

National Report Of Cyprus On Curriculum Innovation (revised final report; submitted on December 17th, 2001) Submitted by Andreas Papapavlou, University of Cyprus

1. Introduction

The Republic of Cyprus was established in 1960 after receiving its independence from British rule that lasted for almost one hundred years. The 1960 constitution declares two languages as the official languages of the Republic: Greek and Turkish (the languages of the two main communities whose population reaches nearly one million). In addition to these two large communities, three other smaller communities (of less than three thousand members in each) live on the island; the Armenians, the Maronites and the Latini (of Franco-Catholic background). The first two of these communities maintain their 'ethnic' language through their own schools and the Latini adopted, long ago, Greek as their native language. Also, there is a large English-speaking expatriate (mainly British) community living on the island. The majority of the population in Cyprus has a good command of English and in some cases of French and German (for the long history of Cyprus that goes back for **nine thousand years** see Hill, G. *A History of Cyprus*, 4 Vols., Cambridge University Press, 1940-1952 and for more recent developments see Joseph, J. *Cyprus: Ethnic Conflict and International Politics*, McMillan – St. Martin's Press, 1997).

1.1. The system of higher education

Education in Cyprus (on primary level, six years; secondary, three years; Lyceum, three years and university, four years) is offered free by the state to all Cypriot citizens and residents of Cyprus.

Prior to the establishment of the **University of Cyprus** (UCy) in 1989, the first state-funded university on the island, there were several institutions of tertiary education, both state and private, offering post-secondary qualifications. The major state institutions of tertiary education are: The **Pedagogical Academy** (established before the independence of the island and its main function was to prepare primary-school teachers). With the establishment of UCy the PA ceased to exist and the training of nursery and primary-school teachers is assumed by the Department of Education of UCy; The **Pedagogical Institute** (offering in-service training for recently hired high-school teachers); the **Higher Technical Institute** (established in the early 1970's and offers degrees up to the HND in various technological fields); the **College of Tourism** and the **Forestry College**. In some of these state institutes or state colleges the language of instruction is Greek and in some is English. In addition, there are nearly thirty private colleges (some established as early as the 1960's) that offer post-secondary qualifications in various vocational, professional and academic fields. All these private colleges are registered with the Ministry of Education and Culture but not all of them received programme accreditation. Some of the major colleges are: **Intercollege**, **Cyprus College**, **Phillips College** and the **Frederick Institute of Technology**. These colleges offer degree programmes, both academic and professional (on the Bachelor's level) that received accreditation.

The University of Cyprus admitted its first students in 1992 and the current population is over 3000 students. UCy is a member of a number of international university organisations and networks. The main objectives of UCy are twofold: the promotion of scholarship and education through teaching and research, and the enhancement of the cultural, social and economic development of Cyprus. The languages of instruction at UCy on the undergraduate level are Greek and Turkish (at present there are no Turkish students attending UCy) and on the graduate level English is used in some programmes. UCy offers degrees on all levels, (BA, obtained after four years of full-time study, MA, two years, & PhD, four years) in about twenty different areas of specialisation (for further information, you can visit UCy's web page at:

<http://www.ucy.ac.cy>). It is of interest to note that although the first university on the island was established in the early 1990s, Cyprus is the **third** country in the world (after the US and Canada) with citizens holding a university degree (obtained from universities from as many as thirty different countries all over the world).

1.1.1. Recent changes in the system of higher education

Recent changes in the system of higher education in Cyprus came about with (a) the establishment of the University of Cyprus and (b) the implementation of the Law governing the accreditation of Private Institutions of Higher Education. First, UCy was founded in response to the growing intellectual needs of the people of Cyprus and is well placed to fulfil the numerous aspirations of the country. Second, the Law governing the accreditation of Private Institutions (implemented in 1996) brought about some order into the system of private higher education on the island and provides the guidelines for the running of private colleges, their admission systems and sets the standards for granting academic degrees (for further information on the history and aims of accreditation of private institutions in Cyprus, you can visit their web page at: <http://www.moec.gov.cy>).

