

BRITISH NATIONAL REPORT ON NEW LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS -THE EUROPEAN LEARNING SPACE

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This report owes a thank to staff at the Subject Centre for Languages, Linguistics, and Areas Studies, and to FDTL projects and their wealth of information which is widely available in various forms.

This author would like to apologise to colleagues in Universities in Wales and Scotland who may feel their good practices have not been fully represented. Given the time framework, the breadth of the report, and this author's prevalent experience of the English and Northern Ireland Higher Education practices, this report may read as slightly biased. This author welcomes any addition which can be integrated in the report at subsequent stages and can redress this bias.

Finally I would like to thank senior management in the Language Institute at the University of Hull for supporting my participation in TNPII.

1. General Introduction

Over the past decade, the education sector in the UK has undergone enormous changes in an effort to respond to the challenges posed by developments in the global and national economic, social and political systems. One of the key factors which has stimulated globalisation has been the rapid expansion of information technology which has resulted in increased demands for lifelong learning and labour mobility. Another consequence has been the need to open, and widen, participation to ensure a better skilled, and therefore more flexible, workforce. Such changes have had implications for higher education in the UK. They have affected the nature of the student population (in terms of age, prior knowledge and experience), the type of graduate skills, students' expectations of the facilities and learning modes, and the professional skills of teaching staff. Such changes have also raised new research questions whose investigation will allow a better understanding of the inter-relation between technological development, language and culture learning. The latter will also affect the way we design courses, interpret new learning spaces, interact as professionals and deal with the meaning of knowledge.

These changes have occurred parallel to demands for greater cost-effectiveness, to which the higher education sector has responded with a variety of solutions such as an increase in class sizes, a reduction in class contact time, a proliferation of multimedia environments (self-access and open learning centres) and a widespread introduction of online learning.

Whilst many of these changes are driven by strong economic reasons - both at government policy level and institutional level - there is a developed educational argument which 1. sees the advantages of more autonomy in learning as a vital component for the future effective functioning of the individual in society; 2. identifies the need for more varied, open and flexible structures to support autonomy - be they in the form of online learning spaces, self-access centres, the classroom or others.

If, on the one hand, there is the positive, philosophical impetus provided by the growing literature and practices of autonomous and open learning, on the other hand the advances in new technologies are often used as simplistic solutions by those who privilege the economic side of the argument.

The polarity of this argument is common to the establishment of self-access centres, virtual campuses, the development of many ODL programmes and the emergence of language learning advisers. This ambiguity will be present throughout this report and may accompany many developments which require change and transformation in attitudes and beliefs. Such tension impacts on the notions of knowledge and learning, and it affects professional profiles.

The centrality of this debate in British Higher Education has resulted in a number of political interventions in the form of 1. quality assessment activities and 2. commissioned inquiries whose results (re.1) and implementation of their recommendations (re.2) have affected and will affect the future of

language learning at all levels of the education sector. Some inquiries have had implications for funding allocation, national strategy and university policies with regards to language learning and new technologies, and had an impact on the creation and/or transformation of learning environments. The report has selected some areas of the inquiries directly relevant to the focus of this subgroup. Colleagues interested in a broader picture can access full reports electronically.

Finally, New Learning Environments embrace a wider definition than that of spaces emerging from the use of new technologies. They are also the result of different types of human resources, new expertise and different attitudes towards concepts of knowledge and learning. This report will attempt to cover this wider definition.

2. The role of New Learning Environments in language teaching and learning

It must be noted that when the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in the UK address the issue of language teaching and learning, the focus is on languages other than English. As a matter of fact the Higher Education Funding Councils for England (HEFCE) and Northern Ireland (DENI) in their Funding for the Development of Teaching and Learning (FDTL) schemes explicitly excluded EFL from their target audience. As a consequence, universities have ended up with a very fragmented, and at times divisive, situation whereby language departments/schools have concentrated on the provision of languages for specialists, whilst language centres have catered for students of other disciplines, have provided EFL tuition and maintained the teaching and learning facilities. In some cases, universities have developed EFL sections as completely independent units, or alternatively such units are attached to a Language Centre or are part of a Department/School. The reasons for such diversity of arrangements tend to be historical or financial, although in many cases it has been identified as a cause of tensions which have made potential collaborative work difficult, or slow to accomplish. Some HEIs have recently merged such separate units under the same 'umbrella'. Others continue to keep them separate.

These tensions and contradictions have been extensively reported in the Teaching and Quality Assessment Exercise (TQA) for England and Northern Ireland carried out in 1995/96 in University Languages Departments. One of the outcomes of the TQA was a set of recommendations to improve areas of weakness, and reward areas of strength in Higher Education provision. Universities which overall reached high score were invited by the Higher Education Funding Councils (HEFCE & DENI) to bid for funding (up to 250k to be used within three years) to disseminate good practice in five areas identified as in need of further attention: 1. Independent learning; 2. New technologies; 3. Cultural awareness; 4. Assessment; Teacher training. 11 projects were granted funding and most of their results are currently being published in various forms. This report principally relies on the outcomes from these projects and other evidence gathered through research publications and national reports. Outcomes of the FDTL Languages Projects and relevant recommendations were also fed into the Nuffield Inquiry (2.2.1)

2.1 The integration of New Learning environments in language teaching and learning

- **for language students ;**
- **for students of other disciplines;**
- **as a preparation for professional life**

Many of the FDTL projects included aspects of innovative approaches to teaching and learning which affect the environments within which students learn languages. Some focused on the Independent Learning component (CIEL and SMILE) some on the IT element (WELL), others on the cultural aspects (LARA) or on transferable skills (Translang). Many of these projects will be described in more detailed in later sections. All these projects are collaborative ventures amongst three or more institutions. One strength of these projects has been the collaborative aspect which allowed wider dissemination and development across institutions. All 11 projects regularly met, organised dissemination events, workshops, conferences, shared the editing of a Newsletter, some contributed to book publications. Their

outcomes and work continue to be disseminated by the Subject Centre for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies (<http://www.lang.ltsn.ac.uk>) where up-to-date information about these projects and further developments are available.

