24	9
7	TEACHING	250	96	154	17	26	14	26	13	0	1	120	14	17	2
11	EDUCATION	137	32	105	4	5	11	9	3	0	0	57	17	8	23
12	SECOND	113	94	19	1	4	0	21	68	0	4	4	5	3	3

Table 9: collocations with the word ‘foreign’, without function words

‘Language’ is the strongest collocation with ‘foreign’, being in three quarters of all cases within five words to the left or right of the term ‘language’. ‘Language’ occurs 110 times in the phrase ‘English language’ and 403 times in the vicinity (five words to the right and left) of English; the other frequent collocations are with other languages, such as ‘French’ (305) and ‘German’ (244). ‘Teaching English’ only occurs 36 times and ‘English teaching’ 13 times, which is a surprisingly low number. It seems as if English is used in other contexts than its teaching in the project publications. ‘Learning English’ hardly ever occurs: only 17 times.

N	WORD	TOTAL	LEFT	RIGHT	L5	L4	L3	L2	L1	*	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5
4	LANGUAGE	403	131	272	25	29	37	32	8	0	110	22	16	97	27
5	FRENCH	305	84	221	7	10	19	24	24	0	4	110	50	30	27
6	GERMAN	244	79	165	6	13	21	29	10	0	3	87	37	25	13
8	TEACHERS	196	114	82	16	8	11	76	3	0	34	22	12	4	10
10	TEACHING	146	98	48	13	15	8	26	36	0	13	25	2	3	5
12	SCHOOL	110	63	47	9	7	22	11	14	0	1	7	15	13	11
14	LANGUAGES	102	72	30	13	12	25	9	13	0	0	5	9	6	10
17	PRIMARY	81	53	28	4	12	19	5	13	0	0	10	12	3	3
18	FOREIGN	80	34	46	5	5	13	11	0	0	3	3	22	10	8
40	LEARNING	49	39	10	6	5	5	6	17	0	1	2	1	3	3

Table 10: collocations with the word ‘English’, without function words

4.1.3. Culture and Interculturality

The other frequently interlinked topics that can be found in the corpus are ‘culture’ and ‘Europe’.

N	Word	Freq.	%
66	CULTURE	1.898	0,17
74	EUROPEAN	1.810	0,16
75	INTERCULTURAL	1.802	0,16
76	CULTURAL	1.717	0,15
82	EUROPE	1.538	0,13
175	CULTURES	811	0,07

Table 11: Extract from the total corpus in Appendix 1, showing the frequency of content words within the word field of ‘culture’ and ‘Europe’, which are within the list of the 200 most frequent words in total.

Of course it could be argued that other terms, such as ‘awareness’, ‘experience’, ‘competence’, ‘understanding’, ‘diversity’, ‘attitude’, ‘experiences’, or ‘issues’ also belong to the word field of culture and intercultural awareness. To determine this, a collocation analysis

is needed. The collocation analysis of the word ‘awareness’ shows that a significant percentage of its collocations are from the field of culture, namely ‘intercultural’ (198 occurrences) and ‘cultural’ (with 158 occurrences), however, the most frequent collocation is with the term ‘language’. These collocations are not direct though, as can be seen by the table below. ‘Language’ only features 80 times as the word directly in front of ‘awareness’, as in ‘language awareness’, whereas ‘intercultural awareness’ occurs 140 times and ‘cultural awareness’ 101 times. ‘Pluricultural’ occurs 35 times as a collocation with ‘awareness’ with 27 direct collocations. Another modern term ‘plurilingual’ is used 45 times in the vicinity of ‘awareness’, but only 13 times as a direct collocation, less often than ‘pluricultural’. The verbs most collocated with ‘awareness’ was ‘raising’ (126) or ‘raise’ (66) and ‘develop’ (46) or ‘developing’ (43).

N	WORD	TOTAL	LEFT	RIGHT	L5	L4	L3	L2	L1	*	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5
4	LANGUAGE	214	139	75	7	9	29	14	80	0	0	31	23	6	15
5	INTERCULTURAL	198	158	40	3	7	6	2	140	0	0	23	3	10	4
6	CULTURAL	158	124	34	6	10	6	1	101	0	1	10	9	7	7
7	RAISING	126	52	74	3	2	3	21	23	0	70	2	1	1	0
9	LEARNING	72	31	41	8	11	9	1	2	0	0	11	15	6	9
10	RAISE	66	66	0	0	1	5	23	37	0	0	0	0	0	0
11	CULTURE	58	32	26	6	7	4	3	12	0	0	8	6	9	3
12	SELF	55	27	28	1	7	3	2	14	0	0	6	19	3	0
15	SKILLS	48	22	26	4	5	2	10	1	0	0	6	7	6	7
16	COMMUNICATION	46	24	22	5	3	4	1	11	0	0	1	14	4	3
17	DEVELOP	46	41	5	3	11	6	11	10	0	0	1	3	1	0
19	PLURILINGUAL	45	41	4	1	4	23	0	13	0	0	0	2	1	1
20	EDUCATION	44	21	23	5	6	7	3	0	0	0	3	2	12	6
21	DEVELOPING	43	41	2	2	3	2	29	5	0	0	2	0	0	0
23	TRAINING	38	12	26	2	3	3	4	0	0	5	1	3	11	6
24	ACTIVITIES	36	19	17	2	6	5	4	2	0	4	7	0	3	3
26	PLURICULTURAL	35	30	5	1	0	2	0	27	0	0	1	0	1	3

Table 12: extract from the collocations with the word ‘awareness’, without function words

The most frequent collocation with the term ‘intercultural’ is competence. The combination ‘intercultural competence’ appears 287 times in the corpus, followed by ‘intercultural communication’ (283 times) and ‘intercultural awareness’ (126 times). One of the reasons for the high frequency of ‘intercultural communication’ is that one of the projects deals with exactly this topic: ICCinTE (*Intercultural communication training in teacher education*). Although ‘language’ is the third most frequent content word collocating with ‘intercultural’, it is seldom a direct collocation and occurs more often only in the vicinity of ‘awareness’. Another frequent collocation is ‘intercultural communicative competence’ (144 times), which thus unites the importance of communication and of culture to a single turn of phrase. For language teachers around the world ‘intercultural competence’ or ‘intercultural awareness’ are well known terms that appear in many publications, conferences or projects that deal with

language teaching and learning. However, it is interesting to note that this is a recent development and that this is not the case when referring to general language use. There is not a single occurrence of either phrase in the British National Corpus Online Edition and only eleven of ‘intercultural’³. This shows that on the one hand the terms discussed in this paper are specific for the discourse of language teaching, especially innovative language teaching, and on the other hand that the terms have not been in use for a very long time, given that the BNC comprises about 100 million words and was created in 1994, with two more recent editions: 2001 and 2007, the latter being the date of the online edition (<http://www.natcorp.ox.ac.uk/corpus/index.xml.ID=products> [28/02/2009]).

‘Learning’ (154 times) appears more often than ‘teaching’ (116 times) or ‘training’ (115 times) in the context of ‘intercultural’. Additionally, the difference is that the phrase ‘intercultural learning’ is clearly the most frequent collocation between these two words (69 occurrences), whereas for the other two this is not the case. For ‘training’ the most frequent collocation is as the second word to the right of ‘intercultural’. The concordance programme finds 48 occurrences for ‘intercultural communication training’, the other phrases present are: ‘intercultural education training’ and ‘intercultural competence training’, which occur once each. It is also interesting to note that the term ‘plurilingual’ frequently appears (92 times) close to the term ‘intercultural’. It seems as if these two innovative terms share some common ground in the perspective of the researchers and authors of the texts. The other frequent direct collocations are ‘intercultural skills’ (60 times) and ‘intercultural activities’ (63 times).

N	WORD	TOTAL	LEFT	RIGHT	L5	L4	L3	L2	L1	*	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5
4	COMPETENCE	507	37	470	8	5	2	17	5	0	287	146	20	9	8
5	COMMUNICATION	387	32	355	5	1	12	11	3	0	283	38	22	4	8
7	LANGUAGE	228	115	113	14	24	35	37	5	0	3	1	32	61	16
8	AWARENESS	204	46	158	8	8	5	20	5	0	126	16	5	8	3
9	COMMUNICATIVE	169	13	156	2	2	6	2	1	0	131	15	3	6	1
10	LEARNING	154	43	111	13	7	6	12	5	0	69	11	12	10	9
11	SKILLS	118	27	91	9	4	6	7	1	0	60	7	12	7	5
12	TEACHING	116	53	63	6	11	14	16	6	0	7	4	4	22	26
13	TRAINING	115	26	89	7	3	11	4	1	0	16	48	13	4	8
16	ACTIVITIES	92	17	75	5	0	10	2	0	0	63	2	2	1	7
17	PLURILINGUAL	92	76	16	1	1	54	19	1	0	0	14	1	0	1

Table 13: collocations with the word ‘intercultural’, without function words

Staying in the semantic field of culture, the term ‘culture’ itself also occurs frequently within the context of the terms ‘language’, ‘teaching’ and ‘activities’. The most frequent direct collocation is ‘culture shock’ (104 times), with almost all of the occurrences in the projects

³ Data cited herein has been extracted from the British National Corpus Online service, managed by Oxford University Computing Services on behalf of the BNC Consortium. All rights in the texts cited are reserved.

“ICcinTE – Intercultural communication training in teacher education” and “ICOPROMO – Intercultural competence for professional mobility”. From this data one can conclude that dealing (‘reversing’, which appears 8 times as a collocation of ‘culture shock’) with ‘culture shock’ is of great concern to the researchers in these two projects.

It might also prove significant that the collocation ‘own culture’ (75 times) appears more frequently than ‘foreign culture’ (39 times). Does that mean the ECML projects suggest students and teachers should consider or reflect upon their own culture more than upon foreign cultures? This is not necessarily the case as this is only the singular of the word. Looking at the term ‘cultures’ we can see that the collocations ‘other cultures’ (159 times) and ‘different cultures’ (83 times) are quite frequent. The term ‘foreign cultures’ appears only 8 times, though. Nevertheless, we see a clear pattern of including in the discussion both: one’s ‘own culture’ and the ‘other cultures’. Both are important in order to gain intercultural competence.

N	WORD	TOTAL	LEFT	RIGHT	L5	L4	L3	L2	L1	*	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5
4	LANGUAGE	335	225	110	14	13	8	154	36	0	2	38	37	15	18
5	OWN	149	135	14	12	9	10	6	98	0	0	2	3	4	5
9	SHOCK	130	10	120	3	0	6	1	0	0	104	6	2	2	6
10	TEACHING	119	61	58	7	4	13	6	31	0	17	4	13	14	10
11	TARGET	116	101	15	2	0	7	17	75	0	1	3	8	0	3
12	RELATED	104	20	84	3	6	6	2	3	0	77	1	0	2	4
17	FOREIGN	83	52	31	1	1	8	3	39	0	0	6	7	10	8
18	ACTIVITIES	80	6	74	3	2	0	0	1	0	0	66	4	4	0

Table 14: collocations with the word ‘culture’, without function words

Another interesting aspect is the use of the function words ‘across cultures’ (34 times) and ‘between cultures’ (24 times). All these aspects need to be considered when talking about intercultural and multicultural aspects. Again ‘languages’ (223 occurrences) is a strong collocation appearing 143 times in the phrase ‘languages and cultures’.

N	WORD	TOTAL	LEFT	RIGHT	L5	L4	L3	L2	L1	*	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5
4	LANGUAGES	233	210	23	20	3	8	171	8	0	0	13	4	1	5
5	OTHER	213	198	15	4	5	23	7	159	0	1	4	1	5	4
6	DIFFERENT	159	134	25	1	13	29	8	83	0	2	8	5	7	3
8	BETWEEN	71	67	4	4	17	14	8	24	0	0	1	1	0	2
13	ACROSS	53	46	7	1	1	4	6	34	0	0	2	1	4	0

Table 15: collocations with the word ‘cultures’, without most function words

4.1.4. Europe and European

It is not surprising that ‘Europe’ and ‘European’ feature strongly in a corpus like this. Most of the occurrences and the collocations seem to refer to the ‘Council of Europe’ (869 times) or

the ‘European Centre for Modern Languages’. In addition to that, we can deduce the use of other specific names, such as ‘European Language Portfolio’ and the ‘Common European Framework of Reference’. We also find common terms such as ‘education’ (219 times), ‘teachers’ (217 times), ‘use’ (207 times) and ‘training’ (185 times) as collocations.

N	WORD	TOTAL	LEFT	RIGHT	L5	L4	L3	L2	L1	*	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5
4	COUNCIL	994	917	77	31	10	7	869	0	0	2	8	11	15	41
6	LANGUAGES	853	255	598	32	97	49	70	7	0	32	10	27	390	139
8	LANGUAGE	730	227	503	79	75	63	8	2	0	299	108	38	36	22
9	MODERN	542	135	407	72	32	26	0	5	0	1	16	372	11	7
10	CENTRE	437	32	405	25	0	2	0	5	0	373	11	7	6	8
11	PORTFOLIO	398	23	375	4	7	2	3	7	0	10	255	94	8	8
12	FRAMEWORK	330	14	316	7	1	6	0	0	0	254	23	5	23	11
13	COMMON	318	266	52	7	2	1	1	255	0	8	16	10	13	5
14	REFERENCE	226	28	198	12	9	4	0	3	0	3	1	171	19	4
15	EDUCATION	219	127	92	26	29	40	21	11	0	7	31	15	21	18
16	TEACHERS	217	185	32	2	178	1	4	0	0	0	1	3	11	17
17	USE	207	198	9	3	5	5	185	0	0	0	1	0	4	4
18	STRASBOURG	203	113	90	1	2	105	2	3	0	1	46	5	32	6
19	TRAINING	185	178	7	165	6	3	4	0	0	0	2	3	2	0

Table 16: collocations with the word ‘Europe*’ (including ‘European’), without function words

4.1.5. Language

As mentioned above, ‘language’ is the most frequent term and therefore appears in almost every collocation table in the top five. We can see that the most frequent direct collocation is ‘foreign language’ (1,314 times), followed by ‘language learning’ (865 times), ‘language teaching’ (558 times) and ‘language education’ (428 times). This is quite obviously the main concern of the ECML and its projects. The implications of the frequencies of ‘teaching’ and ‘learning’ have already been discussed above. A frequent phrase is also ‘use of the European Language Portfolio’ as this was a specific project: “ELP_TT – Training teachers to use the European Language Portfolio”. Another interesting term that appears in this list is ‘target’ with the phrase ‘target language’ occurring 379 times. Many of the projects specifically address ‘language teachers’, which therefore also appears frequently, namely 260 times.

N	WORD	TOTAL	LEFT	RIGHT	L5	L4	L3	L2	L1	*	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5
4	LEARNING	1,574	321	1253	67	68	93	79	14	0	865	144	113	78	53
5	FOREIGN	1,421	1,363	58	18	17	11	3	1,314	0	0	3	14	22	19
7	TEACHING	987	188	799	59	47	33	34	15	0	558	72	83	46	40
8	EDUCATION	829	120	709	35	29	34	13	9	0	428	152	39	55	35
9	USE	767	496	271	39	88	267	87	15	0	153	25	31	35	27
10	TEACHERS	681	275	406	207	30	25	10	3	0	260	39	33	44	30
14	EUROPEAN	516	417	99	17	18	12	4	366	0	1	5	16	32	45
17	PORTFOLIO	443	36	407	6	3	11	10	6	0	379	10	4	4	10
18	TARGET	440	410	30	8	14	8	1	379	0	0	1	12	9	8

Table 17: collocations with the word ‘language’, without function words

4.1.6. Learning, Teaching and Training

Other than ‘language’, the three aspects of ‘learning’, ‘teaching’ and ‘training’ represent the most frequent words. Again we have the collocation ‘language learning’ (949 times) as the most frequently used. The phrase ‘teaching and learning’ occurs 257 times in the corpus, which shows that the two terms are often used as a unit, teaching and learning together are necessary to improve linguistic and cultural knowledge. Another frequent direct collocation is the ‘learning process’ (159 occurrences). Seeing language learning as a process is a very important aspect, as this opens a lot of opportunities for change and improvement. It is also noteworthy that the phrase ‘own learning’ is used quite frequently (73 times) in the corpus, delineating that the learners should take responsibility for and possession of their own language learning process. ‘Learning strategies’ (62 times) and ‘learning activities’ (62 times) point towards a process-oriented active language learning approach that the ECML tries to support.

N	WORD	TOTAL	LEFT	RIGHT	L5	L4	L3	L2	L1	*	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5
4	LANGUAGE	1,586	1,282	304	54	56	138	85	949	0	5	75	94	59	71
6	TEACHING	608	400	208	13	12	27	275	73	0	13	158	17	9	11
7	FOREIGN	342	212	130	9	27	4	171	1	0	15	58	17	22	18
9	PROCESS	259	59	200	12	9	17	20	1	0	159	14	8	12	7
11	LANGUAGES	247	86	161	9	21	7	7	42	0	22	52	49	18	20
15	INTERCULTURAL	164	110	54	9	9	17	3	72	0	5	27	1	9	12
19	CONTENT	131	89	42	2	61	9	4	13	0	7	13	10	4	8
20	ASSESSMENT	128	38	90	15	8	6	9	0	0	0	15	47	14	14
22	OWN	124	109	15	8	6	13	9	73	0	0	0	3	2	10
23	SKILLS	122	41	81	11	5	12	8	5	0	30	12	18	11	10
24	STRATEGIES	121	21	100	7	5	7	0	2	0	62	10	15	5	8
25	ACTIVITIES	120	30	90	11	3	10	5	1	0	62	10	6	8	4

Table 18: collocations with the word ‘learning’, without function words

Looking at the statistic below for the collocations with the term ‘teaching’ we find many aspects discussed above. Again collocations with ‘language’ and ‘learning’ and ‘foreign’ are the most frequent ones. A term that has not occurred yet is ‘materials’ with the direct collocation of ‘teaching materials’ being used 105 times, thus also being an important issue for the ECML projects. Other terms appearing in the vicinity of ‘teaching’ are ‘teachers’, ‘English’, ‘culture’, ‘intercultural’, ‘practice’ (‘teaching practice’ occurring 74 times), ‘training’, ‘content’, ‘assessment’, ‘communicative’ and ‘methodology’.

N	WORD	TOTAL	LEFT	RIGHT	L5	L4	L3	L2	L1	*	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5
4	LANGUAGE	993	819	174	40	39	92	30	618	0	13	29	33	47	52
5	LEARNING	608	214	394	11	15	5	126	57	0	65	269	30	18	12
7	FOREIGN	246	155	91	2	16	6	130	1	0	11	24	17	22	17

10	LANGUAGES	176	57	119	7	3	9	35	3	0	11	37	45	17	9
11	MATERIALS	167	25	142	6	7	5	7	0	0	105	12	11	11	3
12	TEACHERS	154	89	65	22	26	20	14	7	0	1	6	13	18	27

Table 19: collocations with the word ‘teaching’, without function words

In the case of collocation with ‘training’ it is clear that ‘teacher training’ (403 times) and ‘training teachers’ (185 times) represent the main focus of the texts present in the corpus. The ECML also provides ‘training event[s]’ and refers to them in the corpus 109 (singular) and 84 (plural) times. ‘Training’ is definitely used in a very practical sense, since terms like ‘activities’ (‘training activities’: 44 times), ‘event[s]’ or ‘kit’ (‘training kit’: 65 times) can also be found in high frequency. More technical terms like [in- or pre-] ‘service training’ (88 times) or ‘national training’ (87 times) show that there are also many organisational and political aspects to consider when training teachers.

N	WORD	TOTAL	LEFT	RIGHT	L5	L4	L3	L2	L1	*	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5
4	TEACHER	523	445	78	10	8	17	7	403	0	14	14	18	8	24
6	TEACHERS	376	72	304	25	10	12	13	12	0	185	28	48	27	16
7	USE	212	21	191	4	2	12	3	0	0	0	2	175	9	5
8	EUROPEAN	179	1	178	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	3	5	168
9	LANGUAGE	174	109	65	19	17	18	33	22	0	2	30	9	12	12
10	SERVICE	166	140	26	7	4	2	39	88	0	0	6	3	12	5
11	NATIONAL	133	108	25	6	4	2	9	87	0	0	2	8	7	8
12	EVENT	132	10	122	7	1	2	0	0	0	109	2	0	4	7

Table 20: collocations with the word ‘training’, without function words

4.1.7. Projects

It is clear that the term ‘project’ will have slightly different collocations from the previous terms, which were so closely related to the world of language learning and teaching. The term ‘project’ is a very important one for the ECML, so it is not surprising to see it occurring so often. The most frequent direct collocations are ‘pilot project’ (212 times) and ‘project team’ (154 times). Both turns of phrases refer directly to the work of the ECML and the 2nd Medium-Term Programme, as can be seen by the third most frequent content word collocation: ‘ECML projects’ being used 76 times and the term ‘project work’ 44 times. The rest of the frequent collocations are ‘teachers’, ‘workshop’, ‘training’, ‘teacher’ and ‘research’. None of these terms, however, feature strongly as a direct collocation with ‘project’. Nevertheless it shows that projects lie at the heart of the ECML.

N	WORD	TOTAL	LEFT	RIGHT	L5	L4	L3	L2	L1	*	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5
5	PILOT	235	220	15	1	3	3	1	212	0	0	1	12	2	0
7	TEAM	201	26	175	8	6	10	1	1	0	154	9	4	4	4
8	ECML	172	117	55	7	9	5	20	76	0	1	6	7	34	7
10	ELP	131	81	50	8	11	3	16	43	0	7	5	11	20	7

11	LANGUAGE	115	74	41	15	17	13	25	4	0	1	3	10	12	15
12	EUROPEAN	113	34	79	3	6	17	4	4	0	2	1	13	58	5
14	WORK	103	31	72	5	9	8	6	3	0	44	6	8	1	13

Table 21: collocations with the word ‘project’, without function words

4.2. Comparison: Innovation and the ECML Corpus

With regard to the previously discussed frequent terms one could say that there are hardly any surprises. When looking at a corpus consisting of ECML project publications it is to be expected that terms such as ‘language[s]’, ‘learning’, ‘teaching’, ‘training’, ‘project’, ‘teacher[s]’, ‘student[s]’ or ‘education’ feature strongly. What must be noted is that the semantic field of ‘culture’ and ‘Europe’ are very important and occur frequently. These are two aspects that can also be found on the list of innovative ideas in the area of language teaching (see chapter 3.3). However, other topics and terms that are innovative in today’s language learning climate do not occur frequently in the ECML-project corpus.

The following table is a comparison between the previously discussed important and innovative issues and their occurrence in the ECML corpus. This table shows that the ECML projects do not deal with all innovative issues present in the discourse of today’s language teaching community. Considering the number of issues of this discourse, it would be unreasonable to expect this; however it is interesting to see which topics the ECML does not include in its projects and the question arises of whether the ECML does not see these topics as innovative enough for the future of language teaching.

Innovative topic area	Corpus evidence: Search Words and Frequencies	General Frequency of topic area
intercultural awareness	intercultural: 1,802 cultural: 1,717 culture: 1,898 cultures: 811 awareness: 968 competence: 1,472	very frequent
pluri- and multilingualism	plurilingual: 458 plurilingualism: 315 pluri: 71 multilingual: 255 multilingualism: 76 variety 291 language variety: 1 variety of languages: 5 diversity: 600	moderately frequent

usage of technology and the media (especially the internet and all its services)	technology: 76 technologies: 43 technological: 15 media: 145 internet: 337 blog*: 277 virtual: 45 ICT: 51 computer*: 111	moderately frequent
learner autonomy and individualisation (usage of portfolios, e.g. the European Language Portfolio)	ELP: 1,894 European Language Portfolio*: 353 portfolio*: 802 autonom*: 594 individual*: 1,086 independent*: 160	very frequent
use of the CEFR (in syllabi, curricula, definition of objectives, assessment, comparability)	CEFR: 360 Common European Framework of Reference: 181 (especially in reference section)	moderately frequent
early language learning	early: 310 earl*: 395 primary: 776 kindergarten*: 51 nursery*: 15	moderately frequent
networking and cooperation within a school, between schools and between schools and other institutions	cooperation*: 153 cooperating: 13 network*: 273 between school*: 19	partly frequent
language learning as a skill for life (open-mindedness, independence, mobility, values), life-long learning	open-mind*: 13 independ*: 161 mobility: 129 flexibil*: 146 respect: 247 intellectual*: 60 intellectual development: 1 language learning skill*: 5 skill*: 1409 value*: 678 life-long: 18 for life: 13 adult*: 226	partly frequent
native speakers, student exchanges, travels, etc.	native speaker*: 206 exchange*: 410 travel*: 150 excursion*: 15	moderately frequent
bilingual education, teaching contents with a foreign language	bilingual: 673 CLIL: 1641	very frequent
the new role of the teacher (e.g. as a mediator, trainer) and a focus on teacher	teacher train*: 645 trainer*: 742 mediator*: 25	very frequent

education, teacher training	teacher educat*: 634 workshop*: 1041 training events: 203	
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Table 22: Comparison of innovative issues with the frequency and evidence from the corpus

This table shows that four topic areas, intercultural awareness/competence, learner autonomy and portfolios, bilingual education (CLIL) and a focus on the teachers are the most frequently occurring issues. They can therefore be considered as innovative from the ECML's point of view. Other topics that are seen as innovative according to recent publications in the field of language teaching do not appear frequently in the projects, such as the terms 'life-long' or 'for life'. On the other hand, it can be claimed that these concepts already underlie the ECML's work and do not require additional mentioning (which would explain their absence from the frequency lists).

Of course projects always focus on special topics, but the question must be raised as to why the ECML has chosen these topics and what their choice tells us about their idea of innovation. Why is the ELP used more often than the CEFR, or CLIL more often than the term 'native speaker'? The frequent terms represent the main foci of the ECML and because the ECML claims to be innovative in its mission statement, the logical conclusion is that the ECML considers the ELP more innovative than the CEFR or CLIL more innovative than using 'native speakers'. Table 22 therefore provides an overview of the focal points of the ECML between 2003 and 2007 and points in the direction of an ECML definition of innovation in language teaching at that time.

This table concludes the quantitative research carried out through corpus (frequency and concordance/collocation) analysis and is the bridge to the qualitative research section of this paper, in which four different concepts will be analysed in more depth.

