



**THEMATIC NETWORK PROJECT  
IN THE AREA OF LANGUAGES III**

**FINAL REPORT**

**DOCUMENTS  
VOLUME SEVEN**

**Output Ten: A document summarising the results and outcomes  
of TNP3 and presenting a multi-annual action plan**

## Contents

Introduction	3
The general aims of TNP3	3
Background to and context of TNP3	4
Methods applied and activities undertaken in the three-year project period	5
What next?	7
Sub-project 1: Languages for language-related industries and professions	9
1. Changes identified in the professional environment	9
2. Identification of new needs and challenges	10
3. Recommendations	12
4. Project proposals	13
Sub-project 2: Languages for enhanced opportunities on the European Labour Market	15
1. Background and context	15
2. Development of linguistic demands in the private and public sectors	16
3. Consultation and collaboration	17
4. Identification of new needs and challenges	18
5. Recommendations and project proposals	19
Sub-project 3 : Languages as an interface between the different sectors of education	21
1. Aims and Issues of the Sub-project	21
2. Outline of the Activities and the Course of the Sub-project	22
3. Mapping of Interfaces	23
5. Recommendations and project proposals	26
Rapport du groupe de travail « Education et recherche »	28
Multiannual Action Plan (2007-2010)	30
New networks	30
Curriculum development projects	31
Research projects	32

## Thematic Network Project in the Area of Languages III (TNP3) (Socrates-Erasmus Programme, 2003-2006)

### FINAL DOCUMENT

## Introduction

This document provides a concise overview of the principal activities, findings, and outcomes of the Thematic Network Project in the Area of Languages III (TNP3). It is primarily addressed to academics and experts in the area of languages, as well as to higher education policy-makers and decision-makers. A document written in non-specialist language and targeted at a wider range of stakeholders is going to be prepared as part of the Network for the decentralised and centralised dissemination of TNP3 outcomes and results (2006-2007).<sup>1</sup>

### The general aims of TNP3

Like Socrates-Erasmus Thematic Network projects (TNs) in general and the predecessor Thematic Network projects in the area of languages in particular,<sup>2</sup> TNP3 sought to **define and develop a European dimension in its specific area**, i.e. to prepare recommendations and proposals for the area of languages relevant to higher education institutions across Europe.<sup>3</sup> Like its predecessor projects, TNP3 subscribed to a definition of the area of languages based on political, rather than purely academic or disciplinary considerations. Guided by the conviction that multilingualism and linguistic diversity are of crucial importance to the EU's further development, to European society and to the individual citizen, and that higher education (HE) has a crucial role in the promotion of individual and societal multilingualism, TNP3, like its predecessor TNs, defined the area of languages in terms of **transmission / acquisition of linguistic and cultural knowledge, skills, and competences, and language mediation**. It should be clear that this definition covers a variety of HE programmes, portions of programmes – ranging from modern language degree programmes to language studies for all students.

This approach reflects one of the central aims of TNs: to address the frequently observed **disconnection of higher education programmes from changing and emerging needs in the social, professional, and economic environments as well as from pertinent developments in research**, and to work out recommendations and strategies designed to overcome this state of affairs.

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1 All major TNP3 documents and reports are available at the project Web site [www.fu-berlin.de/tnp3/](http://www.fu-berlin.de/tnp3/).

2 Cf. SIGMA Scientific Committee on Languages (1994-5); Thematic Network Project in the Area of Languages (1996-9); Project for the exploitation and dissemination of the results and outcomes of the Thematic Network Project in the Area of Languages (1999-2000); Thematic Network Project in the Area of Languages II (TNP2) (2000-2003).

3 This is why TNs are to involve universities from all the countries participating in the Socrates Programme.

## Background to and context of TNP3

TNP3 was launched in the wake of, and accompanied by major new developments in politics, European societies, the economies, technology, professional life, as well as education itself, most of which are bound to have a major impact on the area of languages. In this document, these developments can only be sketched rather than fully described and analysed.

- *EU enlargement.* On 1 May 2004 ten new Member States acceded to the Union. (Since then, another two countries have joined the EU, with more countries knocking on the EU's door.)
- *Increasing trans-European mobility.* As a result of the Internal Market and enlargement, trans-European mobility of workers and students has assumed a new dimension.
- *Migration into Europe.* Practically all European countries have by now experienced migration from outside Europe.
- *Increasing European and international trade and cooperation.* In line with EU policy and trends world wide, and facilitated by new technological developments, international economic cooperation and trade have reached immense proportions and unprecedented dimensions, involving not just large corporations, but also small- and medium-sized companies.
- *The advent of knowledge-based economies.* The advent of knowledge-based economies has brought about fundamental changes in the labour markets.
- *Globalisation and the knowledge society imply rapidly changing living and working conditions.* Among other things, traditional professions are changing and disappearing, while new job profiles are emerging.
- *The education systems across Europe are being confronted with new challenges and are undergoing major changes.* Key words and phrases are Bologna and Lisbon, learning outcomes relevant to sustainable employability, key competences for lifelong learning, qualifications frameworks. In the area of languages, this change in paradigm is reflected by the Council of Europe's action-oriented *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)*. Moreover, the EU has identified the ability to communicate in foreign languages, and cultural awareness and expression as key competences required in a rapidly changing and interconnected world.

As a result of these developments, the language constellation of Europe, the language professions, and the linguistic and language-related demands confronting individual learners and educational institutions are considerably different than at the time of the launch of the first Thematic Network Project in the Area of Languages ten years ago.

- The number of official EU languages has increased from 11 to 23, and is likely to increase further.

- The workforces of enterprises and the student bodies of universities across Europe are becoming increasingly international, as is the European research effort.
- Practically all European states have become multilingual and multicultural societies.
- Non-Community languages – both migrant languages and the languages of global trading partners – are gaining in importance.
- The role of English as an international *lingua franca* has become a subject of scholarly investigation and of heated debate. Irrespective of these issues, English is increasingly being regarded as a basic skill on par with literacy in the first language and numeracy.
- Communication and language mediation are vastly facilitated by the new technologies.
- Foreign language learning, teaching and testing have become action and task oriented. People learn and are expected to be proficient in foreign languages so that they can carry out tasks in those languages.

Many of these and related issues are addressed in the European Commission's Communication *A New Framework Strategy for Multilingualism* of November 2005, in which the Commission for the first time ever looked at all aspects of multilingualism in the Union. In some respects, TNP3 sought to take things a step further and to reach a clearer understanding of the new linguistic and language-related demands university graduates – language specialists, students of modern languages, students of non-language subjects - are likely to be confronted with both in the short and medium term, and of the skills and competences sought after by the language industry and on the labour market in general. TNP3 also sought to anchor language learning at higher education level in the lifelong learning paradigm.

### **Methods applied and activities undertaken in the three-year project period**

The mainstream project was structured into three sub-projects devoted to the following sub-themes:

- 1) Languages for language-related industries and professions
- 2) Languages for enhanced opportunities on the European labour market
- 3) Languages as an interface between the different sectors of education

Each of the three sub-projects had its own working group comprised of higher education experts from as many participating countries as possible. In addition, at the beginning of Year Two, a working group on "Education and research" was convened, whose members were drawn from the three sub-project working groups.

