

SIGMA Scientific Committee on Languages

FINAL REPORT

SYNTHESIS REPORT

SECTION ONE

PROSPECTS IN LANGUAGE STUDIES

IDENTIFICATION OF NEW NEEDS IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING

This part of the Final Report is an abbreviated version of the "Synthesis Report on New Needs" prepared for and presented at the Stockholm Conference by Angela Chambers of the Department of Languages and Cultural Studies at the University of Limerick in Ireland.

1. INTRODUCTION

The sixteen national reports on languages in higher education reveal a large degree of consensus on the part of the authors on needs in the area of language studies. From even a cursory reading of the reports, it is easy to describe the environment from which they have emerged, an environment which is clearly similar in all the countries concerned. On the positive side, there is an increased appreciation of the need for language skills, with several reports mentioning large increases in the numbers of students. Allied to this is an increase in demand for interdisciplinary programmes combining one or (less frequently) two languages with the study of a professionally oriented discipline, and a rise in the number of students choosing a language as an elective subject. Another positive factor, mentioned in all the reports, is the enormous potential of developments in new technologies for language learners and teachers.

On the negative side, all these developments have come at a time of economic recession in Europe. While references to cutbacks are not unusual in the reports, there is no mention of increased funding in any area. Another negative factor is the apparent absence of strategies and policies guiding the provision of language studies in higher education at a time of rapid and profound change in the language disciplines.

The impact of language teaching in schools on language studies in higher education.

Before examining the situation of language studies in higher education, it is interesting to note the extent to which the content and the level of provision is determined by the situation of languages at secondary level. In this context three issues were raised in several reports.

(i) *The lack of diversity in languages offered by schools.* Lack of diversity, in particular the dominance of English and a small number of other major languages, is perceived as a problem in several reports, both in secondary and higher education. The lack of qualified teachers in the less widely taught languages serves to ensure that this situation is perpetuated.

(ii) *The level achieved in oral and written skills.* Implicit in all the reports, and explicit in many, is the assumption that language study in higher education should commence, ideally, at intermediate or advanced level, and certainly not at beginners' level. Yet in many countries provision at secondary level is such that significant numbers of students will not be available to study certain languages at third level unless they are offered at beginners' level.

Even where languages are studied at secondary level, there is widespread concern that the level achieved is not sufficient for study in a language degree programme at third level, particularly in the context of accuracy in written skills.

(iii) *The number of languages which may be studied.* If national education systems do not facilitate the study of two languages at secondary level, then the universities will find it difficult to provide degree programmes in two languages, unless provision is made for ab initio language study.

(iv) *Liaison between secondary school and university.* While several reports emphasise the problems arising from varying entry levels, only one report, the Netherlands, explicitly defines the need for greater liaison between secondary school and university.

2. LANGUAGE DEGREES OFFERED BY UNIVERSITIES

2.1. Traditional language and literature programmes

It emerges from the reports that there is not a common structure in language and literature degree programmes, nor is there consensus on the nature of the degree and its place in the Europe of the twenty-first century. However, in all the reports there is a clear statement of the type of study which is required if language graduates are to be provided with skills which will be of use in a future career. Five areas of need are mentioned.

(i) *Cross cultural communication.* It is emphasised that there is a need for the language degree to provide cross cultural communicative skills. The need for new expertise in this area, both in teaching and research, is also stressed.

(ii) *Advanced language skills.* The creation of an environment in which students are enabled to acquire advanced language skills is seen as a priority in the vast majority of reports. Far from seeing the present environment as conducive to this goal, there is an acute awareness of the constraints which make it difficult, if not impossible to achieve. These include:

- increasing numbers of students, with no accompanying increase in numbers of staff
- lack of research expertise in second language acquisition
- lack of time, resources and expertise for the development of research and course materials using new technologies

(iii) *Diversity of languages offered.* Many of the reports refer to the dominance of one or two languages, to such an extent that in a very large number of universities only a selection of the official languages of the European Union is offered. It is not only lesser used languages which are affected by this trend. The dominance of English is particularly marked in the Scandinavian countries, and in the Netherlands even German has suffered. The reports agree on the need to guarantee that the diverse European languages are offered for study throughout Europe.

(iv) *Comparability of levels.* The lack of levels of achievement which can be tested and which are recognised nationally and internationally is mentioned in a number of reports. The need for the introduction of systems to ensure comparability of achievement is particularly emphasised in three reports. In the British Report a nationally defined system of levels of achievement against which all qualifications can be measured is deemed necessary. The Italian Report stresses the need for common curricula and certifications throughout the European Union. In the Swedish Report the need to develop better testing procedures and methods, both as regards language proficiency and other components of language studies, is emphasised.

(v) *Study abroad*. There is widespread support for a further increase in student mobility, with a number of reports recommending that a period of study abroad should be compulsory as part of a language degree.

2.2. Alternative programmes

There is considerable variation in the provision of alternative language degrees, ranging from no provision in some states to a wide variety of degree programmes in others. In most reports it is emphasised that still greater interdisciplinarity is needed.

Areas of need.

The five areas of need identified in the previous section also apply to these alternative programmes (See above, Section 2.1). In addition to these, the following needs have been noted:

(vi) *New needs of members of staff*. There is an awareness that these new degree programmes are creating new needs for expertise in teaching and research by university staff to underpin the new directions in which language studies are developing. Areas of expertise considered relevant include Cultural Studies, European Studies, Second Language Acquisition and new technologies.

(vii) *Staff allocation mechanisms*. In some reports it is stressed that the emphasis on language skills is changing the nature of the work of language departments to such an extent that allocation mechanisms which they share with their colleagues in the human sciences no longer correspond to their role in universities. There is a need for these mechanisms to be reviewed.

2.3. Postgraduate programmes

Two types of need predominate at postgraduate level:

(i) *New areas of research*. Needs in this area are closely related to those identified at undergraduate level. (See 2.2. (vi) above.) Indeed it is the major changes in undergraduate studies in modern languages which are creating the need for research developments in Cultural Studies and Applied Linguistics, particularly Second language Acquisition and Languages for Special Purposes.

(ii) *European co-operation and new structures*. There is a stark contrast between the developing situation in European exchanges at undergraduate level and the lack of such activity in the area of postgraduate programmes and research. Several reports identify a need for major developments at European level in this domain.

The authors of some reports are even more ambitious, identifying a need for postgraduate programmes to be developed at European level, with a period of study abroad integrated into certain programmes.