Project TRANSLANG (<http://www.uclan.ac.uk/facs/class/languages/translang/tlweb.htm>) is particularly relevant to this section as it embraces all the categories of this section. It has focused its activities on the needs of students from other disciplines. It was led by the Universities of Central Lancashire and Anglia Polytechnic University with the collaboration of other institutions. As part of the initial fact finding, the project distributed a questionnaire to over 200 institutions to map provision of languages for students of other disciplines in HE in the UK. The questionnaire helped establish the parameters and context for TransLang and also provided information on where Transferable Skills currently fit into non-specialist language provision (NSLP). A few key results from the questionnaire are given in table 1 below. Colleagues interested in the complete report on UK provision can contact TransLang.

Table 1

1. Non-specialist language learning is a growth area. 10% year on year is indicated.
2. Its position within the management and funding structures of HEIs is varied and sometimes precarious
3. The numbers of language learners in HEIs in 1996-97 grew overall .
4. On average 63.6% of language learners in HE are non-specialist language learners.
5. The majority of non-specialist language learning is at beginners and post 'GCSE'.
6. Staffing for non-specialist language provision is problematic and relies to a surprising extent on unsupported part-time or hourly paid staff.
8. Although lecturers are aware that language learning incorporates Transferable Skills, implicitly more work needs to be done in order to clarify them and communicate their importance to learners

The project developed a Skills Map as an essential part of the process of incorporating transferable skills into non-specialist curricula. The Map identifies the skills felt to be implicit in non-specialist language teaching and learning and suggests how to make them explicit by possibly stating them in intended learning outcomes for different levels, languages, programmes etc. For a breakdown of the skills please see the Translang website.

It was perceived as essential that staff involved in non-specialist language provision become aware of these issues, and that they start to explicitly identify and focus on skills which have hitherto been implicitly involved within the methodology and structure of language programmes. This may contribute to raising the profile and status of non-specialist language learning, and may also allow students to make a more informed decision on the worth and value of learning a language within their degree programme, and for their career. Case studies have been gathered on this theme and are available on the Translang website.

2.2. Policies underlying the integration of New Learning Environments

National policy documents such as the Dearing Report first and subsequently the Nuffield Languages Inquiry (1998) have compelled universities to look for institutional policies to address some of their key areas. Some of these relate to the theme of New Learning Environments. According to the Nuffield Inquiry report, languages, like IT, are to be considered a key skills which form the new professional of this new 21st century. The implementation of this recommendation will urge higher education languages departments to adapt/extend/change their language programme portfolio. A need to adopt a national '*languages for all*' policy has been highlighted by the Nuffield Inquiry which has suggested a target of 10% of study time to be devoted to language learning. It has also been suggested that national funding should mirror such a policy. So far the response from the Department for Education and Employment to the Inquiry report has been rather vague and short-sighted. Various post-Nuffield initiatives have taken place and are being organised to develop the languages agenda (see: UCML <http://www.ucml.org.uk>).

2.2.1 The Nuffield Inquiry

(<http://www.nuffield.org> & <http://www.nuffieldfoundation.org/languages/home/index.asp>)

The brief of this Inquiry was to look at the UK's capability in languages and to report on what needed to be done as a nation to improve it. The report findings were published in March 2000. A report can be acquired by contacting The English Company (ltd) at: <http://www.english.co.uk>. The title of the report is: *The Nuffield Languages Inquiry (2000) Languages: the next generation*. It covered a variety of sectors (primary, secondary, higher education, the business world, adult and further education) and mirrored changes at European level (e.g. the Council of Europe framework). Amongst the recommendations for the Higher Education sector were: the co-ordination of initiatives linking technology and languages by setting a national strategy which should support existing pioneering initiatives in ICT. Some recommendations are reported in Table 2.

Table 2

1.The development of a national strategic co-ordination to move technology to the core of language learning.

This is strictly linked to another set of recommendations from the Dearing Report which gave teaching and learning centre stage with C&IT in a strong, crucial, supportive role. The introduction of C&IT as a key skill in the UK education sector has meant that students reach university computer literate and ready to engage in activities where the use of computer and access to a variety of learning environments and resources is the norm. The Nuffield report recommendation is aimed to see an integrative approach to language learning and the use of, now available, new learning environments. The impact of this recommendation will be described in many of the sections of this report.

2.The co-ordination of research in the field of technology and languages to ensure that the benefits of investments are widely felt beyond that sector .

A recent Leverhulme call for research projects in language and communication is an example of the above. The University of Cardiff, for example, managed to secure funding (<http://www.cf.ac.uk/encap/sections/lac/rcentre.html>) for a 5-year research programme on technology, translation and culture, discourse analysis and aspects of intercultural awareness and social identity.

3. Collaborate to rationalise resources

As schools have been encouraged to share expertise and resources, HEFCE has adopted a similar tactic by encouraging universities to do the same. A result of this HEFCE strategy is visible in the strong collaborative element of the 11 projects which were awarded funding to disseminate good practice in language teaching and learning. The recently established Subject Centres - one specific for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies - is another example of a similar process. The Centre (<http://www.lang.ltsn.ac.uk>) involves three institutions: two universities, Southampton and Hull and CILT- Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research - (<http://www.cilt.org.uk>).

4. Ensure graduates are equipped for the future

This focuses on the development of language graduates whose ability to communicate, teach and interact in a foreign language is matched with the ability to do so in a variety of environments and through the intelligent use of a wide range of tools (authoring tools, computer-aided translation systems, computer and video conferencing systems, online multilingual management systems, and other communications systems). This recommendation has implications on the HE language degree programme portfolio and needs to be matched by appropriate funding to back up such a serious and valid proposal.

2.3 New learning strategies: the introduction and promotion of independent learning

New learning environments don't automatically imply an innovative use of the environment and therefore a transformation of attitudes, beliefs and knowledge. Project SMILE (Strategies for Managing an Independent Learning Environment) is a consortium led by the University of Hull and including the universities of Nottingham-Trent, Ulster, Manchester and Salford - focused on the practicalities of setting up and managing an advisory service and its implication on staff and learner development at institutional and personal level (<http://www.hull.ac.uk/langinst/smile>). It identified two trends: 1. an ADD-ON and 2. an ADD-IN model.

The 'ADD-ON' model tends to consider the new environment as additional to the existing structure which does remain unchanged . The new environment is therefore perceived by students as external to an existing structure and mode of learning, constituting at times a disturbing element. This is the case in many self-access environments which have been designed, and built, with very little staff consultation and limited knowledge of the current and potential language users. Results from visits carried out by

project SMILE have showed a gap between the design and establishment of self-access centres, the rather limited subsequent use of such resources, and the staticity of the environment once built. Lack of investment in expert personnel in these centre was also highlighted as another weakness of this approach.