1.1.2. The impact of the Bologna Declaration

As yet, the Bologna Declaration did not have much impact on higher education in Cyprus. However, recently the issues arising from the Bologna Declaration are being considered by the academic community of Cyprus.

1.2. Identification of relevant changes in the social, political, cultural, professional and economic environments

Many of the social and cultural changes on the island came about after the Turkish invasion of 1974 and the division of the country in two parts; the Northern Occupied area and the Southern Free areas. Due to the large movement of the population (of around 200,000 Greek Cypriot refugees) from the north part of the island to the south, the 'forced' abandonment of rural life-style by many, the concentration of the majority of the population in major cities created many social problems. Also, in the early years after the invasion, the decrease in tourism, high levels of unemployment and immigration to other countries by some of the refugees aggravated the situation. In the last fifteen years or so, the economic situation improved tremendously, unemployment reached low levels and the employment of foreign workers became a necessity in certain domains. In July 1990 Cyprus applied to join the European Union, is making the

necessary adjustments in all endeavours in order to meet the criteria set by EU for entry in the union and anticipates to receive full membership around the year 2004. The political situation, however, remains the same due to the division of the island and the 'no-solution' state of affairs creates frustration among the population on both sides of the 'green line'.

LANGUAGE DEGREE PROGRAMMES

2. Innovations in language degree programmes offered by universities

As yet, only the University of Cyprus offers language degree programmes. One private college is in the process of introducing a language degree programmes in English Language and Literature but it needs a final approval from the Ministry of Education and Culture of Cyprus. Once this programme is approved by the Ministry then it has to go through the process of accreditation.

2.1 Traditional language programmes

The Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures of the University of Cyprus offers two language degree programmes. One in **English Language and Literature** and the other in **French Language and Literature**. The content, objectives, and structures of both programmes are almost identical. Both degrees require the completion of 129 credit hours. In addition, the department offers a Language Studies Programme to enable all students of all disciplines to satisfy UCy's foreign language requirement (9 credit hours). The programme currently offers courses in English, French, German, Italian and Spanish.

2.1.1 Content, objectives, and structures of programmes

The BA. Degree Programme in **English Language and Literature** is designed to provide students with: (a) a high level of communicative competence in the use of English; (b) the theoretical background necessary to understand the structure and use of language in general and of the English language in particular; (c) the ability to use knowledge of linguistics and the English language in research and teaching, (d) knowledge of literature of English-speaking peoples, and of its historical and cultural background; major writers and literary movements and; (e) the ability to critically analyse and evaluate literary texts and understand how literature articulates perspectives on historical, social and cultural realities. To achieve these objectives, the programme offers a range of courses in language development, theoretical and applied linguistics, translation studies, literature, its history and culture, research methodology and teaching methodology. The department also has a Linguistics Laboratory, fully-equipped for research and teaching in phonetics, laboratory phonology, psycholinguistics, dialectology, second language learning and testing (for details see <http://www.ucy.ac.cy/faculty/amalia/html/linglab.html>)

2.1.2 Career prospects for graduates

Students who complete the B.A. Degree Programme in English Language and Literature and the B.A in French Language and Literature may (1) pursue a career in teaching, professional translation, public or foreign service, and media and communication; or (2) undertake graduate studies in a wide variety of areas including British, American or Comparative Literature, French Literature, Literary Theory, Cultural Studies, Theoretical and Applied Linguistics, Theatre Studies, Media and Communication Studies.

2.1.3 Recent changes in content, objectives, and/or structure of programmes

Some of the recent changes in the programme are: (a) reduction in the number of required courses, (b) increase in the number of elective courses, (c) more flexibility in choosing from either the Linguistics or the Literature components of the degree programmes, and (d) more emphasis is given on the Teaching Methodology and Translation studies component.

2.1.4 Examples of good practice

Among the good practices are: (a) an approach to teaching that is more student-oriented, (b) less emphasis of accumulating information, (c) more emphasis on critical thinking, (d) more emphasis in understanding and accepting different cultural views, and (e) less emphasis on issues (historical, etc.) that foster ethnocentric thinking.

2.1.5. Reasons underlying these changes

These changes reflect the necessity to accommodate students' needs, provide more flexibility in the choice of specialisation (areas of concentration). These curricula modifications are also in accordance with the greater changes taking places in modern societies.