3. INITIAL AND IN-SERVICE TRAINING OF LANGUAGE TEACHERS

3.1 Initial training

Despite the different structures in the 16 states, there is a high degree of consensus among the authors concerning needs in this area. Seven issues are raised in the majority of reports.

(i) Greater emphasis needs to be given to language teaching methodology rather than to general educational studies.

(ii) More attention should be devoted to ensuring the quality of teachers' language skills.

(iii) Diversity in the provision of European languages is not safeguarded in many states, and there is need to rectify this situation (see 2.1 (iii) above).

(iv) Initial training programmes are not meeting the changing needs of teachers, and more attention should be devoted to areas such as autonomous learning, learning how to learn, and language awareness.

(v) Classroom research should be encouraged to raise teachers' awareness of the nature of the language learning process.

(vi) There is a need for training programmes to ensure a higher level of expertise in the use of new technologies.

(vii) In several reports the authors conclude that EU programmes have no significant impact in the area of initial training for language teachers. The need for the introduction of study or teaching practice abroad is noted in a number of reports.

In conclusion, many of the reports seem to indicate that the initial training of language teachers lacks a clear focus, and that greater co-ordination between linguists and educationalists is necessary, both at national and European level.

3.2 In-service training

Once again the reports reveal a high level of consensus in the needs identified.

(i) Many reports recommend an increase in provision, so that all teachers will have access to in-service training at least once a year, with appropriate replacement teachers and funding.

(ii) The need for in-service training in three areas is highlighted:

- language skills development
- language teaching methodology
- developments in the disciplines in which the teachers have specialised.

(iii) In a number of states existing training programmes are provided by a fairly large number of organisations, and in-service provision is perceived as lacking in focus and co-ordination. This is a need which could be met by action at regional, national and European level.

(iv) Higher degrees can provide in-depth study of subjects which are relevant to the activity of language teaching, in the discipline studied, applied linguistics or a combination of both. The need for the introduction or expansion of such courses is stressed, possibly at European level.

(v) Increased European co-operation in the field of in-service training is a relatively recent development in many states. Initiatives such as LINGUA funding to enable teachers to attend courses abroad are welcomed, although there is a need for further expansion in such initiatives. Developments in distance education and the new technologies are seen as having great potential to contribute to the development of in-service training at international level.

In conclusion, the need for greater focus, co-operation and co-ordination between all those involved in language teacher training in Europe, which was identified as a need in initial training, is also present in the area of in-service provision.

4. LANGUAGE PROVISION FOR STUDENTS OF OTHER DISCIPLINES

According to many reports, this is the domain of language studies in higher education where changes have been most dramatic in recent years, without any accompanying definition or implementation of a strategy in most states or at European level. Among the many needs identified, the following seven appear most frequently:

(i) *Greater prestige.* The reports highlight the contrast between the low status of this area of study and its importance for the development of mobility and co-operation among professionals in a multilingual European context; they call for greater prestige to be given to studies in this area.

(ii) *Needs analysis.* The nature of language studies for students of other disciplines must be defined. The importance of cross cultural communicative competence and specialist terminology, of active and passive skills, is assessed intuitively at present, with little or no theoretical and empirical research informing the choices of individual course planners.

(iii) *Subject-language integration.* The level of integration of the specialist discipline and the language component varies considerably, within states and even within individual universities within the same state. A number of reports identify a need for courses to be delivered through languages such as English, French and German. There is a potential contradiction between this need for greater use of the major languages and the need for diversity which has already been noted.

(iv) *Extension of provision.* While language study is available to students of all disciplines in a number of states, certain disciplines are more popular in other states, particularly Business Studies, with a focus on Export Marketing and Tourism.

In areas such as Law and Economics, integrated degree programmes exist in some states, and there is a need for them to be introduced in others.

Students of Engineering and Science are much less likely to receive language courses, and the availability of language study to an advanced level in this area is relatively rare.

(v) *New needs in research.* The need for research in LSP, Applied Linguistics and CALL to underpin this new activity is underlined in several reports.

(vi) *Language centres.* Language Centres have been introduced in many universities to cater for this new type of teaching. Reactions to this development are mixed. The status of such centres, particularly their contribution to research in applied linguistics, is a crucial factor in the evaluation of their contribution to developments in this area.

(vii) *Internationalisation.* An increase in the number of student exchanges in this area is seen as a priority.

In conclusion, the provision of language courses to students of other disciplines is clearly an area where language centres and language departments, universities, bodies responsible for funding universities and those responsible for the allocation of European funding have failed to design and implement a strategy for the development of what all agree is an important activity. Staffing, research, course design, and the place of the language course in the programmes of study, are all in a state which can euphemistically be described, as in the German Report, as 'unclear'.

5. THE TRAINING OF TRANSLATORS AND INTERPRETERS

Needs in this area have much in common with those identified in other programmes and courses, namely:

- (i) Diversity of languages offered (see Section 2.1 above).
- (ii) An increase in the provision of courses.
- (iii) The need for a high level of language skills for those entering these programmes.
- (iv) The need for greater international co-operation and an increase in the number of student exchanges.
- (v) The need for internationally recognised levels of achievement which can be defined and tested.
- (vi) The need for an increase in research in this area.

Areas of need identified which are specific to this area include:

- (i) Professionalization of the activity of translation throughout Europe
- (ii) In-service provision should be increased, including higher degrees and courses delivered through distance education to overcome the problems of peripherality.
- (iii) The training of translators should be clearly distinguished from the training of interpreters.
- (iv) More training in conference interpreting is necessary.
- (v) Training programmes for translators and interpreters should include courses in areas such as law, administration, science, technology and literature to prepare students for specialist translation in these areas.

6. LANGUAGE STUDIES IN NON-UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

While provision in this area differs greatly from one country to another, the needs identified are similar, and they have much in common with the needs which have already been noted in other areas. They include:

- (i) An extension of existing provision. The success of programmes in areas such as business and tourism is noted, while programmes in the areas of engineering, science and technology require the introduction or extension of language courses.
- (ii) Standardisation of levels of achievement. It is stated in several reports that provision in this area requires regulation, ideally through the introduction of a system for testing the level of achievement which is recognised nationally and internationally.
- (iii) Greater international co-operation and student exchange.
- (iv) Integration of developments in new technologies and self-access systems into language courses in this sector.

7. CONCLUSION

The needs described in this synthesis report will already have been identified by the vast majority of linguists working in universities and colleges throughout Europe. However, the systematic identification of these needs in 16 European countries will have served a useful purpose if it reveals to those outside the language professions, particularly those responsible for the development of educational strategies and funding at national and European level, the constraints within which language departments are currently operating. The combination of huge increases in activity in a rapidly changing environment and the lack of a strategy for the development of teaching and research in language studies in new directions limits the enormous potential of this discipline as a force for European integration.

