

# LANGUAGE RICH EUROPE

WORKSHOP REPORTS

ANNUAL REPORT 2



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# AUSTRIA

19 June 2012

## *Venue*

Diplomatic Academy, Vienna

## *Range of stakeholders*

Academics, practitioners and decision makers from education, business, media, politics, public institutions

## Inputs and organisation

### *Who spoke and how was it organised?*

#### **Overarching theme**

Presentation of overall Language Rich Europe (LRE) results with a particular focus on Austria

#### **Opening/Welcome**

- Michael Girardi (Ministry of Interior)
- Kurt Stürzenbecher (City of Vienna, Integration)
- Martin Gilbert (Director, British Council, Austria)
- Aneta Quraishy (Project Manager, LRE)

#### **Keynote talk**

LRE – Austrian versus European results (Guus Extra)

#### **Panel discussion (followed by audience discussion)**

Moderation: Michael Wimmer (EDUCULT)

Panellists: Eser Akbaba (ORF), Natasha Gulam (winner of Sag's Multi), Hans Staud (owner of Staud's Feinkost), Guus Extra (Tilburg University)

Round-up: Aneta Quraishy, Angelika Losek, Anke Schad

## Response to LRE report and data

### *Level of agreement*

There was general agreement with the LRE data and great interest to follow the analysis of Guus Extra and to examine it further. The main area of interest is (perhaps naturally) the Austria results of the LRE report.

## Main issues discussed

There was a strong focus on migration and integration throughout the event and the areas of education and employment came up repeatedly in the discussion.

The following topics were distilled as main areas to follow up in future workshops:

- the role of multilingualism in education
- the role of multilingualism in employability
- the role of multilingualism in public services and institutions.

# AUSTRIA

21 September 2012

## Venue

PH Wien (Pedagogical Institute, Vienna)

## Range of stakeholders

Academics, educators, teachers, teacher trainers

## Main issues discussed

- multilingualism and education, and in particular the state school system
- which processes/structures are in place?
- what works well? What needs improvement?

## Inputs and organisation

### *Who spoke and how was it organised?*

#### **Overarching theme**

Presentation of overall LRE results with a particular focus on Austria

#### **Opening/welcome**

- Michael Girardi (Ministry of Interior)
- Kurt Stürzenbecher (City of Vienna, Integration)
- Martin Gilbert (Director, British Council, Austria)
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#### **Keynote talk**

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**Round-up:** Aneta Quraishy, Angelika Losek, Anke Schad

# AUSTRIA

5 October 2012

## *Venue*

BTC Wien (in co-operation with AMS – the Austrian Employment Services)

## *Range of stakeholders*

Public Employment Service, Adult Education, City of Vienna, researchers, Consultancy Services for Employability, business representatives

## Main issues discussed

- multilingualism and employability
- how can young people make use of their multilingualism?
- what competencies come with multilingualism beyond the language level?
- which career paths are available/could be developed for disadvantaged youth?

## Inputs and organisation

### *Who spoke and how was it organised?*

#### **Overarching theme**

'Undiscovered Talents' – Multilingualism as an Employability Asset for Disadvantaged Youths

**Co-moderation:** Doris Landauer (AMS); Angelika Losek (British Council)

#### **Keynote talks**

Study on 'Unentdeckte Talente' – Employability of Young People and the Role of Multilingualism (Doris Landauer)

Multilingualism – resources, competencies strategies (Nadja Kerschhofer-Puhalo)

Usability of Multilingualism in Business (Karin Steiner)

Multilingualism and Integration (Thomas Fritz)

#### **Workshops/breakout sessions**

To develop the above sessions further and to develop recommendations for employment services

# BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

28 November 2012

## Venue

Hotel Ero, Mostar

## Range of stakeholders

Stakeholders were representatives from two universities in Mostar, pedagogical institutes, the Association of Foreign Language Schools, and independent language schools as well as NGOs; a few high-school students were present to contribute their views and experiences

## Inputs and organisation

### Who spoke and how was it organised?

#### Focus and format

Short comparative results of European and local findings were presented by Samir Avdibegovic and Amela Sehovic, with an emphasis on education. Presentation of results was followed by an open discussion with participants.

#### Speakers

- Samir Avdibegović, Project Manager for Bosnia and Herzegovina – introducing LRE and comparative research results
- Amela Šehović, Professor at Faculty of Philosophy, University of Sarajevo – presenting results for Bosnia and Herzegovina

## Response to LRE report and data

### Level of agreement

Participants generally agreed with the data, and were sometimes positively surprised at the comparison of the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina and some other European countries.

## Main issues discussed

Even though the presentation of results focused on education, the audience was also interested in exploring other areas and findings.

### The role of media in foreign language learning

It was universally agreed that Bosnia and Herzegovina is very lucky to be able to hear programmes in their original languages, as television is never dubbed but rather subtitled. It was noted that people in the country are exposed to many languages this way and that they pick them up easily. There were many examples of youth who were able to converse in languages they had never formally learned, but only heard through television shows.

### Offers of language courses at universities and at language schools

Following this discussion, representatives from the universities discussed approaches to offering language courses. They noted that in the past 10–15 years, due to many Spanish soap operas being broadcasted, demand for learning Spanish increased and courses were introduced at the university. Currently, soap operas in Turkish are being broadcasted and people are beginning to pick up the Turkish language; the possibility of offering classes in Turkish at the university is being discussed. A strategic approach to languages offered was also discussed: without national strategies and recommendations, universities are operating on fulfilling current demand rather than preparing to fulfil future needs. Languages predicted to be in demand in business were also discussed. Few participating students expressed their desire to have a more diverse selection of languages offered in high school.

### Continuing professional development for teachers

The quality of teachers was also touched upon, though not discussed in depth.

### Standardisation and application of CEFR levels

The need for greater standardisation of testing and teaching levels was universally agreed upon. Some good examples were shared between language schools and other participants.

# BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

30 November 2012

## Venue

Innovation Centre, Banja Luka

## Range of stakeholders

Representatives from universities in Banja Luka, the Pedagogical Institute of the Republic of Srpska, the Institute for Adult Education in the Republic of Srpska, language teachers and students

## Inputs and organisation

### Who spoke and how was it organised?

#### Focus and format

Short comparative results of European and local findings were presented by Samir Avdibegovic and Amela Sehovic with an emphasis on education. The presentation of results was followed by an open discussion with participants.

#### Speakers

- Samir Avdibegović, Project Manager for Bosnia and Herzegovina – introducing LRE and comparative research results
- Amela Šehović, Professor at Faculty of Philosophy, University of Sarajevo – presenting results for Bosnia and Herzegovina

## Response to LRE report and data

### Level of agreement

Participants generally agreed with the data, and were positively surprised at the comparison of the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina and some other European countries.

### Any omissions or inaccuracies note

There was some scepticism to the positive results but nothing major.

## Main issues discussed

Even though the presentation of results did in part focus on education, the audience was also interested in exploring other areas and findings.

### Minority languages

The fact that there are 17 constitutionally recognised minorities living in the country, along with 17 minority languages, prompted discussion on the state of these languages. Provisions for the teaching and learning of minority languages and government support in this area was discussed.

### Mechanisms of data collection

Participants recognised that without current census data it is difficult to make proposals. Next year's census data will be a factor in the interpretation of research data. Methods of data collection for future research and comparisons were also discussed.

### Offer of language classes in education

As in Mostar, participants compared the current offer of language classes in schools to the languages that are rising or that are predicted to rise in demand in the business world. Students from very specialised vocational schools, such as medical school, expressed disappointment at the treatment of languages in their schools: they said they need two foreign languages as students at classical high schools have. They noted that they have job opportunities in Germany, but no option to learn German at school.

The offer of languages in other schools was also discussed and compared to languages needed in business. In all cases, English is considered a necessity, and a second foreign language is a topic of discussion.

### Standardisation and application of CEFR levels

Need for greater standardisation of testing and teaching levels was universally agreed upon.



# BULGARIA

26 October 2012

## Venue

Sheraton Hotel, Sofia, Bulgaria

## Range of stakeholders

Participants from all levels of the Bulgarian educational system – from primary teachers to university lecturers, researchers and doctoral students, representatives of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Science, translators, journalists and project participants

## Inputs and organisation

### Who spoke and how was it organised?

There were three different panels focusing on the findings of the project team and the relevance of the data for the launching of new language policies in Bulgarian education. The time allocated to each panel was one hour. After the end of the discussions a summary was prepared by the three moderators and their assistants and they were presented to all by the main moderator.

### Group profile

**Panel 1:** 12 participants – one is engaged in secondary education, five in higher education, two experts and education policies councils, 11 are involved in teaching/researching/advising on foreign languages, one in the national language.

**Panel 2:** the group consisted of specialists in primary, secondary and tertiary language education and language teacher training, a linguist, a translator, as well as project participants.

**Panel 3:** project participants, foreign language teachers, subject teachers, school psychologists, researchers, PhD students.

## Response to LRE report and data

### Level of agreement

It was generally agreed that the report presents an interesting and thought-provoking picture. It was noted that especially in regard to the situation in the business sector, it was a good representation of reality.

### Any omissions or inaccuracies noted

It was suggested that it would be better if the validity and objectivity of the findings (regarding the method of data collection) could be further enhanced. It was also proposed that the country profiles should include a section which clearly identifies the institutions and the documents (legal framework) that participate in and govern language policies in each respective country, in the way such a section exists on the EU level of the report.

The picture presented seems a bit idealised and lacking in concrete detail in regard to pre-school education.

There is a lack of any data on social networks – what kind of language is used there, and how is language changing?

Some of the participants found the sample unrepresentative.

All agreed that there needs to be greater clarity about the terms used, e.g. mother tongue, first, second, minority, immigrant, etc, language.

### Suggested additions

The country profiles should include a section which clearly identifies the institutions and the documents (legal framework) which participate in and govern language policies in each respective country. For instance, for Bulgaria it should be pointed out which sectors of the government are responsible for what level of policies, which institutions like the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences advise on or research language policies, etc. Account should also be taken of the role of the private-sector educational institutions, which also participate in shaping language policies and practices in the country.

Similarly, there could be more cross-country analysis of the role of the examination system. What compulsory school leaving exams are there, and in which languages and what levels? How are students prepared for these languages. In Bulgaria, even the preparation in the national language is often not good enough and this is reflected in the school leaving exam results in Bulgarian. The reasons for such performance levels also deserves more attention, e.g. syllabuses, teaching methods, number of teaching hours per year, types of activities, etc.

It might be useful to research what languages are most often taught in the different countries and why, then compare and comment on the data in relation to the other findings in the survey.

Clear recommendations are needed for businesses and companies with regard to enhancing their employees' language development.

The question of why minority children, for example Roma, do not opt for mother tongue lessons at school should be researched in greater depth. Is it because the national language has a more important status? Is it because the national language is used in their families? Is it due to the specifics of the Roma dialects, which are numerous and therefore selecting and imposing just one would be artificial?

There are schools in the country whose students are all of Roma origin. This seems to be in contradiction with the survey findings. It would be useful to at least establish Roma children's attitude to learning their mother tongue.

Further, large-scale studies into the current situation need to be undertaken following the LRE overview. They might also focus on the surveyed people's **attitudes** towards learning different languages and on the role of non-formal (out of school) language learning to get a more detailed picture of the current situation.

## Main issues discussed

### *Regional and minority languages*

A considerable part of the discussion revolved around regional/minority languages identified by the report as Yiddish, Armenian, Roma and Turkish. While it was viewed as positive that Bulgaria offers these four, the data suggests that despite the investment made by the government (producing syllabuses and textbooks), scarcely any pupils make use of this resource. Potentially, this has something to do with defining these languages as 'mother tongue' and closing them off within identity-based self-identification for access. It was felt that a discussion is necessary along the lines of (a) definition of said languages; (b) opening access to them across linguistic identities; and (c) the potential role of national and regional communities in supporting those languages.

In relation to (b) for example, as well as a 'minority language', Turkish can be viewed as a 'neighbouring language' or as a 'foreign language'. In this case, the study of Turkish could be seen as of wider interest, including economic, to more learners. Turkey is en route to becoming a EU state and is a potentially big market. Evidence of potential interest is shown by the growth of secondary schools and universities offering the parallel study of English and Turkish, which recruit students not necessarily of Turkish ethnic origin.

In relation to (c), it was observed that the respective communities can be identified as a key resource for bringing regional and minority languages to public attention (examples were given with free Sunday schools given on occasion by the Armenian and Jewish communities in Plovdiv, which are open to all citizens).

### *A divided curriculum*

Related to this, it was viewed as a shortcoming that by and large the Bulgarian educational system keeps subject areas strictly delineated, i.e. classes and textbooks of Bulgarian language are solely concerned with its study, and quite separate from the study of English. By concentrating on the links and connections between languages a more favourable attitude to linguistic diversity could be fostered. There are opportunities to work towards applying common methods and techniques across language disciplines at schools and examples of this should be made public. What is more, it is necessary to encourage such co-operation on a school and a national level.

### *Range of languages*

On paper, it is possible to study the national language (plus one's mother tongue) and two foreign languages. However, although the teaching of the first foreign language (usually English) can be good despite large classes, the amount of time devoted to the second foreign language is not enough and the methodologies are inadequate. There have been quantitative changes but not qualitative (time allocated, degree of complexity of the study content, etc). It would be beneficial if specialists could learn

about established good practices in other EU countries. If the survey says about 80 per cent of the surveyed people want to be proficient in two foreign languages, but only 40 per cent speak one foreign language, how can students be required to study two foreign languages? There is also a need to increase the number of languages available, including immigrant languages. In some small towns especially, the choice is quite limited due to the lack of qualified teachers.

An interpreter pointed out that it is a challenge to have to interact with neighbouring countries via English. More active policies in support of neighbouring languages (or another European language) in addition to English could therefore be beneficial for international and cross-border communication.

### *Bulgarian as a second language*

This was also a major focus of discussion. There are not adequate methodologies for teaching Bulgarian as a second language to students of other mother tongues. There were some similarities between this issue and the problems described above of the second language.

### *Teacher training*

An important part of the discussion was the problem of preparing enough well-qualified language teachers. Language teachers are often not well qualified in the language they are supposed to teach (most often due to the re-qualification system – teachers of other subjects or other languages can requalify to become language teachers). There are different ways to overcome this problem – through self-development or using the opportunities offered by the EC's Comenius programme, but these are related to personal motivation rather than being supported institutionally. A system should be established to guarantee that language teachers are both motivated to develop professionally and supported financially by the school at which they are teaching.

### *CLIL*

As far as studying a subject in a foreign language is concerned, there are mixed feelings as to its efficiency. This might deprive such students of the opportunity to prepare well for the school leaving exams, for example, in history or physics, because they are in Bulgarian.

### *Other issues*

There was some discussion about the role of parents in the choice of a second foreign language.

Some of the participants raised the question of whether the early introduction of foreign language study does not hamper the successful acquisition of the grammatical rules of the mother tongue.

The role of the new media and educational technologies in foreign language teaching was also discussed.

# BULGARIA

11 November 2012

## Venue

British Council in Sofia

## Range of stakeholders

Participants representing a variety of perspectives on minority and migrant languages, representatives of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Science; an expert on language and migration policy at the Council of Ministers, journalists and project participants, scholars and PhD students from the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences and Universities, representatives of NGOs specialising in language policy and the integration of refugees and migrants

## Inputs and organisation

### Who spoke and how was it organised?

The moderator introduced the debate from four perspectives: diversity, globalisation, integration, communication.

**Diversity** has specificity in Bulgaria, as well as in other Eastern European states, where a distinction is made between minorities – the communities traditionally living in the country, and the migrants who are newly arrived. Another crucial post-communist peculiarity is the recent character of immigration, which is connected to the democratisation process.

**Globalisation** is also different in Eastern Europe: it is more of a political than an economic process, which is a result of the post-communist opening and inclusion in global flows. Globalisation is the context that allowed the meeting of Bulgarians with representatives of languages like Chinese – global, but completely unknown and not present during communism.

**Integration** is the main objective of language diversity, understood as a two-directional process of personal development and empowerment through minority language, culture and collective identity and inclusion in the majority or host society through the national language and shared civic values.

**Communication** – Over the last two decades Bulgarians have set a historic intercultural precedent. For the first time Chinese, Japanese, Koreans and Britons are studying the Bulgarian language, and for the first time Bulgarians are starting to learn Japanese, Chinese, Korean, etc.

The project was presented by one of the key participants. He summarised the methodology, the sample and the main findings. He stressed the comparative perspective, which allows better understanding about what is particular and what is typical in Bulgarian language policies and practices.

Two main observations summarise the debate:

- all participants took to the floor, a very important indicator of personal interest, involvement and competence
- different understandings, visions, policies on minority and migrant languages have been argued and deliberated, which illustrates the richness and fruitfulness of the debate.

