TNP3

THEMATIC NETWORK PROJECT IN THE AREA OF LANGUAGES III

SUB-PROJECT THREE:

LANGUAGES AS AN INTERFACE BETWEEN DIFFERENT SECTORS OF EDUCATION

NATIONAL REPORT / Ireland

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Introduction

Part one: Description of administrative and educational structures and policies
1. Responsibilities and competences
1.1   at national level
1.2   at regional level
1.3   at local level

2. Language policies and language education policies: for foreign languages and for native languages as second or foreign languages; policies for LLLL
2.1.   Language policies for native languages
2.2.   Language policies for foreign language education
2.3.   Language policies for life-long language learning
2.4.1   Language policies for speakers of other languages

3 Mapping of institutions and programmes engaged in language provision:
3.1. Vertical axis: formal education system:
      -    primary/secondary/university (graduate and postgraduate studies)
3.1.1   Primary education
3.1.2   Secondary education
3.1.3   University
3.1.3.1 Traditional language and literature degree programmes
3.1.3.2 Alternative degree programmes
3.1.3.3 Language teacher training
3.1.3.4 Language courses integrated into programmes in other disciplines and
        language options offered in combination with non-language programmes
3.1.3.5 Language studies in non-university institutions of higher education

3.2. Horizontal axis: including other language providers
-        adult education institutions, language schools, cultural institutes,
publishing, broadcasting etc.
3.2.1   Private language schools
3.2.2   Publishing
3.2.3   Broadcasting

Part two: Mapping of interfaces on the vertical and horizontal axes

4.   Structures for co-operation in the educational sector and between the different   language providers: at ministerial level, regional level, local level
4.1   Introduction
4.2   The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment
4.3   In-service language teacher education
4.4   Institúid Teangeolaíochta Éireann
4.5   The National Centre for Technology in Education

5. Forms of co-operation
5.1   Vertical axis: educational system and governmental institutions
5.1.1   HEI and primary educational institutions

5.1.1.1 Programmes/curricula
5.1.1.2 Entry-Exit qualifications
5.1.1.3 Validation/recognition
5.1.1.4 In-service training
5.1.2   HEI and second level institutions.
5.1.2.1.Programmes/curricula
5.1.2.2 Entry-Exit qualifications
5.1.2.3 Validation/recognition
5.1.2.4 In-service training

5.2 Horizontal axis: HEI, other providers and governmental institutions
Local, regional, national, European/International

5.2.1   Participation of the universities in international initiatives
5.2.1.1 European Language Portfolio
5.2.1.2 Collaboration with foreign cultural institutes
5.2.1.3 Participation in the work of international organisations
5.2.2   Language schools and private language institutes
5.2.2.1 Qualification of teachers
5.2.2.2 English for immigrants programme

Part three: Needs, obstacles, opportunities, measures, facilitating instruments:

6 Identification of needs, obstacles and opportunities and measures to be taken to improve communication and co-operation
6.1   Integration of language study into primary education
6.2   Compulsory study of at least one foreign language at second level
6.3   Study of two languages in addition to English and Irish at second level
6.4   Language education policy to underpin developments at second level
6.5   Institutional language policies in higher education

7 Identification of facilitating and reporting instruments for lifelong learning in the field of modern languages
7.1   Common European Framework
7.2   European Language Portfolio

8 Identification of needs for future projects, studies and research
8.1   An urgent need for a central body to co-ordinate research projects
8.2   Studies needed in a number of areas

Part four: Recommendations:

9.1   Develop an integrated action plan for foreign language study in Ireland in primary, secondary and higher education.
9.2   Make the study of at least one foreign language throughout second level education compulsory
9.3   Put in place a series of measures to encourage the study of two languages in addition to English and Irish at second level, in keeping with the 1+2 recommendation of the 1995 White Paper

9.4 Develop a national language education policy to underpin the above developments at second level

9.5 Set up a system for the development and implementation of institutional language policies at second level and in higher education

9.6 As part of these policies, ensure that HEIs put in place a system for all students to be able to develop and expand the language learning which they have undertaken at second level

9.7 Set up a project to ensure that the Common European Framework for Language Learning is used as the basis for the description of assessment levels, and for the grades used in secondary, higher and further education

9.8 Encourage greater use of the European Language Portfolio in the context of lifelong learning in languages.

9.9 As a matter of urgency set up and fund a central body to co-ordinate research projects in language learning in Ireland to underpin the above developments

Introduction

Ireland is a parliamentary democracy. The national parliament is called the Oireachtas and consists of the President and two houses. These are the Dáil (The House of Representatives) and the Seanad (the Senate). The power of these two bodies derives from the Constitution of Ireland, adopted by referendum in 1937, and law. In 1923 the first government of the Irish Free State was led by William T. Cosgrave. The name of the state according to article 4 of the constitution is, Ireland in the English language and Éire in the Irish language. Ireland has a population of 3,744,700 (1999 estimate), with Dublin, its capital city, having a population of 953, 000 (source: The Irish Government Website: www.irlgov.ie).