SECTION TWO

PROPOSALS FOR NEW ORIENTATION AND NEW ACTIVITIES

Part II Section 2 of the Final Report is a synthesis of the final sections of the National Reports, headed "Measures to be taken to satisfy the needs identified". It draws on a synthesis report prepared for the Stockholm Conference by Martin Forstner, Vice-President of C.I.U.T.I.

1. INTRODUCTION

The national experts on the Scientific Committee were advised to consider the new measures under three headings:

- measures to be taken in the areas of initial and in-service language teacher training
- measures to be taken in universities (outside the area of teacher training)
- measures to be taken in non-university institutions of higher education (outside the area of teacher training)

Under each heading they were to consider the measures with regard to three different levels of responsibility: institutions, regional and national authorities and the European Union. This structure was chosen so as to enable readers more easily to compare the measures proposed by the various rapporteurs. In the event, things did not quite work out that way. The degree of autonomy enjoyed by institutions of higher education differs from one Member State to another. This means that measures that in one State are within the responsibility of the institutions may, in the case of another State, well be within the responsibility of the regional or national authorities. Generally, there is less overlap between the institutions and the regional and national authorities on the one hand and the European Union on the other.

Such information is, of course, of value once attempts are made to put the measures proposed into practice. In the context of this report, however, it is more important to identify and spell out the measures proposed by the rapporteurs than to state in each case whose responsibility is at stake.

2. LANGUAGE TEACHER TRAINING

2.1 Initial training

Measures to bring education and training into line with professional needs

Most rapporteurs share the opinion that the programmes currently offered fall far short of the professional requirements and that a fundamental re-orientation is needed to meet the challenge of a multi-lingual and multi-cultural Europe.

In this context a number of experts propose projects like the following.

(i) A survey of language teachers at primary and secondary level to determine their evaluation of their initial training, their perception of their needs in in-service training and their perception of their needs in the area of higher degrees (Denmark and Ireland; cf. also Belgium).

(ii) A review of existing provision in education and training with specific reference to the needs of language teachers, including initial training, in-service provision and higher degrees (Denmark and Ireland).

Projects like these could be conducted at either regional or national or at European level.

As was explained in Part II,1 of this Report, the experts themselves have fairly clear ideas of what the needs of language teachers are and where the main thrust in the respective programmes should be, and they urge institutions and authorities thoroughly to revise existing programmes, giving priority to linguistic and transcultural competence, applied linguistics and language teaching methodology.

What some experts seem to have in mind is a core curriculum for language teacher education and training in the European Union guaranteeing a common core of knowledge and skills required of all language teachers.

Measures to guarantee acceptable levels of linguistic competence

(i) Introduction of compulsory language entrance tests at the beginning of programmes.

(ii) Introduction of intensive pre-study language modules for languages not currently taught at school. Provision of remedial language courses in cases where schools fail to provide a sufficiently high level of proficiency.

(iii) Introduction of an obligatory study-related stay abroad (3-10 months) as part of the programmes (study abroad or language assistantship). Related to this is the proposal that mobility programmes should give priority to students following courses leading to a language teaching qualification. In this context a number of rapporteurs point out that more funds will be needed to support study abroad.

(iv) Agreement among those responsible on a minimum acceptable level of linguistic competence to be required of all future language teachers at the end of their training and introduction of language examinations designed to test this competence.

Measures to promote the diversity of language provision at school level

(i) Changes in regional or national regulations concerning language teaching at school level to allow the teaching of all the EU languages, including the less widely used and less widely taught languages.

(ii) Introduction of degree programmes in all EU languages hitherto not represented in the school curriculum so as to allow students to obtain teaching qualifications in these languages. Additional funds will have to be made available for this. It is, however, felt to be unrealistic to expect all universities to offer the full range of language programmes, and a division of labour is called for in this respect. A number of rapporteurs also con-

sider the 17 possibility of enabling students to study a minority language in the target language country if appropriate courses are not available in their home country.

(iii) Course and exam regulations should be made more flexible. Students studying towards a language teaching qualification should be allowed to and indeed encouraged to study two languages to degree level. They should be further encouraged to combine a majority and a minority language.

(iv) Students studying towards a language teaching qualification should be encouraged to learn another foreign language in addition to their major language(s). Regional and national authorities should allow qualified language teachers to teach languages for which they do not hold a teaching qualification provided they have the minimum linguistic competence required. Such additional qualifications should be regarded as bonus points in the recruitment of language teachers.

(v) Linguistic diversity at school level implies that for a number of languages the teaching and learning objectives will normally be limited to receptive skills. Future language teachers should, therefore, be made familiar with methods of teaching receptive skills.

(vi) The new technologies are felt by some rapporteurs to provide particular opportunities for the teaching and learning of the minority languages -- just as they seem to have great potential for intercultural communication and self-study in general, and institutions are urged to make appropriate provision in this area.

The importance attached to language teaching methodology and applied linguistics in language teacher education and training leads a number of experts to call for renewed and concerted research efforts in these areas. The departments concerned should increase recruitment to postgraduate study in applied linguistics and language teaching methodology, and language teachers should have the opportunity to study on these post-graduate programmes.

2.2 In-service teacher training

Here the experts hardly go beyond what was listed in II,1 under "new needs".

(i) Language teachers should have guaranteed access to in-service training once a year.

(ii) Those responsible for in-service training should co-operate at a European level, opening up opportunities for teachers to attend courses abroad. Mobility programmes should be extended to in-service training.

(iii) Just as language teachers should have the opportunity to follow post-graduate programmes, language teacher mobility should be given renewed attention. Teachers should be encouraged to spend a period of time in a minority language country, where they would have the opportunity to learn the national language to a level of proficiency required of language teachers.

2.3 Measures within the responsibility of the European Union

All the experts look to the European Union for support in the continuation and expansion of student and staff mobility, including the mobility of language teachers in school education. They also see a special role for the European Union in the introduction of the new media to the areas of language teaching and learning and in-service training.

More significantly, however, a number of experts propose measures designed to help bring about the improvement and innovation in language teacher education and training deemed necessary in view of the new professional and social linguistic needs.

(i) The EU should support inter-university co-operation in language teacher education and training, particularly in joint curriculum development.

(ii) The European Commission should help set up a project or projects intended to thrash out recommendations for the content and even structure of language teacher education and training and for minimum acceptable levels of attainment.