The common denominator of the three sub-projects was the conviction that in order to obtain a clearer understanding of the current and future needs of graduates and of the labour market, as well as of the place of higher education language studies within the lifelong learning paradigm, universities have to engage in systematic and structured consultation and collaboration with other stakeholders, notably the language industry, employers and employer organisations, graduates, and institutions, organisations and authorities active in and responsible for the other sectors of education.

Activities in the three sub-projects progressed in three stages. In **Stage One**, each of the sub-project working groups prepared a set of national reports, based on a common structure jointly developed and agreed by the members of each working group. Basically, each structure foresaw the description and analysis of the status quo, the identification of new needs and demands, recommendations regarding measures to be taken at different levels, and proposals for future studies, and for development and research projects. Apart from the fact that discussions about the structures and the preparation of the reports enabled working group members to view developments and needs in their respective countries within a wider European perspective, the whole process turned into one large exercise in awareness raising, especially with regard to consultation and collaboration with stakeholders. Each of the three sets of national reports was synthesised in a synthesis report, which permitted the identification of trends across Europe and the development of initial recommendations and proposals from a pan-European point of view.

**Stage Two** saw a Europe-wide on-line consultation among five groups of stakeholders.

*Sub-project 1:* (i) companies / agencies whose primary activity is foreign language related; (ii) graduates in the area of languages who are currently employed in a language-related profession;

*Sub-project 2:* (iii) employers (whose primary activity is not foreign language related); (iv) university graduates not employed in a language-related profession;

*Sub-project 3:* (v) governmental / administrative decision-making bodies, professional bodies, and educational institutions

The five questionnaires were translated into the national languages of the universities involved. The general idea was to find out more about current needs and demands, and to establish to what extent the project's concern with consultation and collaboration between universities and other stakeholders was shared by those stakeholders.

The consultation, whose scope and objectives were probably unique, was – at least initially – affected by human and technical failure. This, in turn, affected the schedule of the project, resulting in partial overlap between Stages Two and Three.

In **Stage Three**, initial recommendations developed for the synthesis reports and the outcomes of the consultation were to have been discussed, and jointly finalised by TNP3 experts and selected stakeholder representatives. In the event, the original plan had to be modified. At the Year Two Closing Conference (Copenhagen Business School, 30/09-01/10/2005), interim findings and recommendations were discussed with stakeholder representatives, while the outcomes of the consultation could only be presented for discussion at the Closing Conference (Université Rennes 2, 22-23

September 2006). The participation of 15 students in both conferences under the Short-term student mobility pilot experience was considered by all concerned to have added an important element to discussions.

## **What next?**

This document, including the action plan, incorporates the outcomes of the consultation and of the discussions held at the two conferences. It does not present ready-made recipes that lend themselves to direct application. For one thing, the national reports and the consultation could not do more than identify trends. For another, situations vary considerably across Europe. However, it was encouraging to note that TNP3 interim findings and outcomes found their way into the Commission's aforementioned Communication of November 2005; also, the final outcomes will be the subject of a major one-year dissemination effort.

As the following chapters of this document make clear, TNP3 findings and outcomes have largely confirmed the assumptions underlying the original project proposal; moreover, they have provided a number of new insights. These now need to be followed up in studies and projects. However, even at this stage, universities can find inspiration for innovation and new measures in this document and in the reports, and sets of recommendations and proposals prepared within TNP3.

- Contrary to the findings of the Tuning pilot project, TNP3 outcomes indicate that multilingual and intercultural skills and competences are highly relevant to graduates' opportunities on the labour market.
- The tracking of graduates' careers and alumni surveys are becoming more and more common in Europe, and universities are increasingly engaging in dialogue with employers and employer organisations; they would be well advised to include questions regarding foreign language proficiency in their surveys and consultations, using the questionnaires prepared within TNP3 as a point of departure.
- Universities are increasingly forming partnerships with schools. TNP3 has identified a substantial number of issues related to HE language studies that call for consultation and collaboration not just with schools, but also with other educational stakeholders.
- While traditional modern language degree programmes are in steep decline in many parts of Europe, there is a need for first- and second-cycle graduates that command a variety of language and communication skills and competences. Universities should use the potential inherent in the Bologna reforms for designing and providing new courses and offerings. Again, the recommendations developed within TNP3 can serve as points of departure.
- The learning outcomes of HE language programmes and offerings should be related to situations of professional language use and anchored in both the CEFR and European and national qualifications frameworks. Without doubt, this constitutes a major challenge to HE experts in the area of languages.

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- One of the most frequent errors of judgment committed by policy- and decision-makers in universities is the assumption that the learning of a foreign language is a relatively easy task, which can be accomplished within a very short period of time. Similar views are widely held with regard to the training of language specialists. On the contrary, the learning of foreign languages, and the acquisition of language-related skills and competences to levels relevant to graduates' opportunities on the European and international labour markets are intellectually demanding tasks that require large amounts of learning time; this should be reflected in the number of credits awarded.
  - Multilingual proficiency constitutes a transversal skill – and this in two respects. Foreign languages are potentially relevant to all subject areas and to professional life in general; through the learning of foreign languages, students acquire generic skills – flexibility of mind, openness to different points of view, ability to analyse and synthesise etc. – that are important for any kind of academic and professional work.
  - In view of the importance of the area of languages in higher education, programmes and offerings in this area – including practical language modules - must be subject to the same measures of quality assessment and enhancement that are applied to higher education programmes in general.

## **Sub-project 1: Languages for language-related industries and professions**

### **1. Changes identified in the professional environment**

Within a very short time frame, a number of major changes have brought about fundamental and often contradictory reappraisals of the role and value of foreign language competences and skills in Europe. On the political level, EU enlargement has at one and the same time increased the need for experts in the new member state languages and strengthened the call for a reduction in the costs of multilingualism. On the economic level, accelerating globalisation has brought about a tremendous increase in multilingual communication, while the role of English as a lingua franca in international exchanges is becoming ubiquitous. Technological changes have opened up new opportunities and increased productivity in the language industries and professions.

All these changes are bound to have a major impact on the use of languages in society and in professional contexts, not least in the language industries and language-related professions. Although it is still difficult to ascertain the precise impact of these developments, and despite what seems to be regional or national differences across Europe, some general trends can be identified. Traditional professional ring-fences are disappearing as the labour market becomes increasingly flexible and competitive. Graduates trained as linguists, translators, interpreters or other language specialists, are often expected to take on a whole range of multifaceted tasks that require non-language competences and skills in addition to their language expertise. Conversely, non-language graduates may take on tasks involving highly specialised language skills.

The developments outlined here are presumably a result of the increase in mobility among students and young graduates brought about by e.g. EU mobility programmes. The young generations of European professionals are thus better prepared for working in a foreign language environment than were their parents' generations, and as a consequence of this, foreign language competences and skills (at least to a certain level) are more commonplace. Paradoxically enough, this means that while there is an increasing need for foreign language skills and expertise, these skills are not so rare any more and therefore less valuable than they used to be.