Part one: Description of administrative and educational structures and policies[1]

1. Responsibilities and competences

1.1 at national level
The Department of Education and Science (DES) is responsible for the administration of public education, at primary, second level and in the area of special education. Government funding for the universities and other third level institutions is also administered by the Department through the Higher Education Authority. Higher Education is mostly provided by universities, institutes of technology, colleges of education and colleges for the provision of specialist education. The Higher Education Authority has both an advisory and budgetary role in relation to the universities, and in 2004 will also take on this role in relation to the institutes of technology.

Following the publication of a review of Irish education by the OECD in 1991, which recommended modernisation, an extensive programme of modernisation was carried out in the course of the 1990s. The Universities Act, 1997, is the most recent legislation which has a major bearing on the current structures of university education. Under the terms of the Act, the National University of Ireland (NUI) was restructured in a way which gave greater independence to its constituent colleges. There are now seven universities in all, the University of Dublin (Trinity College), University College Dublin, University College Cork, the National University of Ireland Galway, the National University of Ireland Maynooth, and the two newer universities, Dublin City University and the University of Limerick.

Private fee-paying third level institutions, which receive no state aid, have increased in number since 1990. Their degrees and diplomas may be validated outside the State or, increasingly, by the Higher Education and Training Awards Council. "The most frequented courses are those in business studies, law, languages, business technology and childcare sector training". However, it is also noted that "with a demographic decline in the higher education traditional age group, and more places available in the publicly funded institutions, such private institutions may face difficulties in student recruitment in the years ahead". (http://www.eurydice.org)

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[1] The source of most of the information for Sections 1 and 2 in this part of the report is the section on Ireland in *The Information Network on Education in Europe (*http://www.eurydice.org)

1.2 at regional level
Education is not organised on a regional basis in Ireland. The 1998 Education Act maintained the centralised administration of the system.

1.3 at local level
While there is considerable devolution of the running of primary and second level education to local level, higher education institutions are administered at national level. Local interests tend to be represented through their governing bodies.

2. Language policies and language education policies: for foreign languages and for native languages as second or foreign languages; policies for LLLL

2.1. Language policies for native languages
According to the Irish Constitution (Bunreacht na h-Éireann), the first official language is the Irish language (Gaeilge). English is recognised in the Constitution as the second official language. In practice English is the mother tongue and the language of habitual use of the vast majority of the population. *The Information Network on Education in Europe* describes the current situation as follows:

> Irish is now spoken as an everyday language in limited areas, mainly along the western seaboard and known collectively as the *Gaeltacht*. Under successive *Gaeltacht* Area Orders or legislation in 1956, 1967, 1974 and 1982 the parts of Ireland called the *Gaeltacht* were defined. At present the *Gaeltacht* comprises five wards and 150 district electoral divisions or parts of wards in seven counties - Cork, Donegal, Galway, Kerry, Mayo Meath and Waterford. There has been a small increase in the population of the *Gaeltacht* areas since the census of 1991. In 1991 there were 83,268 persons. By the 1996 census the numbers had increased to 86,039. *(*http://www.eurydice.org)

In addition to special assistance in the Gaeltacht areas, Irish is mainly promoted through bilingual schools, *Gaelscoileanna*, and through the media, in particular the Irish-language television channel, TG4. In all schools the study of Irish is obligatory throughout the compulsory period of education (6 - 16).

2.2. Language policies for foreign language education
There is no official policy document on foreign language education in Ireland, although there are references in Department of Education and Science documents to the Department's policy of encouraging diversity in language provision.

> [I]n the Irish context, the phrase "language policy" is generally used in the context of policies relating to the position of the Irish language in Ireland. Policy in relation to foreign languages in the education system tends to take the form of initiatives or developments when they appear appropriate, rather than as an ongoing activity based on specific policy documents or statements. (Chambers 2001)

An important development began in this area in 1990 with the publication of a book (Ruane, 1990) and several articles (Davis, 1990; Ó Murchú, 1990; Ó Riagáin and Ó Glasáin, 1990; Singleton, 1990; Smyth and O'Meara, 1990) by academics in modern

languages stressing the need for a language policy. Only in 2003, however, did discussions begin on the possibility of introducing such a policy, and these are still ongoing.