5. Qualitative Analysis

In the qualitative analysis I will analyse four concepts that play a significant role in innovative language teaching in Europe. In the following chapters the topics of 'interculturality', 'plurilingualism', 'learner-autonomy' and the values and policies that the Council of Europe is supporting: languages for democratic citizenship, social cohesion, mobility, life-long learning and mutual understanding will be analysed more closely (after a theoretical introduction to each of the areas). Although the 21 ECML projects are all based on the same parameters, set out in the policies of the Council of Europe, its Language Policy Division and

the CEFR (which is frequently used as a reference tool throughout the individual projects), they approach their tasks and aims from very different perspectives and angles. The aim of this analysis is thus to locate, discuss and categorize the various definitions, interpretations and implementations of the concepts. These different angles mentioned above partly correspond to the 4 different subheadings of the 2nd Medium-Term Programme:

A: Coping with linguistic and social diversity – provisions, profiles, materials

B: Communication in a multicultural society: the development of intercultural communicative competence

C: Professional development and reference tools for language educators

D: Innovative approaches and new technologies in the teaching and learning of languages

For better reader orientation the list of all the projects is once more included in this part of the paper:

Abbreviation	Name	Coordination	Materials
A Coping with linguistic and social diversity – provisions, profiles, materials			
A1. VALEUR	VALEUR - Valuing all languages in Europe	Joanna McPake and Teresa Tinsley	Abstract, flyer, leaflet, report, project website
A2. ENSEMBLE	ENSEMBLE - Whole-school language profiles and policies.	Antoinette Camilleri Grima	Abstract, flyer, book + CD-ROM, project website
A3. LDL	LDL - Linguistic diversity and literacy in a global perspective.	Brigitta Busch	Abstract, flyer, book, project website
A4. Chagal - setup	Chagal - setup. European curriculum guidelines for access programmes into higher education for under-represented adult learners	Grete Kernegger	Abstract, flyer, CD-Rom information, project website
B Communication in a multicultural society: the development of intercultural communicative competence			
B1. ICCinTE	ICCinTE – Intercultural communication training in teacher education	Ildikó Lázár	Abstract, flyer, book + CD-ROM, project website
B2. LEA	LEA – Language educator awareness	Mercè Bernaus	Abstract, flyer, book + CD-ROM, project website
B3 ICOPROMO	ICOPROMO – Intercultural competence for professional mobility	Evelyne Glaser	Abstract, flyer, book + CD-ROM, project website

B4. Gulliver	Gulliver – To get to know each other leads to better mutual understanding	Magdalena Bedynska	Abstract, flyer, brochure + CD-ROM, project website
C Professional development and reference tools for language educators			
C1. CoCoCop	CoCoCop – Coherence of principles, cohesion of competences	Anne-Brit Fenner	Abstract, flyer, book, project website
C2. QualiTraining	QualiTraining – A training guide for quality assurance	Laura Muresan	Abstract, flyer, book + CD-ROM, project website
C3. FTE (EPOSTL)	FTE – From Profile to Portfolio: A framework for reflection in language teacher education. (European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages).	David Newby	Abstract, flyer, book, project website
C4. ALC	ALC – Across languages and cultures	Michel Candelier	Abstract, flyer, report, project website
C5. Impel	Impel – ELP implementation support	Hans Ulrich Bosshard	Abstract, flyer, leaflet, project website
C6. ELP_TT	ELP_TT – Training teachers to use the European Language Portfolio	David Little	Abstract, flyer, leaflet, book + CD-ROM, project website
C7. TrainEd	TrainEd – Training teacher educators	Gabriela S. Matei	Abstract, flyer, book + CD-ROM, project website
C8. GroupLead	GroupLead – Group facilitation in language teacher education	Margit Szesztay	Abstract, flyer + CD-ROM, project website
D Innovative approaches and new technologies in the teaching and learning of languages			
D1. BLOGS	BLOGS – Web journals in language education	Mario Camilleri	Abstract, flyer, book + CD-ROM, project website
D2. TEMOLAYOLE	TEMOLAYOLE – Developing teachers of modern languages to young learners.	Marianne Nikolov	Abstract, flyer, book, project website
D3. CLIL matrix	CLIL matrix – The CLIL quality matrix.	David Marsh	Abstract, flyer, project website
D4. LCaS	LCaS – Language case studies	Johann Fischer	Abstract, flyer, project website (not online yet)
D5. LQuest	LQuest – LanguageQuests.	Ton Koenraad	Abstract, flyer, project website

Table 23: List of all ECML projects of the 2nd Medium-Term Programme (2004-2007).

The four projects in group A appear to consider the challenge of multilingualism from a more sociological starting point. This especially applies to the first three projects, VALEUR, ENSEMBLE and LDL, which do not provide any methodological ideas on plurilingual approaches, but set the scene on a more general level, looking at society at large and proposing certain ways forward to strengthen plurilingualism and linguistic diversity and some examples of projects to disseminate good practice. To give an example, the VALEUR project has taken stock of the huge number of additional languages spoken in Europe and of the available provisions for them, but has not as such come forward with many practical suggestions on how to improve the support for additional languages (which, however, has never been the aim of the project).

Most of the projects deal with teacher training and teacher empowerment much more than with direct activities or ideas for the language learning classroom, however teacher training is obviously meant to have an effect in the classroom as well. The underlying paradigm of the work by the Council of Europe and the ECML is that improving the knowledge, skills, competences and the professionalism of the teacher leads to improved teaching and thus to improved learning and to ‘better’ language learners who in turn become ‘better’ European citizens. This basic theory explains the emphasis on teacher training and empowerment in the projects of the ECML. The Council of Europe has constructed this ideal of a plurilingual, intercultural, open-minded, democratically orientated citizen, which is based on the humanistic tradition of Europe.

Other projects provide activities (with theoretical background) for the language classroom, especially in order to develop intercultural, plurilingual and ICT competences (e.g. BLOGS, GULLIVER).

5.1. The Concept of ‘Interculturality’

‘Intercultural’ is among the most frequent terms in the ECML project corpus, as discussed earlier. In this section I will now take a closer look at the term, first from a theoretical perspective, which is followed by an in depth analysis of the projects and the activities used in these projects to foster and support intercultural competence. The semantic field of culture includes other terms as well (as pointed out previously); however this analysis will focus on ‘intercultural’ and its collocations.

5.1.1. Theoretical Discussion

The term ‘intercultural’ has become increasingly important over the last years, simply because greater mobility and globalisation make it necessary for people to communicate effectively with members from different cultures on an almost daily basis. As seen from the concordance analysis, ‘intercultural’ appears most often as a collocation with ‘competence’, ‘awareness’ and ‘communication’. In many of the publications a difference is made between ‘intercultural competence’ and ‘cultural awareness’, two collocations that will be discussed in this section.

5.1.1.1. Definition

In general “[i]ntercultural competence (IC) is the ability to interact effectively with people from cultures that we recognise as being different from our own” (Guilherme 2004: 297). This basic definition establishes two main aspects, the intercultural - at least two people from different cultures must interact - and the competence aspect: the ability to interact. These are the basic requirements for successful intercultural communication. Müller-Jacquier (2004: 295) defines ‘intercultural communication’ as the following specific communication situation: “communicative events, where people from different cultural backgrounds engage in face-to-face communication”. This however raises the question of whether a telephone conversation or an interaction in an internet chat room between people from different cultural backgrounds should not be considered as an ‘intercultural communication’, as they are not face-to-face. For me face-to-face is not a requirement for ‘intercultural communication’, especially in today’s world of multimedia and virtual connections.

Looking back in history, it can be said that cultural awareness or socio-cultural competence became increasingly important together with the rise of the communicative approach and with that the focus on communication, and on ‘authentic’ communication. Recently another shift has occurred, moving away from mere factual knowledge. Fenner (2006: 43) states that “[i]t is no longer just a matter of gaining knowledge and developing skills, but also a matter of the learners’ attitudes to the foreign culture and interaction”. However, it is not just the foreign culture that has become important, but also one’s own: “By realising that individual learners are part of a cultural community and by enhancing knowledge about that community, learners may become better equipped to encounter the other” (Fenner 2006: 45).

According to Müller-Jacquier (2004: 295), foreign language teaching should equip students with the competences necessary for real intercultural communication situations. In such intercultural situations a common basis of understanding must be found and participants agree on certain frames for the communication, e.g. if an intercultural group meets in a certain country, this country's cultural domain may form the basis. Intercultural understanding would entail that the group finds a new common framework that uses the different cultural backgrounds constructively and "create for themselves a comprehension base for jointly defined frames, meanings, linguistic action and procedures" (Müller-Jacquier 2004: 296). The effectiveness and positive outcome of an intercultural communication situation is dependent on the intercultural and linguistic competence of the participants.

When comparing cultures, Guilherme (2004: 297) (referring to Brislin and Yoshida 1994) differentiates between 'culture-general' aspects (that the cultures share with each other) and 'culture-specific' ones (in which the cultures differ). The weighting of these two aspects explains to what extent we perceive a culture to be different or similar to our own. In successful intercultural communication an understanding about cultural factors is the basis for a respectful and tolerant conduct. Intercultural competence also differs from communicative competence (although the two aspects are linked together), according to Guilherme (2004: 296ff, see also Byram 1997), in so far as the latter focuses at sending messages and communicating whereas the first competence tries to establish relationships.

Byram (1997: 70) also distinguishes between 'intercultural competence', which can include communications in the mother tongue with speakers from other countries, and 'intercultural communicative competence' which includes speaking in a foreign language. In case such an 'intercultural communicative competence' is present the foreign language student can be regarded as an 'intercultural speaker' (see Byram, Zarate 1997), mediating and moving between various cultural identities, of which he/she must be critically aware, and willing to be open yet reflective towards them (see Guilherme 2004: 298). When intercultural communication takes place, the usually fixed culture-specific meanings and symbols are floating because the meeting takes place in between the "cultural identities involved" (Guilherme 2004: 298).

According to Guilherme (2004: 2968) an intercultural speaker is somebody who is "committed to turning intercultural encounters into intercultural relationships". This therefore entails a longer term commitment (not necessarily with the person him/herself), in which the speakers try to increase their awareness about intercultural meanings.

A definition of intercultural competence also includes its components, or the so-called savoir-categories. Byram, Nichols, Stevens (2001: 5) state that the “components of intercultural competence are knowledge, skills and attitudes, complemented by the values one holds because of one’s belonging to a number of social groups, values which are part of one’s belonging to a given society”. This definition alone shows the complexity of teaching and learning intercultural awareness, which is one of the reasons why it might have been avoided in the past and might still be avoided in certain classrooms. It is simply more difficult to define, to teach/learn and to assess than grammar, for instance. However, there is general agreement nowadays that language and culture are indivisible or as Bennett, Bennett, Allen (2003: 237) put it more bluntly when they quote a saying “the person who learns language without culture risks becoming a fluent fool”.

Byram and Zarate (1997: 13ff) have laid an important basis for teaching and learning intercultural competence within the area of foreign language teaching by identifying various different factors, objectives or ‘savoirs’ which are essential for developing intercultural competence:

1. savoir être (attitudes and values)
2. savoir apprendre (ability to learn)
3. savoirs (knowledge)
4. savoir faire (knowing how)

Since then the categories have changed and they now include: savoir être, savoirs, savoir comprendre, savoir apprendre/faire and savoir s’engager. Byram, Nichols, Stevens (2001: 5ff) explain these categories in more detail: ‘Savoir être’ are the intercultural attitudes of a person and present the foundation for intercultural competence. These include attitudes such as “curiosity and openness, readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and belief about one’s own”. (Byram, Nichols, Stevens 2001: 5). Intercultural speakers are willing to accept other values or beliefs as equally valid and are able to change perspective and view their own culture from the outside, they thus can ‘decentre’.

‘Savoirs’ is the next aspect, meaning knowledge which is mostly concerned with an understanding of how social groups operate, how identities function, of social processes, cultural products, and of interaction between members of these groups or society in general. This knowledge can also include the intercultural speakers’ self image.

In addition to attitudes and knowledge intercultural competence also includes skills. ‘Savoir comprendre’ are the skills of interpreting, relating and comparing. An intercultural

speaker needs to be competent in interpreting and explaining documents, events, or ideas from another culture and relating or comparing them to his/her own.

‘Savoir apprendre/faire’ is also needed to be an intercultural speaker; this includes the skills of discovery and interaction. Speakers must be able to gain new knowledge about cultures by themselves, especially by interacting with people from different cultures and talking with them about their beliefs, values and behaviours and relating this new information to their already existing knowledge. The fact that this happens under real-time communicative circumstances makes it even more difficult.

Finally, an intercultural speaker needs a critical cultural awareness (‘savoir s’engager’) of their own values, beliefs and culture and the implications of these for their interpretation of the culture and values of others. This means one needs to be able to evaluate “perspectives, practices and products in one’s own and other cultures and countries” (Byram, Nichols, Stevens 2001: 7). Byram, Nichols and Stevens (2001: 5ff) emphasise, however, that there should be no value judgments by the teacher as he/she should raise an awareness that certain values exist and not change his/her students’ values. However, there are some values which should lie at the basis of any foreign language teaching: human rights, equality and democracy in human interaction.

According to this view, teachers should no longer tell students what life in a certain culture is like, or what native speakers of the foreign language are like, but should rather help students to develop intercultural competence through interactive education. This of course has implications for teacher education itself. Fenner’s (2006: 40ff) article about intercultural awareness is entitled “Intercultural awareness as an integral part of foreign language learning”. The title alone points towards the new, or innovative, view that intercultural awareness is not one chapter in a language learning text book, where students learn about the political system in the foreign country, or one session in which the teacher tells his/her class about famous historic characters of a country, but it is an integral part of language learning, which should be constantly tangible in language teaching situations.

In the *Common European Framework of Reference* four different ‘savoirs’ are mentioned in connection with competences: ‘savoir’ (declarative knowledge), ‘savoir-faire’ (skills), ‘savoir-être’ (existential competence) and ‘savoir-apprendre’ (learning ability) (CEFR 2001: 101-108). For Fenner (2006: 43) this clearly shows the shift from ‘Landeskunde’ and static knowledge about history, geography, etc. to a more procedural form of knowledge. This shift is also exemplified by the categories laid down by Byram, Nichols, Stevens (2001) mentioned above.

Another piece of evidence to show the growing importance of intercultural communication in our world is that ‘intercultural training events’ are available and sought after. The duration can vary, but the basic aim is to help participants handle intercultural situations positively and effectively. Müller-Jacquier (2004: 300) defines the objectives as “interaction-relevant knowledge, conduct norms, and behavioural and linguistic strategies”, which affect the “cognitive, behavioural and affective” areas. The first one includes culture-specific information and knowledge, the second one is concerned with attitudes (e.g. tolerance towards representatives of other cultures) and the third one refers to skills and new behaviours. The trainer must be aware of (and must also make the students aware of) the fact that the target culture is by no means mono-cultural, but is a diverse entity with sub groups and contradictions. One obvious teaching method is the use of case studies (partly from the students themselves); however the students also need some linguistic meta-language and concepts to analyse critical incidents and explain possible reasons for misunderstandings (by establishing and discussing linguistic checklists). Critical voices raised are concerned with the lack of focus on actual intercultural communications and their analysis (cf. Müller-Jacquier 2004: 300ff).

In his definition of the term ‘intercultural competence’ Thornbury (2006: 60) highlights the intercultural aspect of the CEFR: “[i]ntercultural competence, meaning the ability to negotiate cultural contact and difference in a second (or third or fourth, etc) language, is now recognized as being an important component of overall communicative competence, and features prominently in the Common European Framework, for example” (Thornbury 2006: 60). The Council of Europe sees the many European languages and cultures as an important and valuable part of the continent’s heritage and promotes foreign language learning and teaching, especially with an intercultural component. According to Morrow (2003: 4) the Council of Europe considers intercultural awareness as “an essential part of the development of competence in another language or other languages”. What is interesting in this quote is that ‘awareness’ is seen as an important part of the ‘development of competence’. It seems therefore that Morrow sees intercultural awareness as a stepping stone towards communicative and intercultural competence. As mentioned above, Byram, Nichols, Stevens (2001) also consider ‘critical cultural awareness’ as one part of ‘intercultural competence’.

5.1.1.2. Cultural Awareness

According to Risager (2004: 159), cultural awareness and the aspect of culture in language teaching developed out of the wider trend in the humanities and social sciences, the ‘cultural

turn' of the 1980s. The post-modern, mobile, international and culturally mixed society of today has become increasingly interested in questions of cultural difference and, more generally, in 'the other' and what this concept represents. However, it is not only a question of analysing other cultures or being aware of them, but cultural awareness also includes one's own culture. Risager (2004: 159) calls this reflexivity, defining it as "the idea that insight into or experience of the practices or systems of meaning of other cultures is of significance for the individual's cultural understanding of self and their own identity". In European language teaching cultural awareness and intercultural competence are of great importance and are an indisputable part of the foreign language teaching classroom. The development of communicative language teaching also favoured the inclusion of cultural awareness because, as Risager (2005: 160) points out, culture was seen as a possible content to be discussed during language classes.

There are a number of aspects to consider when discussing cultural awareness, as there is no clear cut definition of any of these terms relating to culture. Risager (2004: 160) mentions the following components of cultural awareness:

- reflection about own and target culture
- cognitive and affective dimension
- the question of content and knowledge of facts
- historical and contemporary issues
- inclusion of literary texts
- culture at a national level or inclusion of multicultural communities
- linguistic dimension and language awareness
- the problematic issue of distance to the target culture and the possibility of a stay in the target culture

Other important aspects include the discussion of stereotypes and the realisation that there are many different world views and that they are just as valid as one's own. Cultural awareness presents itself as one of the aims of teaching a foreign language. Risager (2004: 161) claims that intercultural competence and cultural awareness stand in a competitive relationship to each other; however her arguments are difficult to follow. Both concepts have their validity and they focus on different aspects within the wider field of culture in language teaching, although in my view intercultural competence seems to go further than cultural awareness, which is necessary to gain intercultural competence. Risager (2004: 161) defines intercultural competence in the following way: it "refers to and supplements the concept of communicative competence, and therefore includes a skills dimension". She points out that the term is also

used more often for assessment purposes, especially on the European level. In contrast to that cultural awareness is used as a more general term, connected to the content in foreign language education. The nature of this ‘competitive relationship’ between the two concepts is not explained.

5.1.1.3. The Common European Framework of Reference

As is well known the Common European Framework of Reference strongly emphasises the intercultural aspect included in foreign language learning. Heyworth (2003: 13) mentions the following culture related aims to be found in the CEFR: “the development of European citizenship, with an educated European understanding several languages [...], knowledgeable about, and having respect for many different nationalities and national cultures”. The CEFR is very much based on the idea or aim (or dream) of plurilingual and pluricultural citizens with competences in foreign languages that reach further than simple linguistic competence. Heyworth (2003: 16) mentions a list compiled from the CEFR, including pragmatic, sociolinguistic, strategic, existential and finally intercultural competence, which he defines as “knowledge, awareness, and understanding of the relation between the learner’s world, and the world of users of the target language”.

The *Common European Framework of Reference* distinguishes on a basic level between general competences and communicative language competences, although it says that “[a]ll human competences contribute in one way or another to the language user’s ability to communicate and may be regarded as aspects of communicative competence” (CEFR 2001: 101). According to the CEFR (2001: 101ff) the general competences include:

- ‘declarative knowledge (‘savoir’), which comprises ‘knowledge of the world’ (factual knowledge and knowledge of entities), ‘sociocultural knowledge’ (knowledge about a specific culture, e.g. everyday living, living conditions, relations, values, beliefs, attitudes, body language, social conventions and rituals) and ‘intercultural awareness’ (understanding of the relations between the student’s culture and the target culture),
- ‘Skills and know-how (‘savoir-faire’), which comprises ‘Practical skills and know-how’ (social skills, living skills, vocational and professional skills and leisure skills) and ‘Intercultural skills and know-how’ (relating culture of origin with foreign culture, cultural sensitivity, use of strategies, overcoming stereotyping, being a cultural mediator),

- ‘Existential competence (‘savoir-être’)', which discusses the personalities of individuals, concerning their attitudes, motivations, values, beliefs, cognitive styles and personality factors and the
- ‘Ability to learn (‘savoir apprendre’)', which is concerned with the ability to acquire new knowledge and incorporate it in already existing knowledge. This includes ‘Language and communication awareness’ (sensitivity to language and its use), ‘General phonetic awareness and skills’ (facilitating the pronunciation), ‘Study skills’ (effective learning) and ‘Heuristic skills’ (dealing with new experiences, new technologies and resources).

Within the communicative language competences of the CEFR (2001: 101-130) we also find aspects that could be included in the area of cultural awareness as well, namely sociolinguistic competences (e.g. politeness, appropriate register, recognition of dialects and sociolects), as these vary from language to language and from culture to culture.

Having discussed the view the CEFR takes on intercultural competence and its significance I cannot agree with Roche’s (2006: 428) claim that “Der Gemeinsame Europäische Referenzrahmen berücksichtigt interkulturelle Kompetenzen nur am Rande [...]”. It is true that the CEFR focuses strongly on defining linguistic competence and producing scales, however, the underlying vision of the CEFR definitely incorporates plurilingual and interculturally aware language learners. Nevertheless it is interesting that the CEFR has not attempted to produce scales for competence levels of its ‘general competences’ section, as it merely incorporates questions and lists in this chapter. A probable reason for this is that the Council of Europe found it difficult to accurately describe this vast area of competences that are included under this heading, and also to formulate precise descriptors to differentiate between different levels of the learners’ competence. Scales are available for ‘sociolinguistic appropriateness’ (CEFR 2001: 122), however.

5.1.1.4. Related Concepts

It is important to stress that there are a lot of different terms and concepts related to the teaching and learning of culture and intercultural competence. The German term ‘Landeskunde’, which has existed for a long time, is situated on a more basic level. Willems (1990: 23) defines this term as: “containing surface knowledge about the ‘facts of life’ in the foreign community [and] is only part of sociocultural knowledge”.

Other aspects that are mentioned in connection to intercultural competence are ‘culture shock’, which is the “psychological and social disorientation caused by confrontation with a

new or alien culture” (Furnham 2004: 165). People might find it hard to adapt to or feel confident in a new cultural environment, and some might experience a sense of bewilderment, alienation, anxiety, confusion, loss, insecurity or even disgust. The question this raises is “how, when and why migrants and sojourners learn ways of working in a new cultural environment” (Furnham 2004: 166), thus overcoming culture shocks. I believe that these cultural problems can be decreased through a higher level of intercultural competence and preparation for the sojourns.

Another aspect is experiencing a ‘culture bump’, which “occurs when an individual from one culture finds himself or herself in a different, strange, or uncomfortable situation when interacting with persons of a different culture” (Archer 1986: 170f). These potentially problematic situations occur because of different behavioural patterns that are followed in certain situations in different cultures. The difference from a ‘culture shock’ is that they are short moments (although effects can be longer lasting) during which one is in contact with a member from another culture, so they can often happen in the native country of one of the participants.

Archer (1986: 171ff) thinks that such culture bumps present themselves as interesting material for discussions in foreign language classrooms (especially with culturally mixed, international students), as they can provide students with new cultural insights and intercultural competence by means of a thorough analysis of the situation in question, in which the underlying values that lead to the culture bump can be unearthed. This process does not only include a realisation of why the other person from another culture has behaved in a certain way, but also a self-realisation of why ‘I’ have reacted in the way ‘I’ did.

5.1.1.5. Summary

To summarise this theoretical part I would like to present the following aspects which are connected to the concept of ‘intercultural competence/awareness’ and which describe aims to be developed in a foreign language learning environment:

- a general attitude of openness, curiosity, tolerance of others and different world views
- knowledge and awareness of your own and the foreign culture, of yourself and the ‘other’
- the skills to interact effectively with people from other cultures
- the skills to acquire and relate to new knowledge about cultures
- the skills to relate to, interpret and compare different cultures and their beliefs and practices

- a critical awareness of the learners' own culture and its values, and thus its implications on their worldview and behaviour
- competence to deal effectively with culture shock or culture bumps, should they occur

The question now remains how to achieve these goals while learning and teaching a modern foreign language. For this purpose the focus will now shift back to the ECML's projects to see how they have defined intercultural competence and what possible activities, tasks, projects, etc. have been developed and used during the 2nd medium-term programme of the ECML.

5.1.2. Project Analysis

5.1.2.1. Social Orientation

The Council of Europe states in its policies that the development of intercultural and plurilingual citizenship is important for social cohesion, mutual understanding and the harmonious co-existence of European citizens. There are a few projects that approach intercultural competence from the starting point of society, focusing on social issues, such as migration, minorities, identities and integration. These aspects are of course closely related to individuals, but the projects are interested in this wider point of view.

In the project ENSEMBLE⁴, although focusing on linguistic diversity and plurilingualism, all case studies emphasise the importance of intercultural competence in combination with their plurilingual concepts, especially for including, integrating and valuing students from minorities or with a migratory background. In one case study (Young, Helot 2007) about involving parents in introducing different cultures and languages in a primary school in Alsace, France this becomes evident:

Furthermore, by including and acknowledging the languages and cultures of families living within the local community, the teachers were also able to build a number of intercultural and linguistic bridges between the home and school environments of their pupils and thus laying the foundations for a more tolerant and open society (Young, Helot 2007: 18).

In this quotation it becomes clear that the aim of this project is that by promoting intercultural and plurilingual competence the local community and society at large will benefit. The expectations are quite high, as the project claims to be "laying the foundations for a more tolerant and open society". This of course corresponds to the aims of the Council of Europe

⁴ In this analysis the acronyms of the projects will be used. A list of all the projects, with their full title, their project coordinator, etc. can be found in Appendix 2.

concerning language learning. The advantages for the individual students are unquestionably present as well, but are not emphasised in the report.

The LEA project, which focused on “Plurilingual and pluricultural awareness in language teacher education” (publication title), provided a questionnaire for teachers and trainees about their attitudes towards plurilingualism and interculturality. Two of the statements that participants of the study had to grade according to their degree of approval were:

- Plurilingual and pluri-intercultural activities can help to integrate immigrant families into the school life.
- Plurilingual and pluri-intercultural activities may allow me to integrate fully pupils/teachers from minority ethnic backgrounds into the group (Bernaus et al. 2004: file:///E:/questionnaire.html).

Again the emphasis lies on the integration of immigrants and students from minorities. However, it is not only the students who can be helped through plurilingual and intercultural activities, but “immigrant families”. This of course depends on the activity itself (e.g. if parents, as opposed to students, are invited to present their language, this might have a more immediate effect on the families). Attention should also be drawn to the combination of the terms ‘pluricultural’ and ‘intercultural’ to form the clipped compound ‘pluri-intercultural’. This is an indication of the problematic and fast changing terminology surrounding the teaching/learning/facilitating of culture in the language classroom: pluricultural, multicultural, intercultural, transcultural, cultural or socio-cultural, combined with knowledge, competence, skill and awareness form concepts that are partly overlapping. The term ‘pluri-intercultural’ supposedly seeks to unite the positive (yet challenging) aspects of pluricultural competence, i.e. “the various cultures (national, regional, social) to which that person has gained access do not simply co-exist side by side; they are compared, contrasted and actively interact to produce an enriched integrated pluricultural competence” (CEFR 2001: 6), and intercultural competence (see the theoretical discussion above). This term appears only in the LEA project; none of the other projects uses it. In general, ‘pluricultural*’ is used less frequently (353 times in the corpus) than ‘intercultural*’ (1,860 times).

The CHAGAL project defined 12 curriculum guidelines for “access programmes into higher education for underrepresented adult learners” (Foster et al. 2006: E:\en\index.htm), one of them highlighting the social aspect of a multicultural student body in a university: “Embrace diversity, acknowledge the positive contributions of international students and convey the message appropriately” (Foster et al. 2006: E:\en\curriculum_guidelines\first_guideline.htm). This focuses on the one hand on accepting,

acknowledging and making (positive) use of the Chagal students' multilingualism and multiculturalism. On the other hand measures should be taken to engage the public and especially the university in this international discourse and emphasise the advantages of having these students there. Thus, on a very general level the project team claims that "European societies can benefit from the contributions of CHAGAL students in economic, political, and cultural terms." (Foster et al. 2006: E:\en\curriculum_guidelines\first_guideline.htm). In contrast to the previously discussed projects, in this case it is not the immigrant or minority population that will benefit but society at large, the dominant culture of the particular country the university is in. This is a very important observation that not only immigrants or minorities benefit from fostering linguistic and cultural diversity, but even those who are part of the dominant linguistic or cultural group of a society.

5.1.2.2. Individual Development/Empowerment

A very important part of or reason for developing intercultural competence is its impact on individuals and their lives, attitudes, beliefs and concepts mainly concerning other cultures and cultural differences, but also on a wider, more general level. Intercultural competence influences every aspect of social life, even if there is no interaction with another culture, as this concept also includes an awareness of one's own culture and a comparison with the other. In this category projects are included that focus on this personal development. This includes teachers and learners, as everybody can gain from increasing their intercultural competence. As mentioned above, the Council of Europe aims at improving the understanding and the harmonious living together of Europeans by fostering more open, curious, understanding, plurilingual and pluricultural attitudes among citizens. Thus, at the heart of any theory about intercultural competences and plurilingualism is the personal/individual development.