## Response to LRE report and data

### Level of agreement

It was agreed that the report deals with crucial factors for cultural diversity, integration and globalisation. It has been emphasised that the minority and migrant aspects are particularly sensitive in political terms.

An informed and reflexive consensus has been shared on the idea that Europe means language and cultural diversity, that the language of Europe is translation – Umberto Eco.

### Any omissions or inaccuracies noted

The vocabulary of the LRE project is not shared by some representatives of the Bulgarian administration who emphasised the official position that there are no minorities, just ethnic groups, and that Bulgaria does not recognise regional or minority languages, but 'mother tongue'.

The project participants and other participants in the debate shared the opinion that Bulgarian academic and political discourse should adopt European terminology.

### Suggested additions

More research is needed on the definition of minority and migration, because there is still no consensus on their use and referents (according to some participants, Russians are not a minority).

## Main issues discussed

Language diversity has been articulated in a variety of perspectives:

- **normative** – ‘A capital where everybody speaks only the national language is not a real capital. One should speak also the language of the neighbour’
- **descriptive** – 21 languages are taught or offered in the Bulgarian educational system
- **international** – A new directive has been issued concerning the Bulgarian educational centres abroad.

One of the most controversial topics was the mother tongue:

- paradoxes such as no candidates for Roma language courses versus 1,300 candidates for Japanese have been analysed.

Two different visions of individual and family language strategies have been debated:

- a. **Identity approach** emphasising the minority culture as a main source for cultural integrity and personal empowerment. This approach stresses the necessity of the mother tongue.
- b. **Integration approach** focusing on the need for inclusion of the underprivileged minorities in the macro society and the national language as the main road to this objective. A second argument for this approach is that the language spoken at home is often a dialect and instead of studying another version of the mother tongue, it would be better for the kids to learn a foreign language. An example from Germany was provided where there is one Turkish school where all the Turkish kids learn German.

Three different visions of bilingual education have been argued:

- A long and respectful tradition is established in the country. The first bilingual high school was set up half a century ago (in 1965), and numerous bilingual schools in several cities enjoy great interest and recognition. A new law requires that for a school to be bilingual at least three subjects should be taught in the foreign language.
- Real bilingual schools are not the ones with a second foreign language (English, French, German, etc.), but the ones with minority languages and these do not exist in the country (only mother tongue is taught, not subjects – geography, physics, etc. – in the minority language).
- Good examples of bilingual schools for Bulgarians abroad have been given, e.g. the one in Bratislava. The children are Bulgarians and Slovaks and the funding is shared by both states (60 per cent from Bulgaria and 40 per cent from Slovakia). The school is integrated in the two educational systems – Bulgarian and Slovak. The bilingual school in Budapest is another positive example.

# BULGARIA

18 January 2013

## Venue

Sofia University, New Conference Hall, Sofia, Bulgaria

## Range of stakeholders

LRE project participants, scholars and PhD students from the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Sofia University, New Bulgarian University and other tertiary institutions; foreign language teachers, representatives of NGOs specialising in language policy and the integration of refugees and migrants; foreigners living in Sofia, representatives of migrant communities in Sofia, representatives of the business community

## Inputs and organisation

### Who spoke and how was it organised?

The workshop was opened by Lyubov Kostova, British Council Director, who introduced the topic of multilingualism on a European scale and a national/local scale. An introductory speech was also given by Svetlana Lomeva, Sofia Development Association Director, in charge of the Sofia candidacy for European Capital of Culture 2019. She suggested looking into multilingualism from the socio-economic perspective, i.e. of the city as a natural environment enhancing the effective functionality of languages.

Workshop speakers presented different aspects of language richness in an urban setting and their relevant challenges:

Dr Lid King, The Languages Company, UK, outlined the functional aspects of multilingualism in a city, as well as the thematic units to be observed: education, economy and employment, public share, private share and urban space. He also pointed out that research with regard to multilingual cities is not always measurable and is therefore partly subjective but on the other hand the sense of city and the way people feel about it is definitely critical for its multilingual image.

Denitsa Lozanova, Dimitar Lilkov and Elena Nikolova presented findings from recent research (the semi-structured interview method) entitled 'Is Sofia a multifunctional city?' Some of the important results included the topic of language sensitivity and the perceived scope of multilingualism, which is interpreted mainly as 'foreign languages', excluding minority languages. An important result is the existence of neglected languages, such as languages of people with disabilities.

Boyan Benev, Start Your Business magazine's 'Most successful young entrepreneur of Great Britain' for 2007, offered the viewpoint of entrepreneurs: speaking languages is not sufficient for start-ups, a combination of innovative product, understanding of entrepreneurship and willingness to understand cultures is needed. At its core this is a private endeavour but could be effectively facilitated by public support.

Hayan Lee, PhD student at Sofia University from South Korea, shared her personal stories of viewing Sofia as a foreigner. She concluded that a lot has changed over the last eight years, that the interest she witnesses towards Asian cultures and languages has increased radically, and that being a Bulgarian philology student but also teaching Korean at a secondary school makes her an agent of multilingual change, which is a very rewarding role.

Ruslan Trad, chairperson of Forum for Arabic Culture in Bulgaria, brought to the discussion the viewpoint of migrant languages and cultures, the culture versus the security discourse and the improving acceptance of Arab languages and community.

The following discussion contributed to the major topic: what makes a city multilingual, how could multilingualism be measured and what policy recommendations could be identified.

The workshop was moderated by Sevdalina Voynova from the Sofia Development Association.

## Response to LRE report and data

### *Level of agreement*

Research regarding multilingualism is regarded with significant interest since the topic is growing in popularity and in addition it is a deliverable that stirs media interest as well. Sofia-specific research also provoked interest and curiosity.

### *Any omissions or inaccuracies noted*

- the role of the Bulgarian language in a multilingual setting and the effects on it regarding its co-existence with numerous other languages
- author censorship regarding multilingual visibility in the public sphere and public space
- soft powers facilitating multicultural enhancement (such as cultural diplomacy, education tourism, etc.).

### *Suggested additions*

Proof of and elaboration on the quoted qualitative data in the research: for example, is B2 language competency achieved at graduation from secondary schools with the enriched foreign language curriculum measured? If yes, how and by whom? What happens if the B2 standard is not met in terms of corrective measures?

## Main issues discussed

One of the major issues discussed was how residents feel about multilingualism in the city. It seems they like the idea of a multilingual city but cannot relate it to Sofia based on comparisons with cosmopolitan cities like New York or London. To the majority, language diversity encompasses mostly foreign languages and is therefore considered an asset. Very few include in the multilingual scope minority and migrant languages, and close to none include languages of people with disabilities; that aspect of multilingualism is highly sensitive.

Another sensitive issue is the effect of multilingualism on the Bulgarian language since there are concerns that multilingualism reduces native language competency and alters the language system and structure.

Three social types of carriers of multilingualism in Sofia were identified: Bulgarians (predominantly young) who learn and use several languages; migrants; and people of Bulgarian origin who used to live abroad and have returned to Sofia. These three groups co-create their specific multilingual ecosystem in the city including language use but also meeting places, entertainment and business endeavours.

City openness, including its multilingual aspect, was also discussed as a process over a period of 20 years or so, or in some cases longer. Examples were given of historic periods of multi language interactions and exchange in the city setting. Attention was paid to the deliberate efforts and spontaneous developments in Sofia during the last decade that brought it closer to the generally accepted image of a multilingual city: a broader interest in 'small' languages and towards Asian cultures and languages; and business and infrastructure developments that offer independency, choice and access (large shopping malls, the metro, places of entertainment).

# ESTONIA

21 August 2012

## Venue

The Tartu University Pärnu College

## Report

Ursula Roosmaa, Director, British Council, Estonia  
and Kersti Sõstar, Innove Foundation

## Range of stakeholders

Participants were from the Estonian education system, in particular English language co-ordinators from all 16 counties of Estonia, representatives of primary teachers, university lecturers, researchers, BA and MA students, would-be teachers, the Ministry of Education and Research

## Speakers

- Ursula Roosmaa, LRE Project Manager, Country Director, Estonia
- Piret Kärtner, LRE project key stakeholder, Head of Languages Department, Ministry of Education and Research
- Leena Punga, Chair of the Estonian English language Teachers Association
- Kersti Sõstar, Innove Foundation, Head of Language Centre, LRE project partner

## Response to LRE report and data

The overall opinion was that the research presented an interesting and thought-provoking picture of the foreign languages situation in Europe. The participants were particularly interested in the research methodology and the survey questionnaires, as well as the data that the educational part of the survey was based upon.

A lively debate started on the issue of terminology, especially in the Estonian context of the terms: regional, minority and immigrant languages.

## Main issues discussed, conclusions and suggestions

The Russian language has a very special status in Estonia and the terminology issue as specified in the paragraph above raised many questions among the participants, as well as many preconceptions.

The British Council, known as the advocate of the English language and culture, was praised for initiating a project promoting multilingualism in societies. This is also a learning point for Estonia, as English and German have been historically the two foreign languages taught in the education sector.

More integration and co-operation between foreign languages and other subjects formed an important part of the discussion at this meeting.

The English teaching community, being by far the largest foreign language teaching group in Estonia, has traditionally been very self-conscious and has co-operated only in the area of English teaching.

There is a need for coherence and consistency in language learning and assessment when moving from one level in the Estonian educational system to the next. The survey showed very big differences in students' achievements (e.g. below A1 to B2 at the age of 16), even despite the learning conditions being the same. This is especially true regarding children whose mother tongue is not Estonian.

CLIL should become a much more integral part of our education system. This requires an improvement in teacher qualifications and training.

Co-operation in the teaching and learning of all foreign languages is becoming more and more essential in modern societies.

# ESTONIA

29 October 2012

## Venue

Innove Foundation

## Range of stakeholders

Participants from all levels of the Estonian educational system, researchers, representatives of the Ministry of Education, project participants

## Inputs and organisation

### Who spoke and how was it organised?

There were two presentations, one focusing on the findings of the LRE project, the second focusing on the results of the European Survey on Language Competencies. The moderated discussion that followed dealt with the relevance of the data for the preparation of new language policies in Estonia.

## Response to LRE report and data

### Level of agreement

The overall opinion was that the LRE report presented an interesting and thought-provoking picture of the foreign-languages situation in Europe. It was noted that especially in regard to the situation in the business sector, it was a good representation of reality.

### Any omissions or inaccuracies noted

It was suggested that it would be better if the validity and objectivity of the findings (regarding the method of data collection) could be further enhanced. It was also proposed that the country profiles should include a section which clearly identifies the institutions and the documents (legal framework) that participate in and govern language policies in each respective country. Since the project started almost two years ago, the latest documentation and changes in legal context could not be reflected.

### Suggested additions

The country profiles should include a section which clearly identifies the institutions and the documents (legal framework) which participate in and govern language policies in each respective country.

We also suggest greater flexibility regarding the final publication of the results.

## Main issues discussed

### Preparedness

Estonia's readiness to integrate immigrant children into our education system.

### CLIL

CLIL should become a much more integral part of our education system. This requires improvement in teacher qualifications and training.

### Range of languages

In Estonia, the emphasis in the last years in language learning has been too English-centred. The need for learning and teaching other foreign languages besides English has been acknowledged and recognised on policy-making level.

### Consistency

There is a need for coherence and consistency in language learning and teaching when moving from one level in the Estonian educational system to the next, and also from general education to VET (Vocational Education and Training) and higher education, followed by lifelong learning.

### Languages in business

Although languages are widely used in the business sectors that were researched in the survey, the results revealed a lack of monitoring and systematic language policies in businesses as well as a lack of structured support.

Foreign language skills are required at recruitment, but very seldom do employers pay attention to their employees' further development in this area. Little is actually known about the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) and the language learning possibilities offered by EU structural funds.

### Any issues raised for further debate

Teacher training, especially in-service teacher training, needs improvement. The current teacher training curricula at HE institutions in Estonia do not support new approaches in language, nor content language integrated learning.

There needs to be better co-operation between the education sector and the business sector.

There needs to be further development of the system of the internal, external and self-assessment of language competencies (according to the new curriculum and the CEFR levels).



# ESTONIA

## 2 March 2013

### Venue

Tallinn University

### Range of stakeholders

Participants from the Estonian education system, in particular lecturers from universities' language centres, staff from university admission services, researchers, career advisers from schools and universities, representatives of embassies and cultural institutes

### Speakers

- Ursula Roosmaa, LRE Project Manager, Country Director, Estonia
- Kersti Sõstar, Innove Foundation, Head of Language Centre, LRE project partner
- Tuuli Oder, Tallinn University, Head of the Language Centre, peer reviewer of LRE
- Anne Lind, Head of the German Cultural Institute/Deputy Head of Goethe Institute

### Report

Ursula Roosmaa, Director, British Council, Estonia and Kersti Sõstar, Innove Foundation

### Response to LRE report and data

The overall opinion was that the research presented an interesting and thought-provoking picture of the foreign languages situation in Europe. The debate began around language diversity issues, in particular the language background and diversity of students applying to universities in Estonia. The predominant language at the moment is English, but also German, French, Russian, Finnish and Swedish should be delivered.

Difference in the achievement levels in the competency of the new students in English and other languages was pointed out.

Also, challenges in improving language competencies in lifelong learning were discussed.

### Main issues discussed, conclusions and suggestions

English, Russian and German have traditionally been the foreign languages historically provided by the Estonian education system. All participants agreed that in the modern world the choice of foreign languages should be much wider, including Finnish, Swedish, Spanish, French, Chinese, etc.

The importance of teaching Estonian at university level to all students should be maintained or re-established, as well as teaching Estonian as the second language to non-native speakers.

More integration and co-operation between foreign languages and other subjects formed an important part of discussions at this meeting.

There is a need for coherence and consistency in language learning and assessment when moving from one level in the Estonian educational system to the next. The survey showed very big differences in students' achievements (e.g. below A1 to B2 at the age of 16), despite the learning conditions being the same. This is especially true regarding children whose mother tongue is not Estonian.

CLIL not only in general public education but also in HE should become a much more integral part of our education system; this requires improvements in teacher qualifications and training.

Coherence in the teaching and learning of all foreign languages is becoming more and more essential in modern societies, especially in connection with the employability and social-integration issues facing us.

At present there is a requirement of teaching at least two foreign languages at school level; this should apply also to HE, so that graduates could leave with a very good competency in at least two foreign languages.

# FRANCE

25 September 2012

## *Venue*

British Council, Paris

## *Range of stakeholders*

Representatives of Ministries of Education, Foreign Affairs and Culture; representatives from business and trade unions; teachers; journalists; academics; students

## Inputs and organisation

### *Who spoke and how was it organised?*

The first part of the event was a presentation of LRE results by the regional team, followed by a presentation of the results for France by Christian Tremblay of the Observatoire Européenne du Plurilinguisme.

This was followed by a discussion by two keynote speakers, the philosopher Heinz Wismann and the journalist Quentin Dickinson on the theme of multilingualism and the influence it has on their personal and professional lives.

The rest of the event took the form of two round table discussions: the first looking at how languages are managed in the business context and the second looking at how language learning at school influences multilingualism in wider society. Both discussions were chaired by Yvan Amar, a radio journalist at Radio France.

Speakers in the first round table included Bernard Salengro and Jean-Loup Cuisiniez, trade unionists in industry; Claude Truchot, sociolinguist and emeritus professor at the University of Strasbourg; and Kenza Cherkaoui-Messin, a sociolinguist specialising in languages in the business sector.

Speakers in the second round table included Francis Goullier, a foreign languages inspector from the French Education Ministry; Suzy Halimi, Honorary Rector of the University Sorbonne nouvelle – Paris 3; and Calin Rus from the Timisoara Intercultural Institute in Romania.

Xavier North, General Delegate for the French Language and Languages of France at the Ministry of Culture, concluded the workshop with closing comments.

## Response to LRE report and data

### *Level of agreement*

There was general agreement that the report provided a useful snapshot of multilingualism in the French context but could not be considered to be totally representative given the relatively small data sampling size. There was recognition that some of the questions were difficult to apply to the French legislative context, specifically concerning signature of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, which is not possible under French law. In addition, it was also recognised that the concept of migrant and minority languages was difficult to apply in the French context as some of these languages can also be considered to be taught foreign languages (e.g. Portuguese).

Overall, there was a feeling that the results gave an accurate picture of multilingual policy but that in practice the situation can be quite different. This is particularly true in the education sector.

In his closing comments Xavier North expressed his appreciation of the LRE project. He was particularly impressed by the fact that the project was carried out on a large scale despite methodological and practical difficulties. Two risks could be avoided: 1. using an international ranking while comparing countries, although language policies at national level are context-specific; 2. giving a similar status to national languages, regional/minority languages, migrant languages and foreign languages, ignoring that all these languages are involved in power struggles. As a large-scale project the LRE results provide us with invaluable information on languages in the European context as it addresses policy and practice, even if this information is not exhaustive.