The professional environment of language experts is therefore indeed changing. Translation and interpreting are no longer clear-cut categories of work. Perhaps with the exception of those working in (very) large private or public organisations, including international ones, language experts typically find themselves in jobs with several areas of responsibility such as, for instance, translation combined with database management and/or terminology work, with project management or with marketing and sales. Moreover, language specialists increasingly work in the areas of revision and editing because of the changing market conditions: More and more translators work as freelancers and/or work into their B-languages. There is an increase in foreign

language corporate communication, website management, localisation and technical writing; finally, there is an increase in inter-cultural mediation and consulting.

Due to the demand for cost-efficient processes that often require considerable investments in technology and special software applications, and for the highest level of expertise within a given domain, there is an increased concentration in the language industries and professions in several countries combined with an increase in outsourcing, often to offshore sites.

Some of these trends are mentioned in all or most of the national reports and in the documents presenting the outcomes of the Europe-wide consultation, while others are only mentioned in a few of the reports. With the amount of data available, it is difficult to gauge to which extent this reflects actual differences across Europe.

In some countries, computer literacy and knowledge of special applications are not mentioned at all. In these countries, it is presumably taken for granted as a key skill, whereas it is an issue in other European countries where graduates in general are not quite so familiar with relevant specialist IT and software applications. Much more important, however, are perhaps the non-linguistic tasks that seem to be very important to an increasing number of language specialists: general knowledge of the world of work (organisational structures, ethics, time constraints, etc.); management skills; knowledge of or familiarity with the business environment as well as concepts such as cost efficiency and customer awareness; sales and marketing.

## **2. Identification of new needs and challenges**

The above changes in the professional environment should obviously be reflected in university programmes. In this section the language and language related programmes will be dealt with.

Traditionally speaking, foreign language programmes have led to philology degrees, and with very few exceptions, the existing non-philology degree programmes have led to qualifications as translators and/or interpreters, often at HEIs outside the traditional research universities. The changing professional environment and the competences and skills required in the age of globalisation are clearly not all accommodated in these programmes, and universities are therefore well advised to critically assess their programme offerings and adjust the content of these to cater to the needs of the labour market.

In most countries, competences and skills in English are considered a *sine qua non* in international cooperation, transport, business, trade and industry. On the other hand, there also seems to be common agreement that English is not enough, and that students or graduates need to be competent in a second and even third foreign language.

As regards the linguistic and communicative areas of expertise, correct language use and precision is equally important in the mother-tongue and the foreign languages. The consultation has revealed a need for the strengthening of mother tongue competences, especially writing skills, in most European countries.

Graduates cannot do without general knowledge of the countries and cultures in which the foreign languages are used, and the same applies to more specialised knowledge within a given set of domains. As it is downright impossible to teach all domains, focus within the curricula should be on exemplary domains, and on methods to acquire the knowledge and terminology of other domains as the need arises. Knowledge of intercultural differences and cross-cultural communication is also mentioned as a key point in many of the consultation responses; the same goes for placements, work or study abroad. Experience in living and working in a foreign culture and using foreign languages is seen as an asset for young graduates, and even an asset that many of them cannot do without if they want to launch themselves in a career as language specialists.

As regards the non-linguistic areas of expertise mentioned in section 1 above, it is far from being the general norm that they have been included in the university curricula, even as optional subjects. Examples of good practice can be identified and inform the development process at other HEIs, e.g. project work and team work integrated into the programme; preparation of assignments under time pressure; mock conferences and other mock settings; guest lectures and other settings preparing the students for the world of work.

## **2.1 New curricula**

Within the Bologna Process, the European Qualifications Framework has been developed, and it will be taken for granted that, within the next few years, all new programmes are defined as 1st or 2nd cycle programmes in Bologna terms.

In many European countries, new 1st cycle programmes are therefore being or have just been developed. The question is whether the content and structure of these lead to learning outcomes and competence profiles that truly reflect the needs of the labour market, or whether they are 'old wine in new bottles'. What is needed, is a set of programmes at 1st cycle level that lead to qualifications as general linguistic and cultural mediators, that is, not language experts per se, but graduates that are able to take on tasks involving foreign language communication as well as other - often project-relevant - tasks.

As indicated above, language specialist degrees have in the past to a very large extent been translation and/or interpreting programmes. There is, however, a need to diversify the programme offerings at 2nd cycle level and to include revision and editing, community interpreting, project management, conference management, technical writing, terminology, foreign language and intercultural (global) corporate communication, to name but a few. It goes without saying that only very few universities can offer more than one or a few language expert programmes, and in most cases also within a limited language regime, comprising - or being restricted to - the major (western) European languages and not taking into consideration major languages outside western Europe, such as e.g. Chinese, Arabic or Russian, let alone the LWUTLs. While this may be justified for some universities, it is not tenable for all. Individual universities need to monitor their own environments in order to assess the specific needs in their immediate surroundings and at the same time also gauge to what extent they can benefit from

co-operating with other universities and offer joint degrees on a national, European or international level, thereby catering to the needs of more wide-spread audiences.

While the implementation of the Bologna reforms has been and still is a major challenge for most European universities, these HEIs also need to consider their programmes in a lifelong learning perspective. Continuing education, even for professionals with 2nd or 3rd cycle degrees, is more and more in demand, and universities need to respond to this by modularising their degree programmes and making them available to target audiences other than their full-time degree students, as well as by developing short-term courses that cater to the needs of these new target groups.

In the consultation, respondents emphasised the need for practical experience, i.e. work placements or language work in realistic mock settings, for instance enforcing time constraints as well as legal or ethical issues.

## **2.2 Consultation and collaboration**

During preparations for the Europe-wide consultation it became clear that while some universities keep track of their graduates and monitor developments in the demands for new competences and skills on the labour market, this still seems to be the exception rather than the rule in most countries.

## **3. Recommendations**

It goes without saying that, short continuing education programmes apart, any new developments in university curricula should take place within the three-cycle system of the Bologna Process, i.e. at bachelor (1st cycle) or master (2nd cycle) level in accordance with the European Qualifications Framework and the national frameworks developed, or currently being developed, in the individual Bologna countries.

The results of TNP3 lead to recommendations regarding curricula as well as co-operation and consultation between universities and other stakeholders.

### **3.1 New curricula**

As mentioned above, universities should monitor their social and professional environments in order to follow up on needs for linguistic and intercultural expertise and adapt their curricula accordingly.

New first-cycle programmes need to be developed designed to meet the demands of the globalised world of work, e.g. by training students to become general linguistic and cultural mediators in one or two foreign languages.

Special areas of expertise might benefit from being developed jointly by universities that have a special competence in these areas, preferably underpinned by research. Such programmes ought to be developed jointly by groups of universities (on a national

or European level) within the framework of the Bologna Process. This might take the form of double or joint degrees.

One of the best ways of introducing students to the world of work is to establish internships as an optional or, even better, compulsory part of their curricula. Internship programmes should, therefore, be integrated into all first- and second-cycle specialist programmes.

### **3.2 Consultation and collaboration**

Universities are encouraged to develop career-tracking systems and alumni organisations that can enable them to stay in contact and communicate with their graduates in order to monitor changing and emerging demands in the language industry with a view to adjusting existing curricula, or to developing new curricula and/or new continuing education programmes.