Some interesting results can be found in a survey carried out joint by projects SMILE and CIEL in 1997 and repeated in 2000. The first survey showed little awareness of the need to appoint qualified language learning advisers and emphasised the development of open learning materials and investment in equipment and pre-packaged language software as the main contributing factors to improve use of resources and promote independent learning. The second highlighted an increase in the presence of expert personnel (e.g. from 7 advisers (1997) to over 30 (2000)). Section 2.6 will provide further details and data.

The 'ADD-IN' model tends to consider the self-access centre or any 'new' environment or tool (be it in the form of CALL, CDROMs, CMC or web-based environments etc.) as an integrated part and therefore with effects on existing course structure and professional development. For examples of the integration of independent learning in the curriculum, see the work carried out by projects such as CIEL (<http://www.lang.soton.ac.uk>), WELL (<http://www.well.ac.uk>), ALLADIN (<http://www.alladin.ac.uk>) and SMILE.

Attempts to overcome problems of ineffective and inefficient use of the facilities have resulted in the emergence of various solutions. A particularly striking one is the emergence of a new professional role, the language learning adviser, which was initially positioned in the self-access centre and acted as a bridging figure between resources, new learning environments and the traditional academic structures (classrooms and lecture theatres). Subsequent development of the role has called for a need to integrate some of his/her skills in traditional teaching. The latter has implications for staff development (section 2.7).

In both approaches the environment becomes relevant only in so far as it fosters, and encourages, interaction and communication, and provides learning support. In many cases the use of the web-based environments has substituted CALL - because of its accessibility, flexibility and adaptability. It has, though, been observed that often the authenticity of resources is not matched by authenticity of interactions- a potential which the new technologies offer.

2.4. Facilities for independent learning

Almost all UK universities are equipped with state-of-the-art facilities and equipment. The university sector has now moved a stage further and has tried to map the extent to which these resources are used effectively and efficiently. One of the striking results of the 1996 TQAs was the realisation that, although most HE institutions in England and Northern Ireland benefit from new facilities, only a small percentage use them at their full potential. The link between use and learning is also one which requires further investigation as it has also been noted that using the centre at full capacity may not necessarily result in better learning. This observation has repeatedly been made in FDTL projects' findings and other existing literature on the subject of networked learning and independent learning.

A key role in the promotion of independent learning has been played by Language Centres which have gradually expanded from simply providing facilities and resources to service units which cater for the provision of languages for students of other disciplines. Language Centres have a strong organisation which represents them: AULC (Association of University Language Centres in the UK & Ireland - <http://www.aulc.org.uk>) which includes all staff working in higher education language departments and centres in the United Kingdom and Ireland. Through its regular meetings and special interest groups, the Association provides networking opportunities for all staff with responsibilities or interests in administration, research, language advising, resources, or technical matters. Four interest groups mirror the diversity of personnel and themes concerning Language Centres. Each interests group has an email

discussion list and is represented at each AULC's meeting. Further details of each group can be found on the AULC website. AULC is represented on the University Council for Modern Languages and its Chair is a member of the Subject Centre Advisory Board.

Recent surveys (FDTL projects - SMILE-CIEL; WELL) show that the majority of UK HE language learners now have access to C&IT based resources. These include:

- dedicated language learning software in a range of media (often referred to as CALL - Computer Assisted Language Learning);
- language tools (e.g. dictionaries, foreign language word-processors, translators, email);
- foreign language resources (e.g. foreign language newspapers on CDROM, and on the Internet).

2.5. Development of learning materials

A CIEL survey estimates that over one fifth of students already use more C&IT than conventional materials. This trend is likely to increase with the emergence of more web-based resources which can be used for language learning. These include digital TV/radio, and online newspapers from around the world.

The availability of up-to-date authentic target language materials (giving access to both language and culture) is growing dramatically through access to the Internet. But the development of appropriate dedicated computer-based learning materials and activities is not keeping pace. Many language courses have now included CDROMs as a normal feature to choose from. The learning environment which characterises CDROMs though reproduces in many respects some of the traditional teaching methodologies and concepts of knowledge transmission, only pre-packed in a different shell. This is not to say that there is no role for such a learning tool. As in the case of many others it is how they are used which will affect the novelty rather than the gadget in itself.

Along the widespread use of CDROMs, most UK universities possess Intranet systems and/or virtual campuses where students can access course materials and in some cases follow entire courses at a distance. In most cases a password is required to enter the environment. Below are some examples of virtual university/campus:

- the Clyde Virtual University - which also includes an online Portuguese course (<http://www.cvu.strath.ac.uk>)
- the Virtual Campus - University of Lincolnshire and Humberside (<http://www.ulh.ac.uk>)
- The Open University (<http://www.open.ac.uk/education-and-languages/>)
- The University of Hull Merlin Environment (<http://www.hull.ac.uk/merlin/>)
- The University of Leeds online learning facilities (<http://www.tlsu.leeds.ac.uk>)

LARA (<http://lara.fdtl.ac.uk/lara/index.htm>), RAPPORT (<http://www.hum.port.ac.uk/slas/rapport>) and The Interculture Project (<http://www.lancs.ac.uk/users/interculture>) have shown an interesting use of computers to support the experience of the year abroad with meaningful interactive exchanges and integrated approach. Resources have also been developed by the institutions involved in these projects. Further details are provided in section 3.

SMILE has developed structures and resources to integrate learning strategies and promote learner autonomy through advisory programmes, online peer support, tandem learning programmes and gathered a portfolios of accredited learner training programmes.

CIEL started a material swap shop to encourage sharing of resources, minimise duplication and increase collaboration.

The WELL (<http://www.well.ac.uk/languageexercises>) language exercise project enables students to take objective language tests on the web, with immediate feedback. The tutor can access the results or receive them by email. There is an initial body of exercises available in French, Italian, Spanish, and German; by summer 2001 there should be over 16 different topics for each language, and other languages will follow if there is demand for them. The topics for these first exercises are grammar-based, but any type of exercise with a single correct answer can be delivered. The initial sample is text-based only, but audio, video or graphics may be incorporated too. Currently access is restricted to UK Higher Education Institutions, and the “cost” is the submission of one set of 100 questions on a single specified topic for a particular language. Once an institution has submitted this set, its students may access any exercise in any language.

