TNP LANGUAGES

THEMATIC NETWORK PROJECT IN THE AREA OF LANGUAGES II (TNP2)
SUB-PROJECT 3: QUALITY ENHANCEMENT IN LANGUAGE STUDIES

REPORT

ON THE WORKSHOP

TOWARDS AN EUROPEAN FRAMEWORK FOR QUALITY ENHANCEMENT IN LANGUAGE STUDIES

FREIE UNIVERSITÄT BERLIN, 20-21 SEPTEMBER 2002
SENATE ROOM, HENRY FORD BUILDING, GARYSTR. 35, D - 14195 BERLIN

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(FIRST DRAFT)

TNP2

Sub-project 3

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Préface

Devant l'impossibilité de publier dans ce rapport tout ce qui a été dit au cours de l'atelier qui a eu lieu à Berlin le 20 et le 21 novembre 2002, j'ai opté pour une présentation où l'on trouvera des passages résumant certains commentaires ou discussions à côté d' exposés reproduits en entier. A deux exceptions près ces derniers ont été rédigés par les membres du Comité Scientifique. Ils se basent sur les Rapports Nationaux et le Rapport de Synthèse qu'on trouvera au site web qui a été réservé aux travaux du sous-projet 3 dans le cadre du Projet de Réseau Thématique 2 du Conseil Européen des Langues aux adresses suivantes. http://www.fu-berlin.de/elc/tnp2/ et http://www.uni-koeln.de/phil-fak/aspla/tnp2/.

Les deux textes restants sont dus à Virginia Moukouli et Jacques Lanarès. Virginia Moukouli rend compte d'une enquête menée au nom du CEL auprès des institutions membres sur l'importance attribuée par celles-ci à l'amélioration de la qualité de l'enseignement des langues dans les établissements de l'enseignement supérieur alors que la contribution de Jacques Lanarès concerne une expérience intéressante dans le domaine de l'évaluation interne qui a été réalisée à l'Université de Lausanne. Il ne s'agit en effet ni d'une mesure imposée par un ministère ni d' une initiative du rectorat. Ce sont les enseignants eux-mêmes qui ont imaginé cette expérience qui a toutes les chances d'être élargie par al participation d'autres universités.

Les auteurs des contributions qui suivent s'expriment tous en anglais et en français. Dans la plupart des cas ni l'une ni l'autre de ces langues n'est leur langue maternelle. Je les remercie du sacrifice et de l'effort supplémentaire que signifie le choix d'une langue étrangère pour.

Je tiens également à remercier de leur compréhension les membres du Comité Scientifique qui ne sont pas représentés par un texte dans de rapport quoiqu'ils en aient fourni les bases.

C. W.-E.

PROGRAMME OF THE WORKSHOP

DAY ONE: Friday, 20th September 2002

Session One: 2.00 – 3.30 p.m.
Introduction

Official Opening
Chair: Fátima Sequeira, Deputy Co-ordinator of TNP2 Sub-project 3,
Universidade do Minho, PT

Words of welcome
Professor Gisela Klann-Delius, Vice-president, Freie Universität Berlin, DE

Aims of the Workshop
Christian Wentzlaff-Eggebert, Co-ordinator of TNP2 Sub-project 3, Universität zu Köln, DE

External evaluation of TNP2
Victor de Kosinsky, Co-ordinator of THENUCE, Université de Liège, BE

Quality enhancement in Language Studies:
Presentation of interim outcomes, TNP2 Sub-project 3
Chair: Vasso Tocatlidou, Aristoteleio Panepistimio Thessalonikis, GR

Quality criteria as reflected in the structure of the National Reports
Ian Tudor, Université Libre de Bruxelles, BE

Overview of the Synthesis Report
Karen M Lauridsen, Handelshøjskolen i Århus, DK

Evaluation of the survey conducted among TNP2 partners
Virginia Moukouli, TNP2 Manager, Freie Universität Berlin, DE

Questions and answers

Session Two: 4.00 – 5.30 p.m.

Quality measures related to defining and designing courses and programmes in the area of languages
Chair: Thomas Fraser, Université Charles de Gaulle – Lille 3, FR

Presentation of interim outcomes of Sub-project 3, with special emphasis on
1) Learning outcomes and the issue of employability
      regarding language professions,
      regarding general career prospects
2) Language learning outcomes in relation to common European levels of proficiency
3) How to initiate consultation with stakeholders (graduates and employers)
Rodica Baconsky, Universitatea Babes-Bolyai, RO

Comments by *Lewis Purser*, European University Association, BE (1)
         Doris Flischikowski, Universität Potsdam (2), and
         Jutta Siepmann, ThyssenKrupp Stahl AG (3)

Discussion and formulation of recommendations in three groups

Presentation of recommendations by group rapporteurs

5.30 p.m.   *End of Day One*

DAY TWO: Saturday, 21st September 2002

Session Three: 9.30 – 11.00 a.m.

General measures taken at European, national/regional and institutional level designed to ensure and/or enhance quality in HE programmes
Chair: Christian Wentzlaff-Eggebert, Co-ordinator of TNP2 Sub-project 3, Universität zu Köln, DE

Lewis Purser, European University Association, Geneva and Brussels, CH and BE, Kristina Lutz, ESIB, Brussels, BE

Bram ten Cate, Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, NL

Jacques Lanarès, Université de Lausanne, CH

General points of reference for assessing and enhancing quality in HE programes and provision
Chair: Wolfgang Mackiewicz, TNP2 Co-ordinator, Freie Universität Berlin, DE

Introduction
Bernd Wächter, ACA, BE

General discussion, including statements by *Sandra Adolf,* AEGEE, *Achim Hopbach,* the Association of Universities and other Higher Education Institutions in Germany – Hochschulrektorenkonferenz (HRK)*, Jutta Siepmann,* ThyssenKrupp Stahl AG, and *Peder Ostergaard*, Tuning Project

Session Four: 11.30 a.m. – 1.00 p.m.

Quality measures relating to the process of teaching and training
Chair: Piet Van de Craen, Vrije Universiteit Brussel, BE

Presentation of interim outcomes of Sub-project 3, with special emphasis on
1) The creation of a new learning culture
2) Improving the quality of student mobility
3) Quality learning in language teacher education
Silvia Blasková, Univerzita Komenskeho v Bratislave, SK

Comments by *Jacques Lanarès*, Université de Lausanne (1)
        Mike Grenfell, University of Southampton (2), and
        Kristina Lutz, ESIB (3)

Discussion and formulation of recommendations in three groups

Presentation of recommendations by group rapporteurs

Session Five: 2.30 – 4.00 p.m.