The experts seem to believe that entrenched attitudes in institutions and regional or national authorities can best be overcome by initiatives which are the result of European cooperative efforts and which are seen to have the support of the European Union. Linked to this is the expectation that initiatives like the ones mentioned above would further the recognition of study abroad and of language teaching qualifications throughout the European Union and, thereby, promote the mobility of both language teacher trainees and language teachers.

3. MEASURES TO BE TAKEN IN UNIVERSITIES (OUTSIDE THE AREA OF TEACHER TRAINING)

3.1 Traditional language degree programmes (incl. postgraduate studies)

Undergraduate programmes

While the experts tacitly or explicitly express the opinion that in modern language programmes the link between study and professional life will continue to be a less direct one than in other subject areas, they recognise that students following these courses have to be equipped with skills and knowledge that will be of use to them in professional life. A number of experts suggest that, at national level, working groups should be convened, bringing together representatives of the institutions, the regional and/or national authorities and professional organisations to consider the question of new professional opportunities for modern language graduates.

Among the concrete measures proposed by the experts themselves are the following.

(i) The teaching, learning and testing of linguistic competence should be a key element in modern language programmes. To this end, the following measures are proposed:

- special entrance exams
- intensive pre-study courses in languages not normally available at school
- an obligatory study period abroad
- increased availability of modern technology and the development of its use in language programmes
- the development of language proficiency test methods - initially at national, ultimately European level

(ii) Introduction of "intercultural communication" into language programmes

(iii) In countries where language programmes are normally offered as single courses, introduction of courses combining the study of two languages, one of them preferably a less widely used language.

(iv) Extension of the range of languages offered as degree courses to include the less widely taught and less widely used European languages.

(v) Development of receptive language skills modules for the less widely used and less widely taught languages. Language students should be encouraged to do these in addition to their language majors. Such modules should have a marked intercultural profile.

Postgraduate programmes

A number of experts advocate increased recruitment to PhD programmes in the area of languages. Among the recommendations are the following.

- (i) Introduction of taught postgraduate programmes.
- (ii) Greater internationalisation of postgraduate studies.
- (iii) Increased postgraduate student mobility leading to the setting up of European graduate schools. The experts feel that the European authorities should play a major role in such initiatives.

3.2 'Alternative' programmes

A number of experts - notably those from Spain, Finland, Ireland, Portugal and Sweden - advocate the introduction of alternative interdisciplinary degree programmes outside the context of the Arts degree, similar to the European studies and area studies programmes set up in the United Kingdom and Applied Language Studies programmes offered, for example, in France and the United Kingdom. Again, the study of two languages is deemed desirable.

Three proposals worth reporting are made in this context.

- (i) Alternative programmes should also be offered at postgraduate level (Finland).
- (ii) The non-language components of such courses should at least partly be taught in the foreign language. For this foreign experts should be brought in, be it through staff mobility programmes, be it through appropriate work contracts (France).
- (iii) Where the setting up and running of alternative programmes exceeds the expertise available in individual institutions, institutions in different Member States should consider the possibility of jointly designing and offering such programmes.

3.3 The training of translators and interpreters

A large number of experts call for the introduction of specialised programmes for the training of translators and interpreters. Three points stand out in this context.

- (i) The training of translators and interpreters should be professionalised.
- (ii) The training of translators and interpreters should include the whole range of European languages (and, by implication, of non-European languages).
- (iii) Translation studies should also be offered at postgraduate level.

The experts seem reluctant to formulate specific curricular recommendations. It is certainly not by chance that the expert from Ireland calls for the setting up of a body to advise on the professionalisation of the profession of translator - and, one would like to add, of interpreter - in her country and the development of a framework for the professionalisation of translation (and interpreting) at European level.

3.4 Research

All the experts seem to be worried that language studies might degenerate into mere language teaching, and they all emphasise the need for teaching to be properly underpinned by research. What sets their pleas for a proper regard for research apart from the general claim about the overriding importance of research prevalent in academia is the fact that the experts are also concerned about the quality of research. For them, research is linked to the central role of language in the creation of Europe; they see research in language studies primarily as applied research. Some of the experts would like to see a coherent national and, maybe, European research policy. It is in this context that the Irish expert calls for a study of the need for research in the area of modern languages.

Among the concrete proposals for research projects made by the experts are studies and surveys of the state of affairs in a number of areas of language studies and of the professional and social needs relevant to language studies. Also, the learning and teaching of languages are felt to be valid fields of research. In general, the experts call for a Europeanization of postgraduate studies and research.

3.5 Language provision for students of other disciplines

In the section on new needs, it was pointed out that all the experts see a need for quantitative and qualitative improvement in this field -- a need which most institutions will be unable to satisfy unless substantially increased funding is made available for this purpose. However, a number of experts also stress the importance of establishing what current provision there is and what the linguistic needs of non-language students are. It is clear that students will need languages in at least three areas: study at home, study abroad, and professional life - ignoring, for a moment, the more general needs emanating from their being citizens of a multi-lingual Europe. What is not so clear is to what extent these students need specialised language provision oriented towards their field of study and/or their future professions.

Among the measures proposed for a radical improvement in provision are the following.

(i) All non-language students should be given the opportunity to acquire a good working knowledge in two, possibly more than two foreign languages. To this end, language options should be introduced into all non-language degree programmes. A number of experts go even further demanding the integration of language study into all non-language degree programmes.

(ii) Non-language students should be given credits for successfully completed language work.

(iii) Language provision for students of other disciplines should focus on two areas: high-level competence in the "school" languages; the less widely used languages. As for the latter, survival courses as well as courses limited to one or two skills should be introduced.

(iv) Staff charged with the teaching of service courses should have the opportunity to attend in-service training courses.

(v) ERASMUS students should be invited to work as language tutors.

(vi) Working groups should be set up to fix and describe graded levels of linguistic achievement and to develop, for all the Union languages, proficiency tests related to the levels identified. This kind of work, which has already started in a number of Member States, should be conducted at European level.

(vii) Priority should be given to the development of self-access facilities, including the use of modern technology.

(viii) Part of the teaching in non-language programmes should be done in a foreign language, preferably by foreign experts.

(ix) A number of experts believe that one way of improving provision lies in the setting up of language centres in universities. The French expert sees the language centre as a unit having wide-ranging responsibilities -- not only in the area of service courses, but also in research and in providing a service to traditional specialist courses.

3.6 Measures within the responsibility of the European Union

In the previous sections, repeated mention was made of areas where the European Union should lend support and provide orientation. This is a list of the measures and areas mentioned most frequently.