An examination of the above mentioned LEA questionnaire shows that the following statements correspond to the idea of individual development:

- Plurilingual and pluri-intercultural activities can make a positive contribution to changing pupils/teacher attitudes towards other communities and cultures
- Plurilingual and pluri-intercultural activities can promote positive attitudes towards speakers of other languages (Bernaus et al. 2004: file:///E:/questionnaire.html).

The two statements can apply to teachers as well as learners and they focus on their personal attitudes and beliefs and the possibility of changing them in favour of a more positive view. This idea of fostering 'positive' attitudes is only mentioned in the second statement, whereas in the first one the project team only refers to "changing pupils/teacher attitudes". The presupposition of this statement is that the students/teachers enter the classroom/training

centre with negative, stereotypical attitudes and these are then changed through the use of plurilingual and pluri-intercultural activities towards positive, open, tolerant attitudes concerning communities, cultures and individuals. Activities like these can definitely make a contribution to such changes, but attitudes and beliefs are often resistant to alteration, especially if these issues are dealt with only in the language teaching classroom and are not supported by wider measures, including those involving the whole school and also the students' parents.

In order to facilitate these changes the Council of Europe focuses on helping the students 'to learn how to learn' or on providing them with the skills and competences necessary for life-long learning. This is especially valid for intercultural or plurilingual learning, which is neither temporally nor spatially restricted. The CEFR (2001) calls this ability the 'savoir-apprendre' category, in Byram, Nichols, Stevens (2001) it is the 'savoir apprendre/faire' category. Thus individual development can be seen as twofold: teachers should foster intercultural/plurilingual competence through activities and specific approaches, and on the other hand equip students to value the intercultural/plurilingual experiences they have outside school and learn from them. This is why quite a few projects encourage the use of the European Language Portfolio as one of the means to foster these aspects, as can be seen in the following quotation:

We still have a hard work ahead towards accepting the notion that the educational curriculum is not limited to school and does not end with it. Plurilingual and intercultural competence may begin before school and proceed parallel to it (Council of Europe, 1998). The use of the Portfolio may play an important role as a means of exploring and overcoming frontiers within the curriculum as it allows teachers to take into account and recognise a plurilingual and intercultural profile which includes the ability to cope with several languages or cultures and manage such repertoire (Gonçalves, Andrade 2007: 21).

This quotation also shows that it is not only essential to integrate and value experiences and knowledge from outside school, but that it is also important for teachers to cooperate across subject areas to ensure a successful approach to intercultural and plurilingual teaching and learning. As mentioned above, many projects incorporate the ELP indirectly but two projects, IMPEL (C5) and ELP_TT (C6) explicitly deal with the European Language Portfolio and its implementation and support teachers who want to use it. The following quotation is from the impel-project.

The EVC [European Validation Committee] is also concerned to uphold the principle that every ELP should allow learners to document and reflect on all their experience of learning and using other languages, not only the experience that comes to them through education; and it continues to attach great importance to the intercultural and learning-to-

learn components (Goullier 2006: http://www.ecml.at/mtp2/impel/pdf/CoEseminar_E.pdf [12/04/2009]).

Intercultural and plurilingual experiences outside education will often go hand in hand. This means that we have to equip the learners with the ability of 'savoir apprendre/faire' so that they can turn intercultural/plurilingual experiences into valuable learning situations for themselves and recognize them as such. In both of the above quotations it seems as if the teachers find it difficult (or the researchers/authors of the texts believe that teachers find it hard) to adequately value this learning outside school. These quotations suggest that the use of a portfolio may help teachers include their students' intercultural and plurilingual experiences and competences from outside formal education that have historically been undervalued. Such competences may include languages spoken by immigrant families at home (which in the past did not have a place in school education) or holiday experiences (which can prove relevant for intercultural and plurilingual competence).

There is a great difference between assessing and valuing an experience or knowledge. The ELP acknowledges this difference and moves away from teacher assessment, as the ELP belongs to the student and is not marked or graded by the teacher. It records students' experiences and thus values them. Taking note of such experiences and actively writing about them in the ELP also raises the students' awareness of intercultural and plurilingual learning opportunities outside school and, in some cases, values their home language, the culture of their grandparents, or the contact they have with their foreign neighbour (this list is obviously endless). The different versions that are available now ensure that an ELP that is age appropriate can be used with students. Students definitely need encouragement and instruction at the beginning of their ELP journey.

The ELP-TT project has published a glossary on its website (in cooperation with the impel-project), with the following definition of 'intercultural learning': "Acquiring knowledge and understanding of people whose cultures are different from one's own." (Glossary ELP-TT: http://www.ecml.at/mtp2/ELP_TT/ELP_TT_CDROM/DM_layout/Glossary/Glossary.pdf [22/04/2009]). This is a rather shortened definition, as intercultural learning includes more than gaining knowledge and understanding of a different culture, as we know from the 'savoir' categories of Byram and in the CEFR. In addition to that, intercultural learning also brings insights into the learners' own culture and lifestyle and initiates questions and thoughts about their own as well as other cultures. The above is rather a definition of cultural knowledge or awareness, a stepping stone towards intercultural competence.

However, the definition of 'pluriculturalism' is more detailed:

The ability of an individual to interact in different cultural milieux. This ability may imply both knowledge of likely differences in customs and values in a range of communities and the empathy required to respect and place value on beliefs and practices other than one's own (Glossary ELP-TT: http://www.ecml.at/mtp2/ELP_TT/ELP_TT_CDROM/DM_layout/Glossary/Glossary.pdf [22/04/2009]).

The focus in this definition is on the interaction between members of different cultures and on a state of open-mindedness, tolerance and curiosity. I do not see any difference in this definition to that of interculturality, as it does not focus on the 'pluri-' aspect. As mentioned before, 'pluri-' refers to a competence as well as a value and, considering the first aspect, it highlights the interacting competences in our brain that store our language abilities and thus also our intercultural/pluricultural competence. In the ELP-TT booklet Little et al (2007: 15) make this point clear. The trend is moving away from aiming at the

“mastery” of languages in isolation from one another to the development of a plurilingual and pluricultural competence in which all languages interrelate and interact. This paradigm shift poses a significant new challenge for language teachers, requiring them to help students/language users to see themselves as social actors and agents of their own learning and to develop their intercultural communicative competence and their capacity for intercultural communication and cooperation on a lifelong basis (Little et al. 2007: 17).

In this quotation we notice the unification of two important points of view on intercultural and plurilingual education. On the one hand it is essential to empower the individual students, to ensure that they learn how to learn and implement, the 'savoir apprendre/faire' category. On the other hand the authors focus on what this means for the teachers and their classroom activities and methodology. It should not be forgotten though that not only the students are 'social actors and agents' but the teachers themselves as well. This has an influence on the teaching of intercultural communicative competence and on teacher education as well.

Another important concept in the area of individual empowerment is mobility. Mobility between European nations has become an important part of the life of many pupils, students and professionals, who spend some time abroad as part of their education or work. Even if a person stays in his/her home country, he/she will be likely to work with people with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds at some point in time. Although language courses are offered for students of practically all university subjects nowadays, Glaser (2007: 11) found that

[i]n fact, very few educational institutions in the field of the social sciences have successfully managed to combine the development of intercultural competencies with the language education in their programmes. Hence, their graduates often find it hard to cope

with cultural differences, particularly when working in multicultural teams, and they often lack the necessary cultural knowledge or mindfulness (Glaser 2007: 11).

This brings us back to the ‘problem’ that knowing a language is not enough; the speaker also needs cultural and intercultural competence in order to achieve successful communication in multicultural teams. The graduates Glaser (2007: 11) mentions do not know how to deal with people from other countries; they are surprised because of cultural differences and might even experience culture bumps or shocks. This can be avoided by including intercultural activities in their language programs, and empowering them (life-long learning), so that they can carry on by themselves. Again the focus lies on empowering the individual so that they can make the most out of their intercultural experiences and not see them as negative and problem creating incidents.

Through the acquisition of intercultural competence, the learner becomes more open to contacts with others and more inclined to learn other foreign languages and to develop a richer personality. He will therefore be better equipped to live and work in the plurilingual and multicultural reality of present-day European society (Bedynska et al. 2007: E:\en\intercultural-skills-today2.htm).

This quotation from the GULLIVER project (which will be discussed more closely in the methodological section) sums up the idea of personal empowerment and enrichment by including intercultural competence training in the language classroom. This project tries to achieve these aims through an international internet forum. The benefit of including intercultural and plurilingual competence in school teaching can lead to students having a ‘richer personality’, a claim that shows that in this case the students themselves as human beings and European citizens are the centre of attention.

5.1.2.3. Teacher Empowerment

Although it could be argued that the teacher is also an individual and should have been included in the chapter above, the aspect and the role of the teacher will be discussed separately, especially because so many projects focus on the teacher specifically and provide ideas for training events and opportunities for reflection for this group of people, even more so than classroom activities (which are discussed in the following chapter). On the one hand the teacher plays an important role in fostering intercultural and plurilingual competence in the classroom itself. On the other hand he/she has to encourage intercultural learning outside and after school, value the students’ experiences and in some cases change beliefs, attitudes, stereotypes the students may hold (parents, society, school), thus fostering life-long development and learning. This is clearly a demanding task and the ECML projects provide

ideas on how to help teachers cope with it. In addition to that, teachers are also social agents with their own values, beliefs and attitudes, and this is another area that the ECML projects discuss (teacher training events, etc.).

The LEA questionnaire that has been cited above is a questionnaire for teachers and student teachers, thus focusing entirely on their beliefs and thoughts on the topic of plurilingual and pluri-intercultural activities (cf. Bernaus et al. 2004: file:///E:/questionnaire.html). The project itself mainly targets language teacher educators, emphasising that pluricultural and plurilingual activities must be integrated into the training of language teachers.

In the TrainEd self-assessment questionnaire entitled “What kind of trainer are you?” the background knowledge section includes the following statement: “I have a sound background of theoretical and practical knowledge about the key aspects of language teaching – linguistic, methodological, intercultural” (Matei et al. 2007: 18). Here the concept of ‘intercultural’ is situated on the same level as linguistic and methodological knowledge. This shows its importance and high status in the ECML projects. Neither ‘intercultural’, nor ‘plurilingual’ play an explicit role in this project; however, as can be seen by this quotation, it is considered a key aspect in language teaching. It is safe to say that this is the case for all projects.

The ICCinTE project deals more explicitly with the topic of intercultural learning and states the following in its introduction: “[t]he aim of this guide is to [...] help language teacher educators as well as pre- and in-service language teachers to incorporate intercultural communication training into their teaching more systematically” (Lázár 2007: 5). Thus the guide is directed to teacher trainers as well as to teachers, promoting courses for intercultural communication.

These courses consciously and systematically incorporate elements of both “big C” and “little c” culture-general knowledge through culture-specific examples that are not only coming from the target culture(s). They emphasise skills development in the areas of observation, interpreting and relating, mediation and discovery, as well as attitude formation to increase respect, empathy and tolerance for ambiguity, to raise interest in, curiosity about, and openness towards people from other cultures, and to encourage a willingness to suspend judgment (Lazar 2007: 9f).

This list of aims incorporates knowledge as well as competence development and attitude changes in wide areas that try to incorporate all ‘savoir’ categories of the CEFR. These goals are far reaching and difficult to achieve, especially in a short teacher training workshop. This is why the ICCinTE project (and others as well) considers the inclusion of intercultural learning and teaching in pre-service teacher training as essential for a harmonious future in

Europe. Obviously teachers have to have all these skills and attitudes before they can encourage them in their classes. The ICCinTE project criticizes the lack of systematic training in this area:

[...] intercultural communication training is still not systematically incorporated in the curriculum of most teacher training programs in Europe. Since it is obviously of great importance to increase intercultural understanding in a multilingual and multicultural world, training teacher educators to incorporate intercultural competence in language teacher education would have a beneficial multiplying effect (Lazar 2007: <file:///E:/en/project-info.htm>).

This ‘multiplying effect’ is very important for the work of the ECML and its dissemination strategy. In the quotation above we see again that the solution to problems in our multilingual and multicultural society lies, in the author’s eyes, in a teacher education that emphasises intercultural competence. The teacher certainly plays a vital role in changing the attitudes and developing the skills of the next generation, to encourage students to become ‘better’ citizens and thus build a ‘better’ society. Training language educators who in turn teach teachers who then pass on their knowledge, skills and attitudes to students and thus form the next generation of Europeans is a far reaching, long-term plan. This scheme would only achieve its aim if introduced across Europe (or even worldwide). However, it should be noted that, due to the amount and quality of the aims presented in the previous quotation from ICCinTE, achieving all these aims sounds rather unrealistic but intercultural training can certainly lay the foundations for reaching these goals.

Another project, the ELP-TT project, focuses more on the teachers themselves than on teacher educators claiming that reflection upon their own teaching practices is an important part of being a ‘good’ teacher:

To explore their teaching and professional identity as educators, teachers need to develop an awareness of their educational beliefs and the potential consequences of those beliefs for their teaching. Teachers’ educational practices and their beliefs about language teaching and learning will also shape the pupils’ images of “good” language teaching and learning (Little et al. 2007: 26).

This quotation goes beyond intercultural or plurilingual awareness, considering teachers’ attitudes at a very general level (including towards learner autonomy and the implementation of the ELP in particular). In the previous quotations, as with this one, the main aspect is the importance and the role of the teachers as educators of future generations and as change agents who use innovative techniques and alter the attitudes and beliefs of the students, not only in respect to language teaching but to intercultural and plurilingual competence as well.

Another project primarily concerned with teacher education is EPOSTL, the *‘European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages - A reflection tool for language*

teacher education' which includes can-do statements about a wide area of competences in foreign language teaching. Organised to some extent on a similar basis to the ELP it features a glossary, but does not include terms like 'intercultural', 'pluricultural' or 'plurilingual' (the latter two do not occur in the whole document). The main section, the self-assessment one, includes one chapter on methodology, in which the following seven categories exist: speaking/spoken interaction, writing/written interaction, listening, reading, grammar, vocabulary and culture (Newby et al. 2007: 13). Thus culture is on an equal footing with the more traditional parts of language learning.

Although there are eight can-do statements in total that deal with culture from a methodological point of view, only one directly refers to the intercultural component: "7. I can evaluate and select activities which enhance the learners' intercultural awareness" (Newby et al. 2007: 29). This of course is a very basic formulation that might cause some problems for an inexperienced student teacher, paradoxically due to its simplicity, and could make the process of self-assessment difficult. The other statements refer more specifically to certain aspects of cultural education: increasing knowledge and understanding of one's own and foreign cultures, organising out of school-learning possibilities, differentiating socio-cultural norms of behaviour, developing socio-cultural competence, working on stereotypes, the concept of otherness and the connection between language and culture (Newby et al. 2007: 29).

The concept of culture, however, appears in other parts of the EPOSTL as well, such as in the assessment section, which has parallels to the methodological section on culture, although there are only three descriptors present (not doubt because the project team had to limit itself to a restricted number of statements and sections). Whereas the first assessment descriptor focuses on knowledge and the second on skills (in comparing), the third one corresponds to the statement on intercultural competence quoted above: "3. I can assess the learner's ability to respond and act appropriately in encounters with the target language culture" (Newby et al. 2007: 56). It is of course not EPOSTL's task to provide answers to or methodological suggestions on these issues, since it is conceived rather as a supporting tool in curriculum planning and self-reflection for student teachers. In the 'Context - The Role of the Language Teacher' section a more general statement is included: "2. I can appreciate and make use of the value added to the classroom environment by learners with diverse cultural backgrounds" (Newby et al. 2007: 17). This refers to the beliefs and attitudes of a language teacher (or teacher in general) and is intended to indirectly link up to pluriculturalism, in the same way as descriptor 3 ("I can take into account the knowledge of other languages learners

may already possess and help them to build on this knowledge when learning additional languages” [Newby et al. 2007: 17]) refers to plurilingualism. One way of showing this appreciation is through the ELP.

The ECML projects approach teacher empowerment from two different yet interlinking perspectives. There is a general agreement that teachers play an important role in forming the new generation and fostering the aim of European citizenship, in every sense of the word. In order to achieve this some projects focus on the teacher educators and teacher education itself, thus going a level higher, trying to solve the issue more systematically and centrally (e.g. LEA, ICCinTE, ELP_TT, TrainED). Other projects target teachers, their development and their methodological knowledge and options more directly, suggesting certain activities. These will be discussed subsequently.

5.1.2.4. Methodological Perspective

Although all projects touch upon the concept of intercultural and plurilingual education and see them as important aspects, not all of these projects actually present activities or ideas on how to include intercultural/plurilingual education in the teaching and learning of languages. In the theoretical discussion it was stressed that we cannot speak of building intercultural competence if teachers merely present some facts and figures about the target culture. Although such facts are important cultural knowledge, they are only a stepping stone to intercultural competence with its different ‘savoirs’. So how can this ‘ideal’ be reached in a classroom? In the following analysis some quotations and suggestions from different projects will be discussed.

The ICCinTE project focuses on intercultural communicative competence in terms of its development and assessment and uses the ‘Mirrors and Windows’ textbook (ECML) by Martina Huber-Kriegler, Ildikó Lázár and John Strange (2003), which features a range of exercises. “The aim of this book is to help you reflect on your own and others’ cultures and the relationships between them [...]” (Huber-Kriegler et al. 2003: 7) by using so called ‘encounters’ to reflect upon various issues, such as: the concept of time, children, education, food, love, gender, etc.

Implementing the ELP includes using certain activities to encourage students to use it. Little et al. (2007: 17) state that “[t]he ELP provides important concepts and tools that help us to translate the new educational paradigm into pedagogic action”.

Using the ELP in the language classroom not only fosters reflection on aspects of an intercultural and plurilingual nature, but also increases student-centredness and learner autonomy.

Moving from a (relatively) teacher-directed organization of the classroom towards student-centred teaching that promotes autonomy and intercultural learning is a major educational change for the participants. The change is not a simple one; it requires a complex set of new professional understandings, skills and attitudes (Little et al 2007: 17).

This quotation shows that professional (methodological) and personal attitudes and skills of the teachers come together in a language classroom and that changing these attitudes requires considerable effort from teachers, but also some support from teacher trainers or official bodies of the school or country. However, such a change affects not only the teachers but also the students. They also need support when using the ELP for the first time, for instance. Such changes include the incorporation of intercultural competence into a former language-centred curriculum. All these aspects must be considered in the following discussion.

This chapter thus discusses projects that look at intercultural competence from a methodological point of view. This includes ideas on the curriculum, specific approaches, special projects, but also activities that can be included in ‘normal’ language classes. Attention, however, should be paid to the fact that intercultural and plurilingual competence is a mind set that does not end after a single activity is finished but should continue to be an underlying principle throughout education (and beyond).

The ALC project is concerned with specific approaches, which can be defined as pluralistic. The authors (Candelier et al. 2007: 7) have identified four different pluralistic approaches: (1) the intercultural approach, (2) awakening to languages, (3) the inter-comprehension of related languages and (4) integrated didactic approaches to different languages studied (the latter three are considered to have a stronger linguistic orientation than the first one). The project team defines pluralistic approaches in the following way:

The term “pluralistic approaches to languages and cultures” refers to didactic approaches which use teaching /learning activities involving several (i.e. more than one) varieties of languages or cultures (Candelier et al. 2007: 7).

Thus the basic idea of a pluralistic approach is relatively simple. One question that arises is whether this aim of involving more than one language or culture is fulfilled with one foreign language and the mother tongue (thus two languages) or if two or more foreign languages/cultures must be involved. In this respect the definition is not entirely clear, but the project involves approaches for more than one foreign language. Interestingly enough, of the four pluralistic approaches that the ALC-team has identified one is the intercultural approach.

However they consider it as so well known that they do not describe it in their theoretical section; instead, they focus on the three others. The project publication says that “the *intercultural approach* [...] seems to be relatively well-known [...]. The other approaches [...] probably require a short presentation” (Candelier et al. 2007: 7). There seems to be a considerable discrepancy compared to most other ECML projects, which do not share the view that intercultural competence does not need to be defined or given a focus. On the contrary, interculturality itself is the focus of many projects. To expand on the quotation above the ALC report states that the intercultural approach “seems to be relatively well-known, even if it is not always employed explicitly and genuinely in conformity with its fundamental principles” (Candelier et al. 2007: 7). The report thus claims that although many teachers support intercultural competence and consider it important, they are unsure about how to actually implement it, which brings us back to the issue of teacher training and education.

The ALC project sees the use of pluralistic approaches as the only way of achieving the plurilingual and intercultural goals of the Council of Europe; and further claims that the broader aims and principles can be enhanced through these approaches. They warn of the dangers of not using pluralistic approaches:

If the approach is not pluralistic there is a reduction in the diversity of languages offered and taught in schools, and a concomitant reduction in the school’s ability to equip learners with the diversified linguistic and cultural competences (and the ability to broaden these) [...] (Candelier et al. 2007: 10).

This argument states that school education plays a very important role in the whole life of the students as it can develop the children’s linguistic and cultural competences. In addition to that, school must equip the learners with the skill of ‘savoir faire/apprendre’ and learning-to-learn skills so that the students can work on these attitudes and competences throughout their lives. Facilitating life-long-learning is another important aim of the Council of Europe.

The CHAGAL project mentioned above also provides some specific ideas (or as the project team calls them ‘recipes’) for courses for underrepresented adults at university. The project team members focus on different aspects and provide material, including some activities that increase intercultural and plurilingual competence. In Vienna Monika Fritz has brought together foreign students who want to learn German and local students who enjoy teaching it and has turned them into an international group for the benefit of both parties and to increase intercultural competence (cf. Fritz 2007: E:\en\cookbook\finding_friends.htm).

The GULLIVER project includes the use of internet resources, namely forums (involving classes in 22 European countries), and its specific aim is to improve intercultural

competence and understanding on the school level. The title states this clearly: '*Gulliver. To get to know each other leads to better mutual understanding*'. The main idea of the project was that through the discussion of topics related to the three categories of yesterday, today and tomorrow, learners would come into contact with students from other countries and cultures and thus build up mutual understanding and respect and eventually an intercultural awareness and competence. Moreover, the project also claims to improve learner autonomy (see quotation below). It should be noted that the publication (CD-Rom) is more a guideline for future internet forum developers and users than a report although the authors do include details of their own experience. This is one of the few projects that specifically suggests a classroom procedure targeting teachers: "So the target group of this CD-ROM is modern language teachers across Europe and their pupils who are interested in exchanges on an intercultural forum and willing to assume greater autonomy in their language teaching/learning" (Bedynska et al. 2007: E:\en\introduction2.htm).

The following quotation reveals the rationale behind the GULLIVER project:

We wanted to promote the acquisition of intercultural skills in the real Europe of the present day, not through textbooks designed to teach languages but by means of an Internet exchange forum (Bedynska et al. 2007: E:\en\introduction.htm).

A legitimate question would be what the 'real Europe' is? In the forums the children get to know individual perspectives from children of their own age on various issues connected to the past, present and future of their lives and Europe. Is this more 'real' than, say, the materials found in modern textbooks? It definitely seems more immediate and less staged, provides a change from normal school life and motivates the children, who have to take a more active part in it.

Another internet project (BLOGS) that deals with the possibility of using blogs ("a special kind of website consisting of regular entries or posts arranged in reverse chronological order" [Ford 2007: 8]) in a foreign language teaching classroom. A blog platform was designed, implemented and tried out in schools in over 23 nations with about 600 students. The intercultural aspect does not feature strongly in their publication though, although a project like this is inherently intercultural. Their only mention of intercultural competence is the following excerpt which considers "Blogs and intercultural exchanges" in neither a very positive nor clear way:

Teachers are faced with an additional challenge in co-operative projects where the participants are mainly from a range of different cultures. They are required not only to teach the language and culture with their own specific aspects, but they also have to consider the possible linkages between the culture of a native French speaker and the culture of those learning French. Contacts made via blogs have inevitably given rise to

intercultural exchanges or a process of acculturation stimulated by the participants themselves, with teachers responsible for ensuring balance (Leja 2007: 33).

For the Council of Europe and the other projects intercultural competence is an important part and aim of their policies and activities. In this quotation, however, it seems to be a by-product that has to be dealt with rather than an inherent part of the project. Especially the ‘process of acculturation’ seems to pose a threat as teachers must ensure ‘balance’, but a balance between what? Acculturation is the process of adapting to a different culture and taking over some of its norms etc., but it is difficult see how such a fundamental process can occur through the exchange of blogs over a short period of time and why it is seen in an apparently negative light.

The ICCinTE project operates on a very practical level, suggesting measures and activities for intercultural communication training workshops for teachers. It proposes the following possible aims of such a workshop:

- to raise cultural awareness;
- to develop the participants’ intercultural competence (knowledge, skills, attitudes);
- to learn to deal with cultural diversity in and outside the classroom;
- to become familiar with the basic theoretical framework of intercultural communicative competence;
- to define terms like culture, acculturation, intercultural communication and intercultural competence;
- to practise designing and trying out activities with an intercultural focus to be used in a language course;
- to analyse the cultural components of currently used coursebooks;
- to practise modifying and/or supplementing exercises in currently used coursebooks to be able to turn any exercise into a culturally enriching activity;
- to learn to use literature, films and/or music to develop intercultural competence;
- to learn how to assess intercultural communicative competence;
- to discuss the importance of teaching culture when teaching language;
- any other aim relevant to the professional needs of the trainees in the field (Kačkere, Lázár, Matei 2007: 12f).

This list covers many aspects of intercultural communicative competence from a teachers’ point of view, with some very broad aims (e.g. the second one, developing intercultural competence, including attitudes). These broad aims must of course be refined into specific teaching/training goals of each session of the workshop in question. However, it can be seen how strongly the methodological aspect features in this list as it is not only about the teachers’ personal attitudes, but also about how to deal with intercultural aspects in the classroom, how to design activities, how to use course books or how to assess these aspects. What is not mentioned is the possibility of using the new media for intercultural competence building or face-to-face encounters (visits, exchanges, native speakers).

Another section of the ICCinTE publication encourages the use of literature, film and music to strengthen intercultural competence. Rot Gabrovec (2007: 19ff) states that teachers are often inhibited to use literature because of the high level of difficulty or complexity; nevertheless it is a worthwhile task and a positive contribution to an intercultural language classroom. Films do not meet with this kind of scepticism and the author recommends them as valuable resources:

[...] we also enable the audience to see the places they have been reading and hearing about, to decode the body language of the characters, to listen to various languages, accents, intonation patterns. The students can become omnipresent observers – in short, they can fully encounter other cultures with their customs and social practices without actually stepping out of their classroom [...] (Rot Gabrovec 2007: 20).

Using film (or film sequences) in a language classroom can indeed have all the above mentioned effects; however, careful guidance is necessary for the students so that they pay attention to all these aspects (or some of them). Students very often do not see a film watching lesson as a learning opportunity but rather as a chance to relax. Therefore, teachers must give students clear instructions on what to look out for and have an in-depth discussion after the film. If this is the case, films are indeed great resources that make it possible for students to explore a culture without leaving their classroom (which is not necessarily something that should be encouraged, as real life encounters are different and should be made possible for students of any language). Nevertheless, films are not reality, but fiction and should be treated as such. They are the creation of a group of people who all have their views, attitudes, ideas on the issue discussed in the film and construct the filmic fiction accordingly; this is something teachers and students should be aware of. Without wanting to downgrade the use of films, attention should be drawn to this fact. In addition, it has to be stressed that nothing can replace a real life encounter with another culture.

The ICOPROMO project focuses on university students and professionals as a target group and provides a number of different activities to foster intercultural competence. Although the project has a clearly methodological perspective, the rationale still includes social factors and the idea of personal/individual empowerment, showing how the different points of view come together:

[...] the "Intercultural Competence for Professional Mobility" (ICOPROMO) project can make a useful contribution towards greater social cohesion across cultures. In addition, ICOPROMO intends to foster personal fulfilment, active citizenship and social and professional inclusion by facilitating managers' and workers' mobility. It intends to stimulate on-going discussions about the value and necessity of language/culture education for professional purposes (Glaser 2007: np).