Quality measures relating to the organisation and management of the process of teaching and learning
Chair: Juliane Besters-Dilger, Universität Wien, AT

Presentation of interim outcomes of Sub-project 3, with special emphasis on
1) Calculation of student workload in language teaching/learning

2) Systems for the external evaluation of programmes and courses in the area of anguages

3) Systems for the internal evaluation of programmes and courses in the area of languages
Elisabeth M. Lillie, University of Ulster, UK

Comments by *Achim Hopbach,* HRK (1)
  Bram ten Cate, Rijksuniversiteit Groningen (2), and
  Peder Ostergaard, Tuning (3)

Discussion and formulation of recommendations in three groups

Presentation of recommendations by group rapporteurs

Session Six: 4.30 – 6.00 p.m.

Conclusions, outcomes, and recommendations
Chair: Jolanta Urbanikowa, Uniwersytet Warszawski, PL

Training of university teachers and trainers
Ian Tudor, Université Libre de Bruxelles, BE

Transparency and comparability of qualifications
Kari Sajavaara, Jyväskylän yliopisto, FI

Identification of reference points for a European framework for quality enhancement in Language Studies
Juliane Besters-Dilger, Universität Wien, AT

"Towards a European framework for quality enhancement in language studies" Panel discussion chaired by Christian Wentzlaff-Eggebert, with brief statements by Anne-Claude Berthoud, Thomas Fraser, Kristina Lutz, Lewis Purser, Jutta Siepmann, Piet Van de Craen, Bernd Wächter, followed by contributions from the floor

Closing words by Victor de Kosinsky and Wolfgang Mackiewicz

6.00 p.m.   *End of Workshop*

<div align="center">**SESSION ONE**</div>

Official Opening
Chair: Fátima Sequeira, Deputy Co-ordinator of TNP2 Sub-project 3, Universidade do Minho, PT

Words of welcome
Professor Gisela Klann-Delius, Vice-president of the Freie Universität Berlin, DE

Ladies and gentlemen,

Dear friends and colleagues,

It is a great pleasure for me to welcome you on behalf of the Präsidium of the Freie Universität Berlin to the Workshop on "Quality Enhancement in Language Studies" conducted by the Thematic Network Project in the Area of Languages.

If I am not mistaken, this workshop is going to address a number of key issues regarding quality enhancement in higher education. For one thing, you will concern yourselves with the question as to how reference points can be found for the identification and enhancement of quality. For another, you will be asking how the quality of learning and teaching processes and of the management and organisation of these processes can be measured. These questions are indeed of crucial importance.

However, discussions about the quality of teaching and learning have further and more far-reaching implications, which play a major role in the current debate in Germany about higher education reform. These implications range from a public service reform providing for a performance-related structure for professors' pay, to the introduction of junior professorships designed to bring about rejuvenation of the academic teaching staff, and from the idea that universities should be allowed to select their own students - the best students, of course - to the notion that universities are just service establishments, which produce, in a consumer-friendly manner, products geared to market needs, and which are directed by modern management teams. There seems to be the expectation that the quality of the products turned out by a university can be measured in the same way as the quality of the goods produced by a bakery or by a cheese dairy. According to this expectation, what is inside a student's head can be measured and

optimised in the same manner in which the content of a yoghurt carton, of a Camembert or of a loaf of bread can measured and optimised.

One does not have to be a baker, or a cheese maker, or, for that matter, a neuroscientist or a learning scientist to comprehend that this expectation is misguided. And yet many reform ideas are nurtured by precisely the expectation that everything can be measured and calculated. How do people arrive at such ideas?

I can think of two reasons that have a rational basis. For one thing, we are going through a period characterised by low levels of investment in education and increasing student numbers. This means that one needs to check whether the investments made have the desired results and outcomes. No-one would want to say anything against that. For another thing, we are witnessing increasingly fierce competition in regard to the acquisition and possession of knowledge as foundations of economic success. This means that universities are faced with an ever stronger pressure to succeed. These are plain facts, which cannot be ignored. And because of this it is necessary to implement strategies designed to ensure the successful acquisition and transfer of knowledge.

It is these two elements which for me constitute the rational core in current discussions about and endeavours in the field of quality assurance and quality enhancement, because they indicate at the same time which direction the discussion about quality should take. It should focus on essential parameters such as factors facilitating and negatively affecting learning processes, the characteristics of the learning object, and higher education learning goals viewed within a specific social and socio-cultural context. If we do not succeed in addressing these issues effectively, our universities will in future fail to deliver.

Thank you.

Aims of the workshop
Christian Wentzlaff-Eggebert, Co-ordinator of TNP2 Sub-project, Universität zu Köln, DE

Mesdames, Messieurs,

Permettez-moi d'abord d'exprimer ma gratitude à Madame le Vice-Président qui nous a accueilli dans son université et nous a prêté cette salle prestigieuse pour un atelier du sous-projet 'Assurance qualité dans les études de langues" dans le cadre du RTP2, sigle qui désigne le "Second Projet de Réseau Thématique dans le domaine des langues". Merci, Madame le Vice-Président!

Qui dit PRT2, dit Wolfgang Mackiewicz: C'est lui qui imaginé cette entreprise, qui l'a mise en route, qui en est l'âme. Merci, Wolfgang, pour avoir rendu possible cette rencontre.

Quel est l'objectif de cet atelier ? L'entête du programme "Towards a European Framework for Quality Enhancement in Language Studies" le dit clairement. Mais, attention! Ce n'est pas pour rien que ce titre débute par le mot anglais "Towards".

Nous n'avons pas la prétention d'élaborer aujourd'hui et demain, en un jours et demi, un système de référence pour la qualité de l'enseignement des langues qu'on pourrait appliquer dans l'Europe entière et au delà; Ce serait un but bien trop ambitieux. Ce que nous nous sommes proposés, c'est de faire un ou plusieurs pas en avant et sur un chemin conduisant vers un tel cadre de référence. Il me semble que ce ne serait pas peu de chose.

Il est vrai que nous ne partirons pas de zéro. Les membres du Comité Scientifique ont rédigé au cours de l'année dernière vingt Rapports Nationaux dont une première série a montré clairement qu'en parlant d'assurance ou d'amélioration de la qualité nous nous attaquions à un sujet dont ont se préoccupe beaucoup dans certains pays et très peu dans d'autres. Ces rapports ont prouvé également que le concept de qualité n'est pas toujours interprété de la même manière et que les structures administratives et les traditions universitaires, les contextes matériel, personnel et idéologique diffèrent de pays en pays, et ceci non pas seulement entre les états membres et les pays candidats. Les rapports ont en plus rendu évident qu'il est impossible de localiser cette qualité plutôt ici que là.