2.1.6. Identification of needs

2.1.6.1. Seen in relation to the development of language studies

The following needs have been identified for further development of the Language Degree Programmes offered by UCy: (a) **student mobility**; that is, our students need to spend at least one semester in the country where the language under study (either English or French) is the native language of its inhabitants, (b) **students' sensitivity** to other cultures; this can be achieved by either having Cypriot students spend time with members of other cultures or by inviting students from other cultures to spend some time with our own students, and (c) **work experience** ; that is, provide opportunities for our students to gain some relevant experience (in places like Language Institutes, Off-shore companies, Banks, Hotels, etc).

2.1.6.2. Seen in relation to non-academic requirements

Possibly provide facilities (dormitories, flats, etc) that will make student and faculty exchanges much easier.

- 2.1.7. Measures to be taken at institutional, regional, national, and European level to meet the needs identified

Provide incentives (stipends, grants) for student and faculty exchanges. Different countries can invite students from other places to attend some of their national celebrations in order to help them understand the importance and significance (if any) of such events for a given country.

- 2.1.7.1. At first-degree level

The suggestions made above are useful for first-degree level programmes

- 2.1.7.2. At postgraduate level

The suggestions made above are useful for postgraduate level programmes. In addition, making university library facilities available to students and scholars from other countries can enhance scholarship and research collaboration.

2.2. 'Alternative' programmes (Applied Language Studies, Cultural Studies, etc.)

Strictly speaking, there are no 'alternative' language programmes offered in Cyprus either by UCy or by the private colleges. One private college is offering a degree programme in European Studies to a small number of students. At the department of Foreign Languages and Literatures of UCy several discussions took place and several proposals were made for offering a degree in European Studies. These proposals were not received positively by the Planning Bureau of the Republic (that approves academic posts in the budget of the university). Certainly, this is an area that needs further discussion and possibly re-introducing the programme to the Government for further consideration.

One degree programme that can be characterised as an 'alternative' language programme is the degree offered by the Department of Turkish Studies of UCy in **Turkish Studies**. The aim of the Department is twofold: (a) to promote research and expand knowledge and (b) to transmit the fruits of these processes through teaching. Within a wide spectrum of regions and academic disciplines, the Department's aspirations centre on the following areas: (1) The Turkish language (the teaching of modern and Ottoman Turkish); (2) Islam (History, Philosophy, Law, Art); and (3) Ottoman Studies (Sources, History, Institutions, Literature); (4) Modern Turkey (History, Economy, Society, Literary and Linguistic Studies); (5) Cyprus (from the Ottoman conquest to the present); and (6) Greek-Turkish Relations (from the foundation of the Greek state onwards). The degree in **Turkish Studies** requires the completion of 129 credit hours and contains two directions: (a) **History and Politics**, and (b) **Linguistics and Literature**. Also the Department of Turkish Studies offers an MA (it requires the completion of 30 credit hours) and Ph.D (it requires four years of research) in the same directions (as those of the BA programme).

Also, within the area of 'alternative' language degree programmes we can classify the degree offered by the Department of Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies (one of three departments within the Faculty of Letters) of UCy. The Department covers subjects of Byzantine Philology, Modern Greek Literature, Theory of Literature, Comparative Literature, and Linguistics and

offers a Combined Honours B.A. in **Byzantine and Modern Greek Language and Literature**. The degree requires the completion of 129 credit hours.

Also, the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures of UCy is offering two post-graduate degree programmes that fall within the area of 'alternative' language programmes. These are: MA in **Applied Linguistics** (with emphasis on Language Learning and Teaching) and an MA in **English Literature and Comparative Cultural Studies**.

2.2.1. Content, objectives, and structures of programmes

The MA programme in **Applied Linguistics** is primarily designed for those interested in Applied Linguistics as an academic field and has the following main objectives: (a) to offer students a solid background in the main areas of Applied Linguistics, (b) to allow students to specialise in one of the areas of AL (such as Language Learning and Acquisition, Teaching Methodology, Language Use, Language Variation) and (c) to familiarise students with research in the field. The duration of the programme is 30 credit units. The programme is divided into two components: three semesters of taught courses, and a fourth semester of research leading to a dissertation.