This quotation is very much in line with the overall policies, principles and hopes of the Council of Europe: intercultural competence leading to social cohesion, active citizenship and personal fulfilment. The project's target group are adults that come into contact with other cultures on a professional basis; some of the participants will therefore see this course less from a personal than from a professional point of view, as a necessity for the workplace. Attitudes towards such components of a course must be established through needs analysis and a questionnaire before a workshop or course. The activities suggested by ICOPROMO are divided into the following categories: awareness of the self and the other, communicating across cultures, acquiring cultural knowledge, sense making, perspective taking, relationship building, assuming social responsibility (Glaser et al. 2007: CD-ROM opening page). The activities make use of various resources (e.g. excerpts, films) but in general include a large amount of reflection and group discussion (e.g. reading a case study, an excerpt, a quotation and discussing it in a group). This lies in the nature of intercultural competence building but needs to be alternated with more active exercises in a workshop.

5.1.2.5. Summary

The projects approach the topic of intercultural competence from four different perspectives which are interlinked but nevertheless distinct: social orientation, individual and teacher empowerment and a methodological perspective. The ultimate aim is to have self-reliant and interculturally competent citizens living in a harmonious, multilingual and multicultural Europe. Encouraging intercultural competence has an influence on the individual and his/her life as well as on society, and it is often the teacher's responsibility to do this, to help the students become interculturally competent and to help them to develop strategies and means to carry on with their intercultural development outside or after school.

5.2. The Concept of 'Plurilingualism'

In contrast to the concept of 'interculturality', the concept of 'plurilingualism' proves not to be especially frequent in ECML projects. The reason why I include it in the qualitative analysis is the great importance the Council of Europe and the Language Division attach to it in their mission statements.

5.2.1. Theoretical Discussion

Plurilingualism is not a term of very high frequency in language education literature, in contrast to multilingualism; therefore the first question that needs to be raised is whether there is a difference between these two concepts and if so, what it is. First it should be noted that the dream of multilingual or plurilingual citizens is nothing new. For instance in a 1988 Council of Europe conference one of the conclusions was: “the importance of diversifying foreign language provision and the value of seeing the learning of at least two foreign languages [...]” (Conference Report “Language Learning in Europe: The Challenge of Diversity 1989/1994: 17). It is also interesting that there is no entry on or reference to ‘plurilingual’ or ‘multilingual’ in Byram’s (2004) *Routledge Encyclopedia of Language Teaching and Learning*. In contrast to that, multilingualism is discussed frequently in sociolinguistic literature. So the question may be asked in what ways multilingualism or plurilingualism is relevant for language teaching.

An examination of the literature outside the Council of Europe shows that there is no significant difference between ‘multilingual’ and ‘plurilingual’. However, for the Council of Europe this distinction is important. The term ‘plurilingual’ or ‘plurilingualism’ is very frequent in ECML or Council of Europe publications. Plurilingualism lies at the heart of the Council’s language policies and has been supported through various measures, such as the *European Year of Languages* and the *European Language Portfolio* and thus “it is the very notion of plurilingualism which has asserted itself as a form of language education appropriate to European realities” (Beacco, Byram 2003: 30).

5.2.1.1. Definition

On a very general level, “[a] multilingual individual is anyone who can communicate in more than one language, be it active (through speaking and writing) or passive (through listening and reading)” (Wei 2008: 4). This is individual multilingualism, which can be caused by a bilingual upbringing, education in school or post-school environments. However, there is also societal multilingualism. Many countries are officially multilingual (e.g. Belgium, Luxembourg, Switzerland). The language policies of the countries have of course influences on their citizens, however, Wei (2008: 3f) points out that there are multilingual speakers in monolingual countries and vice versa. Another multilingual concept which Ehlich (2006: 21) calls ‘interne Mehrsprachigkeit’, refers to a person speaking a dialect and the official version of a language (in German: ‚Hochsprache‘).

Beacco and Byram (2003: 13) define plurilingualism as “the intrinsic capacity of all speakers to use and learn, alone or through teaching, more than one language” and see it as a competence which should be developed through teaching. Plurilingualism is also “an educational value that is the basis of linguistic tolerance” if the learners’ awareness of their own plurilingual competence guides them to “give equal value to each of the varieties they themselves and other speakers use, even if they do not have the same functions” (Beacco, Byram 2003: 14). This insight is essential for tolerance and intercultural awareness. Following Beacco and Byram (2003: 14), plurilingualism is thus a competence and a value and both aspects should be fostered at school and beyond, through “education for plurilingualism” (competence of speaking more than one language) and “education for plurilingual awareness” (value of linguistic tolerance but also aspects of diversity and democratic citizenship).

In much language education literature a distinction does not seem to be made between multi- and plurilingual. An exception is Beacco and Byram (2003: 14) who use multilingualism to denote that there are several languages present in an area, which does not give information about whether or not the people living there speak more than one language. The *Common European Framework of Reference* differentiates them according to the engagement and the mental interaction of the languages known to a learner: “he or she does not keep these languages and cultures in strictly separated mental compartments, but rather builds up a communicative competence to which knowledge and experience of language contribute and in which languages interrelate and interact” (CEFR 2001: 4). In contrast, multilingualism is “the knowledge of a number of languages, or the co-existence of different languages in a given society” (CEFR 2001: 4) and can be achieved by diversifying subject choice in modern foreign languages at school, or reducing the dominance of one language. Plurilingualism, however, emphasises the possibility of using one’s linguistic and cultural competence as a whole to communicate or interact. These competences grow with each new language learnt, each skill we improve or each cultural experience we have. Trim (2004: 124) simply states that plurilingualism is “an overall communicative competence within which varying degrees and directions of competence in a number of languages interact”.

According to Neuner (2004: 25f) plurilingualism is characterised by a dynamic model in which the learner of a second or third foreign language can use his/her knowledge of the first foreign language and extend his/her existing language knowledge as well. In addition to that, there is no need that ‘near nativeness’ is achieved and the degree of knowledge and the

competences in each language learnt may be very different. The learners themselves and their development are important.

5.2.1.2. Political Aspects of Plurilingualism

According to Krumm (2004: 42) the basic and general rationale behind the political aspects of plurilingualism is: “The preservation of European plurilingualism requires that as many people as possible be given the opportunity to acquire as many languages as possible at an acceptable financial cost, despite limited learning time and the limited resources of education systems“. There is no easy solution to this aim, or dream. However, plurilingualism features strongly in European educational policies.

Plurilingualism is an important concept for the Council of Europe, not just with regard to education, but also in connection with democratic citizenship and political issues. This does not only apply to the Council of Europe but also to the EU. Krumm (2004: 37) states that “[p]oliticians have also discovered how important European multilingualism is for the functioning of democracy in Europe” (according to the Council of Europe definition the term ‘plurilingualism’ should have been used in this quotation), but he criticizes the two institutions for sending out wrong signals, by conducting most of their communications in English or French. The world wide acceptance of English as a lingua franca and the (almost) universal learning of English as the first foreign language pose a serious threat to plurilingualism; after all, what is the point of learning another language if everybody can communicate in English anyway? Plurilingualism must therefore be strongly supported by governments and educational systems. According to Krumm (2004: 40f), Europe as a continent will nevertheless stay multilingual because of the following reasons: languages are part of our heritage and identity and Europe has always been multilingual.

What is required is not only a policy change, but also a change of heart in many European citizens. Languages should all have the same value and level of acceptance, not only people are equal, but languages as well. This means that there has to be an increasing “willingness to live with differences, with linguistic and cultural variety” (Krumm 2004: 40) within a country. Many students will have a rich variety of languages that they bring with them, languages from their parents, their home country, their previous education and all this can be used in a positive, encouraging way.

Ehlich (2006: 18) calls the European attitude towards languages “konsolidierte Einsprachigkeit” and links it to the concept of “Nation”. He (2006: 19f) explains that in the founding period of the nation states in Europe in the 19th century, language was a powerful

tool of identity and thus speaking one language was a reason to be united in one nation. This stands in contrast to the general ability of humans to learn or acquire more than one language. To foster plurilingualism, Ehlich (2006: 28) advocates “eine identitäre Entlastung der Sprache. [...] Es geht um eine Veränderung der Grundeinstellungen.“, which is always the most difficult type of change. Putzer (2006: 59) holds a similar view, claiming that “Mehrsprachigkeit entsteht im Herzen und wird realisiert durch persönliche Anstrengung“. Thus Putzer (2006:60) emphasises that there has to be an emotional willingness to see all languages as equal and worth learning and to denounce a language’s strict attachment to national identity and nationalism; a change which requires personal and political efforts. According to Beacco, Byram (2003: 12f) this also applies to language education in most European countries, where the national language is the means of instruction and is kept clearly separate from learning foreign languages, in order to create a sense of identity.

Language teaching policies in general are of a political nature, although this is often overlooked. Such language policies (which do not only concern language education) are based on certain principles and ideologies, on social functions and economic demands (e.g. the great demand for English at the moment might harm plurilingual initiatives).

Krumm (2004: 42ff) argues that a plurilingual future can only be achieved by a united effort and attention being paid to the following aspects: diversification and choice for pupils of which language they would like to learn (e.g. also offering neighbouring languages for early language learning, not only English), interlinking language learning in the curriculum (making use of synergies) and not pursuing the aim of a native-like competence in each foreign language that students learn.

According to Beacco and Byram (2003: 68ff) the positive effects of a plurilingual language policy would be that language education would be closer to the realities of a multilingual and multicultural Europe, that speakers’ repertoires could be managed more efficiently, that a positive and open European identity could be created, that linguistic and cultural groups could find compromises more easily and that a more efficient, interconnected language teaching style could be adopted. Nevertheless, it is important to take into account the local situation as a basis for organising plurilingual education.

Plurilingualism is a concept closely linked to immigration and mobility. CILT, the National Centre for Languages (London, UK), for instance supports teaching so called ‘community languages’ to positively use the multilingual situation in London and the UK. Seeing additional languages as an opportunity and not as a threat for the country is of vital importance for a peaceful and democratic future.

5.2.1.3. The Council of Europe and the European Commission

Beacco and Byram (2003: 28ff) see plurilingualism as one of the principles of the language policy of the Council of Europe and as linked to minority group issues, the European linguistic heritage, democratic citizenship, European identity and individual language skills. They also claim that common principles for language teaching are needed to provide a basis for language education in Europe, but such principles need to have a democratic and human rights foundation and need to pay attention to current social developments and identity issues. The Council of Europe has encouraged plurilingualism through the publications of the CEFR, the European Language Portfolio, and awareness raising events such as the 2001 European Year of Languages, and of course plurilingualism can be found in its policy recommendations. The Council of Europe seems to particularly highlight two aspects that are connected with and partly based on plurilingualism: pluri- or intercultural awareness and democratic citizenship

Generally speaking the language policies of the Council of Europe promote plurilingualism, linguistic diversity, mutual understanding, democratic citizenship and social cohesion. It is obvious that language education lies at the heart of these concepts and helps achieve the Council's aims. The key to this development are the education systems, which "need to ensure the harmonious development of learners' plurilingual competence through a coherent, transversal and integrated approach that takes into account all the languages in learners' plurilingual repertoire and their respective functions." (http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Division_EN.asp [27/03/2009]).

The Council of Europe defines plurilingualism in the following way:

A plurilingual person has:

- a repertoire of languages and language varieties
- competences of different kinds and levels within the repertoire

Plurilingual education promotes:

- an awareness of why and how one learns the languages one has chosen
 - an awareness of and the ability to use transferable skills in language learning
 - a respect for the plurilingualism of others and the value of languages and varieties
 - irrespective of their perceived status in society
 - a respect for the cultures embodied in languages and the cultural identities of others
 - an ability to perceive and mediate the relationships which exist among languages and
 - cultures
 - a global integrated approach to language education in the curriculum
- (http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Division_EN.asp [27/03/2009]).

This shows the importance of language teaching in the context of teaching not only linguistic knowledge, but equipping the learner with language learning awareness, intercultural competence and self-study skills.

In addition, the European Union or, more specifically, the European Commission also strongly supports linguistic diversity and plurilingualism; for instance the title of a recent communication, published in September 2008, was “Multilingualism: an asset for Europe and a shared commitment” (http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/pdf/com18sept08/2008_0566_en.pdf [27/03/2009]). The basic idea is the same as in the Council of Europe policy statements, highlighting the values of plurilingual citizens in relation to the European heritage, intercultural understanding, solidarity, social cohesion, better life chances and access to their rights for the citizens. The following extract from the above mentioned communication shows the importance of multilingualism for the EU:

The harmonious co-existence of many languages in Europe is a powerful symbol of the European Union's aspiration to be united in diversity, one of the cornerstones of the European project. Languages define personal identities, but are also part of a shared inheritance. They can serve as a bridge to other people and open access to other countries and cultures, promoting mutual understanding. A successful multilingualism policy can strengthen life chances of citizens: it may increase their employability, facilitate access to services and rights and contribute to solidarity through enhanced intercultural dialogue and social cohesion. Approached in this spirit, linguistic diversity can become a precious asset, increasingly so in today's globalised world (http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/pdf/com18sept08/2008_0566_en.pdf [27/03/2009]).

Plurilingualism therefore plays an important role in the official policies of the Council of Europe and the European Union. Many activities and projects have been initiated over the last decades to encourage language learning and to encourage citizens to become plurilingual.

5.2.1.4. Language Education

Plurilingualism is of course a very relevant (and also innovative) concept in foreign language teaching and learning. There are two aspects to consider in relation to school and education: on the one hand the implications for bilingual or plurilingual children (from a diverse cultural background) in the classroom, and on the other hand the actual teaching of more than one foreign language at school and the methodology and didactics in question. Neuner (2004: 15) (based on Königs, 2000) further distinguishes between retrospective plurilingualism (a bilingual student brings the language taught in school with him/her from home already), retrospective-prospective plurilingualism (an already bilingual/plurilingual student is taught

another language in school, which is different to the ones he/she knows) and prospective plurilingualism (a monolingual student learns his/her first foreign language at school).

Although there was fear of negative interferences between languages in earlier days, researchers are now convinced that the positive aspects by far outweigh those. Hufeisen (2006: 532f) explains that studies have shown that students who have a previous language learning experience are more efficient and effective language learners. Among these positive consequences of plurilingual education Hufeisen (2006: 530) mentions: faster and more efficient learning and higher motivation and self reliance.

Interestingly Neuner (2004: 15f) states that ‘plurilingual’ was previously used only as term for people who have acquired two or more languages (through their parents or life circumstances); now, however, it is used for learners as well and this is also the way it is used in Council of Europe publications.

The teaching of “subsequent foreign languages” (Hufeisen 2004: 7) differently from how the first foreign language is taught is a rather new, innovative development, as in the past the foreign languages were taught separately. Nowadays teachers may try to “tap the potential already developed through the teaching of the mother tongue and the first foreign language” (Hufeisen 2004: 7). Neuner (2004: 16f) explains that this is also supported by research in the areas of memory and psychology, as languages are not learnt or stored in isolation from each other and as it is helpful for the functioning of memory to build up a ‘network’ around languages and connections between them.

This idea of a “single language ability” (Neuner 2004: 17) in the human brain has important implications for foreign language teaching because the knowledge of the mother tongue and the first foreign language and the procedural knowledge of learning a foreign language can all be utilized if a second or third foreign language is studied. The prerequisites, the abilities and the knowledge a student brings into a foreign language classroom are therefore different from student to student and this must be taken into account in terms of individualisation and learner autonomy.

There are various models for describing this specific aspect of language education. Hufeisen (2004: 8f), for example, has developed a model that she calls the ‘factor model’, in which she distinguishes stages of language learning that stretch from (1) the acquisition of the first language, (2) learning the first foreign language, (3) learning the second foreign language, to (4) learning other foreign languages. The language learning process changes with each step, due to added, new factors, but the largest step (besides that from first to foreign language) is taken between learning the first and the second foreign language. The basis for

the individual's plurilingualism is laid when learning the first foreign language (which can have a "bridging function" to the other languages, [Hufeisen 2006: 532]). From then on, learners have a concept of foreign language learning and of the emotions, strategies, developments connected to it. "Tertiary language didactics are now using this qualitative difference to advantage, expressly including in L3 teaching learners' previous cognitive and emotional experiences" (Hufeisen 2004: 9). The other aspect they can include is using the students' knowledge of the other languages if they are similar to the language in question.

Hufeisen (2006: 531) further states that an important difference between the learning of the first foreign language and subsequent ones are the general learning circumstances, e.g. age of the learner, life style, motivation, educational background. All these of course influence the learning of foreign languages as well

Neuner (2004: 18ff) points out that the 'old' aim of foreign language teaching, to gain native-like command of a language, has changed towards a more needs-based setting of aims, and, on another level, the conveying of "language learning awareness (procedural knowledge)" (Neuner 2004: 18), which will enable learners to continue their studies individually as well. Additionally, there is language awareness which includes sensitivity about and awareness of the mother tongue, which is the basis of all subsequent language learning (declarative knowledge). Here other languages that the learners have come into contact with at home or through the media can be included as well.

Then, when students learn their first foreign language, new language (learning) experiences are added and linked to their first language, their mother tongue. A new language opens a new world, and this is something monolingual students have not experienced yet. What is especially important for the teaching of the first foreign language is that the basis of 'learning to learn' is laid, something that was not needed when acquiring their mother tongue. The objectives of learning a second foreign language do not differ from that of the first foreign language or any other that follows. However, aspects such as the building up transfers and links between the languages provide additional opportunities for language learning that can be used to great success. Clearly teachers will have to discuss and teach the differing aspects of the languages as well. As in any other language learning situation the specific circumstances must be taken into account to find the best way to fulfil these aims (cf. Neuner 2004: 22ff).

Hufeisen (2006: 534f) also considers drawing parallels between the foreign languages as a valuable tool in language teaching and encourages teachers to help students make intelligent guesses about new vocabulary, for instance, based on their existing linguistic

knowledge (these hints can be especially helpful for weaker learners). Other ideas by her for plurilingual language learning include more interaction between teachers of different languages (e.g. creating a common grammar terminology, or content-wise), teaching specific language learning strategies, and mentioning these aspects in teacher education at university and at teacher training events.

Additional options for fostering plurilingualism are mentioned by Beacco and Byram (2003: 101ff), including bilingual education (or CLIL), in border regions it can be worthwhile to organise cross border events or curricula, harmonising ‘mother tongue’ teaching with foreign language teaching, including aspects such as European studies, international communication in higher education, the possibility of including language awareness in the primary school curriculum, diversification of the language curriculum, or the abolition of exclusive choices between learning the one or the other language in school.

Neuner (2004: 32f) mentions two main problems or questions in plurilingual learning circumstances at school: firstly, the aspect of motivation, and this includes also motivating less eager language students or students who had discouraging language learning experiences in the past; secondly, the issue of caring for the needs of individual students in school contexts, which has been an issue in foreign language education for quite some time.

According to Beacco and Byram (2003: 36), the aims of a plurilingual education in general are:

- to raise awareness of the learners’ linguistic and cultural competence
- to encourage and improve it
- to provide the basis for future autonomous language learning.

Beacco and Byram (2003: 37) also believe that the focus of language teaching should shift away from the questions of how many and which languages should be taught, in the direction of “the acquisition of a competence, in fact unique, encompassing the “mother tongue”, the national language(s), regional and minority languages, European and non-European languages, etc.”. With this term (unique competence) Beacco and Byram (2003: 63) seem to mean the linguistic repertoire available to a speaker and this includes linguistic varieties in general, not only languages, but also dialects, or other regional or social variations.

Beacco and Byram (2003: 63ff) look at plurilingualism in the educational system in a broader way; for example, they suggest that not only language teaching is involved but other subjects as well, as it is also an issue of political, social, cultural, economic importance. The languages taught in school should be diversified, a wider choice should be made available and language teaching should be coordinated across the curriculum. In addition, an emphasis on

pluri- and intercultural awareness is also necessary for plurilingual citizens (these concepts are related but there is no guarantee that one leads to the other in education). Again Beacco and Byram (2003: 63ff) emphasise the concept of European citizenship and the duties and rights that are connected to it. Language is very important for contributing and being involved in the political life of a nation or Europe in general.

5.2.1.5. Summary

Here follows a summary of the most relevant aspects of plurilingualism, which consists of the following points:

- plurilingualism starts with the second foreign language that is learnt, but must include a general communicative competence with various interacting and each other enriching languages (on different levels)
- specific didactic possibilities are open for a teacher of a second foreign language, e.g.
 - drawing parallels to the first foreign language or the mother tongue and using cross references between the languages
 - using the learners' experiences with the other foreign language(s) in a positive way
 - drawing on personal learning strategies and techniques for foreign languages and fostering learner autonomy
 - fostering motivation through previous language learning experiences
 - deciding on a common terminology (or even topics) between the language teachers of a class or a school
 - building and supporting 'language learning awareness'
- choice and diversification in the language curriculum
- all languages are of equal value
- varying competence levels in the languages should be accepted
- plurilingual citizens are important for the concept of democratic citizenship and for Europe's future in maintaining the continent's rich and varied culture, language landscape and heritage
- plurilingualism is supported by the Council of Europe and the European Union
- "placing citizens as language users at the centre" (Beacco, Byram 2003: 107)
- plurilingualism as a competence and as a value

5.2.2. Project Analysis

In the chapter on intercultural competence plurilingualism has in many cases been taken into account, as quite a few projects feature them together and thus have the same approach concerning these two concepts and principles of the Council of Europe. Nevertheless, I want to mention some specific examples of plurilingualism in the ECML projects.

5.2.2.1. Social Orientation

The projects of group A (“Coping with linguistic and social diversity - provisions, profiles, materials”) specifically address the issue of plurilingualism, not from a methodological perspective, but rather from a social one. The project team of VALEUR, for instance, states that plurilingualism is important for society and for the children’s development as valuable members of such a society, affecting areas from the intellectual to the economic life of a nation or community. Among other things it says that a nation which acknowledges and fosters its plurilingual potential sees:

- enhanced intellectual and academic achievement of all children, particularly those brought up plurilingually [...];
- enriched cultural activities in all arts fields, drawing on the traditions and creative potential of many languages and cultures, [...]
- greatly increased possibilities for trade and investment, [...], increasing ability to identify potential markets, understand cultural practices in relation to trade, and embrace the career opportunities of enhanced mobility; [...]
- heightened capacity to compete in the knowledge economy, gathering information [...];
- improved social services [...];
- greater opportunities for participation in public life, and for shaping democratic practices by [...];
- better strategies to combat prejudice, promote tolerance and mutual understanding, [...] (McPake, Tinsley 2007: 11).

These points mention the advantages a plurilingual policy has for society itself, which of course includes the people living there, but the comments are focused on the community and its development. They deal with aspects such as intellectual, cultural, economic, social, legal, governmental and attitudinal issues and thus present themselves as a wide range of arguments for encouraging plurilingualism. Although the individual does play a role in these aspects, it is the society at large that the project is interested in and the reason why the project promotes plurilingualism is that they believe it can lead to a ‘better’ society. The definition of ‘better’ coincides with the principles of the Council of Europe. It is very often the case that it is easier to encourage a government to spend money on certain projects or programmes if an economic advantage is envisioned. This might be one of the reasons for the emphasis on social and

economic advantages in this extract. What this project offers is an insight into plurilingualism itself, stating advantages and taking stock of the European language landscape. It should also not be forgotten that plurilingualism starts with the second foreign language learned.

The ENSEMBLE projects highlights the role a school can play to strengthen the plurilingual attitude in the whole community that it operates in.

As a basic principle, efforts should be made to strengthen a school's communication and co-ordination with its external partners. It is through this type of school leadership that schools can "model" acceptance and respect, and not only reflect plurilingualism, but actually highlight it and make it visible in a positive way (Camilleri Grima 2007: 10).

The quotation thus highlights the school's important responsibility to its pupils, their parents and the community at large in the areas of language learning encouragement and language policy. The project encourages a pro-active approach by the schools, not merely accepting plurilingualism but promoting it through a whole school approach, which includes all educational stakeholders. Schools play an important role in the children's life and thus also in the lives of their parents, which means that policies, democratically implemented by the schools, can have huge effects on the perception of plurilingualism in the community and thus also on the speakers of additional languages. They may be encouraged to teach their children the additional language or take a more active interest in the school or intercultural and plurilingual events in the community. Thus a whole school plurilingual policy can have a big impact on the integration of speakers of additional languages (minorities, immigrants, etc) in the community.

Another way to encourage plurilingualism is through the implementation of CLIL in schools. Although CLIL is more a methodological topic, the observation the project team makes is also interesting from a social and cultural point of view, stating that CLIL is more common in regions where different languages come into contact, such as border regions or "plurilingual countries":

CLIL is also more common in plurilingual countries where the other used language(s) are chosen as target languages. In many monolingual countries the more widely distributed languages are chosen, for example English, French, Spanish, or German. Clearly, the choice of language and the choice of location is always culturally relevant. Quality CLIL schools usually take this aspect into consideration (Marsh 2007: <http://www.ecml.at/mtp2/CLILmatrix/EN/qMain.html> [10/05/2009]).

There is some truth in this assumption but, according to the terminology employed by the Council of Europe, countries are not plurilingual but people are and, as pointed out in my theoretical chapters, there is no monolingual country, due to the presence of minorities, migration and mobility. Nevertheless, it is clear that the cultural and regional aspects play an important role when the language for CLIL is chosen. Whatever the language is, though, the

basic concept of CLIL definitely promotes plurilingualism if other languages are also taught in the school curriculum. Nevertheless plurilingualism is not only a skill or a competence but also a value which has to be actively encouraged in every, also a CLIL, school.

5.2.2.2. Individual Development/Empowerment

One of the main means of support by the Council of Europe for an individual development in the direction of plurilingualism is the European Language Portfolio, which is strongly supported by the ECML and its projects. In general, the ELP seeks to empower the individual and encourages him/her to take charge of his/her language learning and development of plurilingualism. Additionally, the ELP sees plurilingualism as a value and not just a competence, a view, which is important to the Council of Europe. It makes users aware of their language experiences with the intention of valuing all languages equally. The following quotation describes the aims of the ELP:

The goal of a European Language Portfolio is to promote plurilingualism which recognizes that an individual should develop a linguistic repertory over a lifetime that includes all languages a person could use for different purposes at varying levels of ability. The promotion of plurilingualism encourages linguistic diversity and mutual understanding in building a Europe that encourages the principles of democratic citizenship and social cohesion (Schärer 2005: <http://elp.ecml.at/IMPEL/Documents/Canada/CanadianELPWorkshopReport2005/tabid/86/language/en-GB/Default.aspx> [17/05/2009]).

In this extract we see the shift from a focus placed on the individual and their lives to the society that benefits and the interacting principle that unites these aspects. This is an interesting quotation because it draws attention to learner autonomy, to learners' responsibility to continue their learning after school, throughout their whole life, and to the role the ELP may play. What can be noticed is the recurrent theme of the democratic principles which the Council of Europe promotes. It is not plurilingualism in itself that is promoted, but the consequences that plurilingualism has may have for Europe, for societies and for the individuals that are emphasised and seem to be the major concern of the Council of Europe. Plurilingualism leads to something; it leads to positive developments in Europe and is therefore encouraged.

Although VALEUR is a more socially orientated project it also highlights the positive effects plurilingualism has on the students themselves:

Research shows plurilingual children do better than monolingual children on a range of tasks linked to educational performance, such as those involving creative thinking and certain verbal and non-verbal skills (McPake, Tinsley, et al. 2007b: 5).

Knowing more than one language opens up new ways of thinking and seeing the world around us and new ways of interpreting events, thus increasing our intellectual ability. This is one of the few quotes on plurilingualism that deals solely with its benefits to the individual and not to society or Europe. Although these aspects are interlinked, the Council of Europe, the ECML and the projects tend to look at the bigger picture of how to make Europe a better place to live in.