Et cette première série de rapports qui décrivait l'état des choses a ensuite été complétée par une seconde qui était centrée sur les besoins des différents groupes d'apprenants. Le tout a été condensé en suite dans un Rapport de Synthèse.

Cet atelier est pour nous l'occasion de soumettre les conclusions de cette enquête à nos collègues et à nos étudiants ainsi qu'aux représentants du monde du travail et des organisations qui regroupent les professeurs, les étudiants et les institutions de l'enseignement supérieur au niveau européen. Nous sommes convaincus que les Universités et les Grandes Ecoles ont un rôle décisif à jouer dans un effort commun pour l'amélioration de la qualité dans l'enseignement des langues et que les résultats attendus de cet enseignement doivent se définir à partir des besoins de l'apprenant qui sont, en partie du moins, déterminés par les exigences du monde du travail.

C'est pour connaître votre opinion que nous avons réservé de nombreux espaces à la discussion, en séance plénière aussi bien que dans les groupes de travail. Vos critiques et vos suggestions nous aideront à donner forme à un cadre de référence européen pour la qualité.

Je ne saurais terminer sans donner la bienvenue à notre collègue Victor Kosinsky. Je le remercie vivement d'avoir accepté notre invitation. Je sais qu'il est très sollicité., mais je tenais absolument à sa participation parce que j'ai eu l'occasion d' apprécier son expertise quand il s'agit d'évaluation. Plus que tout autre réunion comparable un atelier sur l'assurance et l'amélioration de la qualité se doit de procéder à une évaluation externe et interne de ses travaux. Alors que l'évaluation interne sera à charge du Conseil de Gestion du PRT2, Victor Kosinsky procédera à un sondage d'opinions parmi l'assistance. Il apportera en plus, à titre personnel et d'une façon plus subjective, 'le regard de l'autre' qui est devenu une cheville importante des études interculturelles.

Je l'invite à se présenter brièvement lui-même, car nul ne saurait mieux que lui expliquer comment il conçoit sa tâche.

Je vous remercie.

Quality enhancement in Language Studies: Presentation of interim outcomes, TNP2 Sub-project 3
Chair: Vasso Tocatlidou, Aristoteleio Panepistimio Thessalonikis, GR

Quality criteria as reflected in the structure of the National Reports
Ian Tudor, Université Libre de Bruxelles, BE

SP3 of TNP2 is concerned with the enhancement of the quality of higher education (HE) language studies. Two terms here call for clarification. The first is "language studies", this term being used to refer to all language programmes offered by HE institutions, both those intended for language-specialists (translating and interpreting, for example) and those organised for students of other disciplines. The second in "quality enhancement". In this respect, it is important to distinguish quality enhancement (QE) from quality assurance (QA). QA involves the critical evaluation of current practice. QE includes this, but adds a further element relating to the development of strategies for effecting an improvement in existing practice in response to the evolving demands of the broader social and economic environment. QE is thus a dynamic and proactive process which has a strategic and policy oriented function.

One of the main activities of years 1 and 2 of TNP2 involved the preparation of national reports relating to the specific topic of each of the three sub-projects. The sub-project 3 national reports therefore involved the preparation of reports on the measures undertaken in over 20 countries across Europe with respect to the enhancement of the quality of language studies. These national reports constitute an invaluable source of information on what is currently being done in Europe in the field of QE in HE language studies. They therefore provide the research basis for the formulation of focused and relevant policy initiatives in the field of QE. For this reason, it is useful for interested parties to be familiar with the content and organisation of these national reports.

Each national report is made up of five chapters, and in this paper I will briefly outline the focus of each of these chapters and the logic which underpinned the choice of chapter content.

Chapter 1. General introduction
The first chapter in each national report provides a description of the situation prevailing in the country concerned with respect to the overall language situation, the organisation of language

teaching at secondary and tertiary levels, national language policies, and a variety of other factors such as accreditation of HE institutions and admission criteria. The goal of Chapter 1 is therefore to provide an overview of the language situation, the educational structures in place, and in particular the organisation of HE language studies.

Each of the following chapters involves the description and analysis of measures taken in the country in question relating to a specific aspect of QE.

Chapter 2. Defining and designing courses and programmes in the area of Language Studies
Quality in HE language studies entails consideration of a variety of factors. One absolutely fundamental factor, however, is the relevance of learning content - in other words, are students learning what they need to learn? For this reason, the evaluation of current practice with respect to the definition and design of language programmes is fundamental in quality terms, as is the identification of instances of good practice in the field. Key concepts looked for under this heading include the definition of learning outcomes (vs received wisdom or conventional practice) as a basis for course design; relevance of learning content in terms of employability and both academic and professional mobility; use of target professional profiles; personal development of the individual student, and the role of language education in the fostering of informed European citizenship.

Chapter 3. The process of teaching and learning
The successful achievement of learning outcomes is related to the quality of the teaching provided and on the teaching-learning procedures set in place. A key point evaluated in this chapter is the move from teaching to learning, with the main focus being placed on learner-centredness and the reflective involvement of students in their learning. This, in turn, entails evaluation of the manner in which teaching and learning are organised, the creation of new and innovative learning environments, and initiatives designed to create a new culture of both teaching and learning. In the first instance, such factors are of relevance in terms of the compatibility between intended learning outcomes and teaching-learning procedures. They are also relevant with respect to the preparation of students for the longer term goal of life long learning in terms of both skills and attitudes.

Chapter 4. The organisation and management of the process of teaching

As long as teaching and learning are organised within an institutional context, it is clearly important for institutions to evaluate the effectiveness and the quality of their organisational and managerial structures. This involves consideration of a number of factors. Transparency in the description of programme content and ease of access by students and other interested parties to such information is one basic factor. Others include transparency in the calculation of student and teacher workloads, the establishment of effective information management systems (entry levels, pass rates, etc), a focused division of tasks between institutional actors, and the presence of both internal and external quality evaluation systems.

Chapter 5. The training of he teachers and trainers working in the area of languages

The quality of student learning depends significantly on the quality of the teaching they receive, and this in turn depends on the skills and competences of teachers. Concern with teachers' pedagogical skills is therefore a crucial component of a balanced QE strategy. This is particularly the case at a point in time where the demands made of teachers are evolving rapidly, so that even experienced teachers are having to re-evaluate their practice and develop new pedagogical skills and strategies. Structures need therefore to be set up to support the ongoing professional development of HE language teachers within a framework of quality teaching, professionalism and life long learning.

Overview of the Synthesis Report
Karen M Lauridsen, Handelshøjskolen i Århus, DK

Language studies: Transparency? Employability?