(i) Continued support for student mobility and increased support for staff mobility and joint curriculum development.

(ii) Increased support for European co-operation in the area of research, including postgraduate mobility.

(iii) Support for a survey of the language needs of exchange students coming to a foreign country where they do not speak the language.

(iv) Support for the joint development of language courses.

(v) Support for the joint introduction of distance education and new technologies into regular teaching practices.

4. MEASURES TO BE TAKEN IN NON-UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION (OUTSIDE THE AREA OF TEACHER TRAINING)

A majority of experts believe that the quantity and quality of language provision in these institutions is unsatisfactory. Almost all of them consider language study only in relation to non-language subjects and non-linguist professions.

The experts from Germany and Greece, however, also see a role for non-university institutions in preparing students for linguist professions other than teaching. The German report speaks of "training centres for interpreters" - and, presumably, translators as well -, which should pay more attention to the less widely used languages than has hitherto been the case and which should concentrate on the training of experts who can translate or interpret from one or two foreign languages into their mother tongue. One expert (Spain) calls for the introduction of mixed degree programmes combining languages and non-language subjects.

Among the measures advocated by the experts are the following.

(i) Workshops should be set up and projects conducted to identify the language needs in major professional areas. The European Union should promote the co-operation of senior academic specialists, employers and executive staff of multinational companies.

(ii) The language programmes offered by these institutions should be directly oriented towards specific professional areas and, wherever possible, integrated into the courses proper.

(iii) Language programmes should be extended to areas for which they have not normally been provided in the past.

(iv) The European Union should support the development of new teaching materials geared to the professional needs identified. These materials should be based on proper research.

(v) Because of the variety of subject areas and professional fields involved, special attention should be given to the integration of self-access and multimedia facilities into the language programmes. The expert from Austria proposes the development of "learning packages" for different levels to be designed and produced by inter-disciplinary working groups.

(vi) Language programmes should be restructured. In addition to the two hours per week, which seems to be the norm in many cases, intensive courses should be introduced. The language provision should be modularised.

(vii) The degree or diploma exam should have a language exam as a separate and distinct part.

(viii) Levels of achievement, assessment criteria and certification should be standardised -- not only at national, but eventually also at European level.

(ix) European support for co-operation between these institutions should be stepped up.

5. CONCLUSION

As will have become clear, the measures proposed by the national experts vary in character. They do not constitute ready-made action plans. Some of the measures proposed are very concrete and, given enough resources and some good will, could be realised at short notice. Others are more controversial and in danger of becoming topics of endless debates. Others are still rather vague and require further reflection. All the authors agree that in view of the urgent linguistic needs posed by European integration decisive action is required and that such action should, wherever possible, be taken at European level, with the support of the European authorities. Comprehensive European projects of the kind proposed by some of the experts might well be the most promising first step towards much needed improvement and innovation.

SECTION THREE

STOCKHOLM CONFERENCE 9-10 JUNE 1995 "LANGUAGE STUDIES IN EUROPE - CO-OPERATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION": CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND OUTLOOK

A large part of the Conference was taken up by discussions - both in plenary sessions and in group sessions - of new needs in education and training and new measures required in the light of the needs identified. The most fruitful part of the debate took place in six workshops which addressed the following specific topics:

- *Extending the Use of the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) in Languages*
- *Language Teacher Training*
- *Languages in Employment - Integration of Language Studies into Other Subject Areas*
- *Active or Passive Multilingualism?*

- *Intercultural Competence*
- *Postgraduate Programmes*

The following Conference report is based on the group reports submitted by the rapporteurs and chairpersons of the workshops. It also draws on written statements submitted by a number of participants after the end of the Conference.

1. EXTENDING THE USE OF THE EUROPEAN CREDIT TRANSFER SYSTEM (ECTS) IN THE AREA OF LANGUAGES

Chair: Bertil Holmberg
Rapporteur: Hugh Ridley

Student mobility under ERASMUS/LINGUA Action II has had an extremely positive effect on the quality of Language Studies in higher education. The current level of mobility needs to be maintained and, if possible, raised even further. However, to improve the quality of student mobility in this area, renewed efforts have to be made in the direction of full recognition and integration of study abroad. Without any doubt, a large-scale introduction of ECTS in languages would be the best way of ensuring full recognition and integration.

While the participants of the workshop on ECTS came out clearly in favour of the implementation of ECTS in Language Studies, they expressed the opinion that the introduction of ECTS might, at least initially, require a certain degree of flexibility. In this context, a number of areas of potential difficulty were identified. They included

- (i) the difficulty of establishing transparency of information relating to prerequisites and levels
- (ii) particular difficulties inherent in what was seen as the "non-canonical" nature of of Language Studies (course structures, defining work-load norms, length of learning-units, asymmetrical nature of linguistic experience of translation/interpretation students in visit to target country, and grading problems)

In view of these potential difficulties, the participants of the ECTS workshop felt that further discussions and trial runs might be needed before the system was generally introduced. These could take the form of national projects - like the successful implementation of ECTS in law faculties in Dutch universities - or be conducted as transnational pilot-studies with the aim of identifying models of good practice in the application of ECTS to language studies. Here, the experience of institutions currently extending ECTS to languages should be particularly useful.

2. LANGUAGE TEACHER TRAINING (INCL. IN-SERVICE TRAINING)

Chair: Graça Abranches
Rapporteur: Vasso Tocatlidou

2.1 General recommendations

- (i) While fully recognising and respecting the divergence between and characteristics of the national structures and delivery systems of language teacher training, the European Commission should set up and support a major project aimed at the implementation in all the Member States of certain principles regarding the training and professional qualifications of language teachers.

(ii) Initial and in-service language teacher training should form a continuum. The Commission should support training institutions' initiatives intended to put this principle into practice.

(iii) The learning of foreign languages is a prerequisite for mobility, co-operation and mutual understanding within Europe. In consequence, it is not enough that language teacher training should be concerned only with language teaching at school. The wide-ranging effects of foreign language teaching and learning extend also to adult education, commerce and industry. Initial and in-service training programmes should equip future and practising language teachers with new professional skills, enabling them to help language learners to acquire competences needed in working life.

(iv) Bilingual education has been shown to lead to a higher level of language competence than is normally achieved in school teaching. Future language teachers should be equipped with the linguistic competence and the factual and procedural knowledge needed in bilingual education; they should also be acquainted with the principles of bilingual education.

(v) The new technologies offer great potential for co-operation between teacher trainers and for the exchange of linguistic resources as well as of teaching and learning materials. In view of this, it is of the utmost importance that the Commission should encourage and support initiatives seeking to research and develop the use of new technologies in language teacher training.