The MA programme in **English Literature and Comparative Cultural Studies** aims at students who wish to undertake research in English Literature with a particular emphasis on cross-cultural and interdisciplinary perspectives. Courses engage with contemporary developments in cultural analysis in relation to the literary text, drawing from disciplines such as women's studies, psychology, anthropology, sociology, history and philosophy. The duration of the programme is four semesters and the minimum requirement is 30 credit units. The programme is divided into two components: three semesters of taught courses, and a fourth semester of research leading to a dissertation.

2.2.2. Career prospects for graduates

Teaching profession in secondary schools and private colleges, foreign service, and research.

2.2.3. Recent changes in content, objectives, and/or structure of programmes

Since these two MA Programmes are rather recent, there are no changes in the content and objectives of these programmes.

2.2.4. Examples of good practice

See earlier comments of good practice (section 2.1.4)

2.2.5. Reasons underlying these changes

There are no changes in the programmes

2.2.6. Identification of needs

Basically the same as those identified in the previous section (2.1.6).

2.2.6.1. Seen in relation to the development of language studies

Basically the same as those identified in the previous section (2.1.6.1).

2.2.6.2. Seen in relation to non-academic requirements

Basically the same as those identified in the previous section (2.1.6.2).

2.2.7 Measures to be taken at institutional, regional, national, and European level to meet the needs identified

Basically the same as those identified in the previous section (2.1.7).

2.2.7.1. At first-degree level

Basically the same as those identified in the previous section (2.1.7.1).

2.2.7.2. At postgraduate level

Basically the same as those identified in the previous section (2.1.7.2).

PROGRAMMES FOR LANGUAGE AND LANGUAGE RELATED PROFESSIONS

National Report of Cyprus, Parts 3 & 4

3 Innovations in the training of language teachers

3.1 Language teaching and learning in primary and secondary school education

Primary education in Cyprus begins at the age of six (or even as early as five and a half), it is for six years (six forms) and it is mandatory for all citizens and residents of the Republic. Secondary education is divided in two cycles; **Gymnasium** (junior high-school), for three years (grades 7th, 8th and 9th), which is mandatory, and the **Lyceum** (senior high-school), for three years (grades 10th, 11th, and 12th) which is optional. Education is provided free of charge for all levels. It must be pointed out that at present more than 90% of the student population of Cyprus complete both cycles, and more than 80% of this population continues on for further tertiary education either on the island or overseas. The language of instruction in state schools on all three levels (primary, gymnasium and lyceum) is Standard Modern Greek (one of the two official languages of the Republic). Although the native language of Greek Cypriots is the

Greek Cypriot dialect, teachers use Standard Greek in class (as part of the language policy of the government).

In addition to state schools, there are many **Private Schools** on the island offering primary and secondary private education (in the Nicosia area alone there are at least ten of these schools). The language of instruction for most of these institutions is English and for a few is French. The majority of the English-speaking schools offer British-style education and prepare their students mainly for exams such as the GCE Ordinary and GCE Advanced levels. There is also one primary and one secondary Armenian school which caters for the needs of the Armenian community. In addition, it is important to state that there are numerous **Private Language Institutes** which normally operate in the afternoons and offer private tuition in foreign languages, mainly English. These institutes are flourishing on the island and offer ample opportunities of employment for holders of language degrees.

For the Turkish Cypriot community - living in the Northern Occupied Areas of the island - the language of instruction is Turkish. Also foreign languages are taught in secondary education (no further detailed information can be provided in this report about the educational system of the Turkish Cypriot community since the area where this community lives is not accessible to the present writer).

The first foreign language, English, is introduced in the State Schools in the 4th form of primary school (around the age of nine) and continues to be taught in the Gymnasium and Lyceum. Thus, English is taught for at least 9 years; students who graduate from Lyceum are expected to reach the University of Cambridge First Certificate Proficiency Level. The second foreign language is French, it is introduced at the 7th grade (Gymnasium) and is taught for six years. Depending on students' orientation for tertiary education (kyklos spoudon), other foreign languages are also introduced in the in the Lyceum (currently German and Italian are taught).