- ➢ Need to define clear
  - ➢ Objectives
  - ➢ Learning outcomes
  - ➢ Professional profiles
- ➢ Ensure employability
- ➢ Co-operation with the professional and socio-economic environment

Language studies: Focus on the individual learner

- ➢ From teacher to learner centred approach
- ➢ Language portfolio

The new roles of the teacher

- ➢ The coach, the facilitator
- ➢ How do you train to be a language coach?
- ➢ Capacity building: the development of the professional competences of university staff
- ➢ Permanent positions / full tenure: focus on research
- ➢ The status of the language teacher

Teacher training

- ➢ Institutional level
- ➢ National level
- ➢ European / int'l level

- ➢ Need for co-operation: examples of best practice, exchange of ideas

Quality assurance – how?

- ➢ Institutional level
- ➢ National level
- ➢ European / int'l level

- ➢ International accreditation

A reorientation?

"There is an urgent need for the (…) language departments to launch a reorientation of their programmes (…) because new types of professional careers are opened for language specialists, but for specialists who also have competences and qualifications in areas other than languages such as law, economics & business, information and communication technology, cross-cultural communication, and communication studies"
Kari Sajavaara, Finnish national report (2002)

A reorientation?

- ➢ The decline in interest in foreign languages
- ➢ LWUTL, regional languages, immigrant languages
- ➢ LLL
- ➢ European dimension (e.g. joint degrees)
- ➢ Languages as a generic skill
- ➢ Bi- / trilingual education for non-specialists

Evaluation of the survey conducted among TNP2 partners
Virginia Moukouli, TNP2 Manager, Freie Universität Berlin, DE

Introduction

The TNP2 aims at working out concrete proposals for improvements and innovations in higher education programmes and provision in the area of languages, including project proposals and course outlines. TNP2 is structured into three sub-projects on 'Curriculum innovation', 'New learning environments - the European learning space', and 'Quality enhancement in language studies' respectively. For each of the sub-projects a Scientific Committee was convened, comprised of experts from as many of the participating countries as possible. Committee members prepared national reports and syntheses of these reports, and, based on their findings, have drafted initial sets of recommendations. It was important for the work of the Project to obtain a response to the recommendations from TNP2 partner institutions and organisations. To this end, we prepared a questionnaire which reflects the initial sets of recommendations prepared by the three sub-projects. Therefore the aim of the survey was to start a consultation process about the findings of TNP2.

We had two target groups in mind when we designed the questionnaire:

* TNP2 experts
* heads of the institutions which were represented in the TNP2.

Design of the questionnaire

The questionnaire is divided into four parts, starting with general information on the organisation and three parts with questions on the three areas of the TNP2: Curriculum Innovation, New Learning Environments and Quality Enhancement. As mentioned before it was intended to start a consultation process about the recommendations produced by the scientific committee members. It was decided to rephrase the recommendations into statements and ask then to indicate the level of importance attached to the statement.
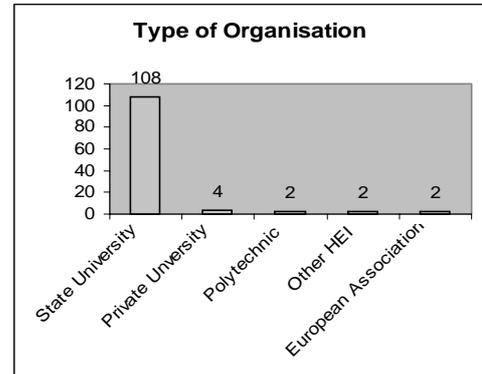
Evaluation of the survey

In July 2002 we distributed 174 questionnaires: 92 questionnaires were sent to the TNP2 members and 82 to the heads of institutions. The deadline to submit the completed questionnaire was 30 July 2002.

Out of these 174 questionnaires distributed 118 were completed and returned: the total response rate was 68 %. When you assess the response rate within the two target groups you'll get a different result: 81 questionnaires (response rate of 88 %) were completed by TNP2 members and 37 (response rate of 45 %) by the heads of institutions.
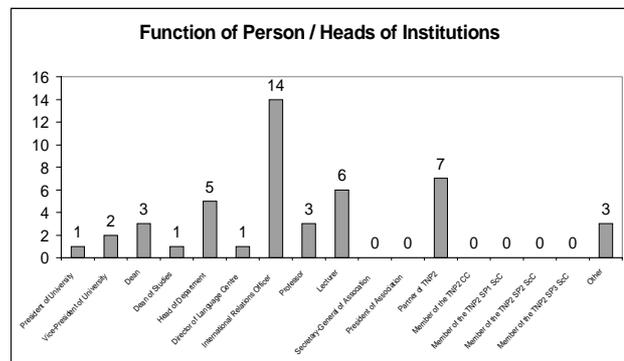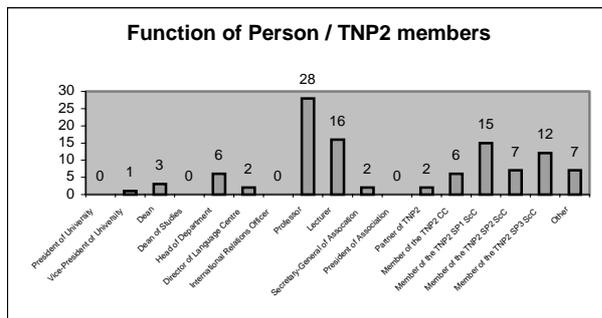
Types of organisations

The types of organisations represented in the TNP2 are as follows:

108 are state universities, 4 private universities, 2 Polytechnics, 2 other HEI (colleges), and 2 European Associations answered the questionnaire.

Type of Organisation

Function of person

Function of Person / TNP2 members

Function of Person / Heads of Institutions

General Assessment

The majority indicated most of the statements as very important. In the statistical analysis of the three parts of the survey, one get the following ranking for the statements on Curriculum Innovation, New Learning Environments and Quality Enhancement:

1. New learning environments with 85 % of the statements assessed as very important. 10 % of the statements were stated as important, 2 % assessed the statements as not so important, 2 % statements are unimportant and 1 % stated that they have no opinion.

2. Curriculum Innovation with 78 % of the statements assessed as very important. 9 % of the statements were indicated as important, 3 % assessed the statements as not so important, and 10 % stated that they have no opinion.