### *Any omissions or inaccuracies noted*

The choice of the Ecole Nationale Supérieure as the Higher Education Institute chosen to represent Paris was considered to be non-representative of the French system because of its elitist nature.

The choice of the city of Corte in Corsica was also thought by some to be a biased choice for the city representing regional language use.

### *Suggested additions*

There is a need to diversify the sampling to include a larger number of cities and sectors to ensure that the data is more representative. A larger number of business sectors should also be included in future profiles.

## Main issues discussed

In the round table on business, the main issue discussed was the difficulty for employees who were obliged to use English language tools (software, documents, internal appraisal systems) and the impact that this can have on staff morale and performance and on business efficiency. Considering that French employees have the right to work in French in France, the role of the national language as a key element of multilingualistic policies was underlined. There was also discussion on the general lack of awareness of employees' language skills and the added value that these skills could bring to business. It was recommended to develop a language strategy for companies, which combines both internal cohesion and international communication needs.

In the round table on education, there was general consensus that the diversity of languages in the population was not appreciated in the school setting and therefore undervalued, making it difficult for pupils to relate language learning in school to a broader social context. There was also discussion around the lack of convergence between languages taught and spoken by pupils and very little attempt to encourage a multilingual dimension to the broader educative experience. There were suggestions that language activities such as foreign exchange visits should have more recognition and be properly credited.

According to the report of the Comité stratégique des langues, chaired by Suzy Halimi, it was suggested to:

- launch a media campaign on language learning
- increase opportunities to be in contact with languages both in society and in the school environment in order to stimulate pupils' motivation
- rethink language learning by introducing it in pre-primary education
- teaching two foreign languages from age 11 (6ème class)
- making teaching content and approaches more efficient, etc.

There was general agreement that the invisibility of language diversity in society has a negative influence on the respect for languages and language learning in the educational context.

# GERMANY

28 February 2013

## Venue

Senatsverwaltung, Berlin

## Range of stakeholders

Delegates specialised in language teaching, curriculum development and teacher training representing various state teacher training institutes – 12 of the 16 German states were represented on this occasion

Representatives from two major school coursebook publishers – Cornelsen Verlag and Klett Verlag

## Inputs and organisation

### Who spoke and how was it organised?

Note on event and scheduling: this group of representatives from state teacher training institutes meets annually over 1.5 days to discuss and exchange best practice across the German federal states and the British Council is an associate member. We had a single slot of 60 minutes in the group's overall agenda, admittedly short yet this was still an ideal opportunity to get feedback on LRE from an interesting group of stakeholders from across the whole country.

### Focus and format

Comparative results and local findings were presented with an emphasis on education. This was followed by discussions on possible recommendations and a ranking exercise to identify priorities.

### Speakers

- Michael Croasdale, Project Manager for Germany – introducing LRE and comparative research results

## Main issues discussed

It is worth noting here that despite increased co-operation and exchange within the primary and secondary education sector over the last 5–10 years, approaches to language learning still remain very varied across the federal states.

There is recognition of some promising initiatives e.g. bilingual school models that cater for migrant languages not just typical prestige foreign languages; use of CLIL; but these are still very localised.

The overall discussion tended to bear out the observation already made in the Germany country profile regarding the 'ambivalent attitude to linguistic diversity'. Notice that delegates here ranked the following points high in importance:

- Need for (investment in) strategies that support a better knowledge of the German language for children and teenagers – especially those with a migrant background?
- Learning of German as a second language (especially at pre-primary and primary level) needs improved support – better trained and qualified staff, better resources, better pay?

# GREECE

## 3 November 2012

### Venue

University of Athens (central building), 'Drakopoulos' amphitheatre, Athens

### Range of stakeholders

Language education experts ranging from professorial staff of foreign language university departments to foreign language school teachers, headmasters and school administrators to junior and senior research staff of the Research Centre for Language, Teaching, Testing and Assessment (RCeL), and administrative staff from the Greek Ministry of Education and the State Scholarships Foundation. The workshop was also attended by a reporter of *ELT News* – a Greek newspaper aimed at the foreign language education community in Greece

### Workshop Co-ordinator

Professor Bessie Dendrinos

## Input and organisation

Four language education policy issues (topics) were selected to be discussed with workshop participants. As the co-ordinator explained to the audience, the workshop organising committee decided to select the relevant issues after considering the findings of the LRE survey, as well as the results of the European Survey of Language Competences (ESLP) administered in Greece. Keti Zouganeli, senior researcher of the RCeL and team leader responsible for the Greek administration of the ESLP, was asked to explain the selection procedure and the rationale behind combining findings from two European surveys that show which aspects of the language education reality in Greece needs to be improved through new policies aimed at Greek students' multilingual literacy.

Each issue selected was the topic of one session. During each session, two speakers identified the relevant problems, explained causes and proposed ways of dealing with them. Each speaker spoke for about 15 minutes, with a view to motivating discussion with the audience.

Professor Bessie Dendrinos, Director of the RCeL, which is the official dissemination partner of the LRE project in Greece, served as co-ordinator, managing the interaction and summarising key points at the end of each session.

In opening session one, the co-ordinator welcomed the workshop participants who had been asked to read about the LRE project prior to joining the workshop so that they could contribute to the discussion. Among the participants was Dr Maria Theodoropolou, representing the Centre for the Greek Language, which collaborated with the RCeL to organise the Greek LRE workshops content-wise. After also expressing thanks to the British Council in Athens, and especially to Aiki Weedall for

helping with the administrative details of the workshop, Professor Dendrinos argued that multilingualism is a polysemous and obscure term which needs to be unpacked and understood for what it is. It is important, she said, to share a common understanding of the term multilingualism, and the practices and the ethos that it entails.

### Foreign languages and linguistic diversity in the Greek school

The aim of this session was to discuss the problem that Greece seems to be one of the European countries that offers fewer foreign languages in primary and secondary school than many other EU countries, that the home or community languages of immigrant children are absent and that minority languages – other than Turkish in Thrace – are also missing from the Greek educational system.

Participants recognised that the inclusion of a greater variety of languages in the school curriculum is desirable, that teachers should be trained to use differentiated language instruction so as to respond to the needs of different groups of same-age students, but also to require that schools have levelled language classes, that school programmes should be modified and education decentralised so that different schools offer different languages – attending both to the 'big' European languages, as well as languages of neighbouring European countries.

Proposals with regard to what can be done on a policy level to improve the situation included:

- schools in different geographical areas should offer different foreign languages – taking into consideration local and neighbouring needs
- the reasons why there is ineffective language teaching and learning in schools should be identified and attempts should be made to create model school programmes, which could be adopted by different schools, depending on their needs
- link foreign language teaching in public education with the state certificate of language competence so that low-income families are not obliged to pay for exam preparation classes in private tuition language schools
- create a pilot programme with the introduction of special language teaching zones in schools, functioning in the afternoon.

Discussions were led by Kathrin Kiyitsioglou, Assistant Professor of the Department of French, University of Thessaloniki and Gianna Giannouloupoulou, Assistant Professor of the Department of Italian, University of Athens.

### *Bilingual students and language education in Greek public schools*

The aim of this session was to discuss current policies and practices regarding first- and second language education in compulsory education in Greece. As the relevant findings of the LRE project show, and as was pointed out by the workshop participants, the existing regulatory framework with respect to students whose first language is not Greek – whether they are bilingual or trilingual – is fragmentary and does not meet the requirements emerging from the most recent European recommendations for multilingual education. Furthermore, the present framework does not seem to take into account the actual needs of Greek society, which during the last decade has received a great number of immigrants.

The session reported on a number of measures implemented towards the enhancement of multilingual practice in Greek schools (e.g. reception classes, remedial courses offered within the framework of intercultural education programmes, bilingual education for the Turkish minority community in the schools in Thrace). Yet the lack of a coherent policy for the teaching of Greek as a foreign/second language and for the teaching of first languages other than Greek was emphasised. With the contribution of the participants, an attempt was made to identify the conditions determining the extent to which the Greek framework is amenable to changes that will cater for the linguistic and cultural heterogeneity of students (specifically in urban areas) and will accommodate the students' plurilingualism. The most striking problems regarding the language education of immigrant children, which were acknowledged to be part of long-lasting inefficiencies of the Greek educational system, were summarised as follows:

- the marginalisation of students whose first language is not Greek
- a lack of specialised or trained teachers
- an absence of a concrete methodological orientation
- a Greek-centred approach to classroom teaching
- an emphasis on examinations and testing processes.

It was pointed out, however, that progress has been made as a result of the actions taken in recent years – actions which (a) have provided classes free-of-charge to hundreds of immigrants who managed to attain a certain proficiency in Greek as a foreign/second language, and (b) have offered training to numerous teachers who have gone through special training as teachers of Greek as a second language.

Moreover, demographic and socioeconomic factors were discussed as critical issues for the development of language education policies, as well as the need for the professional development of foreign language teacher training (especially at a time of serious socioeconomic crisis), raising their awareness with respect to multilingualism in education. At this point, proposals for policy actions, including the following, were made:

- introduce courses in primary education aimed at developing students' interlinguistic and intercultural awareness
- using the widely spoken and taught languages, and especially English, as a vehicle towards multilingual and multicultural awareness
- developing multilingual curricula and new methods for teaching foreign languages in multilingual rather than in monolingual terms.

Discussions were led by Angeliki Kiliari, Professor of the Department of German, University of Thessaloniki, and George Androulakis, Associate Professor of the Education Department, School of Humanities, University of Thessaly.

### *Foreign language pre-service teacher training and in-service teacher development*

The aim of this session was to reflect on the state of affairs in foreign language teacher training and education in Greece (at pre-service and in-service level) and to identify the obstacles for the development of a coherent and cohesive policy. Based on the results of both the SurveyLang and the LRE reports, the majority of language teachers have not been offered practice-teaching experiences as part of their pre-service education, and have had limited opportunities to take part in in-service training as practising teachers. An extremely small number of language teachers have taken part in intercultural exchange programmes or have had the opportunity to travel abroad, mainly because of a lack of financial incentives and lack of information. The following problems were highlighted: the initial education of language teachers such as the lack of national standards, which would offer a basis for teacher training in universities and other institutions of higher learning; lack of a commonly agreed profile of the foreign language teacher; and lack of consensus on the value and role of practice teaching in preparing teachers. Problems of in-service education were also highlighted, including lack of co-operation between language school advisers, lack of a national policy for the lifelong education and training of teachers and lack of trainer training. The discussion centred on failed attempts to promote localised training programmes tailored to the needs of teachers and schools and the following proposals were made:

- development of national professional standards for teachers
- development of professional standards for trainers
- adoption of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages for the training and education of language teachers (Kelly et al. 2004)
- use of the European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages in pre-service education and for novice teachers
- use of the descriptors of the European Portfolio as a basis for the development of pre-service language teacher training curricula
- development of flexible training programmes (e.g. distance learning, e-training) to ensure that all teachers have equal access to training opportunities
- need for school advisers to work closely with head teachers and language teachers to draw up school development plans in an effort to make in-service training relevant and appropriate to the local needs of teachers and schools.

Session led by Evdokia Karava, Assistant Professor of the Faculty of English, University of Athens and Nicos Sifakis, Assistant Professor in the School of Humanities, Hellenic Open University.

### *Use of European teaching and assessment tools and participation in projects for the promotion of multilingualism*

The aim of this session was to discuss to what extent teaching and assessment tools developed by European organisations working on the promotion of multilingualism are taken into account within the Greek school and whether there is a systematic participation of Greek foreign language teachers in the mobility projects funded by the EU aimed at the exchange of teaching experiences between teachers across Europe.

After the presentation of numbers and percentages of participation in mobility programmes per school from the municipality of Attica, it was stated that the participation in mobility programmes related to student exchanges are far more frequent than the ones related to teacher exchanges. According to the SurveyLang research findings there is little participation of schools in such programmes, which is something that does not correspond with the numbers presented in the workshop. In fact, as explained, the teachers willing to take part in such exchanges can benefit from the facilities for information offered by the State Scholarships Foundation (IKY), which also provides them with support regarding the organisation and better management of the programmes. To this end, there is a database with all the European-funded programmes and actions in which schools may apply to take part and specialised staff that can assist teachers in all stages of participation. At this point, proposals for policy actions, including the following, were made:

- better dissemination of information regarding mobility programmes across the country so that all teachers are aware of the opportunities offered.

Discussions were led by Teresa Fotiadou, French language school adviser; Gianna Kerkinopoulou, German language school adviser; and Mrs Xarhoulakou, State Scholarships Foundation representative.

## Response to LRE report and data

### *Suggested additions*

Given that the final report will be published in 2012, it is important that it contains information about the foreign language education reform introduced in Greece in 2010–11, when the LRE survey was carried out. The most important language education policy changes include the following.

- English was introduced in the first two years of primary school in a programme for the development of social literacy through a foreign language. A curriculum was developed and implemented in 'whole-day' schools throughout the country, materials appropriate for mainly oral work in class were prepared, and 3,000 English teachers were trained.
- A new multilingual curriculum for foreign languages was developed, based on the Common European Framework of Reference. It is presently being piloted and evaluated in schools throughout the country.
- Digital material to supplement printed teaching and learning materials for English and French was and is being developed.
- A coherent language education policy is due to be ready in the summer of 2013.

The websites for changes taking place in foreign language education in Greece can be visited via <http://rcel.enl.uoa.gr/flane>

# GREECE

12 November 2012

## Venue

Athens University History Museum

## Range of stakeholders

University teachers, researchers, press representatives

## Input and organisation

### *Who spoke and how was it organised?*

Three topics were selected to be discussed with workshop participants: a) the issue of multilingualism in relation to the Greek media, and to the training of future journalists at the School of Journalism and Mass Communication, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki; b) the history and present condition of print and broadcast media (by and for immigrants) in Greece; and c) the history and present condition of sign language on Greek television.

As the co-ordinator explained, the workshop organising committee decided to select the particular topics in order to find out whether there is a strategy (or even practices) for the promotion of multilingualism in the Greek public media and at the level of tertiary education.

The ultimate aim of the workshop was to contribute decisively in the making of future decisions for the promotion of multilingualism both at national and Trans-European levels.

There were three sessions, the first one chaired by four panellists all involved in foreign and specialisation language teaching at the School of Journalism and Mass Communication, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. The second session focused on the past, present and future condition of foreign press and was presented by a member of the teaching staff of the Department of Balkan Studies, University of Western Macedonia. The third session's speech was given by a Greek sign language interpreter working for the Greek state television channel.

The co-ordinator, Assistant Professor P Politis, welcomed the participants who had been asked to read about the LRE project prior to joining the workshop so that they could contribute to the discussion, and he also welcomed the panellists.

### *Multilingualism in the Greek media and at tertiary education level*

As the co-ordinator pointed out, session one panellists tried to cover a broad spectrum of Greek print and broadcast media and to combine their findings with the status of multilingualism in media-related schools and departments at tertiary education level. Moreover, he added that the findings of session one were based on a first attempt to identify and map multilingualism in private and public media at a national level.

The first panellist introduced a survey whose purpose was to examine the existence of multilingualism in the audiovisual media and press in the Greek context. More specifically, the study sought to investigate whether older and newer language communities in Greece are adequately served by newspapers, magazines, radio and television programmes in their own languages. The survey was conducted in October 2012 in all the major cities of Greece (Athens, Thessaloniki, Patras, Heraklio, Volos, Larissa, Ioannina, Drama, Florina) and the region of Thrace (Xanthi, Komotini), home of the only officially recognised minority of Greece, the Muslim community.

Regarding the press, the survey pointed to the existence of a large number of newspapers and magazines (over 20) written both in the so-called 'strong languages' (English, French, German) and in the 'weak' languages (Albanian, Russian, Bulgarian, Polish, Arabian, Turkish, Chinese, Urdu, Armenian, Tagalong). Most of these newspapers are published weekly and sold in Athens and in other major cities in Greece or can be ordered through subscription. However, large communities are under-represented as no newspapers were found to serve immigrants coming from India, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka and a large number of African countries. In contradistinction to those immigrant groups, at least 15 publications in Turkish were found in the region of Thrace, mostly published on a weekly basis.

In relation to the audiovisual media, it was found that mostly the public and municipal electronic media offer programmes in languages other than Greek. The public broadcaster ERT (Greek Radio Television) offers news programmes in English on a daily basis via ERT World, its online television show, while its radio counterpart FILIA ('friendship') offers one-hour news bulletins in nine languages (German, Spanish, Russian, Romanian, Bulgarian, Serbian, Albanian, Polish and Arabian). In addition, the municipal radio of Athens airs Athens International Radio via the internet, which broadcasts a wide variety of news and entertainment programmes in 13 languages (English, French, German, Spanish, Portuguese, Albanian, Russian, Bulgarian, Romanian, Polish, Urdu, Tagalong and Chinese). The commercial radio and television system, however, does not offer news or any other type of programming in other foreign languages, with the exception of a few local stations in Macedonia (e.g. Egnatia television), which occasionally feature news bulletins and entertainment programmes in Russian and Bulgarian. Generally, it is noted that both the public and the private media industry



offer such programmes only sporadically, which impedes easy access of the interested communities (immigrants and refugees). There are regular broadcasts in Turkish aired by the public broadcaster ERA and by a large number of local radio stations.