Teachers can create your own tests from the questions available, and these are not visible to users outside their institution, so each institution has a unique view of the exercises. Careful attention has been paid to the security aspect to ensure that the system allows each participating institution to view its own students’ results only. Administration for each institution (creating and updating user accounts for students and tutors, question selection, viewing and downloading results, etc.) is as automated as possible.

Collaborative work between DIALANG (<http://www.sprachlabor.fu-berlin.de/dialang>) and WELL might be found as the two systems have some common purposes in so far as testing and sharing resources.

Finally the University of Hull has developed a full course for learners of Dutch, LAGELANDS. These resources are all available online and via a CDROM developed in-house. The course is delivered through the Merlin Environment (<http://www.hull.ac.uk/lagelands>).

2.6. Redefining the profile of the actors involved

The introduction of concepts like autonomy and spaces like self-access centres, has resulted in a general shift from a teacher-led to a more learner-centred approach. This has involved a repositioning of the teacher, and a reappraisal of the skills necessary to manage this change. Terms such as ‘facilitators’, ‘mentors’, ‘counsellors’, ‘advisers’, ‘helpers’, ‘learner support officers’, ‘language consultants’ have appeared to try to characterise this professional change. In some cases, it has meant the emergence of a new professional role which appears to be distinct from the ‘teacher’. The importance of professionals who can appropriately use a variety of environments to suit the new learners’ profile and needs, as well as to prepare the new generation of graduate has been repeatedly highlighted by Government reports. All 11 FDTL projects in fact included an element of staff development. Four of them specifically focused on issues of role changes and staff development.

During 1997-2000, SMILE visited over 40 HEIs in the UK, organised two conferences on advising and series of workshops, seminars and shadowing sessions for newly appointed advisers. The project involved over 2000 staff and students in institutional projects involving a variety of learning environments. Nottingham Trent and Ulster primarily focused on the effective use and integration of self-access centres with emphasis on learner development and advising. The University of Hull focused on a staff development programme and the extension of online advising. Three projects at Hull involved learners of Italian, German and Dutch. Two of these projects (Italian and Dutch) involved colleagues and students from Dutch and Italian institutions. German is currently planning to involve universities in Germany. A book on advising has recently been published and is available from CILT at : <http://www.cilt.org.uk/pubs/higher.htm#beyond>. A new distance-taught post-graduate qualification on Advising for Language Learning is available from September 2001 at the University of Hull - Language Institute. Information can be found at: <http://www.hull.ac.uk/langinst/ma/pg-cert.htm>

Project SMILE’s final evaluation report highlights that there is no universal model for setting up a self-access centre or a self-directed learning scheme, since many parameters vary and each institution

finds an appropriate model which can work for its needs and purposes. In some institutions, the functions and role are embraced by existing teaching staff (e.g. The University of Newcastle), in others (e.g. the University of Nottingham-Trent, the University of Manchester, the University of Liverpool, the University of Middlessex) a separate person has been appointed. Some advocate the need to keep these two figures (teachers-advisers) as separate entities but strictly interdependent (e.g. University of Hull), others prefer the full integration of the advising functions into existing teaching and curriculum demands. As a consequence, some privilege certain 'tools' as key elements to distinguish teaching from advising, some focus on the skills necessary to support learning, others shift the place (from classroom to self-access and online) where this function of supporting learner autonomy should take place.

The project also observed that although new learning environments contribute to promoting change, it is the change in discourse which marks new attitudes and pedagogy. In the 1990 we have seen a shift from the notion of "Computer-Assisted Language Learning" which sought to teach learners through structural drills to a notion of networked learning which tries to associate learning with its social, rather than individual, aspects.

Finally, we also need to take into account developments in notions of pedagogy. In current perspectives, learning a foreign language means to become part of the community which speaks, reads, and writes it. This involves authentic interaction and communication, such as that which can take place online or 'around' the computer.

2.7. Training programmes and courses for language teachers: in-service programmes, staff development

The DOPLA Training Programme (<http://www.bham.ac.uk/DOPLA>) was a consortium led by the University of Birmingham and including the Universities of Bristol, Coventry, Leeds, Sheffield, and UMIST. The project focused on the adequate provision of training and induction of Postgraduate Teaching Assistants (PGTAs) and Foreign Language Assistants (FLAs). It is recognised that if PGTAs and FLAs are to carry out their teaching commitments satisfactorily, appropriate training needs to be provided. This has to be both generic and subject-specific training, since language teaching and learning poses particular problems not covered in the 'standard' short training courses offered by Universities and their Staff Development Units.

A training course for PGTAs and FLAs was developed at Birmingham by a team of tutors from the Modern Languages Unit, the School of Education and the Staff Development Unit. This five-day course links initial training and related activities with a further taught element combining reflection and additional training after a period of teaching practice. Novice teachers leave each element of the programme with dossier of practical strategies for language teaching including:

- teaching grammar; use of the target language; the role of translation; exploiting authentic materials;
- communicative methodology; marking and assessment .

DOPLA have produced a pack of training materials which has been sent out to HEFCE-funded institutions. However, the project makes the materials widely available through the web. On its website you can find links to the 16 modules, introductory pages and appendices. All sections are in .pdf format and require Acrobat Reader to access the documents.

DEVELOP (<http://www.lmu.ac.uk/cls/fdtl/develop>)

The DEVELOP Project was a collaborative project between Leeds Metropolitan University and the University of Sheffield. It revolved around mutual learning and continuing professional development for language teachers through Tandem (Peer) Observation. In September 1999 draft materials were issued to the Focus Group of Universities which evaluated them from September to December 1999. The materials were revised as a result of these trials. The trials took place in the universities of Central

Lancashire, Southampton, Oxford Brookes, the Open University, Trinity and All Saints University College.

The pack includes a video with supporting materials based around the process of Tandem Observation for language teachers. These are intended for group or individual use and includes workshop outlines for group facilitators. Additionally, there is a Methodology Resource Pack for those interested in enhancing their existing language teaching skills. The scheme is flexible enough to be used or adapted by any university language department and is designed with cascade training in mind. A workshop booklet offers a guide for facilitators wishing to introduce a Tandem Observation scheme in their own institution.

Finally, the Residence Abroad Project (<http://www.hum.port.ac.uk/slas/rapport>) has created a distance-taught module which is part of an MA in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education and has already successfully been piloted in 1999/2000.

2.8.Measuring proficiency: Assessment and self-assessment

The question of how to assess what students do outside the language classroom is a recurring one and little consensus seems to have been reached on what constitutes good practice.