3. Quality Enhancement with 62 % of the statements assessed as very important. 10 % of the statements were indicated as important, % assessed the statements as not important and 10 % stated that they have no opinion.
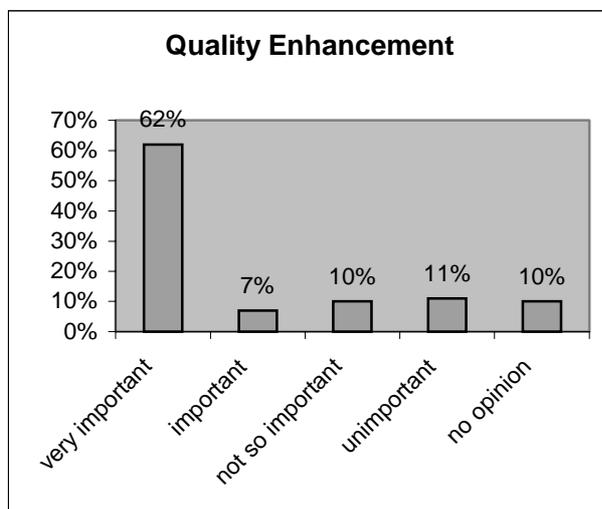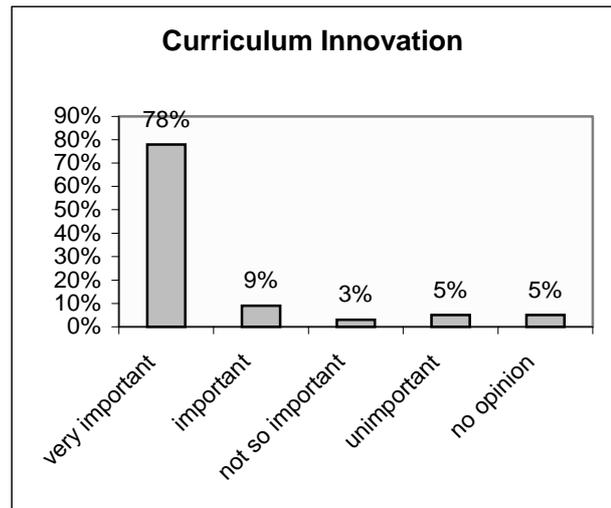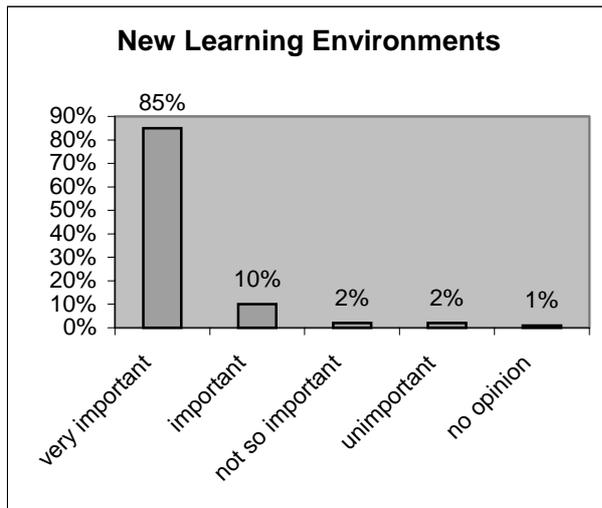
The statement with the highest approval rate is:

Quality Enhancement: Considering quality measures relating to the process of teaching and learning, how important do you think is to introduce new methods in language teaching/learning that focus on the learning process and on the needs of the learner?

The statement with the lowest approval rate is:

Quality Enhancement: Considering quality measures relating to defining and designing course and programmes in the area of languages, how important do you think is it to have European benchmarking statements for the various programmes in the area of languages?

Conclusions

* There is a necessity in HEI to focus on the learning process and on the needs of the learner. This is obvious because most of the TNP2 members are involved in the teaching process.

* The issue of benchmarking is difficult because one cannot compare institutional settings, but should concentrate on learning outcomes, levels etc.

Questions of Quality Assessment and Language Policy have not reached the heads of institutions of higher education.

SESSION TWO

Quality measures related to defining and designing courses and programmes in the area of languages

Chair: Thomas Fraser, Université Charles de Gaulle – Lille 3, FR

Presentation of interim outcomes of Sub-project 3 with special emphasis on
Learning outcomes and the issue of employability
     - regarding language professions
     - regarding general career prospects
Language learning outcomes in relation to common European levels of proficiency
How to initiate consultation with stakeholders (graduates and employers)
Rodica Baconsky, Universitatea Babes-Bolyai, RO

> «Si notre enseignement participe de notre incertitude générale et n'ose pas considérer qu'il s'agit de faire de vous des hommes prêts à affronter ce qui n'a jamais été, alors ne faut-il pas songer à [une] réforme profonde...?» (Paul Valéry)

Le point de vue de cette intervention est moins un tableau fidèle de l'état actuel de la problématique envisagée qu'une analyse des perspectives qu'il faut ouvrir pour une meilleure assise de l'apprentissage des langues dans l'enseignement supérieur, compte tenu des finalités mentionnées.

Aussi débute-t-elle par faire le tour rapide des changements de paradigme dans le contexte actuel dont il faut impérativement faire état:

- la dynamique du monde actuel comme monde de la globalisation, les interconnexions permanentes nécessitant une communication rapide, précise, nuancée, dans un maillage des langues;

- le processus de l'intégration européenne qu'il faut penser comme une intégration de la diversité culturelle et linguistique, mais aussi comme un immense marché du travail où la compétition sera de plus en plus marquée;

- l'environnement des Nouvelles Technologies permettant une approche autre des enseignements;

- les nouvelles politiques académiques telles que le processus de Bologne est en train de les mettre en œuvre (convergence des systèmes universitaires, transparence des diplômations, systèmes des compétences et des résultats escomptés pour l'emploi...);

- la massification des études universitaires entraînant une redéfinition de la qualité;

- la compétitivité des universités européennes face à la concurrence des enseignements formel, informel, non-formel;

et on pourrait, certes, ajouter d'autres facteurs incitants / perturbateurs qui ne cessent de solliciter un renouveau de l'université et, conséquemment et a fortiori, de l'enseignement des langues. Aussi, les universités sont-elles appelées à formuler des réponses spécifiques à des défis spécifiques et à reconnaître aux langues un rôle déterminant dans leur adaptation au monde contemporain.

Les axes pertinents d'une approche de celui-ci devront tenir compte de certains facteurs incontournables pour la réflexion sur / la mise en œuvre de politiques intelligentes et appropriées :

- le niveau des langues au moment de l'entrée à l'université (l'apprentissage précoce préconisé et deux langues étrangères au lycée changent les données actuelles) ;

- le choix des langues (favorisant l'anglais, repositionnant les autres langues dans une nouvelle perspective ; la question de la langue d'introduction et celle des langues dites de proximité, etc.) ;

- les problèmes d'intégration touchant l'immigration et, partant, un questionnement ardu autre sur le bilinguisme ;

- la question de la langue maternelle comme support de l'apprentissage de la langue étrangère (à la fois délier les attaches irréfléchies à la langue maternelle et construire une relation naturelle / non artificielle à la langue étrangère) ;

- l'accès (généralisé) au multimédia (modifiant les perceptions et avantageant l'oralité) ;

- l'accès à l'autoformation et le retour à la formation (lifelong learning) qui imposent une méthodologie autre.