Other possible areas of co-operation between the HEIs and the world of work include experts from the professional environments as external examiners or members of exams boards (where this is legally possible), as members of curriculum advisory boards, guest lecturers or adjunct faculty. Permanent fora of consultation in which the HEIs as well as employers and subject area experts are represented are another important case in point.

Members of the subproject 1 working group identified a number of examples of successful practice, such as students writing their projects and dissertations using real world data or solving concrete tasks for a university-external organisation.

## **4. Project proposals**

While there would always be scope for inter-university collaboration in research and curriculum development, the following project proposals are a direct result of the TNP3 project.

### **4.1 Curriculum development**

- A European curriculum development project to establish a core curriculum for a 1<sup>st</sup> cycle programme in general linguistic and cultural mediation.
- A development and piloting project for establishing a European standard for internships integrated into the university curricula.

## **4.2 Research**

- Systematic research into the linguistic and inter-cultural needs of the social and professional environments, also including areas such as multi-media communications and the entertainment industries that have not been properly covered in TNP consultations.

## **Sub-project 2: Languages for enhanced opportunities on the European Labour Market**

### **1. Background and context**

Since the Lisbon summit of March 2000, communication in foreign languages and cultural awareness and expression have, among others, come to be regarded as key competences for lifelong learning, required for personal development, active citizenship, social cohesion and employability in a knowledge society, as well as for flexible adaptability in a rapidly changing globalised world of work. In its Communication entitled *A New Framework Strategy for Multilingualism* of November 2005, the European Commission expressed the view that “skills in several languages increase opportunities on the labour market, including freedom to work or study in another Member State”. The Commission points out that “for the Single Market to be effective, the Union needs a more mobile workforce”.

The relevance of foreign-language proficiency, including proficiency in non-Community languages, to graduates’ employability has been a subject for reflection, discussion and investigation in all Erasmus Thematic Network projects in the area of languages, beginning with the pilot SIGMA Scientific Committee on Languages (1994-5). The activities undertaken by these network projects and by the ENLU project have had an impact across Europe to the extent that an increasingly large number of universities now acknowledge that linguistic and cultural competences constitute an essential aspect of graduates’ general qualifications and that it is their responsibility to provide students with opportunities for further developing their linguistic and intercultural competences. Needless to say, this trend was reinforced by the Bologna process and its emphasis on the relevance of the first degree to the labour market; in fact, the Berlin Communiqué of 2003 especially referred to this link.

While there is now heightened awareness of the professional relevance of linguistic and intercultural competences, it is far less clear which languages and which skills and competences constitute an added value in this respect. This was the starting point of sub-project 2. The sub-project working group set itself the task of establishing which skills and competences are likely to enhance graduates’ opportunities on the European labour market and beyond. Whereas predecessor projects had, to some extent at least, engaged in enlightened speculation, experts involved in TNP3 sub-project 2 were keen to obtain information based on tangible evidence. They were convinced that they would only be able to do so if they studied materials and communications from the world of work, and if they were to start a dialogue with the world of work – notably employers and graduates -, be it through workshops, or be it through Web-based consultation. In their activities, working group members particularly focused on non-language students and graduates, although they were fully aware that as regards language training formerly existing sharp demarcation lines between modern language degree programmes and other types of programmes and offerings are rapidly disappearing.

## 2. Development of linguistic demands in the private and public sectors

The outcomes of the work undertaken in sub-project 2 - national reports, synthesis report and consultation process – point to new and growing linguistic needs and demands resulting from enlargement, increased European integration, and globalisation. When the project was planned and launched, the Union had 15 Member States. Since then, another 12 countries have joined the EU. This development not only means “new” Community languages, but also changing positions for some of the large ‘old’ languages in Europe.

The results of sub-project activities confirm the special status of English as an international language, which is indispensable for the large majority of graduates. However, it is also clear that English is increasingly taken so much for granted that it often does not give graduates a competitive advantage. Thus, the interesting question in relation to graduates’ language portfolio is which foreign languages other than English they are competent in. In other words, the conclusion is: English is necessary, but more often than not it is not enough. In this respect, the findings of the consultation are revealing. While they confirm the well-known status of German, French, and Spanish, graduates reported that it was also important for them to learn other languages, such as Russian, Italian, Chinese, Polish, Dutch, Arabic, and Portuguese (in descending order).

In most countries competence in at least one foreign language is considered a required component of the cultural and intellectual background of a university graduate. The results of sub-project 2 clearly demonstrate a growing awareness among all stakeholders – university management, students, graduates and employers – of the vital importance for graduate employability of language and intercultural competences and the ability to perform professional tasks and functions in foreign languages.

However, what using a foreign language in a professional, work-related situation actually means is far from easy to define and describe. The questionnaire-based Europe-wide consultation conducted among employers and graduates provides evidence of the wide range of skills and competences required; just which skills and competences are required seems to depend on the language in question, the country of employment, the specific job situation and the task or tasks to be carried out in a given job situation. Two results of the consultation would seem to provide important food for thought for decision-makers in higher education: (i) Both employers and graduates indicate that as regards the first foreign language the most common situations of language use are rather general in nature: understanding and interacting in job-related communication situations (e.g. hosting a visitor, telephoning, travel, talking about one’s job; reading and writing e-mails and short factual texts; following discussions and presentations in professional contexts; reading specialised articles and reports and summarising and reporting on them; communicating to manage international relations and customer contacts). (ii) More than 50% of graduate respondents had already worked abroad, in many cases in other parts of the world. Both findings would seem to suggest that students need to be equipped with rather general skills and competences that allow them to perform in and adapt to a variety of situations of communicative language use. However, the results of the consultation cannot be regarded as being representative.

There is a need for further studies, for continuous consultation of employers and graduates as well as for research into the actual use of foreign languages in different job situations in different Member States and regions. In this context, another important aspect of the consultation should be highlighted. In designing the questionnaires, working group members were at pains to link foreign language skills and competences to perceived situations of communicative language use. From this it follows that it will be important to develop a common language for consultation between higher education experts and stakeholder representatives, couched in work-related 'can-do' statements. This would be an important step towards the identification and description of learning outcomes for higher education foreign language modules. Of course, it will be the task of language experts to interpret the results of consultations and research and to make sure that provision is not geared to specific short-term needs of individual employers.

### 3. Consultation and collaboration

It is now agreed that higher education has to contribute to society; hence there is a growing awareness of the importance of and the need for structured consultation and collaboration between employers and educational institutions to bridge the gap between study and work. This trend has been given particular impetus by the Bologna process. The creation of the European higher education area designed to accompany and complement political, social and economic European integration aims at, among other things, the creation of a dynamic, internationally competitive European knowledge-based society, thus putting greater emphasis on the professional relevance of knowledge, skills and competences acquired by higher education students.