(vi) The European Commission should see to it that minimum acceptable levels of professional knowledge and skills to be required of language teachers throughout the European Union are achieved and guaranteed in all the Member States. To this end it should support projects which pursue the following objectives:

2.2 Specific recommendations

Mobility

(i) Enable all future language teachers to spend a period of between six and twelve months in the respective target-language countries.

(ii) Seek to introduce a concept whereby all future language teachers are required to spend a period of time in a country whose language is different from the language(s) they are studying in order to sensitise them to what is involved in learning a new language. (For example, a German student of English would do a Spanish course in Spain.)

(iii) Support the exchange of foreign language teachers between target-language countries, enabling them to refresh their linguistic competence and to become acquainted with different teaching methods.

(iv) Promote 'European workshops' aimed at developing the 'European dimension' through joint courses dealing with innovation in language teaching.

(v) Urge the Member States to support mobility at all levels through supplementary grants.

Joint programmes

(i) Encourage the development of programmes offered jointly by institutions responsible for initial teacher training and schools as well as by language departments and departments of other disciplines.

(ii) Promote theoretical and practical training courses offered jointly by training institutions and institutions from professional life, aimed at developing specific professional competences (for example, a course jointly run by an initial training institution and a chamber of commerce or by an in-service training institution and a local government) in order to improve language teaching for specific professional target groups.

(iii) Promote courses offered jointly by departments of different foreign languages for the training of teachers of more than one foreign language.

(iv) Support research projects on issues central to language teacher training (methods and instruments for assessing student performance, analysis of professional needs, development of innovative materials, etc.)

(v) Promote the joint development of training modules by institutions in more than one Member State by the use of information technology.

(vi) Support joint projects for the development of materials and instruments for innovative and distance training.

Intensive programmes

(i) Promote, through multinational research programmes devoted to specific topics, intensive training courses staged in target-language countries for both language students, i.e. future language teachers, and students of other disciplines.

(ii) Promote the training of foreign language teacher trainers through intensive courses for more than one language jointly developed by a number of university departments.

(iii) Promote the setting up of joint programmes or summer schools for future or practising language teachers coming from different countries.

3. LANGUAGES IN EMPLOYMENT - INTEGRATION OF LANGUAGE STUDIES INTO OTHER SUBJECT AREAS

Chair: Staffan Wahlén

Rapporteur: Thomas Fraser

3.1 This workshop dealt with two distinct areas: the training of interpreters and translators and language programmes for students of other disciplines. In addition, the question of programmes in major non-European languages was brought up in plenary session.

3.2 Training of Interpreters and Translators

3.2.1 Interpreters and translators have a crucial role in the creation of Europe. In order to avoid unfair discrimination, all citizens of the European Union must be able to avail themselves of the services of professional interpreters or translators if the need arises, be it in a personal or professional context.

3.2.2 There was complete agreement on the following points:

- Translation and interpretation are professions in their own right requiring professional training programmes. Neither traditional nor alternative language programmes constitute professional training programmes of this kind.
- Training programmes need to be geared to the professional needs of interpreters and translators -- to a larger extent than has widely been the case in the past.
- Translating and interpreting are separate skills, requiring separate training programmes.
- There is a special need for more qualified interpreters and translators in less widely used European languages.

3.2.3 While there was agreement on the above principles, opinions differed with regard to the specific professional needs of interpreters and translators and the appropriate structure and content of training programmes. As regards the training of interpreters, a convincing case was made for this to be done at postgraduate level and carried out by professional interpreters. Courses of this kind could be relatively short provided the students had a high level of linguistic competence in a number of languages and met certain other prerequisites, such as familiarity with specific subject areas. What emerged from the discussion was the need for closer co-operation, at European level, between training institutions and experienced professionals.

3.2.4 There is also a need for inter-institutional co-operation at European level to provide high-level language training for future interpreters and translators in less widely used EU languages.

3.3 Language programmes for students of other disciplines

3.3.1 Language provision for students of other disciplines must be improved and diversified. The possibilities for learning languages of other participating countries must be extended to a wider population of non-language majors. To this end, new language modules should be developed, preferably through joint programmes carried out by universities from a number of different countries.

3.3.2 There is a need for general language programmes available across a range of disciplines as well as for discipline-specific programmes. General language programmes should concentrate on languages for academic purposes and on preparation for study abroad. While discipline-specific programmes seem to be particularly relevant to certain subjects like, for instance, business studies and law, efforts should also be made to provide teaching of the content of specific subjects through foreign languages in the students' home universities, preferably by native speakers of the language studied. This is already done in several countries at advanced level -- not only in English, but also in German, French and Spanish. To this end, greater use should be made of students and staff on exchange.

3.3.3 While opinions differed on the place and status of Language Studies in non-language programmes - should they be compulsory or optional? - there was complete agreement on the need for non-language students to be given credit in some form for any language course followed.

3.3.4 There is a need to determine, preferably at EU level, recognized levels of performance in languages and to develop a language testing system recognised both by employers and academic institutions. Proficiency tests for students in higher education as well as for language learners in general are available or are currently being developed for a number of languages in a number of EU countries. The European Commission should support a joint project or projects aimed at determining levels of proficiency for different skills across the whole range of languages, including grading scales, and at further developing and improving testing methods.

3.3.5 Genuine improvement in the area of language provision for non-specialists will only come about if the status of teachers working in this area is improved. This requires recruitment at a high standard of language skills - native or near native - proper training and the carrying out of research in this field. The training of language teachers could be carried out jointly by universities, and the Commission should encourage joint curriculum development in this field, possibly at Master's level. Training programmes should include elements from areas such as applied linguistics and language learning theory as well as practical training. Whereas such training programmes already exist for the more widely used languages, they are non-existent for the less taught languages; this also argues for joint curriculum development. Language teachers should continue to be eligible for European staff mobility programmes.

3.3.6 The use of new media and new technology has great potential for language programmes for non-language students. This would include video, cable TV, computers, e-mail, Internet, World Wide Web etc. The Commission should encourage joint projects aimed at developing the opportunities offered by these media for autonomous learning and distance learning. There is also a great need for self-learning materials, and materials development of this kind should be encouraged and supported.

3.4 Major non-European languages

European language policies have so far rightly stressed the importance of promoting the teaching and learning of the less widely used and taught languages of the European Union. However, European language policies also have to take into account the need for continued and increased dialogue with the rest of the world. Support should therefore be given to the joint development of programmes in major non-European languages; such projects should be undertaken jointly with institutions from target-language countries.