3.2 Initial teacher training

3.1.1 Institutions responsible for training

The training of primary and pre-primary teachers is undertaken by the Education Department of UCy (one of the largest departments of the university). Prior to the establishment of UCy, the training of teachers was undertaken by the Pedagogical Academy (which started in 1937 and ceased to exist in 1992).

3.1.2 Content, objectives, and structures of programmes

It is a four-year programme, it is very competitive and it only accepts around 200 students every year; the best of Lyceum graduating students. For the Bachelor's degree in Elementary School Teaching or Kindergarten School Teaching, a student has to successfully complete 128 credit hours. The courses of the programme are divided into compulsory (60%) and elective courses (40%) in four main areas: Pedagogical sciences courses, Teaching methodology and student teaching courses, Content area courses and General education courses.

3.1.3 Career prospects for graduates

All graduates in primary education find a position immediately after graduation in the state primary schools and salaries are very attractive. The prospect for state employment for Pre-primary teachers is not as 'secure' as that in primary education. For those with degrees in disciplines other than primary education who are interested in receiving posts as secondary school teachers, normally they have to wait at least 10 to 20 years before they are hired by the state (most of those on the 'government waiting employment list' are working in private institutes).

3.1.4 Recent changes in content, objectives, and/or structure of programmes

Since the programmes (in primary and pre-primary) are rather new – only established in 1992 – very minor changes/revisions have taken place in these programmes.

3.1.5 Examples of good practice

3.1.6 Reasons underlying these changes

3.1.7 Identification of needs

3.1.7.1 Seen in relation to the development of language studies

3.1.7.2 Seen in relation to non-academic requirements

3.1.8 Measures to be taken at institutional, regional, national, and European level to meet the needs identified

3.1.8.1 At first-degree level

3.1.8.2 At postgraduate level

3.3. Continuing teacher education (in service)

It must be made clear in this section that primary and pre-primary school teachers (i.e., those graduating from the Department of Education of UCy or those coming from Greek Universities) do not need any further in service training when employed by the state. However, foreign language teachers (i.e., those with Bachelors' degrees in a foreign language) as well as those

employed as secondary school teachers in **all other disciplines** (for example maths, chemistry, biology, etc, etc) are obliged to receive appropriate in-service training.

3.3.1. Institutions responsible for training

The Pedagogical Institute of the Ministry of Education and Culture in collaboration with the Department of Education of UCy offer in-service training for those employed in Secondary and Technical Education in all disciplines, including the teaching of foreign languages. Although holders of Bachelors degrees (from UCy or from overseas universities) in foreign languages may have taken courses in teaching methodology and other related areas (as part of their degree programme), they are still required to receive in-service training in order to take up a post as state foreign language teachers.

3.3.2. Content, objectives, and structures of programmes

For language teachers, in service training entails the completion of such intensive courses as teaching methodology, testing and evaluation, psychology of language, educational technology and school experience. Similarly, for other disciplines (such as the teaching of biology, maths, etc), the in-service training that is offered is specifically designed for these subjects.

3.3.3. Recent changes in content, objectives, and/or structure of programmes

Given that these in service programmes are recently designed, not many changes have taken place in the last few years.

3.3.4. Examples of good practice

3.3.5. Reasons underlying these changes

3.3.6. Identification of needs

3.3.6.1. Seen in relation to the development of language studies

3.3.6.2. Seen in relation to non-academic requirements

3.3.7. Measures to be taken at institutional, regional, national, and European level to meet the needs identified

4. Innovations in the training of translators and interpreters

NOTE:

At present, there are **no** institutions on the island, either state or private, that offer training for translators and interpreters. The language degree programmes offered by the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures of UCy (currently in English and French), include some courses in translation as part of the degree programme. These courses, however, are insufficient to qualify the holders of these degrees as professional translators. The needs for translation and interpretation (for conferences, etc.) are covered by those holding degrees in translation and interpretation obtained from overseas universities (mainly from Greece). There is a private Association for Translators and Interpreters that has a number of qualified registered members. This private association holds annual seminars and workshops for further training of its members.