Language policy must therefore be inferred from the various initiatives being undertaken. A number of such initiatives have been undertaken since 1990, focussing on areas such as the introduction of modern foreign languages at primary level and the promotion of the study of a broad range of languages at post-primary level to replace the traditional dominance of French.

2.3. Language policies for life-long language learning
Policy proposals on adult education were published in 1998 in the Green Paper, *Adult Education in an Era of Lifelong Learning.* Subsequently, following a national consultative conference on adult education, a White Paper, *Learning for* Life was published in 2000*.* This described policy on lifelong learning with particular reference to adult education. Language learning did not receive particular attention in these documents, although there is considerable activity in this area, with language courses offered by the universities, by other higher education institutions, and by the official language services of various foreign governments, such as the *Alliance française*, the *Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst*, and the *Instituto Cervantes*.

2.4 Language policies for speakers of other languages
As a result of an increase in migration into Ireland in the late 1990s and the early years of the twenty-first century, there is now a need for the provision of English to speakers of other languages. There is no specific written policy document in this respect, although a number of measures have been introduced involving the provision of the teaching of English to non-native speakers (For further information, see Part 2, Section 5.2.3 below).

3 Mapping of institutions and programmes engaged in language provision:

3.1. Vertical axis: formal education system:
  - *primary/secondary/university (graduate and postgraduate studies)*

3.1.1 Primary education.
The teaching of foreign languages is mainly the responsibility of second level schools. The introduction of a foreign language at primary level has been considered since 1993 (McCarthy, 1993), and is currently the subject of a government-funded initiative. A number of primary schools provide foreign language courses. In many other schools language courses, mostly in French, are provided after school as an optional weekly class on payment of a fee.

3.1.2 Secondary education.
Foreign language teaching at second level underwent a period of transition in the 1990s, with important developments both in the syllabus and in the numbers of pupils involved. Programmes in languages for the Junior Certificate (an examination which is taken at the end of the third year of study) were revised, as were the syllabuses for the four European languages (French, German, Spanish and Italian)

at Leaving Certificate level. A Leaving Certificate Applied Programme in languages was also developed.

At second level foreign language study is not obligatory, but one language is offered in almost all schools, and two in many (Ruane 1990). French is the most popular, followed by German, which saw rapid growth in popularity in the 1990s, but is now experiencing a fall in the numbers of pupils taking the subject. Spanish is offered in a relatively small number of schools and Italian in very few schools. Table 1 below provides an overview of the numbers of pupils taking the languages on offer from 1939-1999. A government-funded initiative is currently underway to increase language diversity in secondary education.

Year	Greek	Latin	French	German	Italian	Spanish	Cohort (C)
1939	374	1782	1176	42	_	1	2937
% C	*12.73%*	*60.67%*	*40.04%*	*1.43%*	*_*	*0.03%*	
1959	448	4501	2124	42	25	40	7309
% C	*6.13%*	*61.58%*	*29.06%*	*0.57%*	*0.34%*	*0.55%*	
1979	11	1769	21542	1782	85	1406	35510
% C	*0.03%*	*4.98%*	*60.66%*	*5.02%*	*0.24%*	*3.96%*	
1999	9	127	36,871	10,828	210	1559	62,844
% C	*0.01%*	*0.2%*	*58.67%*	*17.23%*	*0.33%*	*2.48%*	

Table 1 (Chambers 2001)

In 2003, 60.9% of all Leaving certificate candidates (LCA included) took French, 16.3% took German, 3.9% took Spanish, and 1% took Italian. (Source: *Inspection of Modern Languages 2004: 9)*

While all four language skills, reading, writing, speaking and listening, are developed in the Leaving Certificate syllabus, greater emphasis is placed on aural comprehension and oral skills, reflecting the popularity of the communicative approach to language learning. While this has the advantage of ensuring that most pupils acquire basic communicative skills, it also created a situation where students achieving the lower pass grades, even at higher level, may enter university without a firm grounding in the basic grammatical structures of the language. This situation exerts a determining influence on the university syllabus, particularly in the first year of study.