4. RECEPTIVE MULTILINGUALISM

Chair: Christian Wentzlaff-Eggebert
Rapporteur: Alexander Schwarz

The workshop discussed the topic at two levels: a theoretical, ideological level and a practical, pragmatic level. The discussion centred round a number of axioms put forward by the chairman and the rapporteur.

4.1 Axiom One: Multilingualism is an important aspect of the richness of European culture. The diversity of languages, including those of minority populations, should be preserved and supported out of respect for the people living in Europe.

4.1.1 Language is an expression of peoples' identity. People can express and preserve their own identity in situations where they can speak and write their own language. The multilingualism of Europe is both an expression of its cultural wealth and a barrier to communication. The linguistic and cultural wealth can only be preserved if a way is found whereby the language barriers can be lowered. Receptive multilingualism would seem to be the most promising prospect.

4.1.2 Language is also an expression of power. Linguistic diversity in Europe has always gone hand in hand with differences in economic and political power. Is it not true that the economically strongest countries in Europe, which represent the "major" languages, decide which languages are used in negotiations etc.? Is not all this talk about "multilingualism" and "linguistic diversity" naive, or worse, a deliberate attempt to veil the differences in economic and political power that exist between countries in Europe?

4.1.3 The discussion of the above points led to the following conclusions: There is a need for clear policies concerning the diversity of languages and cultures in Europe. Concrete

projects in the field of receptive multilingualism have to start from an open and frank debate about the issues involved.

4.2 Axiom Two: In addition to active foreign language competence receptive competence in foreign languages should be developed.

4.2.1 While, over the past few decades, the importance of active foreign language competence has time and again been stressed by both political authorities and language experts, long-established methods of developing reading competence - for instance in the area of ancient Greek and Latin - have almost been forgotten and methods of transferring listening comprehension skills from one language to other related languages have not been sufficiently developed.

This emphasis on active competence, which, for a long time, was viewed positively, is seen in a more critical light as English, and also French and German, are beginning to threaten the development of less widely used languages in the fields of science and commerce and as mediums of cultural, especially literary, identity.

4.2.2 Experience has shown that, given a sufficiently high degree of motivation, receptive skills can be acquired within a relatively short period of time, and it is perfectly feasible to acquire receptive competence in a number of languages. It would seem important to gear programmes aimed at the acquisition of receptive skills to the specific needs of particular target groups.

4.2.3 In addition, research projects have shown that it is possible, within a short period time, to acquire reading comprehension for specific purposes simultaneously in a number of languages related to the speaker's mother tongue or to a foreign language in which the learner has acquired a high level of competence. Drawing on these research findings, further projects should be undertaken for other purposes and different groups of languages.

4.3 Axiom Three: All young Europeans should have communicative competence in two languages from two different language groups and receptive competence in a number of languages belonging to these groups.

4.3.1 Certain countries in Europe, for example Finland, show that active competence in two languages is possible given the right motivation and circumstances.

4.3.2 On the basis of active competence in one Romance and one Anglo-Germanic language, receptive competence in a number of languages of the European Union can be acquired within a short period of time if the conditions are right. Every effort should now be made to develop appropriate methods and institutional conditions to make this practicable.

4.4 Axiom Four: *Apprendre à comprendre les langues*

This axiom has become common practice in wide areas.

- (i) All over the world people are used to conducting bilingual or multilingual conversations in which all participants express themselves in their own native languages.
- (ii) Students and professionals read specialist texts written in languages of which they do not have a good active command.
- (iii) In the cultural domain, we watch films and theatre performances in the original in a number of languages.

4.5 Axiom Five: A research project should be launched aimed at developing methods for promoting and achieving receptive multilingualism.

4.5.1 In order to arrive at a pedagogic model which takes account of the particular linguistic situation in each country, the project should be carried out by specialists from all the countries concerned. The following steps should be taken by the group envisaged:

- open a debate about multilingualism in Europe, collecting and propagating arguments which show that multilingualism is necessary and feasible
- collect and disseminate relevant research findings
- bring together experts in the field
- produce and spread teaching and learning materials
- train and advise language teachers

4.5.2 The initiatives outlined above can only succeed if they are supported by academic and political institutions at local, regional, national and European level.

4.5.3 Academic institutions and authorities at the various levels should provide financial support for students willing to acquire receptive multilingual competence. Multilingualism should feature in assessing staff for appointment and promotion at relevant levels in the public sector.

5. INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

Chair: Luisa Quartermaine

Rapporteur: Althea Ryan

Generally speaking, research and education in Intercultural Communication is aimed at increasing our understanding of the cultural behaviours and attitudes which determine the ways in which we communicate. Unless they are known to and understood by the parties involved, differences in these behaviours and attitudes constitute often invisible barriers to effective communication across cultures. Practical training in Intercultural Communication is seen among other things as a means of reducing the adverse effects of stereotyping, as a way of facilitating the mobility of human resources by enhancing skills of situational adaptability, and as a preparation for working in international and multicultural environments. Particularly with regard to mobility, an internationally recognized form of intercultural certification would be an advantage. (With thanks to David Marsh for his ideas and formulations.)

With these factors in mind, the workshop on Intercultural Communication formulated a number of axioms and developed a set of recommendations.

5.1 Axioms

5.1.1 It is important to avoid Eurocentricism because

- the major languages of Europe are global and multicultural
- many of our students do not come from Europe originally.

5.1.2 Languages, generally speaking, cannot be taught 'naked' (i.e. the purely instrumental 'give us vocabulary and grammar that's all we need' attitude.)

5.1.3 Training in Intercultural Communication theory and skills need not be tied to language teaching.

(i) It can be done in its own right, i.e. to help prepare students of any subject to go to countries where they do not speak the language; in this sense, it can be a useful means of encouraging students to go on exchanges to countries with seldom learned and taught languages.

(ii) It can provide a useful bridge between cultural and linguistic disciplines in 'traditional' language/ literature type courses.

5.1.4 The goals of general Intercultural Communication courses would be:

(i) to arouse intercultural awareness

(ii) to train the ability to observe behaviour In such courses there would be a focus on awareness of one's own culture and of others' cultural stereotypes of ourselves, as well as on other cultures.

5.1.5 As a language-related discipline the goals of Intercultural Communication would be:

(i) to provide a content bridge to link language, literature and society elements in courses of studies

(ii) to develop intercultural behavioural skills and awareness both generally and between specific cultures

(iii) To act as an explanatory discipline in relation to contextual knowledge, e.g. social organisation, literature, history, politics etc.