The consultation, and the discussions held at the Copenhagen and Rennes Conference workshops highlighted the fact, and thereby confirmed the assumption underlying the entire TNP, that structured consultation between universities and employers is in the interest of both sides. Through this process, the universities can reach a clearer understanding of the (perceived) needs of the world of work, while employers are guided to reflect in a more informed manner on the needs of their companies. The descriptions of work-related situations of communicative language use prepared within sub-project 2 are a clear case in point. Members of the sub-project 2 working group were encouraged – many of them for the first time - to reflect on the use of foreign languages in work-related situations, and they were able to describe the work-related use of foreign-languages in a manner that was comprehensible to employers and graduates across Europe. The quite specific 'can-do' questions on which the questionnaires were based made it possible for respondents to give clear answers, and for the analysis of the data to establish interesting and relevant information about the ranking of and the importance attached to individual skills and competences in a variety of work situations and for different languages. The consultation also demonstrated that it is important for universities to track their graduates' careers, as in a globalised world of work young graduates often find employment in other Member States or, indeed, in other parts of the world, rather than in the region in which a given university is located.

What needs to come next is the development of sets of work-related, professionally relevant descriptors of language and language-related skills and competences based

on the Council of Europe's Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), and aligned to the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning (EQF) and the Framework for Qualifications of the EHEA.

#### **4. Identification of new needs and challenges**

For the first time ever, TNP3 sub-project 2 undertook a Europe-wide effort to relate higher education foreign language learning and teaching to the concrete use of foreign languages in the world of work, and it succeeded in creating a basis for communication and consultation between universities and the world of work about the linguistic and intercultural skills and competences required of graduates in professional contexts. The challenges that now need to be tackled can be described as follows.

- Universities need to take a fresh look at their provision in foreign languages. Taking what is known about the use of foreign languages in professional environments as a starting point, they need to define the learning outcomes of their offerings in terms of generic and language-specific skills and competences, including clear descriptions of action-oriented speaking, writing, reading and listening skills.
- In describing the learning outcomes of their foreign language offerings, universities should use a language based on the CEFR and the EQF – and possibly national qualifications frameworks –, incorporating the detailed descriptions of situations of professional language use developed for the questionnaires used in the Europe-wide consultation, and paying particular attention to the prioritised situations.
- The CEFR contains quite detailed descriptors formulated in terms of 'can-do' statements. The results of sub-project 2 activities seem to indicate that the main challenge for universities is to adjust and expand these skill-specific level descriptors, rather than to invent totally new sets of descriptors. In other words, the challenge for universities seems to be to make sure that their study programme descriptions detail levels of competence as regards:
  - general academic skills and competences, related to the level descriptors of pertinent qualifications frameworks (first-, second-, and third level programmes)
  - generic language skills, including the ability to use the full range of language resources, including IT-based resources, in performing language tasks
  - cross-cultural skills and generic language learning competences
  - language-specific skills and competences
  - specific, i.e. professional skills and competences – depending on programme
  - IT-skills – important for anyone engaged in foreign language communication

## 5. Recommendations and project proposals

Given the heterogeneous nature of the thematic area of sub-project 2, it should be clear that the recommendations listed below cannot be directly and immediately implemented in universities across Europe. Rather, they should be seen as a framework for further discussions and developments inside universities and, perhaps even more important, for consultation between universities and external stakeholders regarding curriculum reform, pedagogical reform, and the integration of languages into university programmes in general.

- At present, language modules and offerings are typically based on content (input) rather than on output, i.e. on the skills and competences students are expected to have acquired by the end of a given programme or module and on the kind of professional tasks they are able to perform by applying the language and communication competences acquired. In line with the philosophy underlying the Bologna process, the paradigm of curriculum development should be changed; like all study programmes introduced within the Bologna structure, language modules and offerings should be designed from the learning outcomes end.
- A European project should be launched to be carried out by higher education language specialists in collaboration with employers and graduates for the development of sets of descriptors for language and intercultural skills and competences related to situations of professional language use, as well as for the development of a number of exemplary language modules.
- Universities should include foreign languages in their career tracking. They should question subsets of graduates at regular intervals about the use of foreign languages in professional contexts, and invite them to comment on the appropriateness or otherwise of the language training received at university. Information obtained in this way should be used for a regular revision of language offerings. Case studies of successful career tracking of this kind should be made available at European level.
- Needs analyses and studies should be undertaken on a regular basis in order to obtain robust information about language requirements in the various sectors of the labour market, including the public sector and international non-governmental organisations, and about language-related trends in the employment of university graduates. The information obtained in this way would provide additional reference points for curriculum development and innovation.
- As is argued elsewhere in this Report, demarcation lines between specialist and non-specialist professions are getting blurred. Since all students have to acquire language and language-related skills and competences sought after on the labour market, it is probably no longer useful to make sharp distinctions between language modules in modern language degree programmes, language modules studied in combination with non-language subjects (combined study programmes) and language study accompanying degree programmes. A high degree of professional orientation is required in all of them.

- At universities across Europe, students learn languages in higher education and in so doing, they make language choices. In institutions of higher education, decision-makers at various levels of management also make choices as to the range of languages which it is feasible to offer and the levels of interest at which it may be considered appropriate to offer particular languages and levels. However, little is known beyond the anecdotal about the factors which condition these choices. Are particular languages selected by students on the basis of tradition; perceived needs in the economy; family, school or peer influence; personal experience and interests such as holidays; perceived difficulty or accessibility of individual languages or current beliefs and trends in education? It is recommended that universities should base their decisions on language choice on consultations with employers, graduates and – students, and that they should inform students about the reasons underlying the choice of languages offered.

## Sub-project 3 : Languages as an interface between the different sectors of education

### 1. Aims and Issues of the Sub-project

**The Concept of Interface:** Sub-project 3 focused on a new concept in language learning and teaching. It dealt with issues concerning “interfaces” between the different sectors of education, interfaces having been referred to as points of contact, communication and cooperation between different actors/players in the process of language teaching and learning. They are junctions, where, on the one hand, different levels of language education intercept and where, on the other hand, different players, i.e. decision-makers and language providers both on the vertical axis of formal language education and on the horizontal axis of other language providers or language learning opportunities (could) meet. We were interested in the modes, effects, issues and structures of interfacing, i.e. if and how teachers at different levels, learners, stakeholders and any other partners cooperate and communicate with HEI in order to ensure the common goal of enhancing and improving language learning and multilingualism in a lifelong learning (LL) perspective.

**Rationales for the New Concept:** In spite of the fact that the learning of languages is generally acknowledged to be a lifelong process par excellence and in spite of the various instruments being developed and actions undertaken at European level to ensure more effective, transparent and comparable language learning results Europe wide (e.g. the Council of Europe’s *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)* and *European Language Portfolio (ELP)*), language specialists working in the different sectors of education are largely unaware of each other, as are the different sectors of education, the decision-makers and other providers. The goal of the sub-project was to look into the practices and experiences of successful interlinking, to detect and analyse the needs and possibilities where cooperation is not yet in place and could bring about synergetic effects, and to demonstrate how communication between the different players would benefit learners, institutions and countries in order *for their citizens to attain the goal of mastering at least 1+2 languages*. This goal is linked to general European endeavours: the raising of employability through mobility, the creation of social cohesion, and the fostering of the European dimension.

**General themes and aims:** Three main issues were at the very heart of the subproject’s activities, reports, analyses and recommendations:

- Facilitating the *continuity of language learning (and teaching)* by making it more coherent and efficient, a goal to be attained by removing obstacles to smooth progression and to transparent and efficient learning paths.
- Thus making space and enhancing motivation for learning more languages, *enhancing multilingualism* and attaining the European goal of every citizen speaking at least 2 foreign languages in addition to his or her first one.
- Fostering individual and collective language awareness processes in the *lifelong learning perspective*.