The LDL-project (*Literacy and linguistic diversity in a global perspective*) focuses on developments and problems in the area of language learning in Africa and Europe, stating in the summary that:

[...] in many contexts, it is now only through individual plurilingualism that people can become mobile, that there can be inter-communication in multicultural societies, that individuals can feel included in a society which is only modestly cohesive and that they can play a full part in the various expressions of citizenship (Coste 2007: 96).

Personal mobility is a very important issue for the Council of Europe and one that is promoted through various programmes and funds, with the same being the case for the European Union. Students, teachers, professionals are encouraged to be mobile and to live, study and work in various countries, which increases their intercultural and plurilingual competence. However, they need some knowledge of the language before they can successfully integrate themselves in a given society. Once again the recurrent themes of democratic citizenship, social cohesion and active participation are mentioned as the ultimate aim of all plurilingual aspirations. This extract states that plurilingual competence is important for the individual, if they become mobile and want to live in another country and that it helps them become integrated into a new society. However, according to the Council of Europe plurilingualism is a competence and a value in itself, also for people who stay in their own country. It is not only the new arrival who has to be willing to integrate, but also the society that should be willing to let people integrate themselves, and this is rather possible if the society has plurilingual citizens who value plurilingualism.

Thus, plurilingualism can be considered as a necessary condition for communication amongst diverse cultural groups. However, it is important to consider that multilingualism does not automatically guarantee the formation of a tolerant attitude. In fact, I have known more than a few cases of multilingual individuals who have lived in intercultural environments and still display discriminatory or intolerant behaviours. Although the experience of learning a new language does broaden horizons and allows for access to knowledge of different countries and cultures, it does not necessarily lead to an understanding and acceptance of cultural and social diversity (Pappenheim 2007: 69).

According to the underlying philosophy of the Council of Europe and the ECML projects, plurilingual citizens are necessary to live in a peaceful Europe, worth living in. They see

plurilingualism as the basis of a European future. This consensus is widespread. However, in the quotation above Pappenheim (2007: 69) explains that having learned a foreign language is no guarantee for tolerance among the citizens themselves and therefore emphasis must be placed on intercultural and social competence during language learning and teacher education. As mentioned before plurilingualism is a competence as much as a value and this extract emphasises exactly this point. The term individual ‘multilingualism’ indicates the speaker’s competence in two or more languages, but it does not include the value-component associated with the term ‘plurilingualism’, according to the Council of Europe. The question that is addressed in this extract is what increases tolerance among citizens and whether learning a foreign language is not sufficient in some cases. Is it possible to turn every European into a tolerant, open-minded, culturally sensitive person, or will intolerance, prejudice, discrimination, racism or even hatred always exist on some level of European societies? The Council of Europe believes that learning languages, intercultural competence and plurilingualism can help to overcome these age old problems and that increasing plurilingualism is a move in the right direction. Most of the projects would agree, but, as this quotation shows, their participants are not naïve about its effects.

5.2.2.3. Teacher Empowerment

It seems that it is often not easy for language teachers to pursue intercultural and plurilingual aims in the language classroom, as what they require differs from the more traditional teaching methodology and as they are mostly qualified to teach only one specific language, as Perclova (2007: 3) expresses:

Plurilingualism presents a challenge to language teachers, who inevitably and necessarily focus on the language in which they are qualified, but it could also help to solve the problem of language use. Needless to say, the development of plurilingualism should be undertaken as a whole-school project (Perclová 2007: 3 E:\DM_layout\00_10\07\07 Language in the ELP supplementary text E only.pdf).

Although teachers focus on the specific language they are teaching, this does not mean that they cannot make references to other languages or use other language learning experiences their students had. It is, as mentioned in the extract, essential to include all teachers and other educational stakeholders if a school aims to strengthen plurilingualism. Teachers must be made aware of the possibilities of supporting plurilingualism among their students and some of the ECML projects have worked on this task. Except in specific projects the French teacher will logically focus on teaching French, but the students can still be encouraged to value plurilingualism and to take measures themselves (according to their age and ability) to foster

their language skills outside school. Plurilingualism can be supported by every teacher through appropriate comments or exercises and this is why teacher education and training play an important role, as teachers must be made aware of this fact. This is why it is surprising that there is not a single mention of the exact term ‘plurilingual’ in the EPOSTL, but (as mentioned in chapter 5.1.2.3) the descriptor C.3.: “I can take into account the knowledge of other languages learners may already possess and help them build on this knowledge when learning additional languages” (Newby et al. 2007: 17) refers to the notion of plurilingualism.

ENSEMBLE promotes whole school approaches; nevertheless the innovation (in this case plurilingual school policies) is initiated only by a few teachers concerned.

A very strong message comes across from the case studies, and it can be summarised in the following way:

- in each instance of innovation and in the promotion of plurilingualism there are individuals who are working hard to realise their dream of linguistic diversity and plurilingual competence [...] (Camilleri Grima 2007: 15).

As discussed in the general chapter on innovation, hard working people on the grass root level are essential for any project to succeed. Even if an innovation is decreed from above, it is the teachers who transform it into reality and thus need to be committed. From the teacher’s point of view there must be support from the administrative and also the political level above. In the case of plurilingualism there are various methodological options for teachers concerning how to proceed and how to encourage plurilingualism. On the one hand the ultimate aim might be to create a CLIL class or to increase the variety of languages on offer. Such decisions are far reaching and cannot be decided by a single teacher but involve the whole school and the (local or national) government. However, there are also smaller ways how to support plurilingualism in an everyday classroom situation, such as referring to other languages, drawing parallels, referring to learners’ language learning experiences, increasing the students’ language learning awareness, etc. All these possibilities lie in the hands of individual teachers, and this will be the topic of the next chapter, which deals with the methodological perspective.

5.2.2.4 Methodological Perspective

The CLIL-matrix project also emphasises the social importance of plurilingualism, but looking at it historically one notices a shift in the pattern of who should have access to plurilingual competences:

Societies, knowing that some citizens should have the gift of speech in different languages, have long been involved with forms of CLIL. However, these educational opportunities have very often been restricted to small groups of youngsters who had been picked, for whatever reasons, to join the socio-economic and political elites of a society.

CLIL offers us all an opportunity to dismantle such legacies of the past. It provides all youngsters, regardless of social and economic positioning, the opportunity to acquire and learn additional languages in a meaningful way (Marsh nd: 9).

This idea that everybody is entitled to acquire plurilingual competences, not just the rich, especially gifted or powerful, is a relatively new development in European history and is one of the foundations of the principles of the Council of Europe and its aims. The Council of Europe supports the implementation of democracy and equality throughout Europe and this entails that it strongly believes that everybody has the equal right and opportunity to acquire knowledge and skills. This is not only the right of citizens but it also ‘enhances’ society and the European nations at large and makes Europe a better place to live in for its citizens. This therefore is a twofold strategy, as it targets the citizens and their lives as well as society in general. CLIL is thus a methodological option for increasing the plurilingualism of children, but it is still not a very widespread form of education and in some bilingual schools entrance exams are employed, which again limit the students experiencing bilingual education to the most gifted. Another issue to consider is that most bilingual schools use English as the language of instruction, for obvious reasons. However, the idea behind plurilingualism is that all languages are of equal value. On a theoretical and ideological level this has generally been accepted; however in the social, scientific, economic and political reality English is simply the most powerful language and thus often preferred as the chosen first foreign language, bearing in mind the children’s future job and mobility prospects.

One aspect that needs to be pointed out, however, is that for a plurilingual education it is necessary to have learnt at least two foreign languages, thus CLIL students are not plurilingual until they are taught additional languages, but CLIL is definitely a step in the direction of a plurilingual future.

One of the main methodological options for fostering plurilingualism is introducing the ELP in the language learning classroom; different versions for different countries and age groups exist. In the following short quotation all distinguishing features of the ELP are mentioned and thus also the reasons why it is supported so strongly by the Council of Europe and the ECML. In this Irish case study the specific group of adult migrants are targeted:

Besides supporting the development of learner autonomy, the ELP has other features that are centrally important for adult migrants, especially the emphasis it places on plurilingualism and pluriculturalism and the value it gives to all language and

intercultural learning, wherever it takes place (Lazenby Simpson 2006: http://www.ecml.at/mtp2/impel/pdf/CoEseminar_E.pdf [15/05/2009]).

According to this quotation the ELP supports learner autonomy, plurilingualism and interculturality and is thus perfectly suited for promoting the Council of Europe's ideas in the language classroom. However, the ELP must be introduced to the learners and support must be offered to them. The project ELP_TT and a second project, impel, deal explicitly with the ELP; the ELP_TT project team states the following aim:

The project is designed to contribute to the dissemination and implementation of Council of Europe political concepts - especially plurilingualism, pluriculturalism and education for democratic citizenship - by supporting the widespread and effective use of the ELP and (by implication) the Common European Framework of Reference (Little 2007: ELP_TT CD-ROM, main page).

What is interesting about this extract is that it mentions three 'political concepts' that the Council of Europe pursues, and presents plurilingualism, pluriculturalism and education for democratic citizenship as concepts of equal importance to the Council of Europe. Many other projects consider plurilingualism and pluriculturalism as stepping stones towards the all important aim of 'democratic citizenship'. Is the Council of Europe promoting plurilingualism as an aim in itself or as a way to achieve the greater aim of democratic citizenship, and does it make any difference? The projects approach this issue from different perspectives and with different intensities, but overall the tendency seems to be towards a hierarchical structure, this means towards the latter option.

In other words, we think that if plurilingual competence is really to be as it is described in Council of Europe instruments, and if we want genuinely to make meaningful the principle of synergy it recommends, in order to help learners to construct and continuously to broaden and deepen their own plurilingual competence, it is essential to guide the learners to develop for themselves a battery of knowledge (savoirs), skills (savoir-faire) and attitudes (savoir-être) [...]

Knowledge, skills and attitudes of this nature can, quite clearly, only be developed when the language classroom is a space where several languages and several cultures – and the relationships among them – are encountered and explored. That is to say, in a context of pluralistic approaches to languages and cultures (Candelier et al. 2007: 7).

In this quotation Candelier et al. (2007: 7) present pluralistic approaches in language teaching as the only way to fulfil the expectations of the Council of Europe's policies, namely the idea of 'pluri-' be it in plurilingualism or pluriculturalism, this 'synergy' between the different languages the students have learned. Whereas other projects propose various possibilities to strengthen plurilingual competence (e.g. ELP, CLIL), the ALC-project report declares pluralistic approaches as the only option, as the language classroom needs to be a place where numerous languages and cultures are encountered. The report introduces four pluralistic approaches, which have been mentioned above.

The GULLIVER project “To get to know each other leads to better mutual understanding” worked with an intercultural internet forum, in which students wrote and read texts from other students across Europe. This quotation from a participating teacher shows the plurilingual aspect of such a forum:

For example, when reading texts on the topic “What do you do apart from your school work?”, my pupils worked for the first time in a language lesson with two types of text. They read all the texts in French because they worked on the project during their French classes, but they also read the texts from other participants in English, Spanish and German, each according to his own ability. For the first time, my pupils’ plurilingualism became a natural part of the process of learning a foreign language. We did not exclude the second language from our lessons: on the contrary, we took advantage of it (Zahradníková 2007: <file:///E:/en/actual-example.htm#5>).

This is a very positive comment on the advantages of such an internet forum in a language classroom, especially because plurilingualism was a ‘natural part’ of the students’ work. This is exactly what the Council of Europe tries to promote, the naturalness of plurilingualism. Looking at this extract, it seems as if at first the contact with another foreign language was a side effect of the project but instead of banning the other languages (English, Spanish, etc.) from the French lesson and focusing on French, the teachers and students incorporated them and thus took advantage of a plurilingual learning opportunity. It must be seen as very motivating that the students not only read the assigned texts but were interested enough to read additional texts in other languages. Thus students read different texts, according to which other languages they spoke, which no doubt resulted in an interesting classroom discussion. This kind of success of course depends on the students’ motivation but even if the students do not read the texts in other languages simply out of interest, the teacher can encourage it and make it part of the project requirements. The rationale is clear to the GULLIVER project team: “The more the pupils in the participating classes use all the languages they are learning or in which they are proficient, the more plurilingualism and multicultural experience they will acquire.” (Bedynska et al. 2007: <E:\en\methodology6.htm>). The students must be encouraged to do exactly this, to engage with students or texts from all possible languages and countries and explore this plurilingual and intercultural experience thus gained. This also entails that the teachers organising an internet forum must ensure that they have a network with a variety of countries, cultures and languages.

The LEA project is concerned with training language educators and includes several activities to support plurilingual and intercultural awareness, such as the activity ‘Proverbs: Comparing Proverbs in Different Languages and Cultures’ by Sofie Jonckheere (LEA CD-ROM, <file:///E:/Activities/sofie.pdf>), in which the trainees (pre- and in-service teachers) compare proverbs from up to 16 different languages and analyse a Brueghel painting in which

the painter included a multitude of Flemish stereotypes of his time. According to the abstract “[b]oth these activities aim at creating awareness of and reflection on diversity” (Jonckheere 2007: <file:///E:/Activities/sofie.pdf>). Although this activity includes a variety of languages, the emphasis for me clearly lies on the cultural aspect and not so much on the languages, as all proverbs have been translated into English for better comprehension. There is no doubt that the activity raises awareness of language diversity and cultural comparisons, and this may motivate the trainees to use similar awareness raising activities in their language classrooms, with some changes to the original activity.

Another LEA activity by Ksenia Golubina (“Numbers as Symbols”) uses numbers and number idioms in four different languages to convey linguistic and cultural diversity (Golubina 2007: <file:///E:/Activities/ksenia.pdf>). Although these two activities mentioned use rather different concepts (proverbs versus numbers), they have many similarities, in that they both use culturally significant idioms to show the relationship between language and culture, they use a highly reflective approach and, most importantly, they employ a variety of languages to make the activity part of plurilingualism. The idea seems to be that if more than one foreign language appears in an exercise, it automatically supports plurilingual competence. Such activities definitely heighten the awareness of the linguistic and cultural diversity and the interrelationship between those two; however plurilingualism is more than that. It is a value and a competence and these activities seem to target the value aspect only, with a focus on the intercultural component.

5.2.2.5. Summary

Although the projects approach plurilingualism from different perspectives, the overriding principles are consistent within the projects and with the aims and concepts of the Council of Europe. There is a consensus that plurilingual (and interculturally competent) citizens are necessary for a peaceful, harmonious future of a Europe based on human rights, democratic citizenship, mutual understanding, mobility, social cohesion, tolerance and equality. Although some projects see plurilingualism as an important aim in itself, most of the projects consider it as a stepping stone towards the Europe that has just been described. There were only few projects with specific classroom ideas, but the ideas of using the ELP, creating a CLIL school/class and using internet forums have been advocated and are important paths towards higher plurilingual competence among the students. There is still a degree of uncertainty apparent in some projects about the difference between multilingualism and plurilingualism;

however, most of them encourage both the value and the competence which together form plurilingualism as defined by the Council of Europe.

5.3. The Concept of ‘Learner Autonomy’

5.3.1. Theoretical Discussion

Learner autonomy, (or other terms such as, learner centredness and the individualisation or the personalisation of the learning experience) has been discussed for some 20 years. Little (1991: 1) begins his booklet on learner autonomy with a comment on the fluidity of the concept, although he states that redefinitions and refinements of terms in general are a positive, necessary process for any theoretical concept or term in scientific research and practise.

5.3.1.1. Definition

According to Little (1991: 2), learner autonomy began to become an issue in adult education in the 1970s. However its advantages and disadvantages have only been discussed intensively for use in school environments from the 1990s onwards. He defines learner autonomy as “a capacity – for detachment, critical reflection, decision-making, and independent action. It presupposes, but also entails, that the learner will develop a particular kind of psychological relation to the process and content of his learning” (Little 1991: 4). Thornbury (2006: 22) defines learner autonomy in rather broad terms from a psychological point of view by saying “autonomy is your capacity to take responsibility for, and control of, your own learning”.

It is important to note that although autonomy usually means independence, this is not completely the case in school classrooms, where there is always a certain measure of dependence on the teachers. Little (1991: 5) calls this situation “interdependence” and stresses interaction as an important part of any learning process. He emphasises that learner autonomy “is not merely a matter of organization, does not entail an abdication of initiative and control on the part of the teacher, is not a teaching method, is not to be equated with a single easily identified behaviour, and is not a steady state attained by a happy band of privileged learners” (Little 1991: 4). However, learner autonomy is considered by Little (1991: 57) as an important concept for implementing communicative ideas in the FLT classroom.

All the definitions so far have shown that for many researchers, learner autonomy is not bound to language teaching, but that it is rather a question of the students’ personal

development. The *Common European Framework for Reference* places this concept in the area of broader educational goals; yet Fenner (2006: 27) discusses it not only as part of general educational principles, but also “as an integral aspect of language learning”. The principles she mentions that are included in the term of learner autonomy range from learning how to learn, consideration of learning styles, learning strategies, freedom of choice, use of portfolios or other self-assessment and reflection tools, a new role for the teacher and more student responsibility for their own learning. According to Little (2001, 2004) (quoted in Fenner 2006: 28), however, it is not only learner empowerment and reflection on the learning process that make up learner autonomy, but also “appropriate target language use”, and this is the only category so far that can only be accomplished in the field of language teaching and in no other subject in the school curriculum. Therefore, it does not seem enough to focus on wider educational aims but there is also a need to focus upon language learning itself and on how learner autonomy can be used effectively in this field.

5.3.1.2 Learner Autonomy in a School Context

The concept of learner autonomy can nowadays be found in many school curricula, not focused specifically on the language classroom but as a general aim. In the end, however, it still depends on each individual teacher whether learner autonomy is important in their classroom or not. One criticism Fenner (2006: 28f) puts forward is that theoretical aspects of learner autonomy are not yet included in teacher training, which leaves the teacher without a conceptual framework for this specific goal.

Like Thornbury and Little, Fenner (2006: 30f) also stresses the psychological aspects as reasons why learner autonomy should be integrated into the language classroom, and for this purpose she links language learning with learning theory. According to Fenner (2006: 30f), the basic theory (based on early constructivism) was formed by the psychologist George Kelly in the early 1950s, who stated that learning and teaching are inherently different, that each person perceives the world differently and therefore each learner will learn or acquire different aspects when taught by one and the same teacher and his/her materials. This seriously questions the traditional role of the teacher, for which a redefinition is necessary. Teachers in autonomous learning environments see themselves as resources (e.g. providing helpful examples) and mediators.

An important part of learner autonomy is also the social aspect as learning can only successfully take place in “interaction with peers and teachers” (Fenner 2006: 31). During this interaction the target language (i.e. the foreign language learned) should always be used, if

possible. The teacher should take note of the students' thoughts and comments because the topics learners talk about and are interested in are important to the teacher in an autonomous language classroom. Students use the foreign language to express their thoughts; therefore language learning is also important for developing critical thinking and reflection skills. This is especially true when students' choices are emphasised, as is the case with most learner-centred activities.

These choices do not only increase motivation and participation but are also a “first step involving the learners in critical thinking” (Fenner 2006: 32), opening up discussion and reflection on texts, topics, activities or even methods and approaches. Much of this discussion of course depends on the maturity of the learners. This notwithstanding the teacher should help the students on this path of reflection by providing a scaffolding which should lead learners to “understand what they are learning and why” (Little 2003: 37 as quoted in Fenner 2006: 32f), which is according to Little (2003), also a characteristic of an autonomous learner. Fenner (2006: 33ff) states that by scaffolding the teacher provides the students with challenging, relevant material (both linguistic and cultural content play a role in foreign language teaching) that the students can choose from. Aspects that Fenner (2006) stresses throughout her discussion of learner autonomy are those of the students' personal development, of a general *Bildung* and of its importance in the context of democratic citizenship and active political participation in Europe. Students need a range of skills to make competent choices (according to their own strengths and needs) and to act as an autonomous learner, and they need a competence in planning and reflecting on learning processes, strategies and results.

Crawford (2002: 86f) mentions the importance of suitable materials in order to support learner autonomy. The skills acquired by dealing with a variety of different activities should be transferable to other learning situations. Appropriate materials including self-assessment tasks can contribute to supporting the students' skill in reflecting and assessing their own work.

5.3.1.3 Learner Autonomy and the Common European Framework of Reference

As mentioned above, the *Common European Framework of Reference* does not include learner autonomy within the language learning context but categorises it as “behavioural skills” with the term of “ability to learn” or “savoir-apprendre” (Fenner 2006: 35). In her discussion of learner autonomy within the CEFR, Fenner (2006: 35ff) mentions the following

study skills which include the students' ability to learn independently, or self-directed, to set themselves goals, decide upon strategies, materials and resources and to know about their own strengths and weaknesses. The CEFR also suggests some ways to include the 'ability to learn' in the language classroom, such as: making students more and more responsible for their learning, promoting reflection on their language learning, their preferred learning styles and strategies and raising the students' awareness about learning processes and different methodologies.

According to Fenner (2006: 36f), the students' task of reflecting upon their goals also includes the question of how to achieve them and the different ways of assessing the outcome. In an autonomous learning environment, self-assessment is stressed. For this reason the Council of Europe has developed the *European Language Portfolio*. Self-assessment can be facilitated by 'can-do' lists, learners' diaries or learning logs.

To conclude this discussion, I shall look at the issue of learner autonomy from a wider angle. The general idea of giving learners more responsibility has, according to Little (1991: 7), "far-reaching implications, not simply for the way in which education is organized but for the power relationships that are central to our social structure". Thus the learners, their experience and needs are central to all questions concerning the curriculum and the content of the lessons. Little (1991: 7ff) mentions the following advantages: that in this way the learning is more effective, that the aspects of learning and living become closer or merge and that autonomy is not limited to learning, but that people use it in everyday life, thus becoming more active citizens (which is also a general aim of the Council of Europe).

5.3.1.4. Summary

The following list provides a brief summary of points that are connected to the concept of learner autonomy:

- learner-centred approach
- linked to communicative language teaching
- associated with the constructivist view (each person sees the world differently, learns differently)
- learning and living become closer
- developing critical thinking and reflection skills (active citizens)
- interaction with peers and teachers (social aspect)
- understanding, reflecting on and being involved in the learning process
- setting learning goals (according to your own needs, strengths, weaknesses)

- learning to learn (life-long learning, learning styles and strategies)
- opportunity for and freedom of choice
- different assessment procedures (self-assessment, portfolio)
- new role for the teacher (resources, mediator)
- students take over responsibility for their own learning
- appropriate target language use (cf. Little).

5.3.2. Project Analysis

5.3.2.1. Definition of Learner Autonomy in the Projects

In addition to intercultural and plurilingual competence, learner autonomy is one of the main principles or aims of the Council of Europe language education policies. Again the reason for supporting learner autonomy extends beyond ‘just’ language learning, towards active political participation and democratic citizenship. Learner autonomy must be seen within a wider, more general learner-centred approach. One of the main features of the Council of Europe’s commitment in this direction is the *European Language Portfolio*, which is seen to strongly support learner autonomy.

In the ELP_TT/impel glossary ‘autonomy’ is defined in the following way:

A capacity for detachment, critical reflection, decision-making and independent action, e.g. the learner using own strategies, such as paraphrasing, to get around a lack of specific vocabulary (Glossary ELP_TT/impel: http://www.ecml.at/mtp2/Elp_tt/Results/DM_layout/Glossary/Glossary_E.pdf [22/04/2009]).

Teachers must support the development of such a capacity with specific tasks and procedures throughout the learner’s school life. The characteristics of an autonomous learner as mentioned above are not only important in language learning but also in life in general. This definition is clearly learner-centred and places the individual and his/her intellectual development at the centre of attention. In respect of language learning the characteristics of detachment and critical reflection are important for the evaluation of the learners’ own work, their achievements, their progress and their strengths and weaknesses. This then leads to a decision-making capacity with which the autonomous student decides which course of action to follow, which activities to do, which skill to focus on, etc. This aspect ties in with the characteristic of independent action. After the students have decided what to do, they have to take action themselves and do it. All this must be encouraged and trained by the teachers and in a best case scenario also by the parents. The example given refers more to communication than to learning but shows strong problem-solving skills, which in my view is also a

characteristic of an autonomous learner and of the kind of citizenship the Council of Europe would like to foster: independently thinking, active and critical. Learner autonomy is therefore not just important for language learning but is a life skill, vital for the individual and, according to the Council of Europe, also for European society.

5.3.2.2. Teachers' Perspective

Although learner autonomy is about giving responsibility to the students, the teacher has a very important, yet different, role to play. The idea of autonomous learning must be introduced by the teacher and the students have to be encouraged throughout their 'autonomous learning journey'. This is why many projects start with the teacher and teacher education for encouraging learner autonomy. In the COCOP project Oder (2006: 137) discusses the situation in this respect in Estonia, but the observation she makes is universal:

So the teacher, being a key figure in the learning process, can either promote or hinder learner autonomy, depending on his/her concept of professional teaching. Consequently, it is of vital importance to implement principles of autonomous learning in both pre-service and in-service teacher education if one wants all teachers to promote learner independence (Oder 2006: 137).

Teachers are *inter alia* shaped by their own experiences at school, and few of them will have encountered autonomous learning situations. Thus teacher education plays an important role in introducing concepts such as learner autonomy to the next generation of teachers. Teachers must be trained in giving students responsibility for their own learning and helping them reflect on their work (which are only two features of an autonomous language learning classroom), as this is often more difficult than delivering the input and making the assessment themselves. The EPOSTL project recognises the importance of teacher training in this area and therefore dedicates one section of its 'can do' statements to independent/autonomous learning, including the areas of: "learner autonomy, homework, projects, portfolios, virtual learning environments and extra-curricular activities" (Newby et al. 2007: 44ff). All these are areas in which autonomous learning takes place. The EPOSTL descriptors pinpoint what skills or competences a teacher needs in order to strengthen learner autonomy in their classroom. The general statement on learner autonomy states the following:

As far as learner autonomy and project work are concerned, taking charge means choosing objectives, content, activities, outcomes and forms of assessment. [...] Autonomous learning is an integral part of learning foreign languages, not an additional method of teaching. Teachers need to know how to structure lessons and design tasks which assist the learners in their choices and their ability to reflect on and evaluate their learning. Portfolios can provide valuable insight into the individual's progress both for the teacher and the learners themselves (Newby et al. 2007: 44).

EPOSTL sees learner autonomy as an “integral part’ of language learning but, due to the nature of the publication, does not explicitly discuss further aspects. It does not mention the wider concepts behind which the Council of Europe promotes. One of the ideas behind learner autonomy is that students can set their goals by themselves (according to their strengths and weaknesses), and this is mentioned in the quotation quite clearly: students are meant to “tak[e][...] charge” and choose “objectives, content, activities, outcomes and forms of assessment”, of course under the helpful eye of a teacher. This new point of view towards learning a foreign language has some serious implications for the role of the teacher. The teacher should no longer simply present all students with the same activities to teach grammar, for example, but provide activities which suit different language styles.

The EPOSTL team has created the following ‘can do’ descriptors for autonomous learning, from the teacher’s point of view of course:

1. I can evaluate and select a variety of activities which help learners to reflect on their existing knowledge and competences.
2. I can evaluate and select a variety of activities which help learners to identify and reflect on individual learning processes and learning styles.
3. I can guide and assist learners in setting their own aims and objectives and in planning their own learning.
4. I can evaluate and select tasks which help learners to reflect on and develop specific learning strategies and study skills.
5. I can assist learners in choosing tasks and activities according to their individual needs and interests.
6. I can help learners to reflect on and evaluate their own learning processes and evaluate the outcomes (Newby et al. 2007: 45).