Glenn Fulcher from the University of Surrey was a keynote speaker at a CIEL meeting and gave a very useful introduction to the theoretical base underpinning the assessment of language learning and an overview of some of the issues involved. The slides from his presentation can be viewed at http://www.surrey.ac.uk/ELI/dhtml1/Slide_1.html.

The debate in the UK sector has encompassed many different issues from the relationship between process and product and the tensions of trying to assess the process through tools such as diaries and portfolios and the attempt to compress the innovative potential of these tools into traditional structures (e.g. marking schemes) to evaluate performance.

Another issue concerns whom we are trying to convince: students or management? This calls for rigorous research on effectiveness of learning and its relation to environments (e.g. are new learning environments compatible with the current theories of learner autonomy, how?, why?, who are the actors in this process?, can this be measured? is there an evaluation framework to measure impact of environment on a range of aspects of learning?)

The question of explicitly identifying, and subsequently assessing and accrediting, transferable skills and independent learning is another issue in the debate about assessment. A feel of this debate can be found in the

- CIEL handbook on assessment (<http://www.ciel.lang.soton.ac.uk>);
- Assessment Project (<http://www.ulst.ac.uk/faculty/humanities/lang+lit/fdtlgerman/index.html>) led by the University of Ulster;
- CASTLE Project focuses on computer-aided assessment (<http://www.le.ac.uk/cc/ltg/castle>) .

Some difficulties have been expressed in the self-assessment of productive skills. Most students can quite effectively assess themselves in activities developing receptive skills, i.e. they know how well they understand, especially if an answer key or transcript is provided. However, it is much more difficult to self-assess productive skills. The debate is shifting from self-assessment to feedback and its role in language learning: how and when to provide it; who should provide it - Native speakers, tutors; what preparation is required.

Interesting examples of the latter can be seen in the Tandem Learning Accredited module at the University of Sheffield (<http://www.shef.ac.uk/mltc/tandem/index.html>)

The need for materials in languages is particularly great since language learning is a time intensive process, teacher contact time is limited, and topic-based materials rapidly go out of date. This is one area where European co-operation could be organised.

Finally the reliability of the assessment and the importance to reach some level of standardisation has also been highlighted by the Nuffield Enquiry, which calls for an alignment with the European Language Council framework. The European Language Portfolio is being used by some UK HEIs (e.g. the University of Ulster. For further information contact Mr Mike Jones at mr.jones@ulst.ac.uk.)

2.9 Action research on the implementation of New Learning Environments

The use of new technologies and the development of new learning environments, has thrown up many new questions which require systematic investigation and extensive data gathering. Many of the questions require an interdisciplinary approach, and new forms of research assessment should be explored to encourage meaningful interdisciplinary research. Inter-disciplinarity also calls for transnational co-operation.

CILT has maintained and published a regular register of current research since its foundation in 1966. Such a register is also available online at <http://www.cilt.org.uk>. In addition to descriptions of over 220 research projects reported to CILT in response to the 1997 survey, readers can find an interesting overview by Prof. Byram and a thought-provoking article by Prof. Towell -at the time chair of the University Council of Modern Languages (UCML) - on the situation of applied language research in the context of the Research Assessment Exercise in the UK. CILT also held three research fora and summaries of the papers are available at <http://www.becta.org.uk/linguanet> under the research section.

In June 2000, a conference on '*The New Communicators: Graduates with languages*' held in Nottingham, marked the end of the FDTL languages projects and tried to map the sector and trace the future of languages and research into languages and communication in the UK. A book was recently published by CILT. Further information at: <http://www.cilt.org.uk/pubs/higher.htm>. The next conference will be held at the Manchester Conference Centre on 24-26 June 2002. Further information at: <http://www.cilt.org.uk/confs/HE2002.htm>

Finally, the Research output of each department is evaluated by the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) every few years - the fourth took place in 1996 and one is currently in progress. The scattered nature of applied research conducted by a very diverse set of institutions and departments, which report to different research panels, has contributed to making applied language research almost invisible despite the relevance of the field in relation to other developments in teaching and learning. The research field in languages is therefore diverse and fragmented. Traditional specialist departments focus primarily on the literary, historical and political study of languages, and they still account for most of the research conducted by individuals for postgraduate qualifications. Other important areas of research relevant to our project, are conducted largely outside specialist language departments. For example, within education or linguistics departments.

In some cases new skills are also needed to ensure that staff involved in action research can perform the task with scientific rigour and contribute to enhance knowledge in areas such as networked learning and new electronic literacies.

One attempt to redress this imbalance was the establishment of the new funding for pedagogic research, administered by the Economic and Social Research Council. This encouraged the development of collaborative interdisciplinary research networks (2) and a series of satellite projects. The Leverhulme Fund and the AHRB one are two other funding bodies for research.

The SCOTLANG Project (1999-2002) is based at Scottish CILT, is developing a national network for supporting co-ordinated research on the teaching and learning of languages, in order to inform decisions on language policy, provision and practice (<http://www.scilt.stir.ac.uk/Scotlang/Index.htm>). The institutions involved are: The Robert Gordon University; University of Abertay; University of Glasgow Consortium; University of Dundee.

Applied linguistics research will form a precious knowledge base which can inform policies and develop and sustain future language capability. Amongst some of the key areas identified in relation to technology and language learning are:

1. the nature of online interactions ; 2. impact of learning styles; 3. impact of identities; 4. impact on understanding of other cultures; 5. development of communities of practice; 6. links with linguistic performance; 7. intercultural communication; 8. autonomous learning; 9. assessment ; 10. online learning support

At a local level, it is paramount that such strategy goes hand in hand with professional development opportunities and career enhancement. A simple example is a change in the nature of the sabbatical period to embrace requests from staff to develop and evaluate new programmes in relation to a new learning environment, or innovative aspects claimed by the programme (e.g. use of specific technology, measuring changes in learner and teachers' attitudes, measure increased quality in linguistic performance, evaluate intercultural communication etc.). Promotion mechanisms are also slowly adapting to reward innovation in teaching and learning.