In conclusion, there appears to be a lack of interest by the Greek authorities in a large part of the population, mainly immigrants and refugees. The findings of this study coincide only in part with the results of the LRE survey. Both surveys point to the under-representation of many new language communities in the Greek audiovisual media and the press. However, the larger scale of this study reveals the existence of many newspapers and magazines in Turkish. Moreover, one should not underestimate the efforts of the public and municipal radio broadcasters to provide news and entertainment programmes in a wide range of foreign languages.

Suggestions for the promotion of multilingualism in the media included:

- The implementation of educational programmes that deal with issues of racism in the media.
- The operation of a multimedia network that would promote information and allow for online communication among media and immigrant communities both in Greece and Europe.
- Inculcating the public via campaigns against racism, which would include programmes on multilingualism aired on specific days such as International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (21 March), International Migrants' Day (18 December) and World Refugee Day (20 June).

The second panellist introduced the issue of indirect/covert multilingualism. There are few cases directly promoting multilingualism in radio and television entertainment and cultural programmes; those that do include the radio station FILIA of EPAS and the municipal radio station Athens International Radio. The former focuses on the cultural and touristic promotion of Greece; the latter mainly targets immigration groups and communities living in Greece, providing them with useful information, news bulletins and entertainment programmes. Some of the latter focus on specific target groups, such as Russian women or Albanian children.

Greek television broadcasts many foreign language programmes (mainly English-speaking ones), such as films, serials and documentaries. However, since films are subtitled, and documentaries are to a certain extent, as well as programmes targeting children, it is obvious that broadcasting such programmes is not the result of multilingualism policy planning.

It is worth mentioning that there is access to foreign language television channels through digital terrestrial television, or through the subscriber digital satellite channels by NOVA, or via satellite dishes. Finally, there is also access to the Cypriot three language speaking channel PIK.

Apart from this rather poor picture of overt multilingualism, there are several cases that could be interpreted as promoting multilingualism covertly: the names of radio stations and television channels (Sky, Star, etc.), music programmes promoting songs with foreign lyrics, etc. However, in the overwhelming majority of such covert cases, it is the English language that is mainly promoted.

The conclusions drawn were:

- In the case of radio programmes, multilingualism is promoted through 'infotainment' and foreign music, whereas in the case of television, promotion is achieved through foreign films, series and documentaries.
- In many cases multilingualism equals English language.
- Many of the cases presented could be considered as accidental, i.e. unintentional multilingualism.
- The internet is a relatively new medium that allows access to numerous national and international stations and channels, but its use presupposes economic prosperity, which (usually) poor immigrants in Greece lack.

Suggestions with regards to improving both direct/overt and indirect/covert multilingualism included:

- Subtitling rather than dubbing.
- Official recognition of a 'multilingualism week', which could be celebrated yearly between European Languages Day (26 September) and International Translation Day (30 September). During that week, there could be various events focusing on multilingualism and foreign cultures, all covered by the media, as well as foreign language radio and television programmes (talk shows, interviews, discussions, films, plays, etc.), with foreign-speaking communities playing a very active role.

The third panellist focused on foreign language travel journalism in Greece and its relationship with the international tourism industry.

The main purpose was to examine whether there is a sufficient number of foreign language travel publications in Greece that would help to build the brand image of Greece as a tourist destination.

This is very important for Greece if we consider that tourism is the most dynamically growing sector of the Greek economy.

A secondary aim was to examine which languages are mostly used in travel journalism in Greece in order to contribute to the discussion of multilingualism in Europe.

The study of travel guides and travel books has shown that English, German and French are generally used almost exclusively, with the exceptions of Italian for Ionian Islands destinations and of Russian for travel destinations in northern Greece.

However, there is a special category of bilingual (Greek–English) travel magazines, which consists of the in-flight magazines of Olympic air, Aegean and Cyprus Airways, the magazine *2board* of the Airport Eleftherios Venizelos and the magazine *On Blue* of the Blue Star Ferries Company.

Apart from travel magazines, newspaper travel sections and travel guides, considerable attention has been drawn to the electronic travel media (travel-related internet sites, blogs and social networks) with an emphasis on the Greek Tourism Organisation website.

The findings of the study indicated the dominant use of English language in travel journalism in Greece, especially in the electronic media. However, there are certain examples of promoting a tourist destination (e.g. Rhodes) in many languages, depending on the target market.

The presentation emphasised the role of travel journalists in an effort to build the brand image of Greece as a tourist destination with modern electronic tools (social media, mobile applications) and new techniques (e.g. interactive real-time travel reporting via Twitter).

It was suggested that there is a need for foreign language education for specific purposes in Greece so that Greek travel journalists meet the needs of our time, ensure flexibility in the international labour market and help maintain our country's high levels of tourism competitiveness.

The fourth panellist described a foreign language courses programme, which was part of the programme of study of the School of Journalism and Mass Communication (SJMC), Aristotle University until 2006.

The students were offered three foreign language courses – English, French and German – and had to select two of them for all four years of their studies, i.e. eight semesters for each language. The aim of the programme was to prepare future journalists for an international/multilingual environment.

French and German did not presuppose any prior knowledge on the part of the student, and they were taught as general languages, gradually shifting towards specialisation. English, on the other hand, presupposed a very good knowledge of the general language on the part of the student, and was taught exclusively for special purposes.

Since 2006 the programme of study at the SJMC has changed and the three languages mentioned above are taught exclusively for special purposes, whereas only students who choose journalism have to select two such subjects. There is always, of course, the possibility of selecting general French or German (as free electives), but students prefer other non-foreign course subjects due to the limit of the level on free elective credits.

The presentation was completed with reference to the recent evaluation of the QS Stars rating system for academic institutions, and the good rating the School of Journalism and Mass Communication received.

The main, yet tentative, conclusion drawn was the importance of the language component of the old programme of study, since it may have contributed to the good rating of the school.

The suggestions that were mentioned were:

- that students of the School of Journalism and Mass Communication could be encouraged in the selection of free elective foreign language courses in the form of some bonus in the school's programme of study
- a continuation of the research on (and promotion of) multilingualism in the Greek media through constructive dialogue between the academic community and media professionals.

Session led by M Tzoannopoulou, Lecturer of the School of Journalism and Mass Communication, Aristotle University; Z Ververopoulou, Assistant Professor of the School of Journalism and Mass Communication, Aristotle University; Dr F Galatsopoulou, Language Instructor of the School of Journalism and Mass Communication, Aristotle University; and M Valioli, Assistant Professor of the School of Journalism and Mass Communication, Aristotle University.

### *Print and broadcast media for and by immigrants in Greece*

The aim of this session was to discuss current policies and practices regarding the status and role of the print and broadcast media run by immigrants.

The presentation focused on the media policy in Greece in relation to groups/communities of immigrants from Balkan and Black Sea countries.

Generally speaking, there can be two policies.

- a. The state and social bodies establish immigrant-targeting public media (mainly television channels), which can co-operate with immigrants.
- b. Immigrants themselves establish their own media, which can be non-profitable.

In Greece there are instances of the second policy only. There are around 20 newspapers, the older ones targeting the Polish community. In general, the immigrant press focuses on informing readers about job-related topics, about the Greek state, bureaucracy, Greek authorities' arbitrariness and about legislation. There is also a focus on investing, on social events, on social distinction and on municipal and educational issues.

The editors and publishers are either professionals or volunteers and their major goals include information, political guidance and profit.

The present state of the Balkan and Black Sea immigrant press in Greece was described as follows:

- until recently, newspapers were profitable business enterprises due to the great numbers of advertisements which in turn was due to their large circulations
- as circulation numbers and profitability differ depending on the target immigrant group, there are not many (or none, for that matter) newspapers when the target group is of a low educational status
- the economic crisis and recession in Greece have had an impact on the immigrant press, as many immigrants have returned to their home countries
- the shrinking circulation of the immigrant press has brought about an absence of advertisements and, hence, drop in profits.

Session was led by V Vlasidis, Assistant Professor of the Department of Balkan Studies, University of Western Macedonia.

### *Sign language on Greek television*

The aim of this session was to describe the first steps, as well as the current status of sign language services on Greek television.

The presentation began with the history of the inclusion of sign language in television news programmes. Sign language interpretation was first introduced on Greek state television channels in the 1990s. Its inclusion was met with suspicion due to a general ignorance on the matter. There were, initially, ludicrous reactions to the interpreters' job, ranging from disputes over the optimum size of the frame/window within which they would appear to their 'weird' facial expressions – it was not known that sign language depends both on gestures and facial expressions.

There was special reference to Prisma Plus, the first public digital channel with entertainment and informative programmes and short news bulletins for the deaf (and also people with vision impairment), which was launched in 2000. All of its broadcasts were fully accessible to deaf people, as they were accompanied by sign language and subtitles, while disabled people received free decoders for the channel.

Nowadays, all major (broadcasting nationwide) channels, both public and private, have included short news programmes with sign language interpreters, although the private sector has been quite reluctant to do so. However, the Prisma Plus channel was shut down in March 2012, and several of its services have been transferred to the public digital terrestrial television channel ET1.

The conclusions drawn were:

- the inclusion of sign language interpretation news bulletins has familiarised Greeks with the deaf and their way of communication. As a result, many Greeks have started taking Greek sign language courses
- if multilingualism contributes to the building up of understanding and compassion to the 'other', then in the case of Greece, the inclusion of sign language interpretation programmes on Greek television has contributed largely towards a more understanding and compassionate attitude towards the deaf.

The following suggestions were made:

- there is a need for more programmes, other than short news bulletins, for the deaf and hard of hearing
- sign language interpretation should be accompanied with information about paralinguistic elements, such as laughter, tone of voice, etc.

Session was led by R Zika, sign language interpreter for the Greek state television channel.

# GREECE

21 November 2012

## Venue

Met Hotel, Thessaloniki

## Range of stakeholders

Mostly business representatives from export and tourism businesses in northern Greece and professional associations, academics and representatives of cultural institutes

## Inputs and organisation

### Who spoke and how was it organised?

Venetia Kousia, Country Manager at Manpower Group Greece opened the event with a keynote speech addressing labour-market issues in Greece in relation to language aptitude, testing and use. Project partners, including the British Council and South East Europe Research Centre, outlined the research results and British Hellenic Chamber of Commerce gave an overview. These presentations were followed by a round table discussion with the audience over breakfast.

## Response to LRE report and data

### Level of agreement

There was general agreement with the key points regarding use of English and other languages in the workplace and the predominance of English. There was a discussion around recruitment and language support training where it was noted that Greek companies tend not to test that declared levels of language ability are accurate and that they do not invest sufficiently in language training.

### Any omissions or inaccuracies noted

No, although the Greek companies discussed the importance of being able to operate in the languages of the major markets they are exporting to or operating in. For many companies in northern Greece this would be the Balkan languages and Russian.

### Suggested additions

The private sector should be more forceful with government regarding the skills and competencies required to operate effectively in their markets.

## Main issues discussed

Business success depends on several factors:

- Entrepreneurial spirit.
- Experience.
- Discipline. In order to have this you need to build trust for yourself and with others. You need to have a good sense of your history and your language, but you also need to know a second or third language to understand that we (Greeks) are not the focal point.
- We need to have excellent communication skills (including use of body language) and other competencies acquired through communication and we also need to pay attention to what the other person is communicating to us. This is not just verbal language, this is body language and cultural awareness.
- Greek businesses do not usually reward their employees' foreign language competencies (particularly English) either financially or in any other way. It is simply expected that employees (at a certain level and above) will have a decent standard of foreign language skills, i.e. this is usually taken for granted. This is a risk! If you are not really aware of your employees' level of communication skills in a foreign language you are leaving a wide margin for error and misunderstanding.
- According to a FutureWorkForum survey (among 7,000 young people) two out of three Greeks believe that a good knowledge of English is a passport to business success. The profile of a multilingual person was described as young, with parents from an EU country, working in a managerial position, or a university student, motivated to learn.
- Language learning improves social and job mobility and the acceptance of diversity and thus leads to a healthy economy for Greece.

## Conclusions

The need to invest in language learning was pointed out by members of the business world. Also, there is an even greater need for employees to be able to speak languages of the Balkan countries, who are Greece's major exporting partners. Companies should encourage language learning in order to create an international profile.

Immigrants should be offered Greek classes in order for them to integrate into Greek society and have more employment opportunities. This is being threatened in the current economic climate, as municipalities who traditionally offer such courses are now cutting them.

### *Any issues raised for further debate*

- The audience was split on the role and importance of English. Some participants were satisfied with the use of only one foreign language in their businesses (namely English), claiming that as it is the language of technology and trade globally there was not a real need to have a high level of competence in other languages. Others disagreed with this view arguing that while English remains important it is not enough on its own, especially in newer markets, and skills in a number of different languages are increasingly required by employers. The focus again was on the languages of Balkan countries.
- A number of other languages, such as Turkish, Arabic and Chinese, should be promoted through policies. These languages are sought by companies operating in the international market. English is no longer enough (depending on the business you are in) and it can be difficult to find people with good levels of these languages.
- University graduates are well qualified but should acquire English to a better extent and learn a third foreign language. A good business plan should include a long-term investment in language learning, a good understanding of the culture of the country of export and a mapping of the needs of the market.
- There is a gap between the needs of the business market and the curriculum being taught in Greek education institutions.

# HUNGARY

15 June 2012

## Venue

British Embassy Budapest, Hungary

## Range of stakeholders

Education, language policy, international cultural institutions, media, government, representatives of the Hungarian National Parliament, Member of the European Parliament, minority self-governments

## Organisers

Csilla Bartha, Research Centre for Multilingualism; Helga Hattyár, Research Institute for Linguistics; Noémi Nagy, Hungarian Academy of Sciences (RCM RIL HAS); Viktória Vas and Csilla Ruman, British Council, Hungary.

Translation from Hungarian Sign Language (HSL) to Hungarian and vice versa, and from Hungarian to English and vice versa was provided for the duration of the event.

## Inputs and organisation

### Who spoke and how was it organised?

#### Morning session

Official launch event in Hungary

**Programme:** Opening and welcome speeches, presentations on LRE results, discussion

**Speakers:** Simon Ingram-Hill, Director British Council, Hungary; Jonathan Knott, British Ambassador to Hungary; Miklós Soltész, State Secretary of Social, Family and Youth Affairs; Eilidh MacDonald, Project Co-ordinator; Martin Hope, Project Director; Dr habil. Csilla Bartha, Associate Professor ELTE and Senior Research Fellow, RCM RIL HAS

#### Afternoon session

**Workshop 1:** Sign Languages and Deaf Communities within a LRE – recent trends, challenges and opportunities in Hungary.

**Programme:** presentations, performance of Ergo Sum sign language theatre, round table discussion.

**Speakers:** Dr Ádám Kósa, MEP, President of SINOSZ (National Association of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing), Dr habil. Koloman Brenner, Deputy Dean, Faculty of Liberal Arts, ELTE University, Dr habil. Csilla Bartha, Associate Professor, ELTE and Senior Research Fellow, RCM RIL HAS, Dr Helga Hattyár, Lecturer, ELTE and Research Fellow, RCM RIL HAS, Péter Horváth, equal opportunity expert, Vera Tóthmárton, Project Manager, Tesco.

## Moderator

Péter Zalán Romanek, sign language expert.

## Response to LRE report and data

### Level of agreement

Since the LRE questionnaire did not originally cover the issue of sign languages, participants welcomed the efforts of the Hungarian partner to make the LRE Project thematise this important topic, and despite the fact that some participating countries considered the case of sign languages less important than other topics and that only a few questions were asked, it was possible to conduct European comparative research in a multilingual context for the very first time.

Participants considered it especially important that a cross-national analysis had been made in the most important societal arenas related to multilingualism, based on standardised theoretical and methodological principles. Due to the methods used, results cannot either give a detailed and in-depth overview of the sections examined, nor reflect the actual diversity of a country as a whole. LRE findings highlight the most important trends, differences, good practices and shortcomings which, if continuously updated, can serve as a reference database.

### Any omissions or inaccuracies noted

As the country essay of Hungary and the presentation on the Hungarian situation pointed out, following the completion of the LRE survey, a part of Hungarian legislation directly affecting the issue of multilingualism has significantly changed. Due to time constraints, the practical effects of these changes could not be measured over the course of the project.

### Suggested additions

Greater emphasis should be placed on presenting similarities and differences between countries/regions and good practice examples should be easily adaptable.

## Main issues discussed

### Focus of the morning session

After presenting the methods of the project and the main results of the cross-national analysis and that of the Hungarian research, participants tried to critically respond to the following question: In our globalised world, in the age of financial crisis and growing migration, the knowledge of foreign languages plays a very important role in building up social relationships, finding better working conditions and preserving European competitiveness. How does Hungary respond to the challenges?