La logique de cette démarche conduit nécessairement à cerner et à prendre en compte la relation entre les moyens mis en œuvre* et les résultats escomptés en termes de connaissances, de qualifications et de compétences ; leur possible évaluation comparable et transparente au niveau universitaire ; les attentes formulés par les divers groupes d'intérêts (stakeholders).

1. Définir les résultats escomptés de l'apprentissage des langues en termes de connaissances, de qualifications et de compétences face à l'emploi (l'employabilité):

1.1. connaissances (impliquant des niveaux différents selon le type et la finalité des études)

* acquérir les structures fondamentales de la langue, les principes de son fonctionnement;

* acquérir les éléments qui tiennent à l'imaginaire de la langue, à ses créations, à son histoire, à ses interférences avec les autres langues de la même famille...;

1.2. les qualifications spécifiques dans et par la langue étrangères:

* acquérir une culture professionnelle basés sur la compréhension de textes complexes, le maniement des conventions discursives propres à un domaine de spécialisation ;

* acquérir les principes de l'organisation argumentative et de construction du texte / discours scientifique ;

* atteindre à l'intelligence créative et réaliser sa capacité transversale (apprendre à communiquer et le faire dans d'autres langues et avec / sur d'autres cultures) ;

1.3. les compétences générales (transférables) :

1.3.1. développer des stratégies de communication (problématisation, interaction, gestion de l'altérité, réflexion critique, etc.) ;

1.3.2. développer la motivation pour une formation continue ;

1.3.3. développer la motivation pour l'apprentissage d'autres langues ;

1.3.4. générer une attitude ouverte, adaptable à de nouvelles conditions de travail à partir de la flexibilité et des compétences communicatives, attitude capable d'envisager des profils professionnels à venir ;

1.3.5. aller à la rencontre de la construction d'une citoyenneté européenne.

A partir de ces attentes, il est évident que les universités doivent conscientiser la nécessité de passer d'une pédagogie du paradigme à une pédagogie des compétences qui prépare à bâtir des savoirs et savoir-faire et non plus à les subir. Elles doivent devenir imaginatives afin de préparer à une carrière présente, mais aussi à une reconversion future, à concevoir une stratégie

individuelle de progression et de changement à la lumière du processus de Bologne qui prévoit, lui, une professionnalisation précoce (au niveau de la licence bac+3/4).

Questions:

a. Comment peut-on mieux définir les attentes et les rendre transparentes et comparables dans leur expression?

b. Comment, en l'occurrence, définir la qualité?

c. Comment peut-on le faire au niveau européen en synergie avec les programmes à l'œuvre dans l'enseignement supérieur?

2. Résultats escomptés en relation avec le Cadre commun de référence élaboré par le Conseil de l'Europe:

- la recherche d'un système de référence de la qualité passe par des modèles d'évaluation ;

- à ce titre, le Cadre commun de référence (avec ses compléments, le Portfolio et le Passeport linguistique) représente un concept-outil particulièrement intéressant, car il envisage le réorienter le processus d'évaluation lui-même sur des compétences précises, quantifiables et fiables et, en entraînant l'apprenant lui-même dans ce processus ;

- il permet aussi de mieux saisir l'apprentissage des langues comme une progression et le place dans la perspective de la lifelong learning.

Questions :

a. Comment aller plus loin dans cette voie, comment envisager un système plus pointu d'évaluation de la culture professionnelle linguistique ?

b. Comment envisager, au niveau européen, un Portfolio des universités ?

c. Comment donner cours à une expérimentation au niveau d'une / plusieurs langue(s) qui, appliquée de bonne foi, pourrait constituer :

- une autoévaluation de l'université concernant les performances des étudiants (y a-t-il une progression réelle dans l'acquis des langues ?) afin d'ajuster, à terme, ses objectifs et stratégies ;

- un critère de comparaison entre les universités, mettant en valeur leur compétitivité.

3. Comment initier des consultations avec les groupes d'intérêts (stakeholders) ?

La première remarque à faire tient à la situation asymétrique entre l'Ouest où, de manière plus générale, il y a déjà dans nombre de pays une tradition de partenariat avec les divers groupes d'intérêts, et l'Est, où ce type de relation émerge à peine.

La deuxième remarque tient à la diversité et à la non-convergence des intérêts des stakeholders, à même de provoquer une réflexion approfondie conciliant culture générale, culture professionnelle, qualité, adaptabilité, capacité de communiquer, capacité d'assumer des responsabilités...

En grandes lignes, les groupes d'intérêts visés par le thème seraient :

2.1.1. académiques :

- les collègues

- les collègues (non-spécialistes en langues)

- les étudiants

- les licenciés

- l'université elle-même ;

2.1.2. employeurs :

- l'école

- les institutions nationales, internationales

- les entreprises

- les agences

L'essentiel tient dans l'initiation et le suivi du dialogue entre l'université et tous les facteurs impliqués dans le marché du travail avec l'implicite de la qualité. Par quels moyens. Nous en proposons certains:

2.1.3. une information suivie supposant la transparence et la lisibilité des programmes ;

2.1.4. la responsabilisation des apprenants eux-mêmes dans la définition et la mise en œuvre des programmes des stages de formation ;

2.1.5. l'organisation des services-étudiants destinés à la pré-professionnalisation ;

2.1.6. la permanence du feed-back,

2.1.7. la mise en œuvre du principe : « construire ensemble » le profil professionnel ;

2.1.8. l'intégration des professionnels dans le processus académique (exemple : le Mastère européen d'interprétation de conférence mis en place avec les services de la Commission et du Parlement Européen) ;

2.1.9. la réponse prompte à la demande des employeurs concernant des besoins ponctuels.

Questions:

a. En quels termes définir une politique linguistique réaliste, cohérente, pertinente, stimulative, capable d'envisager des solutions à ces défis multiples?

b. Qui serait en mesure de la faire si ce n'est pas l'Université elle-même et les réseaux qui sont porteurs d'expériences.

Two workgroups were led by *Miriam Broderick, Dublin Institute of Technology, IE and Jolanta Urbanikowa, Uniwersytet Warszawski, PL*

The group, chaired by Jolanta Urbanikowa, working on the relation of language learning outcomes to the Common European levels of proficiency have expressed the opinion that whereas there is an urgent need to establish a set of language learning outcomes for higher education: for the criteria of transparency, comparability and recognition, the following recommendations should be taken into account;

1) the Council of Europe scales of proficiency should be treated like a model

2) the Council of Europe scales of proficiency should be expanded, added dimension, to cover knowledge, skills and competences indispensable for a HE graduate, inclusive of skills for autonomous and collaborative working;

3) the proficiency levels descriptors should be clear, meaningful and legible for all stakeholders;

4) entrance criteria (prerequisites) and exit level from a language course should be established.