5.2 Recommended action to be taken

The action elaborated below may be achieved through staff exchanges, staff workshops across national boundaries for dissemination and exchange of information, and curriculum development projects. The majority, maybe all, of these activities and projects would need to be internationally based.

5.2.1 Preparation of a status report regarding the teaching of intercultural competence in the Member States (not only in relation to European cultures). This report would serve the purpose of pooling existing knowledge and skills and be a necessary preparation for curriculum development.

5.2.2 Development of a framework for levels and types of skills in Intercultural Communication in relation to the training of different target groups: students, language students, teacher trainees, language teacher trainees, teachers (in-service courses), teacher trainers/university staff.

5.2.3 Development of sets of curricular goals for Intercultural Communication teaching at these various levels and to the various target groups.

5.2.4 Development and adaptation of methodologies for teaching the various levels and types of Intercultural Communication skills to these varied target groups.

5.2.5 Development of content modules of different types and at different levels for each European culture to be used by members of that culture to create self-awareness.

5.2.6 Work towards an international certification of intercultural training based on the projects outlined above.

6. POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

Chair: Frans Zwarts

Rapporteur: Angela Chambers

6.1 Definition of area

The topic of the workshop was the possibility of European co-operation in programmes of teaching and research at the level of MA and doctoral dissertation. Given the importance of language study as a force for greater understanding among speakers of different

languages in Europe, and the need for more theoretical and empirical research in some areas of Language Studies, it was agreed that co-operation in this area should be given priority. The success of undergraduate exchange programmes among language students should now be extended to postgraduate level, especially since the number of students concerned is often small.

Despite strong support for this proposal, participants were keenly aware of constraints which could inhibit progress. These include differences in the structure of postgraduate programmes in the various states, perceived differences in the level of study, and the lack of internationally accepted systems of equivalences. The most important sources of variation appear to be the nature of entrance requirements, the length of the programme, the role of the didactic component in relation to research programmes, the position of the supervisor(s), and the admission of external examiners (Doctor Europaeus).

6.2 Case Study: European MA in Linguistics

Sharon Millar (Odense University, DK) gave a short description of the European MA in Linguistics which has developed from an ICP involving co-operation between several European universities. Her account revealed the complexity of the issues to be resolved and the flexibility needed if such initiatives are to succeed. Areas discussed included the designation of core areas and options, difficulties arising from differences in fee structures, viability of student numbers, and accreditation of awards.

6.3 Discussion and proposals

The discussion focused on the need for structures which would ensure quality and equivalence in standards. The following were identified as priority areas for future European co-operation.

(i) *Coursework*

The tendency to introduce taught courses in research programmes was welcomed. It was agreed that international co-operation in this area would help to make joint courses viable by bringing together small numbers of students from various universities. Co-operation in curriculum development and in the delivery of such courses was recommended.

(ii) *Summer and winter schools*

Summer and winter schools could also be developed as intensive programmes for students from several universities.

(iii) *Supervisor and external examiner*

The role of the supervisor or supervision committee and of the external examiner should be discussed, so that joint programmes could be offered with similar or equivalent structures.

(iv) *Study abroad*

Funding to assist postgraduate students to study abroad was considered to be particularly important. Students should be given the opportunity to study at a university where research expertise is available. In this context, the issue of co-supervision has to be resolved.

(v) *Reciprocity*

It was considered that any attempt to balance the number of exchanges between individual universities would be too restrictive in this context. It was felt that some other mechanism should be found.

7. OUTLOOK

7.1 A large part of the plenary sessions at the Conference was taken up by discussions about future developments envisaged by the SOCRATES Programme, especially about the new type of university co-operation projects that have come to be known as "Thematic Networks". Conference participants were fully aware of the fact that the quantitative and qualitative improvement of the knowledge of the languages of the European Union was to be one of the main objectives of the SOCRATES Programme, that this is an area which calls for the setting up of a thematic network, and that the Scientific Committee is seen as a forerunner of the new type of co-operation projects. In fact, a large amount of pertinent advice was offered to the Scientific Committee, and a number of participants from representative institutions and associations expressed their interest in becoming involved in any future action the Committee was going to take.

7.2 Both the National Reports and the workshops at the Conference revealed that there is a high level of awareness inside and outside institutions of higher education of what the current needs in the area of Language Studies are. Also, as the above recommendations show, experts widely agree on the kinds of action required to meet these needs. However, it also became clear at the Conference that most of the recommendations expressed need further study before they can be transformed into concrete projects and that future projects in this area should be properly coordinated.

7.3 European Language Council (With thanks to Robert Clark for his ideas and formulations.)

7.3.1 It is against this background that the SIGMA Scientific Committee on Languages proposes to set up, as a permanent forum, a European Language Council to serve as an interface between institutions representative of the subject area of Language on the one hand and international and European governmental and non-governmental organisations and Member State authorities on the other. The purpose of this European Language Council would be to bring a European level of integration to higher education and research in the area of Language Studies. In particular, it would focus on the social and professional needs of a multilingual and multicultural Europe and seek to initiate actions aimed at the improvement and diversification of language teaching and learning. In doing so, it would look at all sectors of education and training, including the links between higher education and school as well as those between the initial and in-service training of language teachers.

7.3.2 At the national and international level there are many bodies already providing a useful degree of integration in the area of Language Studies. There are, for example, national associations for the study of one national language (and literature) or a group of languages (and literatures), and associations for the study of a particular aspect of pedagogic or professional practice such as foreign language teaching methodology, translation, interpretation etc. Some of these bodies work internationally, and some work at a specifically European level; some are almost entirely unaware of the existence of parallel bodies in neighbouring countries. In addition, there are semi-governmental organisations operating at an international level which have produced a large amount of ideas and practical work relevant to Language Studies. Finally, there are the Council of Europe and the European Commission and their activities in this field.

7.3.3 With regard to the measures proposed in the National Reports and at the Stockholm Conference, the European Language Council would fulfil two crucial functions: It would pool all the expertise available in this area and it would bring together all the organisations, authorities and institutions whose support is crucial for the putting in place of the measures proposed.

7.3.4 In addition, the European Language Council would have to address a further two issues.

- It would have to design and establish links between the areas of education and employment.
- It would have to reflect on co-operation between the European Union and other continents and propose measures in the area of Languages designed to facilitate the co-operation.

7.3.5 The Scientific Committee proposes that the European Language Council should be officially founded at a Conference in the autumn of 1996 or the spring of 1997 to which all bodies currently operating in the field of Language would be invited.