Beyond the presentation of Hungarian LRE results, the focus was put on the very characteristics without which this problem is only partially understandable: differences between the situation and treatment of the 14 recognised minority/nationality languages, the complementary relationship of Hungary and seven neighbouring countries which shaped language education policies concerning immigrants in a way distinct from other countries, causes of problems related to foreign language education, etc.

### Focus of the afternoon session

The most important questions discussed were regarding access to language(s), language policy, linguistic practices and bilingual competence, as well as linguistic and social inclusion of the Hungarian deaf community, with special attention to education and labour market opportunities.

Some presenters drew a clear parallel between the situation of sign language and Gypsy (Romani, Boyash) languages, and stemming from this, between school failures and later labour-market disadvantages of deaf and Gypsy children.

### Some important findings, facts and questions raised and/or discussed during the event

*Multilingualism is not just about foreign languages but requires support for its regional and minority languages, too.* The unique arrangement that Hungarian is a majority language in Hungary but a minority language in neighbouring countries has important linguistic, ideological, political and economic consequences. Countries concerned should handle this regionally as an additional opportunity to develop multilingualism.

As mentioned above, particular emphasis was placed on two of the groups that previously received much less attention: the Roma and the sign language user deaf communities. Besides characteristic differences, there are several features that most Roma and deaf people in the region share: a lower or higher

degree of social separation which goes along with a low employment rate, a bad social situation, poor labour market opportunities, and – in an increasing number of cases – deep poverty. All of these features are closely related to the low level of education and the high drop-out rate from public education of a significant proportion of the Roma and deaf youth. Ádám Kósa, Csilla Bartha and Helga Hattyár introduced new and innovative developments in provisions for the deaf and Hungarian sign language (HSL) in Hungary, one of the three countries where sign language is recognised at the constitutional level.

*Is sign language a natural human language? Is it a minority language or a language used by those with physical disability?* In different pieces of Hungarian legislation – officially recognising HSL as an autonomous, fully fledged natural language, the primary language of the deaf, and considering the deaf community as a linguistic minority – both concepts are present.

The presenters also confronted the participants with the most common misconceptions about sign languages and deafness, which in many countries still have a negative impact on the potential use of sign languages. A common misconception about sign language is, for example, that there is a universal sign language. In fact, there are several – mutually not intelligible – sign languages in the world, and each of them consists of varieties.

The education of deaf children in Hungary should be bilingual using HSL and Hungarian as the medium of instruction – instead of the current form of either the mainstream or special education, which restricts the use of HSL.

Participants of the round table discussion highlighted that legal recognition and practice are different. In Hungary, very few deaf people have the opportunity to learn foreign languages. In the USA, university students with a hearing disability get extra help to learn foreign languages instead of being given an exemption. The UK has a good reputation for teaching sign language at school level. Tesco Hungary operates an equal-opportunity policy that has positions at various levels for deaf employees. At ELTE University, special tutors are assigned to talented students from the deaf community. An in-service teacher-training programme for foreign language teachers – sign language assisted foreign language teaching for the deaf – has been developed at ELTE,

A consensus has been reached that a nationwide awareness of linguistic diversity and multilingualism is needed by way of all available media.

This task has been set as the primary task for the second workshop.

## Other points of interest

According to Jonathan Knott, UK Ambassador to Hungary, in policy terms Hungary is trendsetting in Europe.

According to Csilla Bartha, although the expansion of the English language has been unstoppable in Europe and indeed worldwide, it would be necessary to raise awareness that English should not be seen as the main source of danger for the languages of Europe, but rather as the expected global linguistic form of competence. The role of English as a global lingua franca and as linguistic capital is no more than that of basic computer skills and literacy (which, until the spread of public education, was the privilege of literate groups).

National language policies should create an inclusive environment where the formal and informal learning and use of additional languages is being fostered, and awareness is being raised of the value of these languages as a symbolic and actual capital of the regional and global linguistic markets.



# HUNGARY

15 November 2012

## Venue

National Library of Foreign Language, Literature and Music Collection, Budapest, Hungary

## Range of stakeholders

Education, language policy, international cultural institutions, media, governance, minority groups

## Inputs and organisation

### Who spoke and how was it organised?

#### Opening and welcome speeches

Ibolya Mender, Director of the National Library of Foreign Literature and Music Collection; and Csilla Bartha, Research Professor and Head, RCM RIL HAS, Associate Professor at ELTE

#### Presentations

Csilla Bartha, Research Professor and Head, RCM RIL HAS, Associate Professor at ELTE; Anna Borbély, Senior Research Fellow at RCM RIL HAS; Helga Hattyár, Lecturer at ELTE, Research Fellow at RCM RIL HAS; and Borbála Heltai, PhD student at ELTE

#### Awareness-raising presentations

Péter Lakatos, Roma Junior Research Fellow at RCM RIL HAS, Hajnalka Csernyák, deaf sign language expert at RCM RIL HAS, and Linda Labancz, Junior Research Fellow at RCM RIL HAS

#### Language bazaar – interactive awareness-raising activities of several issues: deaf communities and sign languages

Romani language, Chinese immigrant community in Hungary; Dialects of the Hungarian language; Minorities/nationalities in Hungary; misconceptions of languages, standard variant, multilingualism, foreign language learning and language use.

## Organisers

Csilla Bartha, Helga Hattyár, Szabolcs Varjasi, Noémi Nagy, Linda Labancz and Péter Lakatos, Research Centre for Multilingualism (RCM RIL HAS); students from ELTE; Ferenc Gál, Julianna Bokor, Anett Reveland, Diána Pásztor, Enikő Hugyecz and Ági Pintér, volunteers from RCM RIL HAS; Viktória Vas and Csilla Ruman, British Council, Hungary; Melinda Magyar and Virág Patyus, translation from Hungarian sign language (HSL) to Hungarian and vice versa.

## Main issues discussed

The main goal of the second LRE workshop, entitled Linguistic Diversity in Hungary, was awareness-raising. Besides disseminating the key findings of the LRE project, the workshop also aimed to share information about multilingualism and linguistic diversity, including minority communities and minority languages in Hungary, for all are interested in these issues (university students, high-school teachers, linguists from different research areas, etc). To address and involve participants of the workshop, three stages were identified and elaborated upon: scientific presentations, awareness-raising presentations and interactive activities.

Four presentations covered the following topics:

#### Linguistic diversity, linguistic otherness – facts and misconceptions (Csilla Bartha)

This detailed presentation gave an insight into different aspects of linguistic diversity and linguistic otherness, highlighting the most important issues, main research topics, questions and methodological concerns related to the topic.

#### National languages in Hungary – language maintenance, language shift (Anna Borbély)

This presentation concentrated on the procedure of language maintenance and language shift in minority/nationality communities in Hungary, taking examples from a research conducted in seven minority communities in Hungary, using the same research design in each community.

#### Diversity and sign languages (Helga Hattyár)

The Hungarian sign language has been legally accepted since 2009 in Hungary. Even though in the past few years the deaf community and HSL have received more attention than previously, misconceptions are still widespread. The presentation aimed to overwrite some of them, focusing on the issue of diversity and variability of sign languages.

**Multilingualism in a German minority village in Hungary (Borbála Heltai)**

This presentation was also based on empirical research being conducted in a village in Hungary, where a German and a Roma minority community, Hungarians and new migrants (mainly retired people from Finland and Germany) live together, re-arranging traditional sociolinguistic setting and language commodities and forming a unique multilingual community.

The three awareness-raising presentations introduced three stigmatised communities in Hungary, respectively.

**Linguistic and cultural diversity in Gypsy communities (Péter Lakatos)**

As a junior research fellow and a Romani community member, Péter Lakatos gave an introduction to the linguistic and cultural diversity of Romani in Hungary with a special focus on contact features, loan words and unique discourse patterns of Romani in Hungary.

**Language for the eyes (Hajnalka Csernyák)**

As a deaf sign language expert and a native signer, Hajnalka Csernyák listed the most common misbeliefs on sign languages and deaf people, and confuted them as well.

**'I am Hungarian, but I was born as Chinese' – on the Chinese community in Hungary (Linda Labancz)**

Based on empirical researches, Linda Labancz presented several misbeliefs surrounding the Chinese community in Hungary as well as the Chinese language.

Interactive activities helped participants to acquire experiences about linguistic and cultural diversity in an amusing way. Those who were interested were able to play games related to the dialects of the Hungarian language, HSL, minority languages, linguistic misbeliefs, and also were invited to learn basic Romani, Chinese or HSL.

# HUNGARY

21 February 2013

## Venue

Hungarian Academy of Sciences (HAS), Budapest

## Range of stakeholders

Minority groups, researchers, education, business, language policy, minority institutions, representatives of nationality self governments

## Inputs and organisation

### Who spoke and how was it organised?

#### Morning session

##### Opening and welcome speeches

Zsolt Visy, professor, University of Pécs and President of the Cultural Committee of UNESCO Hungary; Miklós Réthelyi, President of the Hungarian National Commission for UNESCO; Miklós Maróth, Vice President of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

#### Plenary session

Csilla Bartha, Associate Professor at ELTE and Research Professor and Head, RCM RIL HAS; Tjeerd de Graaf, Research Associate, Mercator European Research Center, Fryske Akademy; Balázs Vizi, Associate Professor, National University of Public Service; László Szarka, Senior Research Fellow, Research Centre for Humanities, Institute of History, HAS; Attila Papp Z., Director, Research Centre for Social Sciences, Institute for Minority Studies, HAS.

#### Panel 1

##### Keynote presentations

Cserniczkó István, deputy rector; Ferenc Rákóczi II., Transcarpathian Hungarian Institute, Hodinka Antal Institute, Ukraine and Vice-President of Termini Association; Erzsébet Szalai Sándor, Associate Professor, Director of Europe Centre, Faculty of Law, University of Pécs.

##### Presentations

Koloman Brenner, Deputy Dean, ELTE, President of the European Federation of German Minorities; Dénes Sokcsevits, Associate Professor, Director of Croatian Nationality Research Centre, University of Pécs; Gizella Szabó Mihály, Associate Professor, Constantine the Philosopher University, Nitra, Director of Gramma Language Office, Slovakia; Szilvia Szoták, President of Samu Imre Institute for Linguistics, President of Termini Association.

#### Panel 2

##### Keynote presentations

Ildikó Vančo Kremmer, Deputy Dean at Constantine the Philosopher University, Nitra, Slovakia; Szilvia Lakatos, Assistant Professor, Department of Romology, University of Pécs.

##### Presentations

Csilla Bartha, Associate Professor, ELTE; Research Professor, Head, RCM RIL HAS; Csilla Fedinec, Research Fellow, Research Centre for Social Sciences, Institute for Minority Studies, HAS; Helga Hattyár, Assistant Professor at ELTE, Research Fellow at RCM RIL HAS; Anna Kolláth, Associate Professor, Head of Department, Hungarian Literature and Linguistics, Maribor University, Slovenia; Anna Lehocki, Assistant Professor, J.J. Strossmayer Science University, Zagreb, Croatia.

#### Afternoon session

#### Panel 3

##### Keynote presentations

Anna Borbély, Senior Research Fellow, RCM RIL HAS; István Horváth, Head of Department, Associate Professor, Babeş-Bolyai Science University; Director, Research Institute for National Minorities, Cluj Napoca, Romania.

##### Presentations

Maria Erb, Associate Professor, Director, Research Institute for German Nationality, ELTE; Erzsébet Hornok Uhrin, former Director, Research Institute for Slovakian Nationality in Hungary; István Lanstyák, Professor, Comenius University, Bratislava, Slovakia; Angella Sorban, Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania, Romania; Vilmos Voight, Professor, ELTE.

#### Panel 4

##### Keynote presentations

Mária Kovács, Dean at University of Miskolc, Faculty of Humanities; Judit Kecskés, Assistant Professor, University of Miskolc; Tamás Váradi, Senior Research Fellow, Head of the Department of Language Technology, RIL HAS.

##### Presentations

Ágota Fóris, Head of the Department of Terminology, Károly Gáspár University of Reformed Church in Hungary; István Kozmács, Associate Professor, Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra, Slovakia; Péter Lakatos, Roma Junior Research Fellow at RCM RIL HAS, Greek Catholic Diacone; Péró Lásztity, President, Serbian Institute in Hungary; Tibor Pintér, Research Fellow, RIL HAS.

### Closing session

Zsolt Visy, Professor, University of Pécs; Csilla Bartha, Associate Professor, ELTE, Research Professor, Head, RCM RIL HAS.

### Organisers

Zsolt Visy, University of Pécs; Eszter Szöllősi, Hungarian National Commission for UNESCO; Csilla Bartha, Gabriella Kovács, Szabolcs Varjasi and Helga Hattyár, Research Centre for Multilingualism (RCM RIL HAS); Viktória Vas, British Council, Hungary; Noémi Nagy, translation of the conference; Linda Labancz and Noémi Nagy, translation of the written version of Tjeerd de Graaf's presentation.

## Response to LRE report and data

### *Level of agreement*

Although the content, practices and policy-level management of multilingualism and linguistic diversity show an important geo-political determination, neither the comparative studies of the LRE project, nor the country reports dealt with regional similarities and differences that were also formulated at the first workshop. This event was intended to fill this gap. In the Central and Eastern European region of the EU, both before and after the accession to the Union, as opposed to the Western Member States of the EU, the situation and future prospects of R/M languages has been of particular importance in the framework of the requirement of multilingualism on the one hand, and in the recontextualised concept of nation-state on the other.

## Main issues discussed

The title of the conference highlights the focus of the event: *Problems and Prospects for Cultural and Linguistic Diversity in the Carpathian Basin – the situation of minority mother tongues in light of the Barcelona objectives (mother tongue +2 languages)*. Keynote presentations and round table discussions focused on the characteristics of socio-historical heritage and geopolitical similarities, as well as common and different features of minority language arrangements and patterns of multilingualism in the region. From a hitherto lesser-discussed perspective, these contributions drew attention to the problems and possibilities of maintenance and development of mother tongues of nationalities/minorities living in Hungary, as well as of the native language of Hungarian communities living in minority regions of the Carpathian Basin, in the context of the new era of multilingualism and the three language formula, taking into account practices of other regions as well.

Supporting linguistic diversity and apparently beneficial legal instruments cannot automatically guarantee – even for the users of recognised minority languages – the maintenance of minority mother tongues in a new, expected multilingual setting. Participants of the event sought to answer the question ‘what kind of problems and opportunities may occur in a minority situation due to the trilingual formula including the preservation of mother tongue, and what additional costs and efforts does it take for these language users in the domains of education, law enforcement, culture, science, religion and business?’. Presentations were grouped into four thematic panels, making visible the international practice used in the areas concerned in light of the LRE research project.

- Language policy, language planning and problems and prospects for multilingual strategies in the Carpathian Basin.
- Mother tongue, multilingualism, minority education.
- Minority mother tongues and cultures in the light of research.
- Factors of maintenance and development of minority mother tongues and culture: identities, religion, media, business, and economy.

Discussions following the presentations of each panel raised valuable questions related to the issues discussed, and opened the floor for fruitful conversations of the representatives of different areas (e.g. research, education, language technology).

The findings of the conference contribute to the maintenance and development of non-official mother tongues (languages of national and ethnic minorities, regional languages, immigrant languages), which has become increasingly endangered with the global expansion of English. Furthermore, the results help to develop thoughtful language strategies as well as research and educational guidelines promoting intercultural dialogue and functional multilingualism in the Carpathian Basin.

# ITALY

30 October 2012

## Venue

Italian Representative of the European Commission – Natali Conference Room

## Range of stakeholders

Delegates from the European Commission, Higher Education, Language Teachers associations (Lend), translators (CE), Ministry of Labour (ISFOL), SMI businesses (Just Bit srl, La Cignoza, AIM, Zajedno, Telecom Italia), representatives of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) associations (CONFAPI, CNA), representative of Fondi Interprofessionali (FAPI), the Institute for Foreign Commerce, Foreign Cultural institutions (Goethe Institut)

## Inputs and organisation

### Who spoke and how was it organised?

#### Introduction

The introductory session included a welcome speech by our host, the European Commission, as well as by Stephen Benians, Programmes Manager, British Council, Italy, who pointed out the British Council's commitment – all over Europe – in making multilingualism a business and expansion opportunity for Italian companies.

Our partner from the 'Università per Stranieri di Siena', Prof. Ssa Monica Barni, gave participants an overview on the findings of both the European and the Italian project team in the field of multilingualism and business.

#### Co-talk session

Participants were divided into three groups joined in turns by the three panels.

#### Panel 1

Held by Isfol (Ministry of Labour) focused on Leonardo Action (LLP Programmes) and how it can be exploited by business companies for improving learning skills.