As a result of the provision of languages at second level, there is considerable variation in the starting level of language courses in Irish universities. As Irish is taught in all schools and French in almost all schools at second level, degree programmes in these languages are offered only at post-Leaving Certificate level. German is usually offered at this level, but may also be offered at beginners' level in some programmes. Spanish and Italian are offered at either post-Leaving Certificate level or *ab initio.* All other languages, such as Japanese and Russian, are studied *ab initio.* In programmes combining two languages, it is usual for students to be

permitted to take only one language from beginners' level. In most courses the level at graduation is the same for students who had studied the language at second level and those who started studying the language at university.

3.1.3 University

Degree programmes including language study in Ireland cover all the areas in the grid originally developed for the Sigma reports in 1994, and brief details on each category are included below. As the early nineties saw considerable modernisation in language degree programmes in Ireland, and as there has understandably been little fundamental change since then, the text of this section is partly based on the Sigma national report for Ireland (Chambers, 1995), with updated information as appropriate. It is important to note that, after very substantial expansion in the 1990s in the numbers of students studying in higher education in general, and studying languages in particular, all language programmes are showing a drop in numbers in the early years of the twenty-first century, albeit a less dramatic one than that observed in the United Kingdom.

3.1.3.1 Traditional language and literature degree programmes

Degree programmes combining the acquisition of language skills with the study of the appropriate literary tradition are offered by all Irish university institutions. The aims and objectives of these programmes may be defined within the tradition of liberal education. The development of language skills is seen as a means of access to another culture, and the student studies the literary tradition of that culture in order to understand it more fully and, in the process, to develop analytical skills which will be of use in the student's life and career. While Arts degrees in languages continue to focus on literary studies, several trends can be observed in their development since the nineteen-sixties. Literary studies have tended to focus on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The definition of modern language studies has also broadened to include the study of culture and society. Cinema, politics since 1945, and contemporary social issues are examples of areas of study available to students in addition to literature.

Irish and French are available in all Arts degree programmes, and German and Spanish are commonly offered. French is the most popular language, although numbers taking Spanish have increased in the last five years. Italian and Russian are studied in only a small number of universities. Full degree programmes are not available in any other language, although students following a language programme may be offered courses in a cognate language.

Important developments have also taken place in the language component of these degree programmes. Alongside, and in some cases replacing the traditional prose and translation classes, there is a much greater emphasis on the development of communicative and cross-cultural skills. Courses on linguistics may be included, and there is an increasing emphasis on language awareness and autonomous learning skills. These developments have been supported through the modernisation of audio-visual facilities including satellite broadcasting, Computer Assisted Language Learning resources and, in 2004, experimentation with the introduction of virtual learning environments. Finally there is evidence of an increasing awareness of the importance of the professional use of the language, and students may, as part of the Arts degree, have the opportunity to study language for business or professional

translation. However, all the language degree programmes retain an essentially literary focus within the tradition of liberal Arts education.

The vast majority of Arts students are full-time students. However, in several universities the Arts degree is also offered in the evening for part-time students. The whole range of languages and courses in literature, culture and society is not available, and the number of students studying languages by this method is very small.

3.1.3.2 Alternative degree programmes
In the past thirty years modern language studies have developed in combination with areas other than literary studies. Three types of development may be distinguished.

European Studies. Within the Humanities disciplines, languages have increasingly come to be seen as appropriate subjects for students who wish to specialise not in literature, but in subjects such as History, Politics, Sociology, Economics or Geography in a European context, including the study of one or two European languages to degree level. A number of degree programmes in European Studies have been developed to cater for the needs of these students.

Languages plus another discipline. Another type of programme involves degree programmes in languages combined with another discipline, chosen because of its professional relevance. In such programmes two languages may be combined with a discipline such as Marketing or International Relations.

Applied languages. There are two degree programmes in Applied Languages in the State, the BA in Applied Languages (Translation with Interpreting) at Dublin City University, which focuses on the training of translators, and the BA in Applied Languages at the University of Limerick, which aims to prepare students for careers in which language skills are essential. Two or three languages are studied. The core programme also includes components in linguistics and computer applications in modern languages. Electives include Marketing, Politics and International Relations.

3.1.3.3 Language teacher training

Initial training
Colleges of Education are responsible for the training of primary school teachers, with their degrees are awarded by Irish universities through a system of official linkages.