In this context the following concepts should not be neglected:

- the portfolio for HE

- the outcomes of the Tuning Project

- employability

- the forms of delivery.

SESSION THREE

General measures taken at European, national/regional and institutional level designed to ensure and/or enhance quality in HE programmes
Chair: Christian Wentzlaff-Eggebert, Co-ordinator of TNP2 Sub-project 3, Universität zu Köln, DE

Lewis Purser, European University Association, Geneva and Brussels, CH and BE

Lewis Purser presented an interesting project on "Quality Culture" supported by the European Commission which deals with the development of internal quality culture in institutions by promoting best practices in introducing and developing a quality culture in the following areas: Research management, teaching and learning, student support services, implementing Bologna reforms, collaborative arrangements and communication flow and decision making structures. The expected outcomes are an enhancement of the self-regulatory capacity of the European Higher Education Community, as an important step towards convergence within the framework of the Bologna process and the contributions to the Graz Convention and the Berlin Meeting in 2003.

Kristina Lutz, ESIB, Brussels, BE

Kristina Lutz presented the main results of the ESIP-Quality Insurance Project. In 2001, ESIP sent out questionnaires on quality insurance in European HEI. The target groups were composed by internal as well as external actors. Speaking about the outcomes the ESIP representative pointed out that the differences in quality consciousness are enormous an that the situation is changing rather quickly. She announced the publication of a handbook in Utrecht which will be available in electronically form.

Bram ten Cate, Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, NL

The presentation by professor Bram ten Cate was dealing with the problems related to the evaluation procedures at ministry-, university- and department-level. Taking the example of a negative evaluation he explained that factors such as the infrastructure of the town where the HEI is located, the quality of the copy-shops or the judgement of students had influenced the

results. He also underlined the impact of the outcomes on the attitude of the ministry and pointed out which had been the consequences for the university.

The Lausanne University experiment
Jacques Lanarès, Université de Lausanne, CH

During these 10', I will try to share with you what appears to me as being the core aspects of the project regarding quality at Lausanne University. (slide 0)
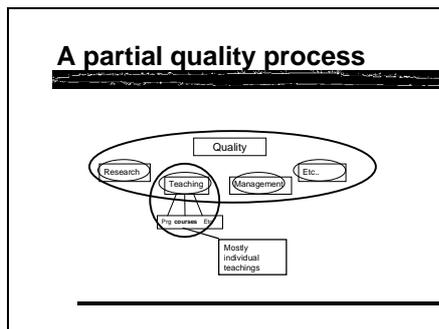
I will tell you a few words about the history of the project, then the process itself and the tools. Finally I shall have a quick look at the « results » of the project and the next steps.

However, before entering into details, I would like to replace the project in the global context of quality. As every body knows, Quality is a very global, multidimensional and in fact ambiguous concept. I think this is a major source of difficulties, because everyone is in favour of quality but we do not necessarily have the same thing in mind. Therefore, to clarify this question, I want to specify what aspects of quality we are considering (slide 1).
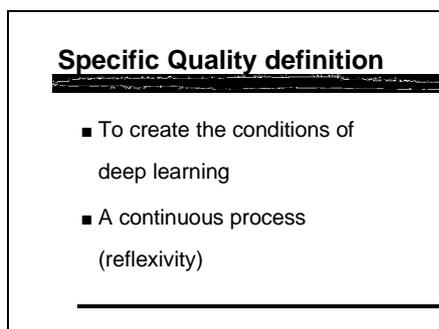
To go a bit further I would like to give some kind of basic definition we refer to that is « to create the conditions of deep learning »which means long term appropriation or integration. Although it is still a wide definition, it is useful because we can refer to research done on these conditions and

because no evaluation of quality can be done without taking position (even if it is not an absolute and universal position).

The second side is that quality is seen as a continuous process, essentially a reflexive process. Namely to make links between intentions and realization. That means to get feedbacks, to make links between different points of view, to explore different possibilities. In short to analyse, to understand, to adapt.

Specificities of the project

- A bottom up process
- To increase the value of teaching
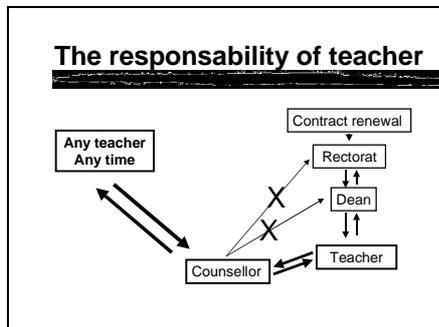- Which requires maturation
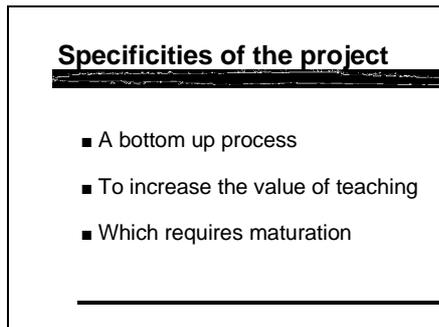
I will say a few words about the specificities of the project. First, I want to underline the fact that it is a group of teachers who started the project. As everybody here knows, research and publication are usually more valued than teaching. As a dean said once, « Teachers are paid to teach but are rewarded for their research and publication ». These teachers wanted to increase the value of teaching in the academic context. To our knowledge, it is the only quality process in Switzerland, which was not top down. The group started the project in 94 and then become an official teaching committee of the Rectorat. The first part of the project was the generalization of evaluation by the students, which started in 99-00 after a pilot phase. This shows the maturation time required. The group needed time to find a consensus on principles and tools and time to get the proposals accepted by the entire faculty. I think this is important because I have heard tell of top-down process with a very short « maturation time » and quite strong resistances. The teachers are the main vectors of teaching quality. How could we do without them?

However, if quality implies evaluation, quality is not only methodology. It is also a cultural process. As usual, this culture is based on values that we can find in the four main principles.
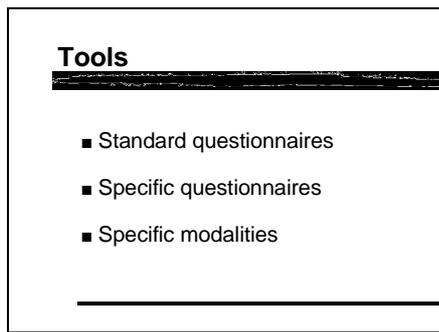
4 main principles

- Formative evaluation
- Confidentiality
- Pedagogical counselling
- Evaluation of Evaluation

1) Formative evaluation, which means that the results are not compared to norms or have administrative consequences but are compared to teacher's objectives and previous evaluations.

