Preparing A Whole-School Language Profile

Introduction
This is a model for data gathering relevant to the development of a whole-school language profile. The aim is to guide one's attention to some details that might otherwise go unnoticed. At the same time it is intended to allow for a possible comparison between schools. The information thus collated should, in turn, help a school produce a whole-school language policy which would thus be based on hard-core information. Having means of developing a whole-school profile is one way of declaring "a policy about policy making" (Corson 1990:62), allowing for transparency and giving cohesion and purpose to the whole school development activity.
It is based on the data generated for, and at the ECML Workshop 8/2005, and on the *Guide for the Development Language Education Policies in Europe* (Council of Europe).

A. General Information

Name of School	
Location Address & contact nos., e-mail	
Type (e.g. state, religious, co-ed)	
Average no. of hours in a school day	
Number of school holidays	
Average number of school days in a year	
Level and quality of school autonomy (to what extent and in which areas is the school autonomous?)	
Relevant information regarding the school budget (e.g. how is the school funded, what amount is available for research and development)	
How is school development planning normally carried out?	
Relevant information relevant to school leadership and decision making processes	
Relevant information relating to recruitment of teaching staff	

(e.g. see *Guide* sections 5.4.3 and 6.2.3)	
Relevant information relating to the school's student catchment area and/or procedures	
Relevant information placing the school within the national (and international) education system/s **(e.g. see *Guide* section 6.1)**	
Existing school policies and school ethos	
Identify obstacles to plurilingual education **(e.g. see *Guide* section 6.2.2)**	
See 'Strategies' by Elisabeth Fleischmann regarding school and whole-school project organisation	

B. Student Population

Number of students enrolled	
Average number of students per grade	
Average number of students per class	
Student-Teacher ratio	
Details of ethnic background of students (e.g. number or % of which background)	
Details about the social background of students (e.g. new immigrants, social class, foreign temporary residents, nationals)	
Relevant information about parents (e.g. career path)	
Parental involvement in school (e.g. in curriculum planning, pupil guidance and discipline, representation on school boards)	
Distinctive features of the school's	

community (e.g. urban, industrial, mobile, close-knit)	
Leadership and community networks (e.g. church-centred, tribal, isolated home nuclei)	
Number of languages spoken in the community, and the status of these languages in the community	
Any other relevant cultural information (e.g. historical, attitudinal, external developments)	
A description of the linguistic strengths of the student population **(e.g. see *Guide* section 5.1.2)**	
Information regarding their interests, self-concept, motivation, attitudes **(e.g. see *Guide* section 5.3.1)**	
Any other relevant information (e.g. special requests regarding language education or racist acts)	

C. Teachers

Total Number of teachers	
Qualifications held by staff	
Previous teaching experience	
Average age and age range	
Ethnic and cultural composition of teachers (and other school staff)	
History of their professional development	
Readiness of teachers to diversify language education	

(e.g. see *Guide* **section 6.2.4)**	
Possibilities for sharing teacher expertise with other institutions **(e.g. see** *Guide* **section 6.2.3)**	
See 'Road Map' by Antoinette Camilleri Grima regarding staff development	

D. The Curriculum

Test scores (e.g. compared to national ratings)	
Curricular specifications regarding languages taught (e.g. which languages, how much time is allocated for each, who teachers them, methodology used)	
Instructional practices (e.g. especially those set up at the school in relation to learning styles and cultural diversity)	
Activities throughout the year (extra-curricular programme)	
Parental involvement (e.g. parents' reviews)	
Attempts at differentiating competences **(e.g. see** *Guide* **sections 6.6.1, 6.6.2)**	
What kind of assessment takes place? **(e.g. see** *Guide* **section 6.8)**	
What provisions are available for students with language problems?	
What resources and other materials are available for language education	
See 'Mind Map' by Madlena Norberg regarding Material Development	

E. Language within the school

Which language/s is used during school assemblies?	
Which language/s is used during school ceremonies?	
Language/s used as medium of instruction	
Language/s used on the school site, outside class time	
Existing policy (stated or unstated) **(e.g. see *Guide* sections 6.10.1, 6.10.2)**	
Teaching formats **(e.g. see *Guide* section 5.5.2)**	
Specific language programmes, activities	
Any relevant history within the school to language education	
What resources are available/used for language education?	
Provisions for alternative ways of learning as in self-directed, autonomous, distance learning **(see *Guide* section 6.5.1)**	
Have any needs been expressed by any of the stakeholders regarding language use within the school?	
See appendices attached regarding ways of collecting language information within the school	

F. Language Background

What languages are spoken by the children outside the school?	