The national establishment of the ILT (The Institute for Learning and Teaching) National Teaching Fellowship is another measure to encourage institutions to focus on teaching and learning and reward applied research. It is worth noticing that 10 out of 95 submissions were by linguists (1999). These individuals were selected by their institutions as representatives of excellence in teaching and learning. One of the 20 fellowships awarded was to Dr Klapper, from the University of Birmingham. His **DELPHI** project (Developing Language Professionals in Higher Education Institutions <http://www.bham.ac.uk/delphi>) is linked to project DOPLA and seeks to provide subject-specific staff development opportunities for full-time academic staff teaching foreign languages in higher education in the UK. These aims will be achieved primarily through the development of materials on different areas of foreign language pedagogy, targeted at staff in modern language departments and language centres. The materials will be web-based and will be made freely available to all staff working in the sector. The flexible mode of delivery will allow staff to access materials most appropriate to their individual teaching situation at a time which most suits them.

3. Promoting multilingualism and cultural diversity

New learning environments are not necessarily shaped only by advances in technology, but also by mobility of people and the development of multilingual, multicultural groups/learning communities. Teaching practices have had to adapt to the different dynamism of the multilingual classroom. Face-to-face tandem programmes are a good example of new cultural exchanges which move beyond the classroom walls, but remain within the university campus boundary. Two good examples are provided by: the Universities of Sheffield (<http://www.shef.ac.uk/mltc/tandem/index.html>) and Manchester (<http://langcent.man.ac.uk/flp/tandem.htm>) which have both accredited their tandem programme.

Technological advances have contributed to supporting and encouraging interaction beyond the classroom through the use of CMC systems and other forms of communication (video-conferencing, teleconferencing, chats etc.). Technology has contributed to shortening space and time, and provides the opportunity for access to authentic language materials and interactions. The development of virtual campuses and networked learning has also made it possible to access a Portuguese course for beginners at Strathclyde <http://www.cvu.strath.ac.uk/courseware/DTUP/>. The Open University's successful development and recruitment to its language courses in French, Spanish and German offers another example of how open and distance learning may attract different audiences, and therefore the

environments need to adapt to its users in order to be accessible and usable. Some interesting results have been presented in a variety of articles published by OU staff (<http://sole.open.ac.uk/pollo/intro.htm>).

3.1.Promoting the learning of the less widely used and less taught languages

A wide range of languages is currently taught in UK university. Evidence suggests that the predominance of French owes more to traditional attitudes and teacher availability than to current requirements. Emerging needs are in languages such as Chinese, Japanese and Arabic as well as European languages such as German, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian etc. British business has expressed the need for a wider representation of these languages to coincide with the UK's economic interests.

One of the recommendations mentioned in the Nuffield Languages Inquiry report is the need to prepare our graduates with the skills to move about the world and take an active role in shaping their relationships with others. Given the global presence of English, it has been tempting to believe that English was enough but evidence indicates that the UK will not thrive with a single language. Successful and reliable communication in complex international relationships needs diversity, flexibility and sensitivity. The research study produced by Professor Graddol (1997) provides a comprehensive study of the major world languages and predicts interesting developments in respect to the future of languages.

The Nuffield report highlights that many of the national shortages in languages are at relatively basic level: calls lost at switchboard or reception, faxes, emails and letters failing to receive a response. Yet languages are not a core element in any post-16 vocational programme and fewer British students choose languages as a specialisation. An increase is registered in the number of students which include a language in their academic portfolio. The latter task of teaching languages to non-specialists has mainly been taken over by Language Centres.

Despite evidence from surveys and research studies, UK Higher Education has recently experienced one of its worst crises, compelling many universities to take decisions which are at times in contradiction with some of the above recommendations. Some Languages Departments have been closed down and/or provision of languages rationalised. In particular, less widely used languages are under threat. The recent fall in students number has had some tragic consequences for languages, and has shifted even further the emphasis of languages as a key skills to be acquired by students of all disciplines as a complement to their programme of study. In practical terms, this means a re-assessment of the existing portfolio of language programmes available within institutions, and a gradual move towards a redefinition of programmes based on external needs rather than personal research interests. Whilst this transformation is going on, relevant funding are needed to allow the process to happen and to maintain diversity of languages advocated by the above statements.

Many small language departments have already started to develop new strategies and ways to support, preserve and enrich their programmes and technological advances have contributed to making this possible. In this process of rationalisation technology can contribute to maintaining existing expertise and extend it to a wider target audience.

Finally VDML (<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/epd/herdu/vdml>) aims to develop a framework to support students and teachers of minority languages (languages not widely taught in UK universities). The development will be piloted in the Scandinavian Studies departments of three UK universities (in particular by learners and teachers of Danish). Other minority language departments will be involved throughout, and the framework will be promoted in the UK Higher Education community.

3.2. Promoting cultural understanding and intercultural awareness

Three projects addressed the issues surrounding intercultural awareness and the residence abroad and have produced both interesting results and an excellent searchable database. The common factor in these three projects is their conviction that residence abroad matters to all those who have a stake in it - students,

staff, employers, advisers, parents. The three projects have therefore combined forces under the banner Residence Abroad Matters (RAM) to offer a joint approach where appropriate

RAPPORT (Residence Abroad Project) (<http://www.hum.port.ac.uk/slas/rapport>) was a consortium led by the University of Portsmouth and includes Northumbria, East Anglia, Ulster, Southampton, Salford, Keele and Nene College. It sought to optimise student learning through residence abroad. The project identified, defined, disseminated and promoted best practice with regard to all aspects of residence abroad. Good practice has been identified in student preparation, support, monitoring, assessment and accreditation, and curriculum integration. The Residence Abroad Project holds on its website a published overview article on Residence Abroad (J.A. Coleman, 1997, *Residence Abroad Within Language Study*, Language Teaching, 30, 1: 1-20, Cambridge University Press) which complements the searchable bibliography on NRAD.

LARA (<http://lara.fdtl.ac.uk/lara/index.htm>) (Learning and Residence Abroad in Modern Languages Degrees) was a consortium led by Oxford Brookes University and including Anglia, Bath, Middlesex, Thames Valley. Together with RAPPORT, they carried out a full census of current practice in all HEIs, using a detailed questionnaire for every individual language department. This was followed-up with interviews in selected cases. The information can be found on the National Residence Abroad Database (NRAD) website (<http://nrad.fdtl.ac.uk/nrad/index.htm>), which has been regularly updated and linked to relevant sections of HEFCE QA reports. The data also allowed the projects to produce overview reports giving the national picture on various aspects of Residence Abroad practice, and to provide bespoke statistical analysis of a given topic. In addition to this data, NRAD holds a unique fully searchable bibliography of Residence Abroad research publications. Interesting is also the 10-commandments list which resulted from discussion and consultation with consortia members.