#### Panel 2

Held by Confapi and Fapi (SMI Association and Fondi Interprofessionali) focused on the kind of assistance that those bodies can provide to SME in the field of foreign-language assistance/acquisition in order to increase their exposure to foreign markets as well as the kind of grants/funds SME can access in order to sustain their employees' foreign language acquisition.

#### Panel 3

Held by the Foreign Commerce Institute (ICE) and aimed at sharing the kind of support that they can provide to business companies in order to expand their own markets abroad, including the handling of a key point such as that of competencies in foreign languages.

After the end of the discussions, a summary was prepared by the three moderators and their assistants and these were pinned to the wall. Once they had shared their own experiences, participants were asked by the facilitator to think of connections between the institutions represented by the panellists. It transpired that although the represented bodies were sometimes focused on the same areas, the idea of networking is still hard to fulfil. Participants came to the conclusion that the involvement of 'decisive' actors like policy makers and 'market' stakeholders in these debates is very difficult.

## Response to LRE report and data

### Level of agreement

It was generally agreed that the report presents an interesting and thought-provoking picture. It was noted that especially in regard to the situation in the business sector, it was a good representation of reality.

### Any omissions or inaccuracies noted

Concentrating the research on a restricted number of companies both for number and sector doesn't give a broad idea of the reality.

### Suggested additions

Involvement both in the research and the project, from the very beginning, of SME trade associations.

## Main issues discussed

### Discussion 1: Mobility

- Increasing individual's mobility in order to find a proper job
- The necessity of setting up training projects (linguistic/professional) to be carried out abroad in order to initiate partnerships
- How to get grants/funds for language training.

### Discussion 2: The role of translators

- Employing a translator or getting the employees to acquire a foreign language?
- New skills for new jobs: new professional profiles. A new profession: the international mediator with marketing competencies. The setting up of a new master's course for training people in this new role.
- Learning/teaching the language in context (at work) and not in a traditional classroom.
- Get people to understand that the English language is not sufficient in today's multilingual reality.

### **Discussion 3: Co-ordination: a dream?**

- How to network the different language training bodies.
- Lack of a multi language policy.
- No exploitation/sharing of language projects/good practices.
- Language projects stop once grants/funds are used.
- What kind of language training do company provide for their employees?

### **Discussion 4: Language for business**

- How to raise entrepreneur's awareness towards the importance of foreign languages.
- Breakdown companies' different needs according to different areas and dimensions. Cultural institutions play a key role in the provision of directions/consultancy.
- SMEs find it difficult to internationalise.

### **Discussion 5: Certification**

- Certification of competencies (formal, informal) is essential. Different systems need to integrate.
- Competence assessment.

### *Any issues raised for further debate*

- Language policy tends not to invest enough in language learning/teaching in schools.
- Non-formal education needs to be 'recognised/assessed/certified'.
- How to network among the language training providers, the cultural institutions, the trade associations, the Ministry of Education.
- the issue of lifelong learning.
- The role of nonprofit organisations in supporting SME's internalisation (e.g. the promotion of EU programmes/initiatives, project co-designing, etc.).
- How to galvanise entrepreneurs.
- International professional exchanges.

# LITHUANIA

25 May 2012, 5 June 2012, 19 September 2012

## Venue

Workshop One (25 May 2012) –  
Vytautas Magnus University, Kaunas

Workshop Two (5 June 2012) –  
Mykolas Romeris University, Vilnius

Workshop Three (19 September 2012) –  
Ministry of Education and Science

## Range of stakeholders

Workshop One (25 May 2012) – representatives from universities, VET institutions and the municipality of Kaunas.

Workshop Two (5 June 2012) – school, VET and university teachers of all languages (national, minority and foreign), teacher trainers and researchers. Workshop Three (19 September 2012) – ministry officials of different departments (secondary and tertiary education)

## Inputs and organisation

### Who spoke and how was it organised?

#### Workshop One – 25 May 2012

An LRE presentation followed by a panel discussion, which included a Q&A session from the audience.

The LRE project and findings were presented by Dr Julija Moskvina, Institute of Labour and Social Research and Dr Irena Smetonienė, State Language Commission.

The panel discussion was initiated by Vilma Bačkiūtė. The panellists were Dr Julija Moskvina, Dr Irena Smetonienė and Professor Ineta Dabašinskienė (Vytautas Magnus University).

#### Workshop Two – 5 June 2012

This was part of the Lithuanian Association of Teachers of All Languages (LKPA) conference, which hosted the LRE launch on the first day, and had a workshop on the second day. LRE issues were taken forward in several workshops. The topics included the Impact of Globalisation on Languages and Culture; Language Policy in Lithuania and Abroad; Languages and Intercultural Communication; Teaching Mother Tongue.

The LRE project speakers and representatives were Professor Boguslavas Gruževskis and Dr Julija Moskvina, Institute of Labour and Social Research; Dr Irena Smetonienė, State Language Commission; and Vilma Bačkiūtė, British Council, Lithuania.

#### Workshop Three – 19 September 2012

This was a round table discussion set up by Vilma Bačkiūtė (LRE Project Manager, British Council, Lithuania). Some 14 ministerial officials reviewed the language teaching policy in Lithuania in light of the EU benchmarks for language teaching and LRE findings in the 24 countries and regions. The participants included two heads of departments, Dr Loreta Žadeikaitė (Lower and Upper Secondary Education Department) and Gražina Šeibokienė (Pre-school and Primary Education Department).

## Response to LRE report and data

### Level of agreement

The LRE results do not clash with the official national data and include no surprises for either researchers or practitioners. Though the Lithuanian law supports and promotes multilingualism, its efficient implementation is a challenge and lacks institutional co-ordination.

### Any omissions or inaccuracies noted

There is insufficient data on tertiary institutions and business companies to draw any conclusions.

### Suggested additions

Research on the private language teaching sector (language schools) would give a clearer understanding of demand for languages.

Instead of 'minority languages', the practice of teaching native languages (i.e. no matter whether they are state, minority or immigrant, they are still native to the speakers of those languages) should be included.

## Main issues discussed

Despite the variety of languages used in Lithuania, attention to recognising and promoting multilingualism is insufficient.

English prevails in all sectors at the expense of other languages, which is neither economically nor linguistically healthy. Investment in learning and teaching English in terms of both time and money does not pay off.

### Any issues raised for further debate

There should be a wider perspective looking at languages as a target for individuals for being competitive in the labour market and general welfare.

The country's economy and employers could benefit from immigrants and their language potential, including gaining access to other countries and cultures.

# NETHERLANDS

14 November 2013

## *Venue*

Silverijn, Utrecht

## *Range of stakeholders*

Participants were mainly from the educational sector, and ranged from university lecturers, students, translators, language schools, banks and municipalities.

## Inputs and organisation

### *Who spoke and how was it organised?*

The subject of this first workshop was multilingualism in education and businesses.

The event started with a welcome from the moderator Toon van der Ven, Chair of the Association of Language Teachers. Toon introduced the four panel members, Sena Dora, International Account Manager at ABN AMRO Dutch Banking Group (talking on multilingualism in banks); Debbie Ceiler, Director of Bernardinus College (talking about her school offering a wide language programme); Dr Michel Wauthion, Education Attaché at the French Embassy in The Hague (discussing the situation of foreign languages offered in secondary education in France); and Professor Guus Extra (discussing LRE results for Netherlands and other European countries).

Each panel member had around five minutes to speak about their specialism/experiences and to end with a quote. There were then questions from the audience.

After a short break, the participants were divided into four workshop groups, where they discussed the quotes from the speakers and where they needed to report back on improving multilingualism in education and business in the Netherlands.

After an hour, the spokesperson from each group reported back on what had been discussed in the workshops and what recommendations they had formulated.

To end the day we had a lecture from Jacomine Nortier from the University of Utrecht about the advantages and prejudices of multilingualism.

The programme was followed by a reception, to which all the participants were invited and had the opportunity informally discuss any further ideas.

## Response to LRE report and data

### *Level of agreement*

There was general agreement that the report presented an interesting overview. It was noted that within the Netherlands we could learn from the Frisians in that they offer three languages at secondary school level.

## Main issues discussed

### *Language diversity*

During the event, it was noted that the Netherlands doesn't value the rich language diversity there is in the country. This is apparent in that there is no data available on language diversity except for Frisian. The question arose of how language education could be incorporated into schools without having data on language diversity. Also, compared to France, language education in secondary schools is very poor and there is a much room for improvement.

### *Multilingualism in the business sector*

Sena Dora noted that her employer, the ABN AMRO, offers language classes for its employees, but it does this when it has been requested by the employee or when it would help in their work. It is not compulsory. In the business sector, employees often choose to speak an office language such as Dutch or English. Multilingualism is only seen as an added value for doing business in other countries, but its value is still very much underestimated. It is therefore very important to come up with strong economic recommendations to improve multilingualism in businesses.

### *Immigration Languages*

In the Netherlands, people are asked to give up their mother tongue and speak Dutch, even at home, as it is seen that it improves integration. In most other countries the opposite is true: home languages are valued and it is seen that the better you are in your mother tongue the easier it is to learn a new language.



# NETHERLANDS

12 December 2012

## Venue

Europa House (EU representation in the Netherlands)

## Range of stakeholders

Participants ranged from university lecturers, students, translators, language schools, municipalities, consultants

## Inputs and organisation

### *Who spoke and how was it organised?*

The subject of this second workshop was multilingualism in the public services and in the media.

The event started with a welcome from Andy Klom, the Head of EU representation in the Netherlands. He introduced the moderator Wim Daniels, a writer and language adviser. Wim introduced the three speakers: Bharti Girjasing, Adviser on International Affairs in the Municipality of Utrecht; Professor Guus Extra from Tilburg University; and Trude Schermer, Director of the Dutch Centre for Sign Languages.

Each speaker had 15 minutes to speak about their specialism. Bharti spoke about the research on multilingualism in the city of Utrecht. Guus spoke about the LRE results regarding multilingualism in the public services and the media and about specialised broadcasting services in Australia, from which the Netherlands can learn a lot. Trude spoke about the situation of sign languages in the media and public services in the Netherlands. All speakers ended with a quotation which formed the start of the panel discussions. The participants were asked to think about recommendations and they came up with several ideas.

## Response to LRE report and data

### *Level of agreement*

There was general agreement that the report presented an interesting overview. It was, however, also noted that sign language ought to be researched more.

## Main issues discussed

### *Multilingualism in public services*

The Municipality of Utrecht has undertaken a large amount of research on the multilingualism of its citizens: 85 per cent of Utrechters speak three languages. The main issue with public services in the Netherlands is that the focus is very much on Dutch, even in Utrecht. If you don't speak Dutch it is very difficult to access public services in the Netherlands. If you need a translator, even for medical services, you have to arrange it yourself. The area of public service in the Netherlands that is most multilingual is the tourist sector, as there is the potential for money to be made there.

### *Multilingualism in the media*

The media in the Netherlands is not very multilingual either. Subtitles are used, but most programmes/films/documentaries are in Dutch or English. Also, since there is no data on language diversity in the Netherlands, it is virtually impossible to set up a multilingual policy for the media, as the languages where is most demand have not been pinpointed. The Netherlands can learn a lot from special broadcasting services in Australia, where a large range of languages are offered on television: they broadcast day and night in over 60 languages.

### *Sign languages in public services and in the media in the Netherlands*

Sign language is one of the most invisible languages. There is no data regarding the number of sign language users in the Netherlands. Deaf people are being ignored. In the media, very little use is made of sign language. Very few media events use a signer, and most important television events have no sign language interpretation. Children's programmes are inaccessible for deaf children and there is no interpretation of election programmes. Deaf people are forced to watch these programmes on the internet. Within visual media, there is an assumption that users don't want to look at an interpreter of sign languages. In comparison, signers are highly visible on US and Australian television.

In public services, deaf people have the right to an interpreter in judicial matters. They can also have a paid interpreter for educational or work-related matters for a few hours per year. However, there is some very valuable and important information from the public sector still missing for deaf people. There is, for example, no information for deaf people on what to do in case of a disaster.

# NETHERLANDS

1 March 2013

## Venue

It Aljemint conference venue at Fryske Akademy, Ljouwert/Leeuwarden

## Range of stakeholders

Participants included researchers, policy makers, translators, representatives of municipalities and the Province of Fryslân, teachers, test developers and university students

## Inputs and organisation

### Who spoke and how was it organised?

The symposium focused on 'LRE – policy and practice in Fryslân, the Netherlands, and Europe'.

After registration, the symposium started with a welcome by Cor van der Meer, Project Leader of the Mercator Research Centre. Van der Meer introduced Professor Guus Extra of Tilburg University. Extra gave a presentation on 'The status of regional minority languages from an international, comparative perspective.' He spoke about the LRE Project and its overall results in general, and the results with regard to minority languages in particular. This gave an impression on how Dutch and Frisian policies compare to that of other countries.

Next there was a presentation by Tsjerk Bottema, Senior Policy Consultant in Language and Media for the Province of Fryslân, on 'Language data and language policy.' Bottema discussed provincial policies regarding the Frisian language and emphasised the importance of language data as a basis for policy development.

A presentation by Professor Reinier Salverda, Director of the Fryske Akademy, had to be cancelled.

The participants were divided into three smaller groups for further discussion around given statements with the aim of formulating policy recommendations; the statements had been formulated beforehand by the speakers. Each group was chaired and notes were taken. After the separate discussion sessions, there was a whole group session reporting on the group discussions.

The workshop ended with a reception, giving the participants the opportunity for further discussion and networking.

## Response to LRE report and data

### Level of agreement

Overall, there was agreement that the LRE report presented useful results. In addition, the importance of language data for policy development was recognised.

### Any omissions or inaccuracies noted

No omissions or inaccuracies were noted during the workshop. Earlier, however, a mistake had been noted on the part on pre-primary education in Fryslân: instead of 60+ bilingual/Frisian playgroups, as mentioned in the LRE report, there are over 130 bilingual/Frisian playgroups, constituting around 35 per cent of all playgroups in the province.

### Suggested additions

No suggestions were made.

## Main issues discussed

- The importance of language data as the basis for policy development, and the lack thereof in the Netherlands. The Province of Fryslân does gather data on Frisian language and uses it.
- The importance of giving more status to children's family languages (if that is not the state language): family languages should be seen as a foundation; they are a prerequisite for the acquisition of subsequent languages.
- The question of how to ensure both quality and quantity of language education (of any language).

# POLAND

## 25 May 2012

### *Venue*

Warsaw University of Technology

### *Range of stakeholders*

Participants from the educational sector: secondary schools, higher-education institutions, universities, private language schools, media representatives: public television representatives, businesses, publishing houses, e.g. Pearson, Macmillan, OUP, representatives of associations and foundations operating in Poland

## Inputs and organisation

### *Who spoke and how was it organised?*

The workshop was chaired by Dr G. Spiewak and Dr Liliana Szczuka-Dorna. It was organised in a form of presentation and discussion on domains and survey results. The main ideas were included in the minutes and formed the basis for the second workshop agenda.

## Response to LRE report and data

### *Level of agreement*

Participants admitted that the LRE project had extra value mainly because a similar survey had been conducted in so many countries. At the same time, they pointed out some misconceptions, e.g. three universities in Poland had represented only by universities specialised in humanities (data was collected from the biggest ones other specialisations were not covered (medical/technical etc.).

### *Any omissions or inaccuracies noted*

The participants agreed that more information should be given to piloting projects and initiatives conducted in Poland but not included in the Polish essay.

### *Suggested additions*

More information about Polish nurseries and schools should be included. Moreover, the range of languages taught at schools should be depicted by teachers. English is one of the possible choices students might have in Poland.

## Main issues discussed

- The level of the secondary school language exam (matura) should be streamlined and extended.
- Teaching should take more communicative forms at different schools.
- Students should continue learning a foreign language as they progress through different schools: they should not start again from the beginner's level when they change schools.
- Television programmes should broadcast films, news, etc, in the original language, which may help developing listening skills.
- More attention should be given to employers and employees in the professional world (knowledge of at least one modern language at B2 level and a second one at A2 or B1).

# POLAND

20 November 2012

## Range of stakeholders

Representatives of universities, private schools, members of the Teachers' Association, the Culture Institute, the Goethe-Institut, the Centre for Education Development, the Educational Research Institute, the Research Centre for Quality in Education, the Education Office in Warsaw, publishing houses and the media

## Inputs and organisation

### Who spoke and how was it organised?

The moderators were Professor Krystyna Drożdżiał-Szelest, Aleksandra Jankowska, Phd.

Alicja Grymek, Director, British Council, Krakow, Marek Jankowski, President, FIJED and Marlena Fałkowska (ORE) welcomed participants.