In all, 12 institutions provide training for second level teachers, but more than 80% receive their training in the form of a one-year postgraduate diploma in the Faculties of Education of the five older universities. In addition, two concurrent undergraduate degree programmes, Bachelor of Education in Physical Education (University of Limerick) and Bachelor of Education in Home Economics (St. Catherine's College, Dublin) offer Irish as an elective subject. A Graduate Diploma in Education (Languages), focusing on the training of language teachers, was introduced in the University of Limerick in 2004.

Training programmes for teachers of English as a foreign language are offered at postgraduate level by a number of universities.

3.1.3.4 Language courses integrated into programmes in other disciplines and language options offered in combination with non-language programmes

The introduction of programmes combining professionally oriented disciplines with language study to degree level was a major development in modern languages in higher education in Ireland in the 1990s. A wide variety of such programmes was introduced, although the numbers of students are generally small compared to the numbers taking the equivalent degrees without language study. Since 1989 all universities have introduced programmes combining Business Studies with a language. Law may be combined with a language in four universities, and programmes in Computer Science including language study are offered by several universities, although there has been a significant fall in numbers since 2001. Language study to degree level in combination with a scientific discipline is still rare, and the few programmes which exist are finding it difficult to attract students, with a number of them ceasing to exist in 2004.

While no degree programme combines Business Studies with two languages, two programmes offer two languages with Marketing. The BA in International Marketing and Languages (Dublin City University) includes a foundation course in Business Studies followed by a study of International Marketing. This is combined with the study of two languages chosen from French, German and Spanish. In Years 3 and 4 students may continue the study of two languages, or they may study one language only. Two languages may also be studied with Marketing on the BA in Applied Languages at The University of Limerick (See 3.1.3.2 above).

In addition to the degree programmes described above, electives in languages, lasting one year or more, are available in all universities. There is considerable variation in relation to the overall numbers of students, the number of degree programmes involved and the range of languages and levels of study offered. No university has a policy in relation to the provision of such courses to all students.

3.1.3.5 Language studies in non-university institutions of higher education
Higher education outside the university sector is provided by institutes of technology and by a number of private colleges. Courses offered by these institutions all have a strong professional orientation, particularly in the areas of business, technology, and tourism, and languages are seen as a supplementary, relevant professional skill.

3.2. Horizontal axis: including other language providers
-   adult education institutions, language schools, cultural institutes, publishing, broadcasting etc.

3.2.1 Private language schools. Private language schools are common in Ireland, mostly focusing on the provision of courses in English, but also providing language courses in other languages for adults, and language courses tailored to meet the needs of business. The cultural institutes associated with the various embassies, particularly French, German and Spanish, are also active in the provision of language classes.

3.2.2 Publishing. The publication of language-learning materials in Ireland is mainly centred on the production of textbooks for use at second level. In the mid and late nineteen-nineties there was a significant amount of production of this type, and the textbooks used at second level generally take account of recent trends in the pedagogy of second language learning and teaching. More recently textbooks for immigrants specially tailored to their needs in an Irish context have been published.

3.2.3 Broadcasting. Most broadcasting in Ireland is through English, with the exception of radio and television channels in Irish. The Irish-language television channel, TG4, has met with considerable success. Enthusiasts in favour of language diversity are currently engaged in a lively debate concerning the availability of television stations in European languages other than English and Irish as part of the basic range of channels available.

Part two: Mapping of interfaces on the vertical and horizontal axes

4. Structures for co-operation in the educational sector and between the different language providers: at ministerial level, regional level, local level

4.1 Introduction
There are no specifically regional or local structures in place, and therefore all the examples given below may be seen in a national context.

4.2 The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment
Formal structural links between higher education and the other sectors of education are mostly channeled through the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA). This gives rise to a considerable amount of co-operation between the HEI and the other sectors.

The NCCA was established in November 1987. Its brief (Education Act, 1998) is to advise the Minister for Education and Science on matters relating to:

> …the curriculum for early childhood education, primary and post-primary schools and the assessment procedures employed in schools and examinations on subjects which are part of the curriculum.