The new perspective is linked to the orientation towards *outcomes*: in language learning the outcome of the learning process *must also be defined in terms of competences*, i. e. the ability to apply knowledge. This is of primary importance for the individual learner and for professionals in language teaching. With every step of their paths towards multilingualism, learners should be able to check the levels of competence reached, and accordingly should be able to choose from a large set of offerings to continue efficiently and without unnecessary delay in the direction set and with the languages they decided to learn or improve. In order to ensure such a transparent, efficient, individually diverse, therefore satisfactory linguistic progression, professionals from diverse sectors of the language industry and decision-makers are expected to step out, talk to one another and by concentrating on the outcomes of learning processes, optimize the results of their common endeavours. Such an approach will result in raising awareness for learning languages and making European citizens see the advantages of knowing more languages as well as the need to take them up at different stages of their lives.

**Role of higher education institutions (HEIs) in this process:** One of the main objectives of the sub-project was to identify the role of HEIs in these processes. As HEIs occupy a central position in the process of lifelong learning, both in terms of provision for the language learner and of producing the human resources needed for language education, they should take a leading role in designing language learning scenarios encompassing the whole spectrum of language learning. We wanted to find out how HEI might step in, take up, stimulate and initiate interface activities.

## 2. Outline of the Activities and the Course of the Sub-project

In the course of work on the sub-project the following main activities were carried out and the following results achieved:

**Stage 1:** Introduction, clarification and identification of relevant issues concerning “interfaces”; decisions on the structure of the national reports dealing with the mapping of existing and needed interfaces, reports on possibly existing examples of good practise. Product: National Reports (NR) and questionnaires on existing interfaces at the national level.

**Stage 2:** On the basis of the national reports a synthesis report (SR) was produced, discussed and evaluated; it was used as a reference paper for the production of a questionnaire to be used in a Europe-wide consultation. The questionnaire was translated and a list of respondents was produced: Products: Synthesis Report (SR), workshop reports, questionnaires in 11 languages.

**Stage 3:** The results of the consultation confirmed a number of assumptions and added valuable information. On the basis of all three stages recommendations and proposals were formulated and discussed at workshops. Products: Consultation results, recommendations and proposals, Final Report.

### 3. Mapping of Interfaces

We started from the assumption that on one hand consultations were already going on between players but that they were not noticed or generally known, so that they would have to be detected and mapped. In order to make the NR comparable and to get a clearer overview of the various kinds of overlap, the different sectors of education and the various FL teaching providers were structured into a system of co-ordinates. The vertical axis represents the three (or more) levels of the formal educational systems. The horizontal axis brings together all the other formal or informal language providers, such as adult education institutions, foreign cultural institutes, language schools and private language institutions as well as distance learning and e-learning organisations. This was necessary because of the identified heterogeneity and striking diversity in all areas of foreign language (FL) teaching and learning.

**Vertical axis: the formal educational sectors and their cooperation and communication with HEI:** As universities or similar types of HEIs provide the training for FL teachers, cooperation with practitioners on the whole vertical axis, from pre-elementary to upper secondary, including vocational education and training, should be guaranteed. Needless to say, the main issues here are to enhance the quality of FL teaching and training; this can only be ensured if there is an ongoing and continuous dialogue between the partners, school teachers being stimulated to express their needs, problems and experiences, and university people to devise methods and ways to overcome and solve detected problem areas. Theory and practice must be interlocked and also linked to the needs of the social environment they are part of. In order to guarantee smooth progression and continuity of learning without disturbing breaks, higher efficiency and quality, all educational sectors have to cooperate in the following tasks: curriculum design (for all sectors, including higher education), entry and exit qualifications, validation and recognition, policy development, in-service training, student practice or trainees (and mentorship), teaching and assessment methods, esp. with IT support, development of teaching materials, implementation of European tools, i.e. CEFR and language portfolios, change of social awareness of the necessity of FL in the life-long perspective, and the promotion of FL learning. In all the above areas some kind of cooperation and communication between HEIs and the other sectors of formal education could be detected throughout Europe in the countries described. Nevertheless, even if numerous structural interfaces, points and ways of cooperation and communication between the partners engaged in FL do exist, they are either undetected, scattered, have a reduced range of impact, are limited in numbers, size and effect or are not exploited to their full potential. Here HEIs could step in and improve matters. Where close contacts between university and school teachers traditionally exist, e.g. via mentoring students in pedagogical practice or via in-service training, offered by HEIs, these are confined to solving concrete problems and are rarely used to discuss and set about general improvements to the benefit of all. This is especially true for the most important interface between Upper Secondary and Higher Education.

**Horizontal axis: cooperation and communication of HEIs with other FL providers:** The introduction of a horizontal axis of FL teaching and learning into the subproject, i.e. the mapping of and interest in all the various providers not included in formal

education, from language schools to producers of materials and resources, goes back to several changes in perspective. The Lisbon agenda and the Bologna process focus on employability and so a large part of FL graduates engage in activities and find jobs outside formal education. Therefore, it must be in the interest of all the three parties involved – students, HEIs and future employers – to cooperate in order either to adjust university curricula according to the demands and needs of the adult FL education sector or to design additional modules, offering knowledge and the development of competences necessary for a successful integration into the many niches of FL teaching and as a response to the emerging new profiles in FL teaching and other related professions. The outcome-driven view of education introduces all kinds of possible recognition and validation of informal, experiential learning. Communication between the different FL providers and HEIs can ensure better motivation for FL learning as well as the use of a common framework and common assessment methods by applying tools developed at European level (CEFR, portfolios). The increasingly individualized approach to teaching and learning, the demand for a broader range of languages offered and the diminishing financial means in HEIs prompt task sharing with external language providers. Coordination of assessment criteria, of exit and entrance qualifications, as well as of curricula according to European tools can make progression easier, enhance motivation for FL learning and promote multilingualism. Communication and coordination with producers of teaching materials, e-learning and other resources within HEIs that in general up to now have worked only on an individual level would make FL learning more efficient, stimulate autonomous learning, guarantee smoother progression, and benefit all parties involved.

Despite the differences in educational systems, we gained enough insight to produce a needs analysis, a questionnaire for our consultation, a set of recommendations and a number of project proposals.

#### **4. Needs Analysis and Consultation**

The mapping of interfaces on the vertical and horizontal axis identified numerous needs that can be roughly integrated into the following groups:

**Development of new interfaces:** Examples of countries and institutions with comprehensive FL policies and/or consultation bodies demonstrate successful implementation of FL learning goals by regular and established communication between the sectors. Therefore, the development and implementation of comprehensive and transparent FL policies, action plans and guidelines at all levels of education in the lifelong learning perspective are necessary as well as consultation bodies between HEI, schools, learners, employers and administrative structures. The setting up and funding of a central body to coordinate research projects in language learning, teaching and applied research between the different sectors of education and other stakeholders from the regional to the European levels should be compulsory and would ensure efficient dissemination of results and a higher level of FL teaching and learning in all countries.