These six descriptors cover the main aspects of autonomous learning: learner reflection (on their existing knowledge, their learning processes, and their outcomes), learner involvement in terms of helping students to plan their language learning future (setting their own aims, choosing specific exercises according to strengths and weaknesses) and learning how to learn. These are all skills a teacher needs to possess in order to encourage autonomous learning and therefore these skills must be addressed in pre-service teacher education. The EPOSTL project thus takes the teacher perspective on learner autonomy by considering the skills a teacher needs to deliver on this aspect of language learning.

In the ELP_TT project Little (2007) mentions three principles that need to be followed for learner autonomy to be implemented:

- learner involvement – engaging learners to share responsibility for the learning process (the affective and the metacognitive dimensions);
- learner reflection – helping learners to think critically when they plan, monitor and evaluate their learning (the metacognitive dimensions);
- appropriate target language use – using the target language as the principal medium of language learning (the communicative and the metacognitive

dimensions) (Little 2007: http://www.ecml.at/mtp2/Elp_tt/Results/DM_layout/00_10/06/06%20Supplementary%20text.pdf [10/05/2009]).

So that autonomous learning is possible the teacher must allow students to be responsible (or partly responsible) for their own learning and they in turn must be willing to shoulder this responsibility. From the above extract it becomes clear once again what vital role the teacher has to play in this development, and the complexity underlying the tasks mentioned by Little (2007). How do you help students to think critically? This requires a high amount of training and planning from the teacher's side. It is nowadays widely accepted that the target language should be used as consistently as possible. Little (2007) further explains what the teacher has to do to encourage learner autonomy in the ELP_TT project:

According to these three principles the teacher should

- use the target language as the preferred medium of classroom communication and require the same of her learners;
- involve her learners in a non-stop quest for good learning activities, which are shared, discussed, analysed and evaluated with the whole class – in the target language, to begin with in very simple terms;
- help her learners to set their own learning targets and choose their own learning activities, subjecting them to discussion, analysis and evaluation – again, in the target language;
- require her learners to identify individual goals but pursue them through collaborative work in small groups;
- require her learners to keep a written record of their learning – plans of lessons and projects, lists of useful vocabulary, whatever texts they themselves produce;
- engage her learners in regular evaluation of their progress as individual learners and as a class – in the target language (Little 2007: http://www.ecml.at/mtp2/Elp_tt/Results/DM_layout/00_10/06/06%20Supplementary%20text.pdf [10/05/2009]).

If the previous list from the EPOSTL project was a list of 'can do descriptors', this is a list of 'to do descriptors', detailing what the role of a teacher is in an autonomous language learning classroom. These points expand on the three principles mentioned above, going into more details on what exactly a teacher should do in the classroom. Nevertheless, these guidelines are still very general, leaving the teacher to find ways in which to realise them. A comparison of this list of six statements by Little (2007) from the ELP_TT project with the descriptors by Newby et al. (2007) from the EPOSTL project shows many similarities. Both take the teacher's point of view and follow him/her through the autonomous learning classroom, and although both of the guidelines refer to language teachers and language classrooms, they can be used in other circumstances and in other subjects as well, if adapted. One aspect which the EPOSTL list does not mention is the use of the target language, maybe because it is not exclusive to learner autonomy but should be part of any language classroom. The other aspect

that Little (2007) picks up on is the social one, stating that group work is an important part of an autonomous language learning experience. Although individual goals have been agreed upon, the work can still be carried out in a group, thus creating the important interaction between peers and also between the teacher and students (social learning).

These two discussions of learner autonomy (ELP_TT and EPOSTL) focus very much on practical aspects and not so much on theoretical issues which underlie them and give no reason why learner autonomy is important. It is noticeable that neither of the two lists mentions the idea of democratic and active citizenship, which is of such importance for the Council of Europe. On a theoretical basis, Fenner (2006: 32) claims that learner autonomy helps develop the critical and reflective capacity of learners. This in turn helps them to prepare for a life as active citizens who critically question information, media input or political decisions. With respect to the EPOSTL, these broader educational aims underlie the descriptors.

Another aspect that is important in autonomous learning is assessment or evaluation. The EPOSTL and ELP_TT extracts show that the teachers should guide students towards self-evaluation. In school systems today there must always be some sort of teacher evaluation or assessment. Nevertheless, it is important that autonomous learners learn how to evaluate the progress they have made and their own work in general and this automatically leads to the question of how they can improve their achievements. It is here that the possibilities of a portfolio come into play, as an alternative form of evaluation for the students themselves. The Council of Europe strongly supports the *European Language Portfolio*, although of course the use of portfolios is not restricted to the ELP, which is aimed at a long-term commitment and encourages life-long learning.

The following quotation from the ELP_TT project sums up the innovative approach of learner autonomy and its implications for teachers:

As the CEFR points out, promoting the goals of student autonomy and education for democratic citizenship requires us to develop working methods that will strengthen “independence of thought, judgement and action, combined with social skills and responsibility” (Council of Europe 2001, p. 4; Byram & Beacco 2002). Such goals clearly involve a paradigm shift in foreign language teaching, moving from the “mastery” of languages in isolation from one another to the development of a plurilingual and pluricultural competence in which all languages interrelate and interact. This paradigm shift poses a significant new challenge for language teachers, requiring them to help students/language users to see themselves as social actors and agents of their own learning and to develop their intercultural communicative competence and their capacity for intercultural communication and cooperation on a lifelong basis (Little et al. 2007: 17).

This extract draws on many aspects that have been mentioned before and shows how these different concepts, aims and principles interrelate and tie in with language teaching which aims at forming the individuals and society envisaged by the Council of Europe. Student autonomy is here seen as a goal in itself on the same level as ‘education for democratic citizenship’. If language teaching wants to play a role in this development, if independence, responsibility and social competence are to be achieved, the focus must lie on the learners themselves and on their plurilingual and intercultural competences. As mentioned before and as Little et al. (2007) point out, any innovation is a challenge for the people involved, in this case for the teachers. The extract emphasises the new role teachers have to play if this idea is to become reality. They need to support the students and encourage the students’ independence and responsibility, provide opportunities for intercultural, plurilingual and social learning and encourage life-long learning. Pre- and in-service teacher education therefore needs to provide the basis for these challenging tasks teachers are facing.

5.3.2.3. The European Language Portfolio

Two projects (ELP_TT and impel) are explicitly dedicated to the ELP; however, most other projects refer to it as an important impulse for language learning, though it does not figure strongly in them (see frequency table chapter 6.). According to Little et al. (2007: 10) the ELP has the following aims and rationale behind it:

[...] the ELP is designed to make the language learning process more transparent to learners and to foster the development of learner autonomy; that is why it assigns a central role to reflection and self-assessment. This function reflects the Council of Europe’s long-established commitment to learner autonomy as an essential part of education for democratic citizenship and a prerequisite for lifelong learning (Little et al. 2007: 10).

The most important fact about the ELP is that it exists for the learners themselves and seeks to empower them. It was not created with the teachers or any school grades in mind, but aims to develop learner autonomy. Making language learning more transparent is another step in this direction as only students who understand their learning processes can take responsibility for their learning and continue to learn outside or after school (life-long learning). Little et al. (2007) call learner autonomy a “prerequisite for lifelong learning”. The other important consideration here is that autonomous learning is an “essential part of education for democratic citizenship”. The encouragement of learner autonomy in foreign language teaching and in education in general is therefore necessary for reaching these two Council of Europe aims: democratic citizenship and life-long learning.

The other aspects that are mentioned here are the role of reflection and self-assessment in order to support critical thinking, which is also an important aspect of democratic citizenship. The view this extract from the ELP_TT project takes is that the ELP is an important and useful tool for increasing learner autonomy and encouraging critical thinking skills and life-long learning (individual empowerment), which in turn is necessary to develop democratic citizenship (social aspect).

The Council of Europe considers that schools in Europe have an important role in creating self-reliant and autonomous learners. In order to foster such individual autonomy in lifetime language learning the European Language Portfolio was designed. The five guiding principles of the ELP are:

1. The owner is the learner.
2. All language competence is valued positively.
3. Learning in and outside formal education is promoted.
4. Life-long learning is encouraged.
5. The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEF) is the basis for the ELP (Schärer 2005: <http://elp.ecml.at/IMPEL/Documents/Canada/CanadianELPWorkshopReport2005/tabid/86/language/en-GB/Default.aspx> [19/05/2009]).

This impel extract shows the main principles of the ELP, with the most important one that the ELP belongs to the learners themselves and nobody else has any claim on it. It should not be marked, graded, corrected by the classroom teacher, but the teachers should encourage its use, introduce the learners to the ELP, its purpose and advantages and support the students along the way, but never dictate what they should write in it. Here we clearly see the 'new' role of teachers, as mentors and supporters more than as teachers in the traditional sense of the word.

The second point refers back to the ELP'S role in fostering plurilingualism (as a competence and as a value) and also intercultural competence (as language always includes cultural aspects as well). This of course includes languages learned or heard outside school as well, which is explicitly referred to in point three. However, learning in formal education is also encouraged. In this way education and learning in general are supported and shown in a positive light so that the students themselves can see the advantages of an additional language or any other knowledge. Point four extends this support for in- and outside formal education to life-long learning. With the ELP students can keep a record of all their achievements and thus see them as noteworthy and valuable. The other important Council of Europe document is of course the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, which has found its way into almost all language classrooms and curricula and is the basis of the ELP. In a different way to the ELP, the CEFR also increases transparency and paves the way for learner

autonomy partly due to the self-assessment grids and the questions for reflection, which are important parts of the learning process themselves.

According to Schärer (2005) in the above quotation, the ELP is meant to help schools “creat[e][...] self-reliant and autonomous learners”; however the ELP is clearly only one means of doing this. It is interesting that Schärer (2005) uses the term ‘create’ in connection with language learners, as it makes the learners appear passive. The very idea of learner autonomy stands against this passive conception of students who should take an active role and interest in their learning. In the above quotations two adjectives characterise the students the Council of Europe wishes to ‘create’: ‘self-reliant’ and ‘autonomous’. Whereas ‘autonomous’, in my view, is more closely related to (language) learning, ‘self-reliant’ is a wider term, a characteristic that the citizens of Europe should possess. This belongs to the same category as critical thinking and other positive features.

The following quotation from the Impel project presents the ELP in a very positive light, as far as its effects are concerned, however, the implementation may cause difficulties:

The pedagogic value of the ELP has been established: there is clear evidence that it fosters plurilingualism, mutual understanding, and the development of learner autonomy and intercultural competence. [...] ELP implementation is enormously complex and we constantly underestimate the amount of time we need to make the ELP part of daily learning in school (Schärer 2006: <http://elp.ecml.at/Portals/1/documents/8-4-1%20Vilnius%20ELP%20seminar%20report%202006.pdf> [18/05/2009]).

Although the ELP most certainly has many advantages and is an important aid in encouraging plurilingualism, interculturality, social awareness and mutual understanding, it can only have positive results if it is accompanied by a number of other measures that support autonomous learning and the above mentioned aspects. Once again, the teacher plays an important, new role and needs to embrace this innovation and encourage it, not only directly but also indirectly through abandoning traditional language teaching methods with a strict monolingual focus. In this extract we therefore see a focus on the positive effects the ELP has on individuals and their development, but also on the challenges facing the teacher to make the use of the ELP successful.

5.3.2.4. Methodological Perspective

In the extract above Schärer (2006) writes very confidently about the advantages of the ELP, but the ELP is not the only way of encouraging learner autonomy. In this statement from the COCOCOP project Fenner points out the possible shortcomings of the ELP:

In a discussion of learner autonomy, however, one must recognise the limitations of self-assessment that is based mainly on checklists. “Can-do” statements can never replace

learning logs, diaries and didactic classroom dialogues, which are based on reflection (Fenner 2006: 37).

Although the ELP is important, Fenner (2006) suggests that it is not sufficient. The limitations of the 'can do statements' and the resulting checklists are obvious and this makes the ELP not entirely in tune with the ideas of learner autonomy, as here the student can only grade fixed descriptors and not write about his/her own thoughts (although there are some open-ended questions as well). This statement by no means suggests that the ELP does not encourage learner autonomy; however, it does draw attention to the fact that the ELP has its limits as it relies heavily on 'can-do' statements, in comparison to more open forms of self-assessment. Fenner (2006) highlights the aspects of reflection, of critical thinking and of learners putting these thoughts into their own words, but also the importance of dialogue within the classroom involving either another learner or the teacher. Fenner (2006) takes a methodological perspective, suggesting additional activities to complement the ELP.

A number of projects suggest activities or methods in addition to those of the ELP to strengthen learner autonomy, e.g. literature, as the following extract from the COCOCOP project shows:

Potential outcomes of using literature in foreign language classes include raised levels of problem-solving skills, encouraging learners' personal development and autonomy. Higher self-awareness and frequent sharing not only of literary texts, but also of reading experiences and personal interpretations result in co-operative skills, tolerance and, eventually, in positive motivation for foreign language learning (Narančić-Kovać, Kaltenbacher 2007: 85f).

The use of literature in foreign language teaching has a long tradition, and one of the reasons for learning a foreign language throughout history has been to be able to read texts by foreign authors. Nowadays, the focus has shifted towards communication, but literature is still considered an important part by many, especially for developing intercultural competence. In this case, however, the authors stress using literature to increase autonomous learning and the learners' development. In addition to that, they see positive effects for self-awareness, social competence and tolerance and suggest that it can also increase language learning motivation. All these aspects tie in with the Council of Europe's policies as well. This quotation encourages teachers to use literature not only for the cultural learning that can be achieved, but use it to strengthen autonomous learning. The question is therefore how and what literature can be used to achieve this. It is interesting that the authors of this article then continue with the difficulties teachers face when choosing an appropriate text (Narančić-Kovać, Kaltenbacher 2007: 86). Should not an autonomous learner have an opportunity to contribute to this decision-making process?

Another innovative approach that encourages learner autonomy according to the following quotation from the ENSEMBLE project is bilingual education (but also CLIL).

As children in bilingual education develop autonomous learning strategies and techniques, which are essential for language acquisition, such reference materials [dictionaries] will support them as they continue their studies independently (Norberg 2007: 41).

Bilingual education or CLIL are innovative approaches that foster plurilingualism, intercultural competence and, following this extract, also learner autonomy. The challenges the students face in bilingual education help them develop into autonomous learners, who are able to use certain strategies they have acquired in their education to carry on with their learning independently. Thus bilingual education, according to this quotation, also encourages life-long learning. It is not clear, though, why bilingual education in itself strengthens learner autonomy, as one can assume that this depends on the teachers and their methods rather than on the basic system of bilingual teaching. Although the students certainly do face challenges through bilingual education that students in monolingual schools do not face (e.g. vocabulary for specific purposes, working with scientific/academic texts in another language), the teachers must ensure that they introduce the students to the necessary strategies and give them the tools to carry on independently. Nevertheless this extract shows another didactic possibility for encouraging learner autonomy on a school basis.

The following quotation from the LEA project shows that all of the aspects mentioned throughout this analysis – plurilingualism, interculturality and learner autonomy – tie together, according to Bernaus et al. (2007) (who is referring to a questionnaire here):

Moreover, the most experienced teachers indicated that using plurilingual and pluricultural materials encourages student autonomy in searching for reference materials, leads students to transfer skills and positive attitudes to other non-language specific areas of the curriculum and accelerates the learning of other languages (Bernaus et al. 2007: 65f).

This extract claims that using plurilingual and pluricultural material supports learner autonomy as the students develop certain strategies that are important for language learning in general, but also for other subjects to which these strategies are subsequently transferred by the (independent) students. The strategy that is mentioned here is the use of reference material which can help students in every subject. This extract places the fact that learner autonomy is important not only for language learning but for education and learning in general into the focus of attention. It also suggests that the motivation to learn in general is higher than for non-autonomous learners.

5.3.2.5. Summary

Learner autonomy is an important concept for the ECML projects and an undisputed aim of the Council of Europe's language policy. It is considered as one of the steps leading towards democratic citizenship, critical thinking and active participation in the political, social and cultural spheres of Europe. In their discussion of this concept, the ECML projects focus on methods and techniques employed to encourage learner autonomy among language students. In this context the *European Language Portfolio* plays an important role and teachers are encouraged to implement the ELP, as it is seen as one way to strengthen learner autonomy. However, other options are also suggested: using literature, plurilingual and pluricultural activities, bilingual education, CLIL, learner diaries, etc. The encouragement of learner autonomy through these suggestions lies in the hands of the teachers, who are the other main focus of the ECML projects. Through pre- and in-service teacher education teachers should be made aware of the measures they can take to promote learner autonomy in their teaching. Although, as the projects point out, teachers will face challenges, learner autonomy is a concept worth promoting in the context of the Council of Europe's principles and policies.

5.4. Values and Principles of the Council of Europe

5.4.1. Theoretical Discussion

The theoretical discussion of this topic can be found in Chapter 2.1., detailing the Council of Europe policies and values.

5.4.2. Project Analysis

The discussion in Chapter 2.1. has pointed out three different aims among others: intercultural and plurilingual competence and the development of learner autonomy, that the Council of Europe pursues. Throughout my analysis I have commented on how strongly all the projects and their goals are based on the values and principles of the Council of Europe and how frequently they refer to them. There are a number of such principles, but the most important ones (apart from the very basic ones, such as tolerance, equality, liberty, freedom, human rights) appear to be: democratic citizenship, mutual understanding and social cohesion. These can also be found in the explicit statement of goals from the Language Division in Strasbourg, along with plurilingualism and linguistic diversity (see chapter 2.1.2). In the following

analysis I have included mobility and life-long learning, as they are also important aspects the Council of Europe promotes.

Throughout the projects it is noteworthy that the principles above are usually mentioned together, presenting some kind of unity. As they are all at the same level of overall goals of the Council of Europe, the projects assert that democratic citizenship, mutual understanding and social cohesion are being supported and strengthened by the projects and their innovations. An example of this is the following extract from the 'impel'-project about the ELP. Both the ELP and the CEFR are aligned with these aims.

The goal of a European Language Portfolio is to promote plurilingualism which recognizes that an individual should develop a linguistic repertory over a lifetime that includes all languages a person could use for different purposes at varying levels of ability. The promotion of plurilingualism encourages linguistic diversity and mutual understanding in building a Europe that encourages the principles of democratic citizenship and social cohesion. The Council of Europe considers that schools in Europe have an important role in creating self-reliant and autonomous learners (Schärer 2005: <http://elp.ecml.at/IMPEL/Documents/Canada/CanadianELPWorkshopReport2005/tabid/86/language/en-GB/Default.aspx> [17/05/2009]).

In this quotation we find a number of goals the Council of Europe supports: learner autonomy, life-long learning, plurilingualism, linguistic diversity, mutual understanding, democratic citizenship and social cohesion. In this case the author arranges the principles on different levels: the use of the ELP supports plurilingualism, which in turns encourages linguistic diversity and mutual understanding, which leads to democratic citizenship and social cohesion, this being the ultimate aims of the Council of Europe. This is a logical chain of aims, one leading to the other; however very often they appear on one level in projects, as this example from VALEUR shows:

With regard to education, the plan calls on member states to build a more human and inclusive Europe by ensuring social cohesion, promoting democratic citizenship in Europe, protecting and promoting cultural diversity and fostering intercultural dialogue. It is obvious that language education plays an important role in pursuing all these goals (McPake, Tinsley, et al. 2007: 47).

The authors here claim that it is 'obvious' that modern foreign languages have a role to play in this attempt to become a more 'human' and harmonious Europe. It is, however, not specified here what kind of language education is meant or which methods or activities should be used in the language classroom to achieve all these aims. The idea that simply knowing another language turns us into democratic, and interculturally competent citizens is however questionable; as mentioned above, there are citizens who speak two or more languages and still harbour certain (sometimes) subconscious ideas of xenophobia or even racism. This is why such a person can not be called plurilingual, because, as we have seen, plurilingualism is not only a competence but also a value.

Does it make a difference if there is a hierarchical progression of aims, as we have seen in Shärers' comments on the ELP, or if, as McPake, Tinsley et al. in VALEUR seem to suggest, they are all on one level? This depends on what the aim of each individual language education policy is. A lot has been said about a paradigm shift in language teaching, about linguistic competence no longer being the only centre of interest, about fostering learner autonomy and using intercultural activities, etc. However, ultimately it is the teacher who decides if social cohesion and democratic citizenship are rather overriding principles for him/her, ever present but never explicitly mentioned, or if he/she wants to be more active in this area and chooses texts or examples, literature, case studies, etc. that discuss aspects such as democracy, political participation, human rights, society, the rule of law, Europe, equality, racism, etc.. Such sources would directly encourage students to express their thoughts and ideas on these topics, thus receiving an education in democratic citizenship and at the same time practicing communication in a foreign language.

The LEA project is concerned with teacher education and also considers change as necessary in teacher education as the aim of language education shifts:

Language teacher education has traditionally been focused on the didactic procedures for teaching particular languages. However, developments in contemporary society oblige educational institutions to face up to the challenges of plurilingualism and pluriculturalism. Consequently, it is necessary to enrich language teacher education by including the competences needed to promote linguistic and cultural diversity for the construction of "democratic citizenship, social cohesion, mutual understanding and respect". Language and culture awareness help to promote these aims. [...] Such a programme would enable teachers become key social actors with a major role to play both locally as well as globally (Bernaus et al 2007: 1, file:///E:/documents/LEA_pdescE.pdf).

In this case again, we see that language and cultural awareness come first; they help to encourage linguistic and cultural diversity which leads to the three by now well-known principles of the Council of Europe. This presents a challenge for the teachers and also for the teacher educators as they now not only need to teach the language itself but a host of concepts, principles and values as well, and for that they need the necessary competences. The teacher and the training of the teachers play a vital role in the projects of the ECML and in this case, the authors again highlight the potential role of a teacher who has the necessary education to fill such a post.

5.4.2.1. Democratic Citizenship

Democratic citizenship and human rights education are important parts of the Council of Europe's agenda. In the ECML projects, the COCOCOP project included them explicitly in

its publication, both theoretical aspects (Popovici 2006: 59ff and Pappenheim, Popovici, Roldán Tapia 2006: 168ff) and practical ideas (Popovici, Roldán Tapia 2006: 151ff). The basic idea is to include case studies or information about human rights in the foreign language classroom as contents, thus enabling the students to acquire vocabulary related to these topics, but more importantly to engage with this topic and the values in question. The authors (Pappenheim, Popovici, Roldán Tapia 2006: 169) also state the importance of including training for human rights teaching in teacher education programmes and encouraging a content-based approach, so that these topics can be readily included in the language classroom. This is the only explicit reference to specific activities regarding democratic citizenship and human rights. In the other projects the principles play an important background role.

In the COCOCOP project publication Popovici (2006: 62) expresses the view that it is language teaching especially that should engage with these topics, even more than other subjects, because “[t]he two domains share issues such as identity, cultural heritage, communication, understanding and participation”. Therefore, even if the content is not specifically related to human rights or democracy, language teaching can still make a contribution to this Council of Europe goal. It is not only the contents of a language classroom that is in tune with democratic citizenship but also its methods and approaches, according to this extract:

The pedagogy of the language classroom is not only conducive to education for citizenship and human rights but can be seen in itself as a representation of their principles. Interactive and participatory methodologies, learner-centeredness principles, exposure to a variety of tasks and methods to cater for different learning (and teaching) styles and encouragement of free expression of opinion are democratic human rights principles in their own right (Popovici 2006: 63).

Thus Popovici (2006) sees the influence and relationship between language education and democratic citizenship and human rights as twofold. On the one hand, there is the content, either explicitly about human rights etc. or through general concepts such as culture, identity, mutual understanding etc. and on the other hand the methods and approaches which tie in with the principles of democracy, e.g. learner-centredness, interaction, differentiation, and expressing opinions. The teacher has to initiate such discussions or use these methods, something not every foreign language teacher does; therefore teacher education needs to address these topics. Popovici (2006: 67) emphasises the role of the teacher, claiming that “teachers of English need a background in human rights and democratic citizenship as they are responsible for guiding the development of democratic global citizens and intercultural

speakers”. Teachers are not the only people responsible for this, of course, but they can indeed play an important role and must therefore be trained to take this task upon them.

The European Language Portfolio is also mentioned as one possible aid to promote democratic citizenship, via learner autonomy (according to the ELP_TT project): “[...] This function reflects the Council of Europe’s long-established commitment to learner autonomy as an essential part of education for democratic citizenship and a prerequisite for lifelong learning (Little et al. 2007: 10)”.

The VALEUR project highlights the importance of supporting the additional languages in Europe to ensure that the three goals are reached:

This brief review of languages education policy in support of the Council of Europe’s principal goals – social cohesion, democratic citizenship, protecting and promoting cultural diversity, and intercultural dialogue – makes clear that additional languages have a key role to play, along with the dominant languages of the 47 Council of Europe member states. From the perspective of an individual the arguments set out here are directly related to and can be derived from more general human rights, such as the right to full personal development, the right to good quality education, the right to participate in society but also the duty of becoming a responsible citizen. At state level, language education policy is to be considered part of social policy, and from this perspective supporting additional languages should be viewed as working towards responsible use of human capital, contributing to wise management of migration, ensuring social cohesion, and promoting the ideals of an intercultural citizenship (McPake, Tinsley, et al 2007: 48).

In this extract the emphasis is laid on the fact that language education with its far-reaching results has an influence on both the individual and their development and on society. The concept of democratic citizenship involves both rights and duties, which the citizen must be aware of. This project claims that educating students in additional languages will have such an effect on them, so that they become aware of their rights and duties. On the other hand, education itself is a right, a basic human right that helps citizens be able to actively participate in society. From the point of view of society, nation and government, the support for additional languages can, according to this extract, have positive consequences that ensure social cohesion. Therefore, democratic citizenship is considered as being important for the individual, whereas social cohesion is essential for a harmonious society. What is also mentioned is the term ‘intercultural citizenship’, which links the two concepts of interculturality and democratic citizenship together. This is only once more mentioned in all the publications, namely in Gulliver:

School must prepare pupils to be European citizens, but being a European citizen does not mean coming from nowhere. Intercultural citizenship does not exclude patriotism. [...] On the contrary, it is a question of remaining firmly attached to one’s own cultural heritage, being conscious of one’s own cultural identity while opening up to others and accepting their richness (Bedynska et al. 2007: E:\en\intercultural-skills-today2.htm).

This quotation shows how all the different aims and principles of the Council of Europe are connected with each other. Intercultural and plurilingual competence leads citizens to accepting difference and tolerating and engaging with others, and this is important for a Europe in which citizens participate in democratic and social processes. Popovici (2006: 61) considers this from a different angle, claiming that

[...] the concept of “citizenship” has moved away from the close association with nation state and nationality, into “democratic citizenship”, which expresses the idea of living harmoniously in respect of diversity and the rule of law at local and wider levels (Popovici 2006: 61).

The Gulliver extract suggests that although identity, roots, and patriotism may be important, Europeans can develop an intercultural citizenship which acknowledges diversity, whereas the COCOCOP extract insists that nation and nationality no longer play an important role in democratic citizenship. Both claim that democratic citizenship can be realised, one by holding on to one’s national identity, the other by abandoning it.

5.4.2.2. Social Cohesion

As the programme itself is called ‘Languages for Social Cohesion’, all the projects claim to improve social cohesion in Europe, which is why they have been selected for this medium-term programme. However, the LEA project claims to be especially suited to encourage social cohesion, by focusing on teacher education.

The LEA project is particularly relevant to the general thematic area expressed in the ECML call for proposals of the 2nd medium-term programme “Languages for Social Cohesion. Language Education in a Multilingual and Multicultural Europe” because the main objectives of the project are aimed at developing social cohesion through language teaching/learning among teachers and consequently among their students (Bernaus et al 2007: 1, file:///E:/documents/LEA_pdescE.pdf).