The work of the NCCA involves five types of activity:

- Planning curriculum and assessment initiatives ranging from broad learning frameworks for early childhood to detailed subject specifications for Leaving Certificate syllabuses;
- Consulting with all key partner organisations, through the representative nature of the Council itself and through consultative documents, discussion papers, seminars and meetings;
- Supporting the change process in schools, through the development of guidelines for teachers, through liaising with the providers of professional development for teachers, and through working directly with schools and other educational settings;
- Reviewing the experiences of the implementation of curriculum and assessment change, together with relevant research, to support the process of curriculum and assessment review and development;

Informing school authorities, teachers, parents, employers and the general public about developments in curriculum and assessment, through publications, public meetings, briefings and the media. (Source www.ncca.ie)

The work of the NCCA is carried out by a number of specialist committees, comprising teachers, inspectors, representatives of teacher unions and school managerial bodies, parent and subject associations and higher education interests including universities and other colleges. These committees draw up the syllabus or course for each subject or part of the curriculum. (Source www.ncca.ie)

4.3 In-service language teacher education

In-service training for language teachers, as for all teachers, is the responsibility of the Department of Education. It is funded by the Department, co-ordinated by the In-Career Development Unit and monitored by the inspectorate. The Department takes direct responsibility for the provision of training programmes when there is a change of syllabus and a resulting change in the form and content of examinations. Otherwise in-service training is devolved to a large number of associations and institutions, in particular HEI. Subject Associations play a major role in the area of languages, as well as organisations committed to the development of specific languages, such as the *Bureau de Coopération Linguistique et Educative* of the French Embassy and the *Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst.* Colleges of Education and universities are also providers of in-service courses. Attendance at such courses is voluntary.

Postgraduate programmes in the teaching of languages or in the subject in which the teacher specialised at undergraduate level may also be chosen as a form of in-service training, although this places a heavy burden on individual teachers, financially, in terms of the additional workload, and, in some cases, because of the distance from the university.

4.4 Institúid Teangeolaíochta Éireann

The main role of *Institúid Teangeolaíochta Éireann* (ITÉ), which was founded in 1972 as a centre for research for state language policy, was the provision of research and advice services to all organisations dealing with language issues. The Institute concentrated on the main languages taught in Irish schools - Irish, English, French, German, Italian, and Spanish. The Institute had particular responsibility in the case of Irish, where research was done on school syllabus and daily language use. (Source: www.ite.ie)

The Institute's Department of Modern Languages served all sectors of the educational system and promoted the learning of a range of languages. It employed language specialists in Irish, French, German, Italian, Japanese and Spanish. These specialists were active in projects relating to the languages for which they were responsible, and provided a means of encouraging collaboration between HEI and second level education. For example, the French specialist played a key role in a project involving the creation of a web portal to provide second level teachers of French with information on resources suitable for their teaching. This project brought together specialists in ICT and language learning from the higher education sector, second level teachers, the national centre for technology in Education, and the *Bureau de Coopération Linguistique et Educative* of the French Embassy.

ITÉ was closed permanently in 2004, and no plans have been announced to replace it. The closure gave rise to many letters of protest in the national press from academics in Ireland and international researchers.

4.5 The National Centre for Technology in Education (NCTE)

Established by the Department of Education and Science in 1998, The National Centre for Technology in Education (NCTE) is the Government's agency on the use

of information and communications technology (ICT) in education. Its core work areas are:

- Providing advice and developing policy proposals for the Department of Education and Science (DES) on issues related to the development and use of ICT in the Irish education system
- Providing information and advice to other educational agencies on ICT in education
- Maintaining a mechanism of funding for schools to develop their technological infrastructure and purchase ICT equipment and software. The funding is provided in most cases by the DES
- Designing and implementing a series of in-career ICT training programmes for teachers
- Developing and maintaining an educational website portal - ScoilNet
- Developing and evaluating educational software
- Piloting models of technology integration and support through the Schools Integration Project (SIP)
- Providing support in educational ICT to teachers in special needs
- Undertaking research on the best uses of ICT in education
- Maintaining Irish involvement in current and future EU initiatives
- Developing and maintaining an NCTE website.
  (www.ncte.ie)

HEI are involved in a number of initiatives in which the NCTE participates and funds. See, for example, Section 5.1.2.4 below.

5. Forms of co-operation

5.1   Vertical axis: educational system and governmental institutions

5.1.1 HEI and primary educational institutions

5.1.1.1 Programmes/curricula
These are developed within the NCCA structures as described above in Section 4. At present, in the context of languages, only English and Irish are compulsory. A recent initiative involving cooperation between primary schools and higher education involved the development of a new syllabus for Irish throughout primary education.

Another initiative has led to the introduction of other modern languages in a number of primary schools. A number of schools, approximately 5%, participate in the Modern languages in Primary Schools initiative, which involves cooperation with HEI. These schools offer classes in French, German, Spanish and Italian. The time allotted to this is 1.5 hours per week
(Source http://www.mszs.si/eurydice/pub/eurydice/fltndirl.pdf)

5.1.1.2 Entry-Exit qualifications
There is no examination at the end of primary education in Ireland. Levels of achievement are as decided by the appropriate NCCA committee.