**Use and expansion of existing interfaces:** The mapping identified numerous interfaces that could be functionalised to address and implement the initially set common goals by consolidating, enhancing, disseminating, promoting, expanding and funding them. Expansion of cooperation and communication along the LL line towards early learning

on the one hand and adult learning on the other is a priority of most NR and was also stressed in all discussions and workshops.

**Smooth transitions and quality assurance and enhancement:** One of the central deficiencies in FL teaching and learning, especially in formal education, but also on the horizontal axis is its lack of continuity, transparency and efficient progression. Promotion, dissemination and implementation of the CEFR and ELP for all levels and all FL providers could improve matters and bring about important psychological and social side-effects. Cooperation as a quality regulator and a tool to enhance and ensure quality of FL teachers at all levels should be introduced. The creation of a European FL Teacher Label and regular assessment procedures are to be stimulated as well as teacher mobility and professional development at all levels.

**Europe-wide consultation and its results:** In contrast to the two other sub-projects, the survey of sub-project 3 addressed a defined range of respondents according to the mapping structure, above all persons dealing with languages on the vertical and horizontal axes of education as well as in decision-making bodies. The respondents mostly came from educational institutions: all sectors of formal education from kindergarten to universities were included as well as other sectors of language provision from adult education, language schools, cultural institutes to publishing houses. In its first section the questionnaire dealt with the central question of the respondents' view of the importance of an exchange of experiences, cooperation and communication between HEIs and other sectors of education in general and in language education in particular as well as with their opinion of the tasks HEIs should take on when interfacing with the other sectors of language education. Not surprisingly, but nevertheless largely beyond expectations, 95% of the respondents (2/3 very important and 1/3 important) stated the paramount importance of cooperation and communication and the leading role HEIs have to play in ensuring progression and dialogue. Even if mostly the traditional roles of HEI as initiators, organisers, producers of material, active partners in cooperation as well as producers and providers of knowledge, were stressed, it becomes clear that HEI have to open up and fulfil the trust set in them by the other sectors and stakeholders of language teaching and learning. The message here is clear: HEI should take a leading role in bringing together people concerned with language issues, but in doing so they have to consider and take up the experiences and needs of other language providers as well as the possibilities they offer.

The next section listed 15 areas and types of possible cooperation and communication between the different sectors of education and tried to establish the extent of already existing ones as well as the need to strengthen them or to initiate new ones. The slight discrepancies in the results indicated in this section, developed in the next section, dealing with the continuity of language learning and the use of common European standards, into discernable conflicts between intention and implementation, wish and reality, theory and practice. The final section especially focused on the lifelong language learning perspective.

The overall impression given by the quantitative and qualitative data available from the consultation leads to some general comments and consequently to some important questions to be addressed in the recommendations:

- A sharp contrast between enthusiastic expression of intent and willingness as well as competence to implement the addressed issues cannot be overlooked, which leads to the question *how partners and stakeholders could be motivated to remove obstacles and to talk to one another*.
- There is a *remarkable lack of knowledge and thus a need for better information about European policies, initiatives, standards, tools and practices, such as the CEFR, the ELP and the EU's lifelong learning policy, and of existing examples of working interfaces, cooperation and communication between different language providers and stakeholders*. This raises the question as to how language awareness can be enhanced and information and good practice be disseminated.
- As most of the respondents of the consultation were people interested in language issues and informed about them, the *need for innovative thinking in language education is even more striking*. Thus, the question arises how language providers can be motivated to take up new ideas in the perspectives of LLLL and multilingualism.

## 5. Recommendations and project proposals

**General recommendations:** In the course of action in all three stages of the sub-project a substantial number of needs was identified and solutions were formulated. They should be implemented through enhanced, stressed and efficient communication and collaboration between the different sectors of FL provision and can be found in the NR, SR and Final Report. The following recommendations are to be understood as their common denominator and are the result of a difficult selection process:

*HEI are supposed to take a leading role in all areas relevant to the interface issues: They should initiate and enhance cooperation and communication between different language providers and stakeholders. They should inform and disseminate European initiatives, standards and tools BUT they have to address relevant issues of teachers' daily practice, have to listen to the other providers' problems, needs and resources and have to include and motivate experiences from other sectors. They should come up with and disseminate innovative solutions, especially on how to attain synergy effects by interfacing.*

The set goals could be reached by enabling, creating and supporting interfacing via

- regional and local networking,
- new modules and curricula for areas lacking in cooperation and communication with the relevant players in the other sectors of education,
- changing of in-service training,
- stimulating the creation of contact points, bodies for communication,
- transfer of knowledge and collective problem solving.

Motivation seems not to be lacking, willingness for change cannot be doubted and should be exploited.

**Project Proposals:** According to the needs analysis and the above recommendations the sub-project identified a large number of project themes, but the following were chosen and developed as priorities:

**Development project 1:** The CEFR as a general tool to evaluate language competencies across borders as well as different levels of education and sectors of work.

**Development project 2:** Creation of educational language networks, in which a certain number of HE institutions, schools and educational authorities from the same area participate.

**Development project 3:** Creation of a network of centres, provisionally called “Comenius Competence Centres”, to enhance the quality of language learning and teaching through cooperation between sectors, through collection of examples of good practice and through dissemination of these examples.

**(Curriculum) development project 4:** Fostering early foreign language learning through continuing education (in-service training) for teachers of young learners (Master’s programme).

**(Curriculum) development project 5:** Development of modules and/or a European master’s programme aimed at the professional development of language teachers active in the adult provider sector, in HEIs, cultural institutions, language centres, material development institutions and other language providing organisations.

Development project 6: Use of and access to native speakers in language education, at all levels from kindergarten to HEIs.

**Development project 7:** Continuous professional development of teaching staff with a special focus on novice teachers.

**Research needs:** Besides the proposal for a concrete research project, dealing with the effectiveness of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) on various levels of education in different regions in Europe, research needs were identified and recommendations formulated to underpin and accompany the developments described above. Applied research in the area of FL interfacing, in most countries a striking deficit, is yet surfacing. The envisaged research projects have to reflect cooperation between educational sectors and should preferably be designed as comparative studies and combine quantitative and qualitative analyses of the effects of successful interfacing, be it on the structural level or in the smooth progression of FL learning paths.

## Rapport du groupe de travail « Education et recherche »

### Rappel du mandat

Le groupe « Education et recherche » avait pour but de collaborer à l'identification de questions de recherche issues des rapports nationaux et des rapports de synthèse des trois sous-groupes du TNP3, ainsi que de participer au développement de scénarios de recherche. Des recherches susceptibles de promouvoir les buts du TNP en y impliquant les organes de recherche tant européens que nationaux.

### Démarche

Suite à l'identification des besoins de recherche, à leur mise en discussion lors de la Conférence de Copenhague et à leur reformulation dans une réflexion conjointe du groupe de travail « Education et recherche » et de représentants des trois sous-groupes du TNP, des scénarios de recherche ont été développés autour des thématiques sélectionnées. Questions de recherche et scénarios qui ont été présentés et discutés lors de la Conférence de clôture de Rennes.