Although none of the project parts specifically deals with social cohesion, the activities suggest that by making the trainees aware of the diversity in the European landscape of culture, language, religion etc., social cohesion is supported. The activity “Socialising by Religion” by Camelia-Elena Arhip under the section “Learning about Languages and Cultures” claims, for example, to do exactly this. This is the same idea as seen in the previous chapter, namely that acknowledging diversity and embracing it leads to democratic citizenship and social cohesion.

However, and this ties in with the idea that it is necessary to gain knowledge and understanding of one’s own culture discussed in the previous chapters, we also have to know our roots, in this case the linguistic basics in our mother tongue.

Establishing effective literacy in the first languages (L1) and bi/multilingual approaches to literacy teaching in early childhood education are now widely accepted as among the most effective ways of ensuring educational achievement for children and of promoting social cohesion in multilingual societies (Alexander, Busch 2007: 9).

This extract from the LDL project considers as important both, education in the mother tongue and supporting the child's plurilingualism at as early a stage as possible. This not only helps the child and his/her educational development, but also leads to social cohesion due to improved communication and better opportunities for citizens who have some plurilingual competence.

The other projects all stress the importance and the influence that intercultural and especially plurilingual competence have on social cohesion. The following sample extracts (from 1. Gulliver, 2. Qualitraining, 3. Valeur, 4. Ensemble) all share the same train of thought: plurilingualism leads to social cohesion and must therefore be encouraged:

1. Nowadays, in this multicultural, plurilingual Europe, the acquisition of intercultural skills is becoming more and more essential in order to live, work and communicate with other people. It is a process which makes it possible for the representatives of different cultures and languages to coexist in harmony and fosters social cohesion in Europe (Bedynska et al. 2007: E:\en\intercultural-skills-today.htm).

2. Addressing quality assurance in a coherent way across fields of language education, across languages and regions, can contribute to better social cohesion, so that all citizens can expect to receive services of equal quality standards, irrespective of the language they are aiming to learn (Muresan et al. 2006: E:\Lucru\QualiTraining_pdescE.pdf).

3. We took as our starting point Council of Europe policies on plurilingualism and the desirability of promoting linguistic diversity both for individual citizenship in Europe and for social cohesion (McPake, Tinsley, et al. 2007: Flyer).

4. The Council of Europe, through the efforts of the Language Policy Division in Strasbourg and the European Centre for Modern Languages in Graz, stresses the importance of societal multilingualism and of individual plurilingual competence, as paths towards social cohesion (Camilleri Grima 2007: 5).

It is the possibility of communication and understanding that these extracts emphasise as having a positive effect on social cohesion. In all these cases there is a clear hierarchy of aims: we have a multilingual society and a multilingual and linguistically and culturally diverse Europe and thus plurilingual citizens are needed to improve social cohesion in such a society.

5.4.2.3. Mutual Understanding

Mutual understanding is the third of the Council of Europe goals that can be seen as an overriding aim for all projects and all Council of Europe policies, as has been mentioned at

the beginning of this chapter. There is again a basic agreement that mutual understanding is an important goal and all projects claim to encourage this through different methods. The Gulliver project, for example, uses an internet platform to increase social cohesion and mutual understanding:

We are convinced that such experiences and joint work by young people across frontiers will contribute to better mutual understanding among the representatives of different languages and cultures, and will foster social cohesion in Europe (Bedynska et al. 2007 E:\en\conclusions.htm).

In this case it is the (virtual) journey through Europe and the visiting of other countries and cultures in cyberspace which foster intercultural competence and mutual understanding. The Blogs project shares this idea, claiming that “[u]ltimately, the new means of storing information, such as blogs, [...] make human relationships more open, leading to mutual understanding and awareness via the Internet” (Leja 2007: 34). In these two cases the use of the internet is suggested to improve mutual understanding, whereas others support the use of the ELP and the CEFR to reach the same aim (impel-project):

Both instruments are descriptive and promote ideals and goals that underpin the mission of the Council of Europe: respect for linguistic and cultural diversity, mutual understanding beyond national, institutional and social boundaries, and the promotion of plurilingualism and pluricultural education (Schärer 2008: <http://elp.ecml.at/IMPEL/Documents/tabid/83/language/en-GB/Default.aspx>[19/05/2009]).

Schärer (2008) here considers mutual understanding as an aim on the same level as plurilingualism or pluriculturalism, and both of these are promoted through the ELP and the CEFR. However, both documents need to be put into a context for the students by the language teacher and must be supported by additional methods or activities that foster that kind of goals. The LEA project sees the major aim of the ELP as encouraging mutual understanding. This respect for diversity ties in with plurilingualism, as it is one way of showing respect for other languages and their speakers.

Along with the CEF the Council of Europe created the European Language Portfolio (ELP). [...] Its general purpose is to deepen mutual understanding among citizens in Europe, to respect the diversity of cultures and ways of life. It is also a way of promoting a plurilingual and intercultural competence (Gonçalves, Andrade 2007: 7, <file:///E:/Othermaterials/Articles/portfolio.pdf>).

According to this ECML project the ELP is made part of a language classroom and beyond to foster mutual understanding and intercultural and plurilingual competence. In the COCOCOP project, however, Pappenheim (2006: 76) suggests that by strengthening intercultural competence mutual understanding can also be strengthened. The ELP is one possibility among others to strengthen mutual understanding. Here are Pappenheim’s suggestions:

It has been my purpose in this paper to show that by means of a curriculum and syllabus design focused on aspects of intercultural competence such as social and cultural awareness it is possible to integrate language knowledge and skills, communicative competences and social and cultural competences for the implementation of a language policy for mutual understanding and the observation of human rights (Pappenheim 2006: 76).

She encourages integrating linguistic, cultural, social and communicative competence, which would lead to mutual understanding and enhance human rights education. Mutual understanding seems to be the big picture in this case, which should be achieved by integrating all other aspects of the Council of Europe's language policies.

5.4.2.4. Life-Long Learning

Another important concept the Council of Europe supports is life-long learning, usually encouraged together with learner autonomy, as this gives the learners the skills and competences they need to be able to continue their education outside or after school. Many aspects of importance have already been covered in the chapter on learner autonomy. However, I would like to stress again the Council of Europe's view that the European Language Portfolio is one of the main means to achieve such an autonomous learning and, in consequence, life-long learning, as these extracts from impel show:

The ELP is based on visions and principles which impact on educational practice and on educational systems

Visions and goals: * Plurilingualism * Mutual understanding * Mutual respect * Unity in diversity * Life-long learning * etc.

[...]Common goals and principles have been stimulating and inspiring development all over Europe, and a substantial body of experience and know-how has been building up (Schärer 2007.

<http://elp.ecml.at/IMPEL/Documents/Keyissuesofimplementation/tabid/118/language/en-GB/Default.aspx> [21/05/2009]).

Life-long learning is one of the values the ELP is based on and one that it has constantly tried to strengthen. Considering the five guiding principles of the ELP the connection between learner autonomy and life-long learning becomes even more evident:

In order to foster such individual autonomy in lifetime language learning the European Language Portfolio was designed. The five guiding principles of the ELP are:

1. The owner is the learner.
2. All language competence is valued positively.
3. Learning in and outside formal education is promoted.
4. Life-long learning is encouraged.
5. The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEF) is the basis for the ELP (Schärer 2005: <http://elp.ecml.at/IMPEL/Documents/Canada/CanadianELPWorkshopReport2005/tabid/86/language/en-GB/Default.aspx> [21/05/2009]).

As the learners are the owners of the ELP they can continue to use it after and outside school, which is the first step to life-long learning. Such practices must, however, be strongly encouraged and supported by the teacher. The third and fourth principles directly refer to life-long learning. Using the ELP in a language classroom can thus have a strong impact on the whole life of students, if they are inspired by the teacher to continue using it after school. They must be made aware of its advantages for themselves, for their careers and for society at large.

5.4.2.5. Mobility

Mobility is the last concept to be discussed in this section and it is slightly different from the other aims or goals, as mobility is twofold. On the one hand the Council of Europe and the European Union encourage mobility (among various professions and age groups) and on the other hand it is an everyday aspect of life for all Europeans, which, with some citizens, causes anxiety and xenophobia. Thus the Council of Europe must aim at increasing mobility among students, pupils and the workforce to support plurilingualism and intercultural competence, but on the other hand it must encourage measures which make sure that some people's attitude towards migrants or visitors becomes positive, so that they see the advantages of such a policy rather than as threats to culture, safety, etc. Mobility is nothing new, but the pace and our perception of it has changed over the years. This is the reason why

[...] nowadays we feel the need, probably more pressing than ever, to equip citizens with a set of competencies, at both a personal and a professional level, enabling them to fully explore the opportunities of a world that seems to, all of a sudden, have become wide open to them. In this project, we have focused on a set of intercultural competencies which are supposed to help us become interculturally mobile (Glaser et al. 2007: 41).

It is interesting that nowadays the need is felt to help citizens make the most of the opportunities of mobility. What has changed in the world? According to Glaser et al. (2007: 17), "in recent years, a much larger and more diverse demand for intercultural competence has begun to emerge, driven by economic, political and social change on a global scale." This not only refers to the EU and its free movement of people, but to the whole world: world trade, the internet, air travel, and migration. ICOPROMO (*Intercultural competence for professional mobility*), the only project that deals explicitly with the question of mobility for professionals, considers intercultural competences as the key to a positive experience of mobility for the participants.

The ICOPROMO model is transformational in that it articulates the journey the individual undergoes when becoming aware of intercultural challenges as a result of

his/her mobility or that of others with whom he/she must communicate effectively (Glaser et al. 2007: 15).

ICOPROMO developed a model that reflects the journey internationally mobile professionals undertake when they reach the point of becoming an interculturally mobile person, which means more than just knowledge, but also a “frame of mind which allows a cross-cultural encounter to turn into an intercultural one” (Glaser et al. 2007: 45). Mobile professionals first have to reflect on themselves and their identity, thus working on their intercultural competence before they can gain the most out of their experiences in foreign countries. This shows how important intercultural competence is for mobility in general. Mobile people may also suffer from culture shocks and to avoid them (or minimise their impact) they have to have gained knowledge and competences that enable them to understand and participate in the society they are in. Consider the following extract from ICOMPRIMO:

The person entering another culture, whether as a professional or as a migrant, can be seen either as an intruder or a saviour, or both. He/she needs to be able to understand the dynamics of mobility and develop the appropriate skills to ensure they can both satisfy their own requirements and goals and be seen to contribute to the community. To achieve this they have to first of all confront their own predispositions and ready themselves to embrace difference [...] (Glaser et al. 2007: 20).

This quotation makes it clear that it is not only important for the travellers, migrants, workers, etc. themselves to have intercultural (and plurilingual) competence but also for the country they go to and its inhabitants. Likewise the citizens of this society should also “embrace difference” and not see the new arrivals as ‘intruders’ or even as representing dangers. I fear however, that such a conception of arrivals is not yet entirely realistic as prejudices still have a lot of power.

Whereas ICOMPRIMO aims to promote intercultural mobility and focuses on the individual and their intercultural competence, the LEA project emphasises the role teachers can play in encouraging necessary competences for successful mobility.

Today’s society is one of increasing interaction and mobility between peoples of diverse backgrounds, beliefs, and customs. It is essential that teachers are aware of pluricultural and plurilingual issues and are capable of effectively dealing with these issues at the school and personal level (Lefever n.d. <file:///E:/Activities/samuel.pdf>).

The extract is taken from a proposed activity to strengthen this awareness, by using individual reflection and group work. It is one of the teachers’ responsibilities to address plurilingual and pluricultural issues and to ensure that the students are able to deal positively with and benefit from today’s mobility. This includes their attitude to arrivals in their own society as well as their experience when going abroad. Once again it is the teachers who are requested to lay the

founding stone of their students' future attitude towards mobility by including plurilingual and pluricultural competence in their teaching. The road towards successful mobility thus requires plurilingual as well as intercultural competence.

The 'impel' project highlights the role the CEFR plays in mobility: "[t]he Framework provides a basis for the mutual recognition of language qualifications, thus facilitating educational and occupational mobility (Rehorick, Lafargue 2005: <http://elp.ecml.at/IMPEL/Documents/Canada/CanadianELPWorkshopReport2005/tabid/86/language/en-GB/Default.aspx> [20/05/2009]). The CEFR ensures that levels of language competence can be transferred throughout Europe, and everybody will understand what B2 means and what can be expected of somebody with such a degree of competence. This facilitates student and professional mobility.

All the above extracts point to the individuals and the competences they require or the benefit they can expect due to mobility. The VALEUR project, however, mentions the need to investigate the linguistic consequences of such an increased mobility in Europe:

The linguistic consequences of mobility need more extensive consideration than has hitherto been the case. The principal of labour force mobility is central to much of the economic planning of the European Union, but this is often envisaged in terms of unencumbered workers, fluent in their own 'national' language plus two other 'national' languages of the EU, moving freely from one state to another. The reality is more complex (McPake, Tinsley, et al. 2007: 28).

It is one of the goals of the Council of Europe and the European Union that every European citizen can speak two foreign, European languages. As can be seen from this extract, this is not the case. VALEUR looks at mobility from a sociolinguistic point of view, considering the possible effects such mobility has on the language, the speech community, and the speakers themselves. This refers more to migrants who spend the rest of their lives in a different country than to students or professionals who spend a couple of months there, before returning to their home country. Nevertheless, VALEUR considers mobility from a totally different point of view than the other projects mentioned before, with ICOMPROMO addressing the individual's intercultural competence, LEA insisting on the role of the teacher and impel highlighting the significance of the CEFR in this matter. Mobility is a complex matter which can have a number of positive effects on the travelling persons themselves and on society as well, if the necessary intercultural and plurilingual attitude is present, and this is one of the aims of the Council of Europe.

5.4.2.6. Summary

As these values and principles represent the basic aims of the Council of Europe, it is not surprising that all projects claim to work towards them to a certain extent. However, especially aspects such as life-long learning, mobility or mutual understanding are not mentioned in all projects. On the whole, although the various projects focus on different aspects, these aims are the ultimate goals of all Council of Europe language policies even if some of them might remain in the background. As they are so strongly connected, addressing one value increases the students' awareness of all the others as well.

6. Summary of Analysis

In this thesis I have combined quantitative with qualitative analysis and in this summary I shall consider Table 24, which shows the number of occurrences of the concepts discussed above. It can be seen quite clearly that the number differs substantially among the different projects. This can be partly attributed to the length of the publications, but the reasons lie mostly with the topic of the project itself. It is, for example, not surprising that the two projects with the highest number of occurrences by far for the ELP and the CEFR are the two projects that directly and explicitly dealt with the European Language Portfolio (impel and ELP_TT).

What is surprising, however, is that some projects do not mention these two main Council of Europe publications at all or hardly ever. This may be due to the topic; nevertheless these two publications are the backbone of the Council of Europe's language policies and play a role in supporting all the values or principles of the Council: democratic citizenship, social cohesion, mobility, learner autonomy, life-long learning, plurilingualism, intercultural competence and mutual understanding. 'Mobility' features strongly in the ICOMPROMO project, which deals explicitly with this concept, and learner autonomy is mentioned frequently in COCOCOP (there is a theoretical chapter on this topic and the practical suggestions also try to encourage it) and in ELP_TT, where the connection between learner autonomy and the ELP is made.

'Intercultural' is a very frequent term, especially in section B of the projects, which ties in with the overall title of this section: 'Communication in a multicultural society: the development of intercultural communicative competence'. The term appears to be most frequent in ICCinTE, but does not feature strongly in the D section of the programme.

This is also true for the term ‘plurilingual’, which altogether is less frequent than ‘intercultural’. The term features most strongly in the LEA project and also in ENSEMBLE. This concept is also important for the European Language Portfolio, which is why the term appears often in impel and ELP_TT. In addition to that, there is also a high frequency in the ALC project.

This quantitative summary at the end of my qualitative analysis shows that, although there is no doubt that these terms are essential to the work of the Council of Europe in the area of languages and language education and thus also essential for the ECML, not all projects mention them in their publications. The reason for this can either be that this specific concept is considered as so well established that there is no need to refer to it, or that it does not play an important role in that project.

Project/ Search term →	Intercultural competence	Plurilingual competence	Learner autonomy	Principles and documents of the Council of Europe							Tokens (total number of words)	Types (number of different words)
	intercultural*	plurilingual*	autonom*	democratic/ (democra*) citizenship	mobility (mobil*)	co- hesion	life- long lear- ning	mutual under- standing	ELP, European Language Portfolio	CEF[R], Common European Framework		
A1. VALEUR	32	91	4	5/ 10	22	9	0	4	7 + 12 =19	9 + 8 =17	31.319	3.546
A2. ENSEMBLE	20	160	24	22/ 14	5	9	0	3	0 + 2 =2	0 + 5 =5	89.306	8.231
A3. LDL	12	15	0	12/ 3	4	6	0	1	0 + 0 =0	0 + 1 =1	34.955	4.977
A4. Chagal - setup	69	0	6	0/ 0	8	1	0	0	0 + 0 =0	1 + 2 =3	53.752	6.122
B1. ICCinTE	615	6	4	5/ 2	3	2	0	2	0 + 2 = 2	10 + 6 = 16	106.863	8.196
B2. LEA	216	320	14	22/ 16	32	12	1	7	12 + 8 = 20	7 + 29 = 36	140.625	14.381
B3 ICOPROMO	337	4	0	30/ 13	110	7	0	2	0 + 1 = 1	0 + 1 = 1	57.827	7.103
B4. Gulliver	120	13	20	9/ 1	1	5	0	3	0 + 0 = 0	0 + 6 = 6	21.903	2.839
C1. CoCoCop	141	3	218	28/62	1	29	0	4	7 + 1 = 8	0 + 33 = 33	70.719	5.603
C2. Quali Training	1	2	6	3/ 1	3	5	0	2	7 + 9 = 16	23 + 13 = 36	38.618	3.712
C3. EPOSTL	2	1	10	1/ 1	0	4	0	1	7 + 8 = 15	12 + 13 = 25	15.211	2.056
C4. ALC	22	59	6	4/ 4	2	3	0	1	0 + 0 = 0	12 + 10 = 22	38.244	3.875
C5. Impel	80	43	51	4/ 11	19	5	7	8	1082 + 53 = 1135	178 + 47 =225	85.952	6.382
C6. ELP_TT	132	50	165	8/ 4	5	6	0	4	778 + 248 = 1026	281 + 50 = 331	90.148	5.825
C7. TrainEd	6	2	3	2/ 1	0	3	1	1	0 + 0 = 0	7 + 0 = 7	53.709	5.116
C8. GroupLead	3	0	2	3/ 0	1	4	0	0	0 + 0 = 0	0 + 0 = 0	38.449	4.058
D1. BLOGS	3	2	0	1/ 0	1	2	0	2	0 + 0 = 0	0 + 0 = 0	14.583	3.034
D2. TEMOLAYOLE	24	1	15	1/ 1	0	3	0	2	3 + 4 = 7	1 + 1 = 2	54.326	5.890
D3. CLIL matrix	23	12	43	5/ 4	5	3	0	0	0 + 1 = 1	0 + 4 = 4	90.634	6.199
D5. LQuests	2	0	3	0/ 0	1	2	0	0	0 + 1 = 1	24 + 3 = 27	16.472	2.342

Table 24: Frequency list of terms from qualitative analysis according to the individual projects

Conclusion/Recommendation

This paper consists of four parts, a discussion of innovation, a corpus analysis, a theoretical discussion of four innovative ideas in language learning, intercultural competence, plurilingualism, learner autonomy and the values and principles of the Council of Europe and finally a qualitative analysis of these concepts, aided by a concordance analysis.

The ECML strongly stresses the innovative aspects, with its focus on innovation itself and its dissemination, involving various channels and methods to spread the message. With regard to the qualitative analysis and the topics discussed, the following conclusions may be drawn:

- The basic idea that the ECML and the Council of Europe follow is: better language education leads to better citizens and a better society and thus a better world. This is a very humanistic tradition, going back to the European Enlightenment: education improves people.
- The Council of Europe uses a high number of so-called ‘purr words’, e.g. social cohesion or mutual understanding, terms for which I have not found any definition in any of the projects (one definition can be found on the Council of Europe website). Such purr words have a very positive connotation and sound good but their concepts are very hard to achieve, if considered as a realistic goal.
- Although the ECML projects differ widely, they share the common base of the principles of the Council of Europe, the CEFR and the ELP.
- Different projects approach the issues from different points of view: the teachers, the students, the individual, society, the methodological or didactic aspect. These differing views are one of the strengths of the ECML, as the project teams thus offer various solutions or ideas to various issues.
- The CEFR and the ELP are basic documents that are seen as possible contributions to the challenges Europe is facing at the moment and are strongly promoted.
- In some cases there is still uncertainty about terminology, especially with the prefixes: inter-, trans-, pluri-, as in intercultural, or about the difference between multi- and plurilingual. Often the CEFR, or other Council of Europe documents, are used for definition purposes. The ECML could consider creating a language

education glossary in which all the important terms, used by and often created by the Council of Europe, are explained. This would be certainly helpful for the reader, but also for the project teams themselves, so that everybody has the same starting point. Although views on the individual terms may vary, there is still a need for a common basis of terminology for all ECML projects.

- One of the main requests made by various projects was an improved or more comprehensive teacher education. Teaching is a very demanding job and teachers need to be thoroughly trained; however, with the often tight timeframe of pre-service teacher education, it will be difficult to include in the training programme all the aspects mentioned in the projects. According to the ECML projects, teachers should have a knowledge of and competence in the following aspects, which they should include in their teaching: human rights and democratic citizenship, intercultural competence, plurilingualism, the values of democracy, equality, tolerance, social cohesion, mutual understanding, respect, open-mindedness, autonomous learning, life-long learning, critical thinking, self-reliance, identity and, last but not least, language competence as well. A lot of teacher training institutions will find it difficult to include all this in pre-service teacher education; this is why in-service teacher education will need to be promoted. The ECML encourages this with its programme of workshops and seminars.

The aim of this paper was to look at the ECML projects, both quantitatively and qualitatively and analyse their unifying and differentiating aspects while considering the innovativeness of the ECML. The findings have been presented above and I can only conclude by stating that although the projects focus on different aspects of language education or have different starting points, they all work towards the general principles, values and aims of the Council of Europe, which is the unifying connection between all of them.

Deutsche Zusammenfassung

Diese Diplomarbeit untersucht die Implementierung von Innovation im Fremdsprachenunterricht in Europa. Sie fokussiert dabei auf das Europäische Fremdsprachenzentrum (EFSZ/ECML) in Graz, eine Institution des Europarats, und hier spezifisch auf sein 2. Arbeitsprogramm: *„Sprachen für sozialen Zusammenhalt: Spracherziehung in einem vielsprachigen und multikulturellen Europa“*, welches nach vierjähriger Laufzeit im Jahre 2007 abgeschlossen wurde. Das Europäische Fremdsprachenzentrum, zusammen mit der *„Language Policy Division“* in Straßburg, ist verantwortlich für die Sprachenpolitik und ihre Umsetzung in den Mitgliedsstaaten des Europarats. Das ECML hat als sein erklärtes Ziel, Innovation und Exzellenz im Fremdsprachenunterricht durch die Unterstützung von Projekten und die Durchführung von Workshops mit Mitgliedern aus ganz Europa zu fördern.

Ausgehend davon lautet die Forschungsfrage dieser Arbeit, was im europäischen Fremdsprachenunterricht im Moment als innovativ angesehen wird und, aufbauend darauf, wie das ECML in seinen Projekten diese innovativen Ideen implementiert.

Diese Diplomarbeit beginnt mit einer theoretischen Einführung in die Thematik der Innovation, ihrer Dissemination und Implementierung generell und spezifisch im Bildungsbereich und im Lehren und Lernen von Fremdsprachen. Darauf folgt der Analyseteil dieser Arbeit, der aus zwei Teilen besteht. Dabei werden zwei verschiedene, jedoch mit einander verbundene Methoden eingesetzt. Zunächst wird eine quantitative Methode, und zwar eine Korpus- bzw. Konkordanzanalyse mit dem Programm WordSmith (Scott 1999), verwendet, um einen Überblick über die wichtigsten Konzepte des ECML (2004-2007) zu bekommen. Dadurch wird evident, was im Moment vom ECML als innovativer Fremdsprachenunterricht angesehen (und konstruiert) wird.

Mein Material (und dadurch auch mein Korpus) sind die 20 Projektpublikationen (Bücher, CD-ROMs, Webseiten) vom 2. Arbeitsprogramm des ECML, die elektronisch verfügbar gemacht wurden, um sie für das Korpus verwenden zu können. Die Korpusanalyse ergibt einen hohen Prozentsatz der folgende Begriffe: *language, teacher(s), student(s), learning, teaching, intercultural, Europe*, um nur ein paar Beispiele zu nennen, und streicht damit ihre Wichtigkeit im ECML-spezifischen Innovationsdiskurs hervor. Eine Frequenzanalyse gibt einen ersten Überblick über einen Text, aber erst durch die Konkordanzanalyse ergeben sich tiefere Einblicke in die Verwendung dieser Begriffe und in die dahinter stehenden Konzepte.

Der zweite Teil dieser Arbeit beschäftigt sich mit vier ausgewählten Konzepten, die in den Publikationen (Bücher, CD-ROMs, Webseiten) des 2. Arbeitsprogramms häufig vorkommen, nämlich: ‚interkulturell‘, ‚plurilingual‘, ‚Lernerautonomie‘ und den Werten und Prinzipien des Europarats (demokratische Bildung, sozialer Zusammenhalt, gegenseitiges Verständnis, Mobilität und lebenslanges Lernen). Durch diese Fokussierung auf vier Konzepte kann eine qualitative Analyse durchgeführt werden, die jedoch auf den Ergebnissen der Korpusanalyse aufbaut. Zu jedem dieser vier Konzepte ist zuerst eine theoretische Einführung zu finden, um den momentanen Expertendiskurs zu diesen Themen festzuhalten. Darauf folgend wird mit Hilfe einer qualitativen Textanalyse untersucht, wie (und ob) die ECML Projekte diese innovativen Konzepte definieren und umsetzen. In diesen Analysen sehe ich, über die Grenzen von Einzelprojekten hinweg, auf das Gesamtbild, das die 20 Projekte darstellen, um Ähnlichkeiten und Unterschiede ebenso wie Chancen und Herausforderungen für heute und die Zukunft zu identifizieren.

Die ECML Projekte gehen davon aus, dass wir in einem multilingualen und multikulturellen Europa leben, in welchem durch eine gesteigerte Mobilität (und Globalisierung im weitesten Sinn) das Treffen von BürgerInnen mit unterschiedlichen Kulturen und Sprachen bereits alltäglich ist. Was manche immer noch als Problem ansehen, will der Europarat in eine Chance umwandeln. Er ist der Überzeugung, dass interkulturell kompetente und plurilinguale BürgerInnen, die die Fähigkeit zum autonomen Lernen haben und mit den Wertvorstellungen des Europarats vertraut sind, eine bessere, friedliche, demokratische und harmonische Zukunft in Europa garantieren können. Diese Fähigkeiten bei den SchülerInnen und BürgerInnen im Allgemeinen zu fördern, ist sowohl wichtig für die Gesellschaft als auch für das Individuum und seine positive Entwicklung.

Das große Themengebiet Kultur im Sprachunterricht hat schon seit längerem Eingang in die Unterrichtspraxis gefunden, allerdings eher als Landeskunde und faktenbasierte Informationen über die Geographie, Geschichte und Lebensweise des Landes, in dem die unterrichtete Sprache gesprochen wird. Das ist allerdings weit von den Vorstellungen und Zielen im heutigen, innovativen Diskurs entfernt. Es geht hier viel mehr um die interkulturelle Dimension und, davon ableitend, um die interkulturelle Kompetenz, die bei den SchülerInnen gefördert werden soll. Eine derartige interkulturelle Kompetenz besteht aus mehreren Komponenten (auch *savoirs* genannt), die sich unter anderem aus Wissen, Wertvorstellungen, Ansichten, Offenheit, Interesse, Wissbegier und verschiedenen Fähigkeiten (selbstständiges Lernen, Verstehen, Analysieren, Vergleichen, Interpretieren, Entdecken, Interagieren) zusammensetzen. Das inkludiert nicht nur das Verständnis für eine fremde Kultur, sondern

die SchülerInnen müssen auch in der Lage sein, die Werte, Haltungen und Besonderheiten ihrer eigenen Kultur zu erkennen und zu hinterfragen.