- 4.1. Description and analysis of the current spectrum of professional activities**
- 4.2. Institutions responsible for training**
- 4.3. Content, objectives, and structures of programmes**
 - 4.3.1 At first-degree level
 - 4.3.2 At postgraduate level
 - At the level of continuing education
- 4.4. Career prospects for graduates**
- 4.5. Recent changes in content, objectives, and/or structure of programmes**
 - 4.5.1 At first-degree level
 - 4.5.2 At postgraduate level
 - 4.5.3 At the level of continuing education
- 4.6. Examples of good practice**
- 4.7. Reasons underlying these changes**
- 4.8. Identification of needs**
 - 4.8.1 At first-degree level
 - 4.8.2 At postgraduate level
 - 4.8.3 At the level of continuing education
- 4.9.1. Measures to be taken at institutional, regional, national, and European level to meet the needs identified**
 - 4.9.1 At first-degree level
 - 4.9.2 At postgraduate level
 - 4.9.3 At the level of continuing education

PROVISION FOR STUDENTS OF OTHER DISCIPLINES

5. Innovations in language provision for students of other disciplines

NOTE: At present there are NO language studies programmes which are integrated into non-language programmes. The only programme that could be included in this category is the BA Programme in European Studies that UCy intends to offer in the near future. The programme combines the study of at least two languages, cultures and literatures with such disciplines as economics, management and political science.

- 5.1. Language studies integrated into non-language programmes**
 - 5.1.1 Content, objectives, and structures of programmes
 - 5.1.2 Recent changes in content, objectives, and/or structure of programmes
 - 5.1.3 Examples of good practice
 - 5.1.4 Reasons underlying these changes
 - 5.1.5 Identification of needs
 - 5.1.5.1. Seen in relation to the development of language studies
 - 5.1.5.2. Seen in relation to non-academic requirements
 - 5.1.6. Measures to be taken at institutional, regional, national, and European level to meet the needs identified
 - 5.1.6.1. At first-degree level
 - 5.1.6.2. At postgraduate level

5.2. General and subject-oriented language courses accompanying non-language programmes

- 5.2.1. Content, objectives, and structures of programmes
 - 5.2.2. Recent changes in content, objectives, and/or structure of programmes
 - 5.2.3. Examples of good practice
 - 5.2.4. Reasons underlying these changes
 - 5.2.5. Identification of needs
 - 5.2.5.1. Seen in relation to the development of language studies
 - 5.2.5.2. Seen in relation to non-academic requirements
 - 5.2.6. Measures to be taken at institutional, regional, national, and European level to meet the needs identified
 - 5.2.6.1. At first-degree level
 - 5.2.6.2. At postgraduate level
- ## **5.3. Language provision and support for mobile students**
- 5.3.1. For incoming students
 - 5.3.2. For outgoing students
- ## **5.4. Non-language programmes or parts of programmes taught through one or several other languages**
- 5.4.1. Disciplines involved
 - 5.4.2. Levels at which (parts of) programmes are taught
 - 5.4.3. Languages used
 - 5.4.4. Target groups (mobile students, home students et cetera)
 - 5.4.5. Policies and objectives underlying the practice described
 - 5.4.6. New measures propose

CONTINUING EDUCATION

6. Innovations in language studies in continuing education (excluding language specialists)

NOTE: There are no language studies offered either by the private or state sectors in **continuing education**. The Ministry of Education and Culture offers various evening courses in several languages and at different levels (English, French, Italian, German, Turkish, Arabic). These courses are geared toward adults but are not linked with specific degree programmes. Also in the area of continuing education, we may include courses for the study of the Greek Language offered by the Department of Byzantine and Greek studies of UCy. These courses are intended for those interested in studying at UCy (where the language of instruction is Greek). In addition, the various private institutions of Higher Education on the island offer evening courses in several languages but these course do not lead to BA degrees.

- 6.1. Target groups**
- 6.2. Content, objectives and structures of programmes and courses**
- 6.3. Recent developments**
- 6.4. Identification of new needs**
- 6.5. Measures proposed to meet the needs identified**