5.1.1.3 Validation/recognition

As the study of Irish is compulsory throughout primary education, primary school teachers study Irish throughout their initial training. This is the main form of cooperation between HEI and primary schools.

5.1.1.4 In-service training

In-service training is provided according to the system described in Section 4.2 above. There is considerable involvement by HEI in the provision of such training. For an example, see Section 5.1.2.4 below.

5.1.2 HEI and second level institutions

5.1.2.1. Programmes/curricula

Cooperation is of three main types. HEI are involved in curriculum development through the NCCA and also may be involved in the production of teaching materials. Thirdly, they participate in the various initiatives, which have been the main policy instrument for developments in languages in Ireland in the last decade.

The Post-Primary languages Initiative, which has been in operation since 2000, aims to implement the Department of Education and Science's policy of expanding and diversifying language provision at second level. Italian, Spanish, Japanese and Russian are included. More than 250 schools have participated in the initiative. Cooperation with HEIs includes:

- Preparation of teaching materials by staff in the University of Limerick
- Provision of courses in Spanish and Italian for primary school teachers by the Dublin Institute of Technology, University College Cork and NUI Galway. (source www.languagesinitiative.ie)

5.1.2.2 Entry-Exit qualifications

Entry to second level education is not controlled by any examination. Exit level is assessed by the Leaving Certificate, a baccalaureat-type examination usually involving 7 subjects. Only Irish is a compulsory subject. The subjects may be taken at ordinary or higher level. For university entrance a pass in a modern language is necessary. HEI are associated with the leaving certificate in a number of ways, mainly through their participation in the NCCA, which sets and regularly revises the syllabus. In some cases HEI also participate in the setting of the examinations.

5.1.2.3 Validation/recognition

The main interface between second level and higher education is the system through which the school leaving examination, the Leaving Certificate, serves as the means of selection for university entrance. Centrally administered on behalf of all HEIs by the Central Applications Office (CAO), this is known as the points system. For further information, see http://www.cao.ie

One vital, and fragile link between second level and higher education, deserves special mention here. As noted above, the study of a modern language throughout secondary education is not compulsory in Ireland, but it is the norm for all those aspiring to study at university, simply because it is obligatory for university entrance on almost all courses. Thus those wishing to study law, medicine, business,

engineering etc. must have a pass in the leaving certificate in a language other than English and Irish. With a drop in the birth rate now affecting the age cohort in higher education, however, there is already some evidence that this may change for some courses. This would leave language study at second level in an extremely weak position, and it would also reduce the numbers of students qualified to study languages in higher education.

5.1.2.4 In-service training
In-service training is provided according to the system described in Section 4.2 above.

In addition to the system described above, government-funded organisations and HEIs often collaborate on specific initiatives. One recent example is the OILTE project in ICT & language learning, which involved co-operation between the National Centre for Technology in Education, the Linguistics Institute of Ireland (ITÉ), the University of Limerick and Dublin City University, second level language teachers and international experts. The project, which was awarded the European label in 2004, also drew on the experience of university experts in international projects associated with the European Language Council, such as the TALLENT project (Teaching And Learning Languages Enhanced by New Technologies).

5.2 Horizontal axis: HEI, other providers and governmental institutions
Local, regional, national, European/International

5.2.1 Participation of the universities in international initiatives
5.2.1.1 European Language Portfolio
Universities are active in the various international initiatives involving language learning at second level. A notable recent example is the development of a European Language Portfolio, based on DES syllabi and the levels of the CEF, specifically for use in Irish second level schools. The Portfolio has been implemented in a number of secondary schools, mostly in the vicinity of Dublin, co-ordinated by Trinity College Dublin. For further information see www.tcd.ie/CLCS/portfolio/

5.2.1.2 Collaboration with foreign cultural institutes
This collaboration results in activities such as:

- Collaboration in research projects. For example research projects in ICT and language learning at the University of Limerick have received support from the *Bureau de Coopération Linguistique et Educative* of the French Embassy.

- Collaboration in relation to the work and funding of lector posts, notably by the *Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst* and the Austrian government.

- Collaboration in the organisation and funding of seminars by researchers from other European countries.