What languages are spoken by the teachers and school administrators outside the school?	
What language/s did teachers learn through when they were at school?	
Relevant information regarding levels of competence of students and staff in the various language varieties	
What attitudes (recognition, respect, promotion) do students and school staff have regarding plurilingualism?	
What attitudes do parents have regarding language use at school?	
What information about the literacy practices in the home does the school have?	
In which languages are textbooks and learning resources available? Is there an inherent message in the quantity and quality of these?	
What movements are there in the community, or nationally, regarding the value of languages and of language education?	
What international trends are current regarding language education?	
Have any of the stakeholders (learners, teachers, parents, school administrators) experienced very positive or negative events relating to multiculturalism or plurilingualism that might have a bearing on school language policy? In what way?	
Have any needs been recently expressed by any of the stakeholders in relation to language education?	
What is the position of the Ministry of	

Education, of the Regional Authority and of the Local Authority on the issue of linguistic diversity?	
See 'Rivers and Lakes' by Andrea Armspach-Young regarding parental involvement and valuing cultures and languages	

Appendix 1: A survey of the Headteacher's language use at school
This form can be used on chosen days, or within a specified time-frame, to keep a record of language/s used, with whom and for what purposes

Headteacher	Which language is used?	Topic of communication	Comments
Headteacher speaks to Teacher X			
Headteacher speaks to a group of teachers informally			
Headteacher speaks to a group of teachers formally			
Headteacher speaks to teachers during staff meeting			
Headteacher speaks to parent X			
Headteacher speaks to Assistant Head			
Headteacher speaks to Secretary			
Headteacher speaks to clerk			
Headteacher speaks to cleaner X			
Headteacher speaks to pupil X			
Headteacher speaks to a group of pupils informally			
Headteacher speaks to a group of pupils formally			
Headteacher addresses the whole school			
Headteacher speaks to a visitor			
Headteacher writes to parents			
Headteacher writes to local and/or national authorities			

Headteacher writes to teachers			
other			
other			
other			

Appendix 2: Teacher's interaction

Teacher	Language/s used	Topic of communication	Comments
Teacher to Head			
Teacher to Assistant Head			
Teacher to Secretary			
Teacher to clerk			
Teacher to cleaner X			
Teacher to parent X			
Teacher to teacher X			
Teacher to a group of teachers			
Teacher to pupil X			
Teacher to a group of pupils informally			
Teacher to a group of pupils formally (outside lesson time)			
Teacher to visitor			
Teacher to pupils during school outing			
other			
other			
other			

Appendix 3: Pupil communication

Teachers can fill this in on behalf of the younger pupils. Please tick the number of instances a certain language is used

Lesson	Language X	Language Y	Code-switching
Teacher addresses whole class			
Teacher addresses individual pupil			
Pupil asks question to teacher			
Pupil asks question to another pupil while whole class is listening			
Pupil talks to another pupil while teacher continues lesson			
Pupils talk during group work			
Pupil talks to a visitor			
Visitor addresses pupil/s			
A pupil from another classroom comes to class and addresses teacher			

A pupil from another classroom comes to class and addresses pupil/s			
Parent comes to class and talks to pupil			
Pupils listen to a broadcast			
Pupils work on a computer			
Pupils listen/use a tape-recorder			
other			
other			
other			

Appendix 4: Teachers' Questionnaire

Background information
1. Which level/class do you teach?

2. What training did you receive before you became a teacher?

3. Which language did you speak as a child at home?

4. Which language was mainly spoken at the school/s you attended as a student?

5. Which language do you speak now at home?

6. What language do the pupils you teach speak at home, and amongst themselves?

7. Is there a language in which you think you have greater competence? Please explain why.

Bilingual Education

8. Is there a language policy that obliges you to use a particular language as a medium of instruction throughout the day? If yes, please explain what it says.

9. In what language is the pupils' textbook for these subjects? Does this help them learn? Explain how.

10. Which language do you use to teach language subjects? Why?

11. Which other subjects do you teach? Which language/s do you use in teaching these subjects? Why?

12. Do you sometimes use code-switching when teaching? When do you need to use codeswitching? Why?

13. In general, which language do you prefer to use in order to teach? Why?

Other Information

14. Have you taken the pupils to an outing during which a foreign language was the main language used (e.g. visiting a museum; watching a film, etc.)? Please specify.

15. Please give a rating to pupils' competence (1 is the weakest, 5 is the highest):

Speaking in Lx	1	2	3	4	5
Writing in Lx	1	2	3	4	5
Speaking in Ly	1	2	3	4	5
Writing in Ly	1	2	3	4	5

Your comments:

16. If you have some experience in teaching at another school, what differences do you find in the use of languages between that school and this one? Can you explain why?

17. At this school, has any parent ever asked you to use a particular language in your teaching? If yes, please give details.

18. Have you ever discussed the use of language in the classroom with the other teachers? If yes, please give details.

19. In your pre-service or in-service teacher training, have you received information about language as medium of instruction? If yes, please specify.

20. Do you have a language policy yourself? Please give details?