In den Projekten des ECML spielt diese interkulturelle Kompetenz eine große Rolle und wird als eines seiner Ziele sehr oft genannt. Die Herangehensweise der Projekte an dieses Thema ist allerdings sehr unterschiedlich. Manche stellen die Auswirkungen einer Stärkung der interkulturellen Kompetenz auf die Gesellschaft in den Mittelpunkt, andere das Individuum oder die LehrerInnen, oder sie fokussieren auf eine methodisch/didaktische Perspektive. Der Ansatz, dass alle, ob die Gesellschaft als ganzes, ImmigrantInnen, EinwohnerInnen, SchülerInnen, Eltern, Auslandsstudierende oder Reisende, von interkultureller Kompetenz profitieren können, ist ebenso unumstritten wie die Überzeugung, dass die Schule, und hier vor allem der Fremdsprachenunterricht und die LehrerInnen, die Chance aber auch Verantwortung haben, diese Kompetenz zu fördern und die Lernenden dazu zu ermutigen, ihre interkulturelle Kompetenz auch nach oder außerhalb der Schule zu verbessern.

Das zweite wichtige Konzept für den Europarat und damit auch für die Projekte des ECML ist Plurilingualität. Dieser Begriff wird vor allem in den Publikationen und Entscheidungen des Europarats verwendet; in den meisten anderen Publikationen wird nicht zwischen den Begriffen Multi- und Plurilingualität unterschieden, wobei ersterer viel häufiger vorkommt. Allerdings versteht der Europarat unter Plurilingualität mehr als die Kenntnis mehrerer Sprachen (angestrebt ist die Muttersprache und zwei Fremdsprachen), sondern sie basiert auf einer bestimmten Werthaltung und auf der Existenz verschiedener interagierender Cortex-Areale im Gehirn, wo alle Sprachen gespeichert sind. In dieser Hinsicht kann man von einer gemeinsamen sprachübergreifenden Sprachkompetenz sprechen. Außerdem sollte es nicht per se das Ziel eines Fremdsprachenunterrichts sein, ein der Muttersprache ähnliches Niveau erreichen zu wollen, sondern alle Sprachkenntnisse sind zu schätzen und mit einzubeziehen.

Sowohl bei Interkulturalität als auch bei Plurilingualität spielen das Europäische Sprachenportfolio und autonomes Lernen eine große Rolle in den Projekten des ECML. Das Konzept der Plurilingualität ist weniger verbreitet als das der Interkulturalität, jedoch heben die Projekte die Wichtigkeit dieses Konzepts für die Gesellschaft und das Individuum hervor. Einige Projekte fokussieren auf die Rolle der Lehrperson in der Förderung dieser Kompetenz, und das betrifft nicht nur Sprachkenntnisse, sondern auch Werthaltungen, denn Plurilingualität ist nicht nur eine Kompetenz, sondern auch ein Wert. Auch methodisch/didaktisch ist Plurilingualität ein Thema; hier werden vor allem die Verwendung

des Europäischen Sprachenportfolios, bilingualer Unterricht und Internetplattformen vorgeschlagen.

Das dritte Konzept, das eingehend behandelt wird, ist Lernerautonomie. Obwohl das Konzept schon seit längerer Zeit existiert, ist die Förderung von autonomem Lernen im Schulunterricht keine Selbstverständlichkeit und ist daher als innovativ anzusehen. Der Europarat sieht in Lernerautonomie einen wichtigen Schritt in Richtung eines unabhängigen, kritisch denkenden, demokratiepolitisch aktiven Menschen, der als idealer europäischer Bürger angesehen wird. Sowohl das Europäische Sprachenportfolio als auch der Gemeinsame Europäische Referenzrahmen für Sprachen stärken die Lernerautonomie durch die Ermutigung zur Eigenverantwortung der SchülerInnen in Bezug auf ihr Lernen und ihren Fortschritt, aber auch indem sie das Lernen und Lehren von Fremdsprachen transparenter machen. Durch eine Stärkung ihrer autonomen Lernfähigkeiten sollen SchülerInnen u.a. in der Lage sein, ihre eigenen Stärken und Schwächen zu analysieren, ihre Ziele und einen Zeitplan festzusetzen und ihren Fortschritt zu erkennen.

Das Europäische Sprachenportfolio ist der Schwerpunkt in zwei ECML Projekten, aber auch andere Projekte unterstützen es, um Lernerautonomie zu fördern. Andere methodologisch/didaktische Vorschläge inkludieren die Verwendung von Literatur, den bilingualen Unterricht und die Miteinbeziehung von plurilingualen und interkulturellen Übungen in den Sprachunterricht. Außerdem wird empfohlen, dass neue Beurteilungsmethoden verwendet werden, so z.B. Portfolios oder Tagebücher, in denen die SchülerInnen ihr Fortkommen im Erlernen der Fremdsprache dokumentieren. Erneut spielen die LehrerInnen eine zentrale Rolle, sie müssen deshalb durch eine entsprechende Aus- und Fortbildung darauf vorbereitet werden, die autonome Kapazität der SchülerInnen zu unterstützen.

Die letzte Analysekategorie setzt sich aus der Diskussion von fünf verschiedenen Konzepten zusammen, die alle die Ziele und Wertvorstellungen des Europarats repräsentieren, nämlich demokratische Bildung, sozialer Zusammenhalt, gegenseitiges Verständnis, Mobilität und lebenslanges Lernen. Diese Ziele und Prinzipien begleiten alle Projekte, auch wenn sie nicht durchgehend explizit in den Projektpublikationen erwähnt werden. Erneut spielen die zwei Hauptpublikationen des Europarats für Sprachen eine große Rolle, das Europäische Sprachenportfolio und der Referenzrahmen.

In den Projekten wird deutlich, wie stark all diese Ziele und Wertvorstellungen miteinander verbunden sind und dass sie sich gegenseitig bedingen bzw. beeinflussen. Diese Vorstellungen werden nicht nur von den Projekten des ECML gefördert, sondern sind weit

reichende Forderungen und Ziele des Europarats. Allerdings sind die Projektautorenen überzeugt, dass auch der Fremdsprachenunterricht einen wichtigen Beitrag zur Stärkung dieser politischen, sozialen und kulturellen Ziele leisten kann. Häufig werden auch die Aspekte der plurilingualen und der interkulturellen Kompetenz als Schritt in Richtung dieser Ziele genannt. Bei lebenslangem Lernen wird vor allem die Nähe zur Lernerautonomie hervorgehoben, da eine autonome Lernfähigkeit eine Voraussetzung für lebenslanges Lernen darstellt. Prinzipiell kann man erneut die verschiedenen Zugangsweisen der einzelnen Projekte erkennen, mit dem Schwerpunkt auf der Gesellschaft, dem/r SprachlernerIn, der Lehrperson oder der Didaktik, die zu einer Stärkung der oben erwähnten Aspekte führen kann.

Die Projekte fokussieren alle auf sehr spezifische Themen, jedoch zeigen die Ergebnisse, dass als gemeinsame Basis aller Innovationen in den Projekten die Werte und Ziele des Europarats zu sehen sind, gemeinsam mit dem Gemeinsamen Referenzrahmen für Sprachen und dem Europäischen Sprachenportfolio. Allerdings sind die Ausgangspunkte, die Schwerpunkte (z.B. mit einem Fokus auf die Gesellschaft, das Individuum, die LehrerInnen oder auf die methodisch-didaktische Perspektive) und auch die Qualität der Projekte unterschiedlich. In einigen Fällen kann man eine gewisse Unsicherheit mit der Terminologie feststellen, v.a. im Bereich der Plurilingualität und ihrem Unterschied zur Multilingualität. Viele Projekte beziehen sich auf den Referenzrahmen, um Begriffe und Konzepte zu definieren. Allerdings wäre es hilfreich, wenn es eine Art Glossar mit den wichtigsten Konzepten und Termini für das ECML gäbe, um zumindest eine gemeinsame Terminologiebasis zu schaffen. Dennoch sind die Vielfalt und die unterschiedlichen Herangehensweisen an Sprachunterricht eine der Stärken des ECML, da diese Vielfalt den LeserInnen die Möglichkeit bietet, verschiedene Wege in Richtung der oben erwähnten Ziele zu gehen.

Das ECML fokussiert auf Lehrpersonen und LehrerausbilderInnen, denn der Europarat hat die generelle Einstellung, dass ‚besserer‘ Unterricht ‚bessere‘ Kinder und, darauf aufbauend, auch ‚bessere‘ BürgerInnen hervorbringt. Dieses ‚besser‘ orientiert sich an den Standards des Europarats. Aus diesem Grund werden in vielen Projekten Ideen und Übungen zur Steigerung der plurilingualen, interkulturellen und lernautonomen Kompetenz, aber auch der oben erwähnten Wertvorstellungen, angeboten und präsentiert. Das ECML und der Europarat arbeiten daran, durch einen innovativen und effektiven Fremdsprachenunterricht das Leben der einzelnen Bürger, aber auch das der gesamten europäischen Gemeinschaft, zu verbessern und die 20 analysierten Projekte sind ein Teil dieses Gesamtbildes.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Frequency List

Total frequency list of content words until the 300th most frequent word in all ECML projects

N	Word	Freq.	%
1	LANGUAGE	10.738	0,94
2	LEARNING	4.484	0,39
3	TEACHERS	4.186	0,37
4	LANGUAGES	3.856	0,34
5	S	3.281	0,29
6	TEACHING	3.140	0,27
7	EDUCATION	3.124	0,27
8	STUDENTS	3.077	0,27
9	TEACHER	2.902	0,25
10	SCHOOL	2.819	0,25
11	PROJECT	2.541	0,22
12	DE	2.410	0,21
13	TRAINING	2.391	0,21
14	USE	2.357	0,21
15	ENGLISH	2.171	0,19
16	LEARNERS	2.082	0,18
17	DIFFERENT	2.060	0,18
18	FOREIGN	1.984	0,17
19	E	1.931	0,17
20	CULTURE	1.898	0,17
21	ELP	1.894	0,17
22	ACTIVITIES	1.843	0,16
23	WORK	1.838	0,16
24	GROUP	1.829	0,16
25	EUROPEAN	1.810	0,16
26	INTERCULTURAL	1.802	0,16
27	CULTURAL	1.717	0,15
28	SCHOOLS	1.690	0,15
29	DEVELOPMENT	1.684	0,15
30	CLIL	1.641	0,14
31	PARTICIPANTS	1.565	0,14
32	OWN	1.545	0,14
33	EUROPE	1.538	0,13
34	COMPETENCE	1.472	0,13
35	NEW	1.360	0,12
36	KNOWLEDGE	1.309	0,11
37	TIME	1.309	0,11
38	SKILLS	1.263	0,11
39	COMMUNICATION	1.250	0,11
40	LA	1.248	0,11
41	D	1.239	0,11
42	USED	1.239	0,11

43	ET	1.234	0,11
44	LINGUISTIC	1.234	0,11
45	PEOPLE	1.194	0,10
46	ASSESSMENT	1.193	0,10
47	LEVEL	1.169	0,10
48	PROCESS	1.154	0,10
49	MATERIALS	1.116	0,10
50	INFORMATION	1.093	0,10
51	WELL	1.066	0,09
52	WAY	1.050	0,09
53	L	1.039	0,09
54	LEARNER	1.036	0,09
55	SELF	1.013	0,09
56	CLASSROOM	1.003	0,09
57	COUNCIL	1.003	0,09
58	MAKE	1.002	0,09
59	NATIONAL	995	0,09
60	QUALITY	990	0,09
61	DES	979	0,09
62	NEED	979	0,09
63	LES	972	0,08
64	AWARENESS	968	0,08
65	EXPERIENCE	967	0,08
66	SOCIAL	964	0,08
67	RESEARCH	963	0,08
68	ACTIVITY	958	0,08
69	NUMBER	956	0,08
70	CHILDREN	950	0,08
71	EDUCATIONAL	950	0,08
72	GROUPS	925	0,08
73	EXAMPLE	923	0,08
74	UNIVERSITY	919	0,08
75	CURRICULUM	915	0,08
76	M	910	0,08
77	FRENCH	906	0,08
78	PUPILS	903	0,08
79	G	897	0,08
80	PART	897	0,08
81	SECONDARY	884	0,08
82	CONTENT	873	0,08
83	ETC	867	0,08
84	LIKE	856	0,07
85	COMMON	855	0,07

86	BASED	854	0,07
87	QUESTIONS	849	0,07
88	C	843	0,07
89	B	842	0,07
90	IMPORTANT	838	0,07
91	CONTEXT	830	0,07
92	WORKSHOP	829	0,07
93	PROGRAMME	824	0,07
94	CULTURES	811	0,07
95	HELP	809	0,07
96	STUDENT	797	0,07
97	PRACTICE	795	0,07
98	COURSE	794	0,07
99	INDIVIDUAL	787	0,07
100	ECML	786	0,07
101	FRAMEWORK	786	0,07
102	PRIMARY	776	0,07
103	DEVELOP	773	0,07
104	FOLLOWING	773	0,07
105	EVALUATION	770	0,07
106	WWW	769	0,07
107	TAKE	763	0,07
108	SEE	760	0,07
109	ORDER	758	0,07
110	COMMUNICATIVE	752	0,07
111	TEAM	749	0,07
112	STUDY	744	0,07
113	PERSONAL	743	0,06
114	APPROACH	742	0,06
115	WORKING	741	0,06
116	EN	738	0,06
117	PROFESSIONAL	738	0,06
118	ROLE	737	0,06
119	GERMAN	735	0,06
120	GENERAL	732	0,06
121	DISCUSSION	726	0,06
122	SAME	725	0,06
123	RELATED	723	0,06
124	USING	723	0,06
125	TARGET	720	0,06
126	PORTFOLIO	716	0,06
127	NEEDS	711	0,06
128	LE	707	0,06
129	COUNTRIES	706	0,06
130	YEAR	703	0,06
131	COUNTRY	694	0,06
132	P	684	0,06
133	FIND	677	0,06
134	BILINGUAL	673	0,06

135	LEVELS	671	0,06
136	SPECIFIC	667	0,06
137	GOOD	666	0,06
138	KNOW	665	0,06
139	HTTP	661	0,06
140	BECAUSE	658	0,06
141	CLASS	655	0,06
142	GUIDE	651	0,06
143	IMPLEMENTATION	648	0,06
144	POSSIBLE	648	0,06
145	SUPPORT	648	0,06
146	LEARN	647	0,06
147	T	646	0,06
148	MODERN	640	0,06
149	CENTRE	634	0,06
150	THINK	628	0,05
151	SUBJECT	622	0,05
152	O	621	0,05
153	DIVERSITY	600	0,05
154	WORDS	593	0,05
155	CASE	590	0,05
156	TASK	586	0,05
157	À	585	0,05
158	DEVELOPING	585	0,05
159	SUBJECTS	581	0,05
160	PROFICIENCY	580	0,05
161	WORLD	572	0,05
162	TASKS	571	0,05
163	YEARS	568	0,05
164	LIFE	562	0,05
165	GIVEN	556	0,05
166	TERMS	555	0,05
167	UNDERSTANDING	553	0,05
168	COMPETENCES	551	0,05
169	SET	551	0,05
170	WAYS	550	0,05
171	FOCUS	549	0,05
172	PROJECTS	543	0,05
173	ACTION	539	0,05
174	ATTITUDES	539	0,05
175	RESULTS	538	0,05
176	CHANGE	533	0,05
177	ISSUES	531	0,05
178	PARTICULAR	531	0,05
179	FEEDBACK	528	0,05
180	MAIN	528	0,05
181	INVOLVED	527	0,05
182	ASPECTS	526	0,05
183	GIVE	526	0,05

184	SERVICE	526	0,05
185	TERM	526	0,05
186	PROVIDE	525	0,05
187	FORM	524	0,05
188	MADE	523	0,05
189	IDEAS	519	0,05
190	MEANS	518	0,05
191	LANGUES	516	0,05
192	DEVELOPED	514	0,04
193	EXPERIENCES	512	0,04
194	INTERNATIONAL	512	0,04
195	OBJECTIVES	512	0,04
196	ABLE	508	0,04
197	REFERENCE	508	0,04
198	RESOURCES	508	0,04
199	UNDERSTAND	507	0,04
200	DU	506	0,04
201	PLACE	506	0,04
202	PROGRAMMES	503	0,04
203	WHOLE	502	0,04
204	GRAMMAR	501	0,04
205	READING	501	0,04
206	SITUATION	500	0,04
207	FURTHER	494	0,04
208	WRITING	493	0,04
209	J	487	0,04
210	QUESTION	487	0,04
211	STUDIES	483	0,04
212	EXAMPLES	481	0,04
213	LITERATURE	475	0,04
214	PARENTS	474	0,04
215	SYSTEM	471	0,04
216	PRINCIPLES	470	0,04
217	YOUNG	469	0,04
218	DIFFERENCES	468	0,04
219	POINT	466	0,04
220	MEMBERS	462	0,04
221	NON	458	0,04
222	PLURILINGUAL	458	0,04
223	STRATEGIES	458	0,04
224	POLICY	457	0,04
225	SEVERAL	454	0,04
226	CLASSES	449	0,04
227	REFLECTION	449	0,04
228	VARIOUS	448	0,04
229	BECOME	446	0,04
230	TEXT	446	0,04
231	AUTONOMY	443	0,04
232	IDENTITY	443	0,04

233	END	438	0,04
234	INTERACTION	438	0,04
235	LITTLE	437	0,04
236	WRITE	437	0,04
237	SITUATIONS	435	0,04
238	COURSES	434	0,04
239	ABILITY	432	0,04
240	ACCORDING	431	0,04
241	TAUGHT	427	0,04
242	DISCUSS	424	0,04
243	SECTION	419	0,04
244	APPROPRIATE	417	0,04
245	ADDITIONAL	416	0,04
246	UND	415	0,04
247	INCLUDE	414	0,04
248	HOME	413	0,04
249	MODEL	410	0,04
250	READ	409	0,04
251	APPROACHES	407	0,04
252	COMMUNITY	406	0,04
253	MAIL	406	0,04
254	VIEW	406	0,04
255	DAY	405	0,04
256	WRITTEN	405	0,04
257	PRESENT	404	0,04
258	DESCRIPTORS	402	0,04
259	CONTEXTS	400	0,03
260	HUMAN	400	0,03
261	NATIVE	397	0,03
262	AIMS	396	0,03
263	TOGETHER	396	0,03
264	KEY	395	0,03
265	ASK	394	0,03
266	INTEREST	394	0,03
267	TOPICS	394	0,03
268	VALUES	390	0,03
269	SPEAKING	386	0,03
270	UNE	386	0,03
271	UN	385	0,03
272	FACT	381	0,03
273	AVAILABLE	380	0,03
274	LESSONS	380	0,03
275	TRAINERS	379	0,03
276	INTRODUCTION	378	0,03
277	MOTHER	378	0,03
278	PRESENTATION	378	0,03
279	MEDIUM	377	0,03
280	R	377	0,03
281	DER	376	0,03

282	POUR	376	0,03
283	TEXTS	376	0,03
284	FUTURE	375	0,03
285	BASIS	373	0,03
286	DANS	373	0,03
287	REPORT	372	0,03
288	CERTAIN	370	0,03
289	NECESSARY	369	0,03
290	MAKING	366	0,03
291	SAY	366	0,03

292	MATERIAL	364	0,03
293	PERSON	364	0,03
294	PROCESSES	363	0,03
295	SHORT	363	0,03
296	THINGS	363	0,03
297	AWARE	361	0,03
298	CO	361	0,03
299	QUE	361	0,03
300	TRAINER	361	0,03

Appendix 2: List of ECML Projects (2nd Medium-Term Programme)

Abbreviation	Name	Coordination	Materials
A Coping with linguistic and social diversity – provisions, profiles, materials			
A1. VALEUR	VALEUR - Valuing all languages in Europe	Joanna McPake and Teresa Tinsley	Abstract, flyer, leaflet, report, project website
A2. ENSEMBLE	ENSEMBLE - Whole-school language profiles and policies.	Antoinette Camilleri Grima	Abstract, flyer, book + CD-ROM, project website
A3. LDL	LDL - Linguistic diversity and literacy in a global perspective.	Brigitta Busch	Abstract, flyer, book, project website
A4. Chagal - setup	Chagal - setup. European curriculum guidelines for access programmes into higher education for under-represented adult learners	Grete Kernegger	Abstract, flyer, CD-Rom information, project website
B Communication in a multicultural society: the development of intercultural communicative competence			
B1. ICCinTE	ICCinTE – Intercultural communication training in teacher education	Ildikó Lázár	Abstract, flyer, book + CD-ROM, project website
B2. LEA	LEA – Language educator awareness	Mercè Bernaus	Abstract, flyer, book + CD-ROM, project website
B3 ICOPROMO	ICOPROMO – Intercultural competence for professional mobility	Evelyne Glaser	Abstract, flyer, book + CD-ROM, project website
B4. Gulliver	Gulliver – To get to know each other leads to better mutual understanding	Magdalena Bedynska	Abstract, flyer, brochure + CD-ROM, project website
C Professional development and reference tools for language educators			
C1. CoCoCop	CoCoCop – Coherence of principles, cohesion of competences	Anne-Brit Fenner	Abstract, flyer, book, project website
C2. QualiTraining	QualiTraining – A training guide for quality assurance	Laura Muresan	Abstract, flyer, book + CD-ROM, project website
C3. FTE (EPOSTL)	FTE – From Profile to Portfolio: A framework for reflection in language teacher education. (European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages).	David Newby	Abstract, flyer, book, project website
C4. ALC	ALC – Across languages	Michel Candelier	Abstract, flyer,

	and cultures		report, project website
C5. Impel	Impel – ELP implementation support	Hans Ulrich Bosshard	Abstract, flyer, leaflet, project website
C6. ELP_TT	ELP_TT – Training teachers to use the European Language Portfolio	David Little	Abstract, flyer, leaflet, book + CD-ROM, project website
C7. TrainEd	TrainEd – Training teacher educators	Gabriela S. Matei	Abstract, flyer, book + CD-ROM, project website
C8. GroupLead	GroupLead – Group facilitation in language teacher education	Margit Szesztay	Abstract, flyer + CD-ROM, project website
D Innovative approaches and new technologies in the teaching and learning of languages			
D1. BLOGS	BLOGS – Web journals in language education	Mario Camilleri	Abstract, flyer, book + CD-ROM, project website
D2. TEMOLAYOLE	TEMOLAYOLE – Developing teachers of modern languages to young learners.	Marianne Nikolov	Abstract, flyer, book, project website
D3. CLIL matrix	CLIL matrix – The CLIL quality matrix.	David Marsh	Abstract, flyer, project website
D4. LCaS	LCaS – Language case studies	Johann Fischer	Abstract, flyer, project website (not online yet)
D5. LQuest	LQuest – LanguageQuests.	Ton Koenraad	Abstract, flyer, project website

Appendix 3: Sample Concordance Analysis of the term ‘democratic citizenship’

N Concordance
1 ‘intercultural’, ‘multicultural’ or ‘anti-racist’, or be seen as part of the democratic citizenship agenda) aiming to foster greater mutual unde
2 in English. It follows that the international English class is a site for democratic citizenship and human rights almost by definition. The tw
3 FR p. 4). It suggests that aims of this kind are relevant to exercising democratic citizenship and to promoting social cohesion. European
4 autonomy (cf. the Council of Europe’s commitment to education for democratic citizenship and lifelong learning) • Reporting function – t
5 understanding in building a Europe that encourages the principles of democratic citizenship and social cohesion. The Council of Europe c
6 ’’, Paris, UNESCO, 1996. 62 Language education and education for democratic citizenship and human rights Language education is an
7 mmitment to learner autonomy as an essential part of education for democratic citizenship and a prerequisite for lifelong learning. The s
8 unique potential of language teaching to contribute to education for democratic citizenship and human rights. At this point it may be us
9 curriculum. But what makes the relationship between education for democratic citizenship and language education special? The two do
10 quently, teachers of English need a background in human rights and democratic citizenship as they are responsible for guiding the develo
11 tion policies are intimately connected with education in the values of democratic citizenship because their purposes are complementary.”
12 t modern language education is probably the most efficient “site” for democratic citizenship and human rights, to use the Council of Euro
13 human and inclusive Europe by ensuring social cohesion, promoting democratic citizenship in Europe, protecting and promoting cultural
14 th the whole class. References Breidbach, S. 2003. Plurilingualism, Democratic Citizenship in Europe and the Role of English. Strasbou
15 Council of Europe recommendation which states that “education for democratic citizenship is fundamental to the Council of Europe’s pri
16 r intercultural communication and acceptance of cultural differences Democratic citizenship Participation in democratic and social proce
17 broader project of democratic citizenship, namely the Education for democratic citizenship project (1996 onwards) which was originally s
18 ints out, promoting the goals of student autonomy and education for democratic citizenship requires us to develop working methods that
19 izens in those communities (Guilherme, 2000). 4 3 8.3 Intercultural democratic citizenship When intercultural communication and intera
20 ible or – seen as handicap rather than resource Plurilingualism and Democratic Citizenship “The development of plurilingualism is not
21 The Council of Europe’s cultural/educational agenda • Education for democratic citizenship – hence a commitment to learner autonomy
22 the goals of the system as a whole, including the European vision of democratic citizenship, are balanced against the goals of individual
23 unication. Illinois, National Textbook Company. Starkey, H. (2002). Democratic citizenship, languages, diversity and human rights. Stra
24 ilingual and a multicultural Europe. Graz: ECML. Starkey, H. (2002), Democratic citizenship, languages, diversity and human rights. Gui
25 ols”. Geneva: UNESCO: IBE and GTZ CD-Rom. Starkey, H. (2002), “Democratic citizenship, languages, diversity and human rights – G
26 is also only possible when contextualised within a broader project of democratic citizenship, namely the Education for democratic citizen
27 avsky, 2004: 1). On reflection, it becomes obvious that education for democratic citizenship, often used as an overriding concept for the t
28 support of the Council of Europe’s principal goals – social cohesion, democratic citizenship, protecting and promoting cultural diversity, a
29 ded to promote linguistic and cultural diversity for the construction of “democratic citizenship, social cohesion, mutual understanding and

30 Centre for Modern Languages 2 A rationale and activities to promote **democratic citizenship**, social cohesion, mutual understanding and
31 cultural communication and interaction, within a framework of active **democratic citizenship**. 8.4 Intercultural competencies for “effective”
32 order regions. In this way it is also a tool for promoting education for **democratic citizenship**. Piloting the CercleS ELP in European high
33 age education, education about religious diversity and education for **democratic citizenship**. It is a tool to foster respect for diversity, dial
34 development of language and intercultural skills necessary for active **democratic citizenship**. The following tentative conclusions are bas
35 e, Oxford: Oxford University Press. Osler, A. (2005), “Education for **democratic citizenship**: new challenges in a globalized world”, in Os
36 istic tolerance, raise awareness of linguistic diversity and educate for **democratic citizenship**” (Beacco and Byram, 2003: 20). The secon
37). It is this plurilingual education – related explicitly to “education for **democratic citizenship**” (p. 45) - which the Guide advocates - “to org
38 ay from the close association with nation state and nationality, into “**democratic citizenship**”, which expresses the idea of living harmonio
39 12 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on education for **democratic citizenship**”. Strasbourg: Counc