5.2.1.3 Participation in the work of international organisations
HEIs in Ireland are very active at international level in ways such as the following:

- Hosting international organisations related to language studies. For example until 2004 CERCLES (*Confédération Européenne des Centres de Langues dans l'Enseignement Supérieur*) had its headquarters in University College Dublin, and EUROCALL (The European Association for Computer Assisted Language Learning) currently has its headquarters at the University of Limerick.

- Participating in the work of international organisations such as the sections of the European Commission related to language studies, the European Language Council and the organisations named above.

5.2.2 Language schools and private language institutes

5.2.2.1 Qualification of teachers
HEI play an important in providing courses in English Language Teaching, particularly at masters level, to ensure a supply of well qualified teachers for the significant English language industry in Ireland.

5.2.2.2 English for immigrants programme
In recent years the state provides funding to companies, some of which are set up by universities for the provision of courses in English for non-native speakers of English. One example is Integrate Ireland Language and Training Ltd., set up by Trinity College Dublin and funded by the Department of Education and Science. It provides English language training for adult refugees and supports the teaching of English as a second language to immigrant pupils in primary and post-primary schools.

Part three: Needs, obstacles, opportunities, measures, facilitating instruments:

6 Identification of needs, obstacles and opportunities and measures to be taken to improve communication and co-operation

6.1   Integration of language study into primary education
Language study needs to be integrated into primary education, taking into account the need for a smooth and viable transition from primary to second level. In particular the issue of pupils who have studies a language at primary school being taught alongside beginners at second level needs to be addressed. (See Section 5.1.1.)

6.2   Compulsory study of at least one foreign language at second level
The study of at least one foreign language at second level should be compulsory. This would provide a guarantee that all school leavers would have some competence in at least one foreign language, as well as providing universities with a sound basis for language provision across all faculties. (See Section 5.1.2.3.)

6.3   Study of two languages in addition to English and Irish at second level
The study of two languages in addition to English and Irish should be encouraged at second level. This would help to provide a non-graduate workforce with proficiency in languages, as well as enabling universities to develop programmes involving the study of two languages without offering one of them at beginners' level. The

European Commission Action Plan (2003) is a relevant document which should be consulted in this context. (See Section 3.1.2.)

6.4   Language education policy to underpin developments at second level
There is a need for a language education policy to underpin developments at second level. This would provide a sound basis for the various initiatives which take place at second level and which greatly influence the starting point for the provision of languages in higher education. (See Section 2.2.)

6.5   Institutional language policies in higher education
Also in higher education, institutional language policies would ensure long term planning of language provision across the various faculties.

7. Identification of facilitating and reporting instruments for lifelong learning in the field of modern languages

7.1   Common European Framework
In both the lifelong-learning context and the context of full-time education, there is a need for the Common European Framework to be implemented as the basis for the description of assessment levels, and for the grades used in the CEF to be used also in higher and further education (See Béacco and Byram 2003).

7.2   European Language Portfolio
Greater use of the European Language Portfolio is needed in the context of lifelong learning in languages.

8 Identification of needs for future projects, studies and research

8.1   An urgent need for a central body to co-ordinate research projects
There is an urgent need for a central body to be set up to co-ordinate research projects in language learning in Ireland, to replace the Linguistics Institute of Ireland (ITÉ), which has had government funding withdrawn and was closed down in 2004. (See Section 4.4.)

8.2   Studies needed in a number of areas
Studies are needed in the following areas:
Language policy in second level education: development and implementation
Language policy in higher education: development and implementation
Developing Erasmus exchanges in higher education outside language programmes
Integrating language studies in programmes for students of other disciplines.

Part four: Recommendations:

9.1 Develop an integrated action plan for foreign language study in Ireland in primary, secondary and higher education.

9.2   Make the study of at least one foreign language throughout second level education compulsory.

9.3 Put in place a series of measures to encourage the study of two languages in addition to English and Irish at second level, in keeping with the 1+2 recommendation of the 1995 White Paper.

9.4   Develop a national language education policy to underpin the above developments at second level.

9.5 Set up a system for the development and implementation of institutional language policies at second level and in higher education.

9.6 As part of these policies, ensure that HEIs put in place a system for all students to be able to develop and expand the language learning which they have undertaken at second level.

9.7 Set up a project to ensure that the Common European Framework for Language Learning is used as the basis for the description of assessment levels, and for the grades used in secondary, higher and further education.

9.8 Encourage greater use of the European Language Portfolio in the context of lifelong learning in languages.

9.9 As a matter of urgency set up and fund a central body to co-ordinate research projects in language learning in Ireland to underpin the above developments.

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