Guests who participated in the discussions included Janina Zielińska, the International Federation of Teachers of French; Bożena Ziemniewicz, Councillor of the Łódzkie Voivodeship and representative of the British Center; Agnieszka Mazur, Head of Projects, Polish-American Foundation of Freedom; Anna Gębka-Suska, President, IATEFL; Grzegorz Śpiewak, President, DOS-TTS; Ewa Orłowska, ORE; Lidia Dorota Staworzyńska, representing the Language Centre, Warsaw School of Economics; Mariola Borowska, representing the Education Office in Warsaw; Barbara Wojciechowska, representing Polish Television; Agata Łuczyńska, representing Center for Citizenship Education; Danuta Sołtyńska, representing SJO Warsaw Politechnics; Kinga Studzińska-Pasieka, representing CNJO Medical University; Anna Grabowska, representing the Foundation of the Development of the Education System; Halina Wiśniewska, representing L. Koźmiński Academy; Wanda Pawlicka, representing SGGW; Anna Machlarz, representing the English College; Wojciech Graniczewski, representing TVP.

## Main issues discussed

### Activities promoting foreign language learning

Nationwide campaigns, periodic events (European Day/Week of Languages), conferences, workshops, institution open days. It was suggested that an invite be extended to language institutions that promote minor languages and to include second language learning in primary schools.

### Foreign language learning in pre-school education

Qualified teachers, quality of education, lack of coherent training programmes for pre-school. Suggestion: to invite representatives of the Ministry of Education to participate in January workshops and to engage with these issues.

### Language teaching in higher education

- Low language proficiency of students, differences in levels (quality of language teaching in the countryside versus big cities), students should reach B2+ or C1 CEFR level and due to their low proficiency and small number of language lessons this is not possible. Suggestion: language teaching as a criterion in accreditation.
- A coherent and common language teaching framework programme for higher education. This would make language competencies comparable.
- The media could contribute to promoting multilingualism and language teaching. The Ministry of Education and Polish Television are planning to launch a new education channel that would promote language learning and multilingualism. Suggestion: product placement of language learning in a popular television series.
- The importance of the internet as a language learning medium was stressed.
- Integrated teaching of many languages.
- Communication skills versus advanced expression skills.
- Creating working groups. The groups would prepare materials for further discussion. Suggesting recommendations for the conference in Brussels.
- Launching a platform to enhance communication among participants of the workshops.

# POLAND

8 January 2013

## Venue

ORE Warsaw

## Inputs and organisation

### *Who spoke and how was it organised?*

- Liliana Dorna
- Prof. Krystyna Drożdżał- Szelest
- Wojciech Graniczewski

## Main focus of the workshop

To elaborate on national recommendations, which can be presented both at national level (through new initiatives) and at European ones (during meetings in Brussels).

### *Recommendation concerning foreign languages/ foreign language teacher training from the point of view of language teacher educators*

Steps/measures need to be taken to develop language awareness and language learning awareness as well as teacher awareness in order to change the prevailing attitude towards foreign languages (emphasising the advantages of knowing foreign languages and being able to participate in a European language community), foreign language learning/teaching, teacher training, and, as a result, changing language syllabuses and examination requirements, as well as teacher training programmes.

### *Recommendations concerning foreign languages taught at universities*

- Making decision makers/authorities aware that language is not knowledge, it is a skill, i.e. a tool for gaining knowledge; this distinction is vital in view of the organisation of classes, number of hours, student numbers in groups, etc.
- Students should have the right to learn at least two languages in the course of their study.
- Keeping the status of academic teacher for language teachers: teachers at universities teach specialist languages, both in terms of vocabulary, skills and language functions characteristic of the academic community (the special character of the classes rules out outsourcing, which does not work in academic teaching).

### *Recommendations concerning foreign languages taught in kindergarten education*

#### **Recommendations concerning university programmes**

- The introduction of a language component teaching foreign languages at pre-primary level: new pre-education teacher programmes should include a language component (e.g. a foreign language exam B2/C1) and a methodological course that will give the teachers the required qualifications to teach a foreign language in nursery. Such a solution may in future help lower the age of introducing foreign languages to the education system without much increase of costs that could otherwise arise from the need of employing additional language teachers or others prepared to teach foreign languages in nurseries (according to the Regulation of the Minister of Education).
- The introduction of a pedagogical component for language students. There is a need to increase the number of hours and/or to create a specialisation in the methodology of working with children at a pre-school age, as well as in knowledge of child psychology.
- Students internships in nurseries: it is very important for the future of pre-school education and foreign language teachers that there is the opportunity to practise language teaching in nurseries.

### *Recommendations concerning vocational training for teachers currently teaching at nurseries*

- Vocational training and access to expertise: there is a great need to increase the number of training courses for foreign language teachers in nurseries. The need for training concerns primarily the methodology of foreign language teaching of pre-school children as well as access to current methodological consultations for nursery directors and teachers (materials useful for nursery directors, such as: guidelines or sets of qualifications and skills that should be required of the foreign language teachers employed in nursery).
- Web platform: there is a need for a web resource base that would on the one hand be a 'map' for teachers, collecting free materials for language teaching of pre-school children and on the other hand a set of skills that the children, depending on age, may possess in learning a foreign language.

- Postulate on changes in the core curriculum: teachers point to the problem of carrying out foreign language classes outside the nursery curriculum (in most nurseries, the curriculum is implemented for five hours and these are free teaching hours). This problem is particularly conspicuous in many rural nurseries where children's stay in the nursery is limited by the school bus timetable. Most children cannot participate in extra-curricular activities. The core curriculum of pre-school education does not provide the opportunities for organising extra-curricular activities before classes finish for the day.

Moreover, in many cases, the teacher works in a number of institutions and it is physically impossible to work in several nurseries after the school day has finished. In addition, pre-schoolers are often unreceptive to teaching in the afternoon when the school day has finished. Therefore, we propose a solution that would include a part of the extra-curricular activities such as foreign language teaching in the core curriculum – 'classes in interests groups'. For children, it is a kind of 'interest', so for example, when other children arrange puzzles, paint or play, a part of the group can play in English or German.

The implementation of this proposal would solve the 'after-school problem' and more children would have access to learning a foreign language as early as in kindergarten.

- There is a need for financial support of foreign language classes in nurseries, especially in rural areas. Many parents, especially in rural areas, cannot afford to pay for extra foreign language classes. Hence, the importance of the financial support of such activities in the nursery.

### *Recommendations for the implementation of national education programmes lowering the age of commencing foreign language learning (postulated at the European level)*

We call for the development of national programmes for lowering the age of compulsory learning of foreign languages (a kind of road map).

# PORTUGAL

10 May 2012

## *Venue*

Instituto Camões, Lisbon

## *Range of stakeholders*

Businesses, academics, teachers, representatives of teachers' associations, cultural institutions, European Union National Institutes for Culture (EUNIC) partners, representatives from the Ministry of Education

## Inputs and organisation

### *Who spoke and how was it organised?*

There was a welcome note from Gill Caldicott, Director, British Council, Portugal; and a welcome from Professor Mário Filipe, who hosted the event.

This was followed by a presentation by Mário Filipe as a member of the LRE steering group and representative of one of the Portuguese partner institutions in LRE, Instituto Camões. He gave an overview of the project, what its aims and objectives are, what we expect to obtain, what information will be gathered, how the data will be used, etc.

Fabiola Santos and Lis Gonçalves, from our other partner institution, the Instituto de Linguística Teórica e Computacional (ILTEC research institute), made a presentation on how the data was collected, what challenges and difficulties the researchers encountered when undertaking the data collection, and what sort of issues arose.

In the second part of the workshop, we divided the participants into different groups and asked them to debate given topics.

The group debates were followed by a session during which everyone shared the main points discussed, main issues raised, main conclusions, main opinions on what needs to change or improve, best practices already in place, etc.

Professor Carlos Ceia, the rapporteur for the event, finished by giving his views on the event, mentioning the main conclusions and issues raised.

## Response to LRE report and data

### *Level of agreement*

The British Council in Portugal, together with our local partners, decided to organise the first workshops prior to the publication of the LRE report and data so as to gather perceptions on the situation in Portugal before we had the results.

## Main issues discussed

The given topics for debate were: plurilingualism in Europe; how to reach the decision makers and how we can communicate the results of the project to them; foreign language teaching in Portugal; teaching towards linguistic diversity, foreign languages within the educational system in Portugal and the European guidelines on language teaching; foreign languages in Portuguese companies.

# ROMANIA

## 28 June 2012

### Venue

The Village and Ethnographic Museum, Bucharest

### Range of stakeholders

Ministry of Education, Ministry of European Affairs, Romanian Cultural Institute, French Institute, Hungarian Cultural Centre; Institute Camoes, Kingdom of The Netherlands Embassy, Polish Institute, Soros Foundation, Institute for Educational Sciences, National Agency for Community Programmes and European Language Label Awards, Erasmus Programme Students' Association, Bucharest School Inspectorate, representation from the European Commission to Romania, General Department for Translations-European Commission, European Institute for Participative Democracy, Romanian Centre for European Policies, Department for Inter-ethnic Relationships, British Romania Chamber of Commerce, Romanian Office for Immigration, National Commission for UNESCO, Academy for Economic Studies, University of Bucharest, University of Iasi, Romanian Association for Quality Language Services, schools, students' associations, publishers

## Inputs and organisation

### Who spoke and how was it organised?

There were **plenary sessions** that alternated with **video sessions** of **interviews**. After each session there were **discussions** open to the audience. There was a round-up feedback session.

Addresses were presented by Martin Harris, British Ambassador to Romania and Dr Nigel Townson, Director, British Council, Romania.

Plenary sessions were presented by Dr Terence Lamb, University of Sheffield, UK; Dr Kutlay Yagmur, Tilburg University, the Netherlands; Vilma Backiute, British Council, Lithuania; Calin Rus, Intercultural Institute Timisoara, Romania; and Ruxandra Popovici, British Council, Romania.

Video sessions were presented and commentated by Dr Stefan Colibaba, EuroEd Foundation.

Discussions were moderated by Dr Stefan Colibaba, EuroEd Foundation and Ruxandra Popovici, British Council, Romania.

## Response to LRE report and data

### Level of agreement

All participants showed a high interest in the survey methodology and the cross-national results. There were vivid comments and agreement over the results for Romania. Without exception, all participants expressed their wish to become part of the LRE network.

*'This has been the highest-standard professional event I have attended in recent years.'*

*'The results of the survey are invaluable and I do not think there has been any attempt so far at the state or NGO level to explore this extremely powerful issue of our time. Real innovation. Well done.'*

## Main issues discussed

- LRE project overview.
- LRE findings in the cross-national perspective.
- Developing plurilingualism in schools.
- Interculturalism and linguistic diversity.
- Perspectives on pluri- and multilingualism.
- Language rich Romania: context and findings; Perspectives on the future.



# ROMANIA

21 September 2012

## *Venue*

Emil Racovita National College, Iași

## *Range of stakeholders*

Ministry of Education, universities, Romanian Association for Quality Language Services, schools, students' associations, Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Iași

## Inputs and organisation

### *Who spoke?*

Discussions were moderated by Lid King, Stefan Colibaba and Ruxandra Popovici.

## Response to LRE report and data

### *Level of agreement*

All participants showed a high interest in the survey methodology and the cross-national results. There were vivid comments and agreement over results for Romania from both a national and local perspective.

## Main issues discussed

- Language rich Romania: context and findings.
- Perspectives on the future.

# ROMANIA

22 September 2012

## *Venue*

Emil Racovita National College, Iași

## *Range of stakeholders*

Ministry of Education, universities, Romanian Association for Quality Language Services, schools, students' associations, Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Iași

## Inputs and organisation

### *Who spoke and how was it organised?*

There were video sessions of interviews followed by discussions. Discussions were moderated by Stefan Colibaba and Anca Colibaba.

## Response to LRE report and data

### *Level of agreement*

All participants showed a high interest in the survey methodology and the cross-national results. There were vivid comments and agreement over results for Romania from both a national and local perspective.

# SPAIN

25 October and 8 November 2012

## Venue

Universidad de Nebrija, Madrid.  
European Commission, Madrid

## Range of stakeholders

Participants came from many diverse fields: academics, university professors, foreign language teachers, representatives from the Ministry of Education and other cultural institutions

Very wide range: journalists, translators, economists, professors, foreign language teachers, representatives from the Ministry of Education

## Inputs and organisation

### Who spoke and how was it organised?

#### Language and education

The meeting consisted of two parts: Marta Genís, who is the research partner for LRE in Spain, presented the results; Mark Levy from the British Council moderated the discussion.

The presentation of the results was very thoroughly done by Marta Genís, who took and clarified questions from the participants. In order for participants to engage in the debate a document was distributed with a list of topics for reference. However, the participant interventions flowed so well that this wasn't needed.

#### Language and the media

A similar format was followed in this workshop, with the exception of some welcoming words by Carmen Zamorano, DG Translation Field Office from the European Commission.

Marta Genís presented the results and Mark Levy moderated a very vivid discussion.

## Response to LRE report and data

### Level of agreement

There was overall agreement about the necessity of this type of study. In particular, the results on education were thought-provoking, as they show the consequence of many recent policy changes.

## Any omissions or inaccuracies noted

With regard to education, the findings were surprising in many areas. In some cases the results were thought to be inaccurate due to methodological reasons. The most important of these follow.

- Not differentiating between private and public education.
- Talking about Spain as a whole – education is run independently by the various regions in Spain. This was devolved to the 17 autonomous regions in Spain.
- Combining the results from areas with very different linguistic realities, such as Madrid and Valencia.

In the case of media, it was noted that the internet was omitted from the study and that this resulted in a limited perspective of what is really happening – in both the digital contents offered by media outlets and the use of the internet outside of mainstream media as a source of information.

## Main issues discussed

### Education

- Overall results of policy changes: in all considered good, but still insufficient.
- The number of languages taught at schools, and language diversity (which does not reflect reality).
- English taking over foreign language education everywhere.
- Bad transitions within the different stages in education, particularly from school to university.
- What levels within the CEFR are demanded of students at universities – it is B1 when they enter and B1 when they leave in the majority of university degrees.
- The CERF and the rigidity of its definitions. There is a need of more flexibility and the definition of partial skills. The CERF should include more and better examples.
- The different application of the CERF among Spanish autonomous regions.
- A lack of foreign language training for the majority of primary school teachers.
- Many opportunities created by the fact that Spain is a recipient of immigration are being missed.
- Better teacher training is needed, and also support from department directors regarding CLIL and the communicative approach.
- Different regions demand different language exams. This should be unified.

## *Media*

The participants agreed that there was very little presence of different (immigrant, minority, foreign) languages in the media. This presence would benefit multilingualism not only from an educational perspective but also from a cultural one. Dubbing was considered by all to be a big problem, although one that is difficult to solve due to the importance of the dubbing industry.

- subtitling is of poor quality
- media outlets do not support the use of languages due to market reasons
- legislation is not being followed regarding subtitling and sign languages on television
- there is a lack of cultural awareness not only with regards to other European countries, but within Spain and with its languages
- events related to language learning are not publicised sufficiently.

# SPAIN – CATALUÑA

19 October 2012

## Venue

University of Barcelona

## Range of stakeholders

Academics, media, teachers

## Inputs and organisation

### Who spoke and how was it organised?

- Albert Bastardas
- Miquel Nicolás
- F Xavier Vila
- Bernat López, Universitat Rovira i Virgili
- Piet Bakker, Hogeschool Utrecht
- Zohar Kamfe, Hebrew University of Jerusalem
- Guillem Calaforra, Universitat de València

## Main issues discussed

- The position of Catalan and other languages in mass media in Catalan-speaking societies.
- The position of Dutch and other languages in mass media in Dutch.
- The position of Hebrew and other languages in mass media in Israel.
- The position of Polish and other languages in mass media in Poland.

## Workshop content

- Would it be possible, convenient or desirable that there should be a common European policy regarding the promotion of plurilingualism and linguistic diversity in the area of media? Which areas should it cover?
- With regard to audiovisual products that come from abroad, and taking into account the different situations and traditions (dubbed, translation, subtitling, sign language, etc), is it possible to identify preferable models and advise on action to be taken?
- What actions should be taken to guarantee that linguistic and cultural diversity not be neglected during cultural and audiovisual production?
- Are the existing European policies adequate as far as transfrontier communication is concerned? Should the European Union adopt a more active role in the promotion of transfrontier exchanges?

# SPAIN – CATALUÑA

23 November 2012

## *Venue*

British Council, Barcelona

## *Range of stakeholders*

Academics, educational representatives in education, business and government

## Inputs and organisation

### *Who spoke and how was it organised?*

Speakers were Miquel Strubell from the Open University of Catalunya and Amado Alarcon from the University of Roviri I Virgili. There were two presentations and two break out sessions.

Talks were entitled 'business and multilingualism: the challenges of internationalisation, tourism and language diversity', and 'the relationship business – language + case study of a call centre'.

## Main issues discussed

The talks mentioned above were discussed in detail.

There were two break-out sessions. The first had three groups dealing with statements that needed completing:

1. The competitiveness of Catalan businesses would improve if its management of multilingualism...
2. The competitiveness of Catalan tourism would improve if its management of multilingualism...
3. The Catalan economic sector could take better advantage of the linguistic diversity present in Catalan society and adapt to it better if...