The Interculture project (<http://www.lancs.ac.uk/users/interculture>) was a consortium led by the University of Lancaster, including Sheffield, Central Lancashire, St Martin's College, Homerton College. The project aimed to identify areas of intercultural and sociolinguistic sensitivity experienced by students during their periods of study and work abroad. In the light of these, it reviewed existing practices designed to enhance intercultural awareness and to develop further exercises which would enable students to cope more effectively with the areas of difficulty concerned. The findings of the project are based on data provided by students and staff through a combination of questionnaires, diaries, interviews, focus groups and workshops.

3.3. Accessing Authentic resources and materials

Authentic resources can be accessed through a variety of channels and what constitutes authenticity may also be subject to extensive discussion. The C& IT website (<http://www.hull.ac.uk/cti>)- managed by the University of Hull, and part of the Subject Centre for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies - has an excellent and extensive collection of useful web links, for teachers and learners, regularly updated. Online dictionaries, newspapers, etc. can be accessed through this site which contains resources in a wide range of languages as well as multilingual. The existence of such a centre has many advantages in that it allows individual institutions

- to access a wealth of information easily and promptly
- to take part in conferences and workshops,
- to share experiences, expertise and resources
- to collaborate in inter-institutional projects.

The Centre also hosts **EUROCALL** and liaises with Cambridge University Press in the publication of the **ReCALL** journal (<http://www.hull.ac.uk/cti/pubs/pubs.htm>) and participates in a range of national and European projects.

Access to CMC systems, discussion lists, chat-rooms is also another way to experience authenticity of dialogue and interactions and can be through closed environment accessible only through membership and password (e.g. the FirstClass system, Blackboard, University virtual campus systems etc.) or can be through Internet sites which provide this kind of service (e.g. some have moderators, others don't). For an example see the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) (<http://www.jisc.ac.uk/>). This is a strategic advisory committee working on behalf of the funding bodies for higher and further education (HE and FE) in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. It also works in partnership with the Research Councils. The JISC promotes the innovative application and use of information systems and information technology in HE and FE across the UK by providing vision and leadership and funding the network infrastructure, Communications and Information Technology (C&IT) and information services, development projects and high quality materials for education. Its central role ensures that the uptake of new technologies and methods is cost-effective, comprehensive and well focused. Jisc hosts a variety of language-related discussion lists too.

The LARA report shows how the adoption of new or modified approaches to fundamental questions and the use of appropriate materials can have a major impact on the effectiveness of a stay abroad. It argues that the key to a proper realisation of the potential of periods of residence abroad lies in integrating them - academically, linguistically and educationally - as completely as possible with the rest of the course. The report also contains pointers and introductions to the other outputs of the project, which take the form of printed teaching and support materials, audio-tapes, video, supplementary reports and Web-based materials. The country-specific Interculture Quizzes, together with their suggested responses and commentary, are now available in full. A section on Intercultural Incidents is also available. A section of Learning Activities, Other Resources, has been added, containing references to learning activities which we have come across in the course of the project.

The HUMBUL catalogue (<http://www.humbul.ac.uk>) aims to be UK higher and further education's first choice for accessing online humanities resources. The Subject Centre's C&IT Centre at the University of Hull is co-ordinating the Modern Languages and Literatures sections.

Finally IALIC (the International Association for Languages and Intercultural Communication) (<http://www.cf.ac.uk/encap/sections/lac/ialic>) is a specialist forum for academics, practitioners, researchers and students. Working within an interdisciplinary and critical framework, members share a unique concern for the theoretical and practical interplay of living languages and intercultural understanding.

3.4 Student and Staff Exchanges

Student and staff exchanges are an important part of language programmes and the work described in sections above reflects the important role of these exchanges and their influence on curriculum, assessment and language teaching and learning matters in general.

4. New learning environments in training programmes for languages and language-related professions

4.1. New Learning Environments and the training of language teachers

Much information has already been provided in section 2.7.

The work carried out by WELL (Universities of Liverpool John Moores & Brighton) is noteworthy. A questionnaire was distributed across the entire HE sector in the UK, with the to provide a snapshot view of the current status of use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) - with particular emphasis on the WWW - by staff and students in the UK HE Foreign Language sector. The survey was repeated two years later to determine the extent to which the situation had changed. Hence, the main significance of the survey lies in its comparative and not its absolute

value. The feedback provided through this survey helped the project to determine the content of the training sessions and the types of resources to be covered on the website. One hundred responses were received. The responses have been analysed and a summary of the results is shown below.

1. Most institutions have, as yet, made little use of telematic resources to support learning and teaching, despite a high level of investment in hardware and infrastructure.
2. The commonest use of Web resources is as a source of materials which are downloaded by the lecturer and distributed to students.
3. Instances of interactive use or exploitation of communicative potential are very limited.
4. Most training in Web use has been carried out through individual initiative rather than institutional policy.
5. The major obstacle to more effective use of telematic resources is identified as lack of staff training.

Issues related to the use of Web-based resources and the creation of activities, copyright were dealt with. A bibliography of WELL, an urlography of WELL with links to relevant sites, online assessment, and catering for different types of learner are also present. The case studies presented show how telematics may be used to support language teaching and learning. Whilst some of them make use of new software, their purpose is to show the extent to which the technology has supported effective pedagogy. Some interesting case studies are from:

Goldsmiths' College; University of Sunderland ; University of London ; University of Derby University of Exeter; UMIST; ,Liverpool John Moores University; Bolton Institute of H.E.; University of Durham Language Centre; Coventry University ;University of Warwick; London Guildhall University; University of Southampton; University of Lincolnshire and Humberside; University of Birmingham; City University, London; University of Surrey; Aston University; University of Leeds; University of Portsmouth ; University of Glamorgan.

Other useful information can be found on :

- HECALL (<http://www.qub.ac.uk/hecall> - Higher Education Computer Assisted Language Learning) seeks to promote and advance the use of computer assisted language learning in Higher and Further Education in the UK, while at the same time providing a global showcase for all UK Language Centres and Computer Assisted Language Learning.