Il est important de souligner que la sélection et le développement des propositions de recherche ont été largement influencés par l'évolution du contexte de la recherche, et en particulier par les différentes phases préparatoires du FP 7 et le démarrage des deux projets « langues » DYLAN et LINEE dans le cadre du FP6. Les recherches issues du TNP doivent contribuer à combler des secteurs encore inexplorés ou insuffisamment explorés en matière de programmes de formation en langues ou liés aux langues, tout en s'inscrivant en continuité et en complémentarité dans le champ de la recherche européenne.

Ainsi, les esquisses proposées devaient-elles répondre à un triple défi - thématique, méthodologique et structurel, au sens où il s'agissait de proposer de nouvelles questions de recherche à partir de nouvelles formes de recherche et de nouveaux réseaux de chercheurs.

### Questions de recherche

- **« Mediation needs in a changing multilingual environment »** : vise à évaluer les nouveaux besoins dans le champ de la médiation linguistique, résultant de l'intégration et de l'expansion européennes ainsi que de la globalisation, et à faire des recommandations sur les moyens de répondre à ces besoins.
- **« The effectiveness of content and language integrated learning (CLIL) on various levels of education through different regions in Europe »** doit apporter de nouveaux arguments scientifiques au développement des méthodes

CLIL, et en particulier concernant les variables en jeu, telles que le contexte linguistique et géopolitique, l'âge et les disciplines impliquées.

- « **Factors which condition language choices by students** » vise à apporter de nouvelles connaissances sur les critères guidant les choix de langues par les étudiants, afin de donner aux hautes écoles les moyens d'une politique linguistique plus informée.
- « **The challenge of multilingualism for sustainable development** » a pour objectif de montrer en quoi la prise en compte de la diversité des langues et des modes de communiquer dans la question du développement durable permet d'envisager une nouvelle forme de qualité, aussi bien en termes conceptuels qu'en termes stratégiques.
- « **The challenge of multilingualism for knowledge production, transfer and application** » constitue un objet émergent à l'intersection des champs disciplinaires, visant à saisir et à exploiter l'impact de la diversité des modes discursifs dans le traitement des connaissances.

Que ce soit en termes de médiation, d'intégration, de choix, de développement ou de connaissances, les questions envisagées appellent toutes des recherches transversales impliquant :

- le décloisonnement des disciplines, aussi bien au sein des sciences humaines et sociales qu'avec les sciences de la nature,
- le décloisonnement de la recherche, sous la forme de recherches « policy-driven », de recherche orientée ou de recherche action avec les secteurs public et professionnel,
- ainsi que le décloisonnement des chercheurs eux-mêmes, devant apprendre à s'engager ensemble dès le départ sur des objets émergeant à la frontière des disciplines.

## Multiannual Action Plan (2007-2010)

### The role of the Conseil Européen pour les Langues / European Language Council (CEL/ELC)

Like the previous Erasmus Thematic Network projects in the area of languages, TNP3 was launched from within the Conseil Européen pour les Langues / European Language Council (CEL/ELC), a permanent international non-profit association linking some 160 higher education institutions and associations in Europe and beyond. The CEL/ELC has also had a major role in disseminating the outcomes of the Thematic Network projects among its members and beyond, and in preparing the ground for development and research projects building on the TNs.

At its latest meeting (Berlin, 28 January 2007), the CEL/ELC Board discussed the question as to how the momentum generated by TNP3 and its predecessors could be maintained and further developed in the next few years. The Board agreed to launch a number of European projects – notably under the LLP -, which are to build on the outcomes of TNP2 and TNP3, and of the ENLU project.<sup>1</sup>

The CEL/ELC's articles of association are currently being amended to permit the admission of companies as full members and of individuals as associate members. A further expansion of membership to include local or regional language networks is currently being considered.

As a result of these amendments, current and future corporate and individual members of the virtual consortium of stakeholders created during the final stage of TNP3 will be able to become CEL/ELC members; this will facilitate their participation in future CEL/ELC initiatives and projects.

The following initiatives have been launched, or are going to be launched in the foreseeable future.

### New networks

#### I. *Network for the decentralised and centralised dissemination of TNP3 results and outcomes (TNP3-D) (2006-2007)*

The principal outputs foreseen are

- I.1 four regional dissemination conferences (Aarhus, DK; Braga, PT; Southampton, UK; Warsaw, PL) and a European Conference (Brussels);
- I.2 two dissemination documents: (i) a document, written in non-specialist language, summarising the principal TNP3 findings and outcomes; (ii) regional synthesis papers;

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<sup>1</sup> ENLU – European Network for the Promotion of Language Learning Among All Undergraduates (2003-2006) was launched under the Call for Proposals DG EAC/45/03.

I.3 a Web site, designed to (i) announce, and facilitate registration for conferences; (ii) disseminate project documents, and to direct visitors to other pertinent Web sites; (iii) invite project-external experts to submit case studies for publication on Web site.

II. *LANQUA – Erasmus network for the development of standards of quality assurance in the area of languages (2007-2010)*

Application to be prepared and submitted by the University of Southampton, UK.

LANQUA is to further develop work undertaken in TNP2 (notably in sub-project 2) and in TNP3. LANQUA will produce a reference document, a series of relevant case studies and a set of recommendations designed to help improve the quality of provision in five sub-areas (intercultural communication in the language curriculum; language teacher education; CLIL in higher education; literary and cultural studies; language learning).

III. *MOLAN – LLP/KA2 Network of good practice designed to motivate language learners (2007-2010)*

The network will link higher education institutions, schools, cultural institutes, and education authorities which have developed language policies and/or have designed and put in place practices that have motivated young Europeans to learn languages.

Application to be prepared and submitted by the Freie Universität Berlin, DE.

MOLAN is to build on outcomes of the ENLU project and of TNP3 (notably sub-projects 2 and 3). It will seek to undertake the following activities:

III.1 Collect, process, and disseminate case studies of successful and innovative policies and practices.

III.2 Prepare a handbook on strategies designed to motivate young Europeans to learn languages.

III.3 Organise workshops for the presentation for discussion of recommendations and case studies.

III.4 Encourage the creation of local, sub-regional, and regional language learning networks.

### **Curriculum development projects**

IV. *MULTICOM – Erasmus Multilateral (CD) Project for the development and implementation of first-cycle curricula for multilingual communication (2007-2010)*

The project is a direct outcome of TNP3 sub-project 1.

Application to be prepared and submitted by Université Rennes 2, FR.

V. *An Erasmus Multilateral (CD) Project for the development of continuing education modules for language specialists (2008- )*

The project is to build on the outcomes of TNP3 sub-project 1. It is to be carried out jointly by CEL/ELC member institutions with special expertise in this matter and C.I.U.T.I.

VI. *An Erasmus Multilateral (CD) Project for the development of sets of descriptors for language and intercultural skills and competences related to situations of professional language use, and for the development of a number of exemplary language modules anchored in these descriptors (2008- )*

The project is to be carried out jointly by higher education institutions and enterprises; it will also involve HE graduates.

### **Research projects**

A number of CEL/ELC member institutions are partners in the DYLAN Integrated Project (FP6, Priority 7) (2006-2011). TNP3 experts are currently engaged in exploring opportunities for funding under FP7. Further opportunities may arise in the wake of the publication of the final report of the High Level Group on Multilingualism. At this stage, it is impossible to provide dates for the launch of the projects envisaged