Each group was asked to examine these questions in terms of the potential roles of the European Union, local government and business.

The second break-out session was a whole group dynamic to answer the following question:

What are the most important steps that a company should take regarding multilingualism when wanting to access foreign markets?

# SWITZERLAND

22 January 2013

## Venue

Zürich

## Statements and recommendations

### Governmental level

- Promote interdisciplinary research programmes. Language skills and technical skills are not opposites.
- An understanding of the other national languages brings the language regions in Switzerland closer together.
- Multilingual countries such as Switzerland are less able to profit from the European expansion towards the East than monolingual countries such as France, Germany or the UK.

### Companies

- What difficulties do companies in general have to face concerning the language skills of their employees? Find out the hot topics.
- European language learning programmes are not known/not taken into account by Swiss businesses. Make programmes known via business associations.
- Companies should examine closely who makes the decision as to which employees can/have to take what kind of language course. On what criteria is this decision based?
- As companies become more mobile, their employees should too. The importance of language skills increases (to more than two languages). However, mobility in Switzerland from one language region to the other is underdeveloped.
- English becomes more and more valuable. However, in Switzerland, the national languages remain strong, and language skills in German and French are considered important, especially at higher executive levels.
- Employees should be able to speak in their own language at internal meetings to avoid misunderstandings. People can also formulate thoughts better in their native language. This means that all employees should have a sound understanding of the other languages. This is not always possible, even among academic staff.
- Some companies are considered 'German' and as such have a very hard time doing business in the French part of Switzerland (and vice-versa). They have to change their image to become 'multilingual', and have to change how they are perceived.

- The language/s of the target markets influence the language skills required by the company of their employees.
- Business sectors (associations and individual companies) should support more actively all higher-education facilities (higher vocational training, universities of applied science, universities), including non business-related studies (languages, history, etc.).

### Other

- Need for a study on the effects of cross language business (Switzerland between the German and the French or Italian regions, France-Germany, etc.) for SME in Europe.
- Switzerland's main strength as a business location is its small size and openness. However its perception as a German- or French-speaking country can make it more difficult to access other language regions.

### Questions

- How can an appreciation of the merits of a multilingual society be fostered in the general population?
- How can you interest companies to promote language learning (during school and later on) and especially language learning of the other national languages?
- Research has shown that around ten per cent of the Swiss GDP is generated thanks to multilingualism in Switzerland. Could it be even more?

# UKRAINE

9 November 2012

## Venue

Conference Hall of the Institute of Social and Political Psychology

## Range of stakeholders

Representatives of the National Academy of Pedagogical Sciences, universities, Junior Academy of Sciences, researchers, the Ministry of Education and Science, Youth and Sports, city administrations, the National Council on radio and television, journalists

## Inputs and organisation

### Who spoke and how was it organised?

The programme was divided into two parts: the launch of the LRE publication and a round table discussion.

During the launch, a project overview was presented, there was cross-national analysis of language policies and practices in Europe and research results for Ukraine.

During the round table, country profiles of Wales and Lithuania were discussed. The partner project – Crimea Policy Dialogue Project – demonstrated the model of multilingual education in Crimea. Participants had an opportunity to hear about the language policy in higher education, the cross-country situation with national and regional languages in Ukraine and also to look into the development of languages policy in Ukraine in the course of its 20 years existence. Each session concluded with questions and a discussion. However, because of quite a packed programme, participants wanted to have more time for discussions.

## Response to LRE report and data

### Level of agreement

Generally the audience accepted the LRE report with high interest and agreement. For many people, it was particularly interesting to see the similarities in language policy of other European countries and Ukraine (many trends in Lithuania and Ukraine are quite similar).

It was generally agreed that this is a good base for further research into language policy and practice areas.

### Any omissions or inaccuracies noted

Some minor inaccuracies were spotted in the Ukraine results but the LRE partner argued that the time span between the research itself and the presentation was quite big and the situation in this area had changed, i.e. new laws on languages had been passed, new initiatives in education had been introduced and begun to be implemented and so on.

### Suggested additions

Participants were interested in further research and in learning more about language policies and practices in Europe.

To have more specific contributions/ideas from participants it would have been good to disseminate the publication in advance in order to allow people to familiarise themselves with the report beforehand.

## Main issues discussed

- Language policies and practices in European countries versus Ukraine.
- An overview of the situation in Wales and Lithuania.
- An initiative to introduce multilingual education in Crimea and prospects for other parts of Ukraine.
- Language policy in higher education.
- Developments in the language policy in Ukraine.
- Confrontation of the national and regional (Russian) language, people's attitudes and preferences throughout Ukraine.
- Necessary steps/further initiatives to improve the situation.



# UK

28 June 2013

## Venue

London School of Economics

## Range of stakeholders

Primary language consultant, local authority, National Association for Teaching English and other Community Languages, universities, businesses, Institute of Linguists, secondary school headteacher, Association of University Language Centres, government department (DfE), the British Council, Cambridge ESOL, Council of Europe

## Inputs and organisation

### Who spoke and how was it organised?

The topics covered the themes for discussion which were suggested but did not follow a fixed agenda. The afternoon workshop picked up some of the points that had been made during the morning session. There was ample opportunity for the exploration of ideas and discussion.

## Response to LRE report and data

### Level of agreement

There was a good level of discussion and subsequent consent leading to an agreed set of challenges and suggestions for meeting those challenges.

### Any omissions or inaccuracies noted

None.

### Suggested additions

None.

## Main issues discussed

More learners abandon language learning at 14 in England than in any other of the countries surveyed; very few continue with languages post 16. What are the reasons for this and what are the solutions?

### a. So many teenagers drop languages, yet surveys show that adults are keen to learn languages – just a few years later. Why do teenagers drop languages and yet as adults come back to language learning?

- For the majority of teenagers, language learning is not a meaningful activity. They are not convinced of the point of learning another language.
- School assessments and GCSEs are not inspiring.
- People regret having dropped languages when they reach their twenties, realise they need them for travel, making new friends and acquaintances, and for work.
- The brand association of languages is not attractive to teenagers.
- Language teachers in schools are under enormous pressures – jobs under threat, the need to recruit students, assessments and targets. Teachers are ground down and stressed. This cannot be addressed by teacher training.
- The time allocated to foreign language learning in school is one of the lowest in the EU and language learning starts later.
- Companies do not make their need for language skills explicit when jobs are advertised. This has a knock-on effect on the motivation of teenagers considering whether to continue with languages.
- In Scotland, languages are an ‘entitlement’ and not compulsory. Two recent reports highlighted a number of issues which are now being addressed. These are: senior leadership, ethos, structural obstacles, e.g. timetabling, pedagogy.

### b. Nearly a million school-age children have another language besides English, but we do not seem to value this ‘linguistic capital’. Why is this and what is to be done?

- In London, there are limited or no resources in multilingual schools to sustain those languages.
- How relevant are French, German and Spanish? Why don't we designate Urdu or Arabic as a main language?
- Progression from a number of primary schools into one secondary means that the schools need to have a shared approach to language learning.
- There is a shortage of trained language teachers in the full range of languages.

**c. Advanced language learning is becoming a class issue in England – the private sector and selective schools dominate at A level and despite brilliant exceptions ‘vocational’ language learning is minimal. What issue does this raise about our society?**

- Language programmes in further-education colleges have largely been axed so young people have few opportunities for language learning and would be disadvantaged. The innovative language work in FE has largely been lost.
- The value and relevance of language learning in an employment context is recognised by young people who undertake work experience placements – especially abroad. The experience of undertaking Leonardo Programme work experience placements transforms students’ motivation in learning languages.
- Languages Work – a useful resource  
[www.languageswork.org.uk/home.aspx](http://www.languageswork.org.uk/home.aspx)
- There needs to be the possibility of taking language options in sixth form but at lower levels.
- The International Baccalaureate and the Language Diploma were cited as offering more flexible opportunities.
- In Scotland, two units for language related to work are being developed, e.g. Mandarin for work purposes.
- Employability is a criterion against which universities are graded. Language is a key element of employability. Institution-wide language programmes in all higher-education institutes would help meet this criterion.

# UK

28 June 2013

## Venue

London School of Economics

## Range of stakeholders

Primary languages consultant, local authority, National Association for Teaching English and other Community Languages, universities, businesses, Institute of Linguists, secondary headteacher, Association of University Language Centres, government department (DfE), the British Council, Cambridge ESOL, Council of Europe

## Inputs and organisation

### Who spoke and how was it organised?

Almost everyone spoke. The topics covered the themes for discussion which were suggested but did not follow a fixed agenda. The afternoon workshop picked up some of the points that had been made during the morning session. There was ample opportunity for the exploration of ideas and discussion.

## Response to LRE report and data

### Level of agreement

The group appeared to be impressed with the detail of the findings and found it a useful source of information to pursue a range of different issues on the languages agenda. The discussion did not relate to the report itself but how to use the information to bring about change.

## Main issues discussed

- There needs to be greater advocacy for languages from the economic perspective, raising awareness of the economic benefits that accrue.
- We should be adopting the European Language Portfolio.
- We discussed the need to move to a competence-based curriculum and to adopt more clearly the CEFR with very clear forms of recognition. The DfE's Languages Ladder did this. However, the current mainstream qualifications were neither competence-based nor clearly linked to the CEFR. The FCO uses the CEFR, so why not others?
- We discussed primary languages and welcomed the move to compulsory languages from the age of seven. However, there was considerable discussion and disagreement over the nature of the curriculum. There was a strong body of opinion that it should be exposure to 'languages' and developing 'learning to learn' skills. Others felt it should be a specific language. There was considerable discussion over issues relating to primary languages – the transition to secondary education, the quality of teaching, resources, time allocation, curriculum content and assessment.
- General comments about the curriculum were that there was too much teaching and not enough learning.
- There was discussion about under-exploited resources – how secondary and primary schools could make better use of native speakers. There was a need to focus on opportunities for informal learning, such as the use of social networking.
- Post-16 education needs a much broader curriculum and range of qualifications. What about incorporating languages into some of the new apprenticeships and exploiting more the opportunities for mobilities (LdV)?
- Current EU mobility programmes are under-used. There are few opportunities for intensive language learning.
- The UK needs to capitalise more on best practice.
- There should be a compulsory language requirement for teacher training and a focus on why it is important to learn languages.
- Some 54 per cent of businesses are not satisfied with language skills, and 41 per cent are not satisfied with cultural awareness. The Confederation of British Industry is supportive of improving language skills but there needs to be consideration of how to exploit their influence.
- The groups started by exploring the concept of language rich and linguistically poor, the fact that in many cities there is a 'linguistic goldmine' and how to exploit the rich resources that already exist.
- There was a discussion on bilingual children and how they view speaking more than one language as normal. How can this be exploited further? Is it possible to use this resource to change the attitude and cognitive development of monolingual speakers?
- Valuing languages. There is a lack of recognition of existing language skills (the linguistic goldmine). This is across the whole of society, from policy makers downwards. There needs to be a celebration of languages and there is a specific need for improving teacher education where there may well be a perception that only English matters.

# UK

## 28 June 2013

### *Venue*

London School of Economics

### *Range of stakeholders*

The British Council, exam board, academics, local authority, consultants, deputy headteacher (primary school)

## Inputs and organisation

### *Who spoke and how was it organised?*

Discussion group – six issues were provided by event organisers.

## Response to LRE report and data

### *Level of agreement*

There was general agreement, but participants had not had time to read the report in depth or absorb key data.

### *Any omissions or inaccuracies noted*

The data on children who speak another language besides English is not precise enough. We need to know which languages they speak, and their proficiency in English and other languages.

# UK

28 July 2013

## Venue

Europe House, Smith Square, London

## Range of stakeholders

Education, business, strategic, public services, community

## Inputs and organisation

### Who spoke and how was it organised?

#### Speakers

- Dr Lid King: introductions and presentation on 'Identity'
- Stephen Hagen: presentation on 'Employability'
- Angeliki Petrits and John Evans: presentation on 'Active Citizenship'
- Bernardette Holmes: presentation on 'Effective Languages Education'

#### Organisation

Plenary presentations and discussion, followed by break-out workshops then a drinks reception.

## Response to LRE report and data

### Level of agreement

There was general agreement, although many participants did not have the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the findings.

### Any omissions or inaccuracies noted

The importance given the Cornish in England was questioned.

## Main issues discussed

### Identity

- The concept of multiple identities, with reference to nationality, heritage, culture, politics, policy, technology and religion.
- Politicians' lack of engagement in this issue.

### Employability

- Disadvantages to UK business in a globalised economy: companies lack a good HR strategy and do not capitalise on linguistic capital among employees.
- The importance of language management strategies for companies.
- The difficulty in engaging business and effective collaboration in the sector, difficulty in creating clear messaging in this sector.
- The education system is a drawback for business.

### Languages education

There are many issues in the way languages are taught at school. Teaching needs to change to allow learners to progress faster.

## Any issues raised for further debate

Engaging politicians and other influential people, e.g. parents, headteachers. Disseminate existing examples of good practice more widely.

Languages can be raised in the context of economic (trade) and societal (community cohesion, political extremism) concerns.

Business engagement is tricky as the sector operates so differently from the political and educational worlds – it is reactive and not necessarily collaborative. We must listen to business concerns and priorities.

The link between language learning and literacy must be researched further.

The Estonian representative had clear suggestions for a campaign: first, launch something nationally. Go on a charm offensive – take people out. Politicians respond well to this. Target the wealthiest people and try to get them to speak publicly. Look at international examples, e.g. Utah's bilingual programme. An agency would be needed to take on the campaign. A plan needs to be formulated: identify the ideas that drive thinking; identify the mechanisms; have 'sleeper cells' (e.g. parent-driven groups in Canada – grassroots is very powerful); involve politics, business, media and grassroots; and most importantly, have a consistent message.

# WALES

10 August 2012

## Venue

Societies Pavilion, National Eistedfodd, Llandow, Vale of Glamorgan

## Range of stakeholders

Session open to the general public and all visitors to the National Eistedfodd

## Inputs and Organisation

### Who spoke and how was it organised?

The session was organised in collaboration with the National Assembly for Wales and was structured as a panel discussion and debate with input from the audience.

The panel was led by Aled Eirug, Chair of the British Council Wales Adviser Committee.

The panel was made up of the following individuals:

Ceri James, Director of CILT Cymru. A former French and German teacher, Ceri has been Director of the National Centre for Modern Foreign Languages since 2003.

Gareth Kiff, Cardiff University Welsh for Adults Centre. Gareth is the principal tutor at the Centre and has been active in the Welsh language field for over 20 years.

Carl Morris, Native HQ. Carl is a consultant in digital media and co-founder of Hacio'r Language, a network investigating opportunities for Welsh in the digital age.

The session was opened by Rhodri Glyn Thomas, Assembly Member for Carmarthen East and Dinefwr.

## Response to LRE report and data

### Level of agreement

The first workshop in Wales took place prior to the national launch. Therefore, the results of the research study were not discussed specifically. However, to open the discussion there was a presentation to give an overview of the project and its methodology.

### Suggested additions

The event was used to raise awareness of the forthcoming publication of the research results, rather than to comment on these directly.

## Main issues discussed

The title of the session was 'What are the Benefits of Bilingualism', and the discussion was structured into three sections. First to identify whether it was felt there were benefits of bilingualism and what in fact these were. Second, the challenges bilingualism is facing in Wales and third, how these could be overcome.

A summary of these discussions is shown below.

### What are the benefits of bilingualism?

The assumption is that bilinguals are better language learners than monolinguals, but this may not be true: it is difficult to prove scientifically. However, generally it could be said that bilinguals have better language awareness.

Reasons for this could be that monolinguals, in speaking, do not use as many sounds in their vocabulary and therefore it is more difficult for them to learn new languages. Also, the grammatical use of gender of words is common in many languages, but not in English, placing monolingual English speakers at a disadvantage in language learning. Also, the concept of language learning may be harder for monolinguals, where bilinguals are already familiar with using different dialects and the advantages of this.

Most nations in the world are, in fact, bilingual, and being comfortable with this can give an advantage to individuals competing for jobs internationally and also to Wales in developing commercial opportunities globally.

## Any issues raised for further debate

### What are the challenges facing bilingualism and multilingualism in Wales?

Are there enough opportunities for people to develop as both bilingual and multilingual speakers? Is the current curriculum overloaded, with insufficient time available for effective language teaching?

A common challenge is the lack of funding in developing language strategy within the education sector and the wider society. Is there also a lack of support for this at a national level?

There is low attainment in Welsh language learning within Wales and many language teachers feel that they are not making a difference. The question is whether this is due to too much emphasis on the wrong outcomes and therefore not creating bilingual and multilingual speakers.

The point was raised that Welsh and other languages are a medium and not a subject, and the current qualification and quantification of these may therefore be inappropriate.



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