4.2. New Learning Environments and the training of translators and interpreters

TransIt-Tiger (<http://www.hull.ac.uk/cti/tell/tellprod.htm#TIGER>) was developed by the Universities of Hull and Coventry under the auspices of the TELL (Technology Enhanced Language Learning) Consortium. The methodology used by TransIt-Tiger was originally conceived as a course in translation from a variety of registers of technical Italian into English. First intended for final-year students of Italian at the University of Hull, it was later used as the basis of other similar-level courses in French, German and Spanish. Course materials were then transported as "TransIt-Tiger" into a hypertext environment provided by "Tiger" (Translating Industrial German), a course at Coventry University. Tiger's aim was to "help students acquire general translation skills and an awareness of basic techniques of professional translation, including the use of IT tools." Though originally intended to provide "a preliminary experience in translation as a career," the major claim of TransIt and TransIt-Tiger is to "to assist students in extending their range of linguistic competence in both their target and their source language."

InterprIt: Self-Access Interpreting Program (<http://www.hull.ac.uk/cti/tell/tellprod.htm#InterprIT>)

The programme was also developed at the University of Hull. and was designed to offer self-access practice to students following a final year course in interpreting. Interpreting is used primarily as a further means of acquisition of Italian and of general language awareness. The program includes recorded interviews and speeches (sound and text) with a selection of exercises that students can follow, in their own time, to enable them to achieve a greater degree of facility in interpreting than would otherwise be possible in the limited amount of class time available.

ReCall contains articles which deal with online learning and teaching. Some deal directly with issues of translation (e.g. Connel's and Orsini Jones' on <http://www.hull.ac.uk/cti/eurocall/recall/rvol11no2.pdf>).

The Astcovea consortium is producing materials for computer-assisted French and German grammar learning. It involves the Universities of: Aston, Coventry and East Anglia with interest and contributions from other institutions (<http://www.les.aston.ac.uk/tltp.html> & <http://www.ched.coventry.ac.uk/Astcovea/>).

5. The role of New Learning Environments in continuing education programmes or courses

For relevant information in this area please see: 1. the Nuffield Languages Inquiry, section 5 on Continuing Education (<http://www.nuffield.org.uk>); 2. CILT (<http://www.cilt.org.uk>) for projects and initiatives in sectors others than HE; 3. *Supporting lifelong language learning*, a recent publication by L Arthur and S Hurd (eds).(<http://www.cilt.org.uk/pubs/adult.htm#supporting>).

6. How to use Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for promoting European co-operation

Many UK institutions are involved in European collaborative projects. In most cases technologies such as CMC or video-conferencing are used in the day-to-day running of such ventures. Often the end product of such ventures is in the form of a closed CDROM (e.g. Small is Beautiful Project <http://www.hull.ac.uk/sib/>). The SIB packages aim to cater for the needs of (young) adult learners who have no prior experience in formal foreign language learning. Other European SIB partners are from institutions in Norway, Sweden, Finland, Belgium, The Netherlands, Portugal, Italy and Greece.

The development of structures which use more interactive platforms - geared to be easily transferred and shared by all European HE institutions - is still to be fully explored. The ICT4LT (<http://www.ICT4LT.org>), is an example of such an attempt in the area of ICT training. The programme was co-ordinated by Thames Valley University in partnership with CILT, CTICML-University of Hull. European partners were: the University of Venice (Italy) and the University of Jyväskylä (Finland). All the modules are available both on the website and in printed format in English, Italian, Finnish and Swedish. It is anticipated that the syllabus and the delivery mode developed and piloted in this project will lead in the longer term to a recognised international qualification, e.g. a Diploma or MA Degree. **Possible collaboration with existing qualifications to integrate modules (e.g. the new advising qualification and the Residence Abroad Project module) should be explored.**

7. Needs in the area of new learning environments

7.1. in relation to language teaching and learning

7.2. in relation to the promotion of multi-lingualism and cultural diversity

7.3. in relation to the promotion of European co-operation

7.4. in relation to the provision of language learning to students with special educational needs

Most of the needs in this area has been identified and addressed in individual sections (2,3, 4 and 6). In relation to the provision of language learning to students with special educational needs, some interesting works has been produced by the University of Hull on Dyslexia and Language Teaching and Learning (<http://www.hull.ac.uk/langinst/olc/dyslexia.htm>). This work was part of extra funding allocated to project SMILE under the Accessibility Fund. Other excellent work and resources, developed in a wider area of special needs affecting students and teachers of languages, has been produced by ALLADIN (<http://www.alladin.ac.uk> - Surrey Institute of Art & Design, Project Partners University College; The University of Southampton & The London Institute); CIEL (<http://ciel.lang.soton.ac.uk> - Universities of South Bank, Leeds Metropolitan & Southampton).

8. Measures to be taken to meet the needs identified

8.4. 8.1.at institutional level; 8.2.at regional level; 8.3.at national level; 8.4. At European level

As it has been seen, much is already happening at institutional level in the UK. The main current issue is to raise the profile of languages and continue to lobby Government bodies to ensure adequate funding and support to languages in Higher Education. This work is conducted at various levels. UCML and the Subject Centre for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies together with many other associations (in different educational sectors, for different languages etc.) are actively involved in addressing these needs. At a regional level, initiatives are taken in collaboration with the DTI(Department of Trade and Industry) and other local business organisations to raise awareness of the needs of employers and of the skills of language graduates. Individual institutions also take part in initiative with local schools to strengthen the link between languages, degrees and future employability: e.g. they organise open days throughout the year, events and taster sessions for school children, special seminars and language taster sessions for business people.

At European level some measures are:

- to reduce the amount of bureaucratic red tape to obtain funding;
- to standardise platforms to ensure easy access of resources and expertise and overcome the complexity of some environments whose elaborate navigation, and use of the environment, distract from the original purpose: communication and interaction;
- to create a European teaching and learning network - Information Centre on the model applied for the LTSN which brings together all existing activities and organisations of European HE institutions and serves as a main port of call for dissemination of information;
- to foster research on the issues identified in section 2.9 and encourage European projects which integrate research to development;
- to create post-graduate and professional programmes whose validation can be recognised by European Institutions and be included in universities career structures.

9. Examples of good practice

Many interesting examples have already been cited and described throughout the report. Below is a brief list of other projects. More can be added at later stages.

- the use of videoconferencing for collaborative learning (University of Cambridge);
- The CKS (Cambridge, Kent and Southampton) project which developed a number of multiple media (print, video, and computer-based) self-access language learning dossiers in French and German for science and engineering students at 3;
- the use of the Web for supporting grammar reference and practice (Manchester Metropolitan);
- the use of audio and text conferences between learners and tutors (Lyceum - The Open University -).