2) Confidentiality: answers from students are anonymous and results are confidentially transmitted to the teachers and only to them. This is to get information that is more accurate and increase acceptance of the results.

3) Counselling. Evaluation is not a burocratic process but the starting point of a pedagogical reflexion. Teachers can ask for individual counselling or join workshops.

4) Evaluation of the Evaluation. The Evaluation process must be evaluated to keep its pertinence. So how does it work?

The responsability of teacher

Any teacher Any time

Contract renewal

Rectorat

Dean

Teacher

Counsellor

There are two cases.

The teachers have to give a feedback to students. This is a critical point because we must find a subtle balance between one extreme where everything is confidential and secret and nothing happens and the other extreme when anything is public and then demagogical process start (that is to try to please the students but which doesn't mean deep learning). Therefore, they have to tell the students what are the main outcomes of the evaluation and this is the starting point of a dialogue with students.

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Tools

- Standard questionnaires
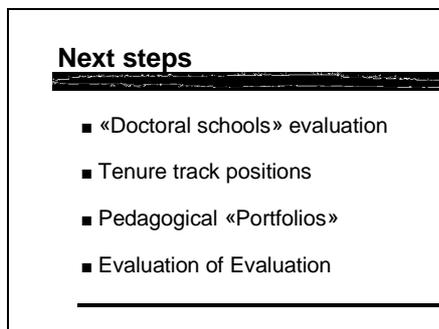- Specific questionnaires
- Specific modalities

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The tools.

Nothing new about the tools but the goal is to remain relevant in various situations (specific teaching conditions) and try to bring answers to the questions the teachers have. Therefore, questionnaires and interviewing methods are adapted to the various teachings.

Just a graphic of the evolution, which shows a 200% increase in two years. (Slide)

The impact is different depending on the faculty (slide).

I can see from my personal contacts and reactions that the culture is still to be developed in some faculties.

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Next steps

- «Doctoral schools» evaluation
- Tenure track positions
- Pedagogical «Portfolios»
- Evaluation of Evaluation

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Next steps

Lausanne University in partnership with Geneva has developed doctoral schools. A pedagogical quality evaluation of the project has been done and an other evaluation after one year of functioning will be done.

As part of the project it has been decided to give weight to teaching quality evaluation for tenure track positions.

Therefore, the teaching quality concern is gently spreading inside university

An evaluation of the evaluation is scheduled during the next academic year and should give answers to questions such as: Are the principles applied? What kind of modifications is made to courses? Should the tools be adapted? And so on.

All this with the hope that as far as teaching quality is concerned, reflexion on relevance will always prevail over conformity to norms.

General points of reference for assessing and enhancing quality in HE programmes and provision
Chair: Wolfgang Mackiewicz, TNP2 Co-ordinator, Freie Universität Berlin, DE

Introduction
Bernd Wächter, ACA, BE

The main issue raised by Bernd Wächter was about the standards to apply.
"How good is good?" he asked underlining at the time that every discussion on quality is also a discussion on institutional development and about the Bologna Process.

The introduction was followed by a general discussion, including statements by
Sandra Adolf, AEGEE, DE

Sandra Adolf came up with a short list of definitions, revendications and concrete proposals underlining that motivation is considered as a key-issue by her organization, that language courses should be free and offered at various levels (including continuous education), that the number of hours should be similar for SOD and students of philology, that credits should be given for language courses to SOD, that the needs of the labour market should be taken into account, and not only English should be offered but also Italian, Spanish and so on, including offers of other partners (like the German Hungarian association) and that standards for students should be set. She also spoke on facilities such as "tandem" or other types of partnership, study visits to the target country, summer courses, possibilities for improving language skills by autonomous learning in language laboratories. Finally, she asked for the employment of native speakers as language teachers, for an interesting teaching and the evaluation of the teaching by the students.

Achim Hopbach, Association of Universities and other Higher Education Institutions in Germany – Hochschulrektorenkonferenz (HRK), DE

In his comment on Bernd Wächter's presentation Achim Hopbach raised the alternative of setting or checking criteria of quality. As a representative of the German Conference of Rectors, he

invited the departments to define the contents and the objects proposing that evaluation then should continue taking in account this basis. He underlined that such a procedure would be in accordance with the existing founds and added that the list of criteria to be defined by the universities could be rather long. It would not be sufficient to describe language skills but important to look also for broader generic competences, as for instance social competences are.

Jutta Siepmann, ThyssenKrupp Stahl AG, DE

Jutta Siepmann exposed the conditions set by her company in the area of languages concerning people applying for a job: a good dominion of a first foreign language and a basic knowledge of English because the candidates will afterwards participate in specialized language courses depending on the field where they will work. At the same time, they should be able to learn a third language in an intensive course in accordance to the needs of the employer. That means that quality of the language skills is not as important as the quality of the teacher involved in the further learning process. Teacher have to be able to motivate learners in the evening after a long working day or during a whole week, should have a good didactical and cultural background and be convinced that the language they are teaching is important. The industry should discuss the needs of the future and establish a dialogue with universities formulating purposes for the choice of languages and the definition of outcomes.

Peder Ostergaard, Tuning Project, DK

As a representative of the project„Tuning Educational Structures in Europe", Peder Ostergaard presented four main lines of this project. These are
1. On learning outcomes paying attention as well to general as to subject-specific skills
2. On knowledge, curricula and contents
3. On ECTS as an accumulation system
4. On methods of teaching and learning, assessment and performance.

He explained that the quality of output and input has to be considered in relationship with the cost of achieving learning outcomes and the time to achieve them. He also emphasised the necessity of defining the importance of every outcome in terms of employability. A mapping of subject areas and describing content and knowledge could be useful.

Quality measures relating to the process of teaching and training
Chair: Piet Van de Craen, Vrije Universiteit Brussel, BE

Presentation of interim outcomes of Sub-project 3 with special emphasis on
The creation of a new learning culture
Improving the quality of student mobility
Quality learning in language teacher education
Silvia Blasková, Univerzita Komenskeho v Bratislave, SK

The creation of a new learning culture

Learning and teaching has both human and contextual terms. Postmodernist crisis in values on the one hand and research findings on the other one resulted in identification of deeper links and relatively independent educational worlds existing in the worlds of social phenomena. This new concept created an immense complexity and dynamism in the evaluation of the teaching-learning process. The easiest way of presenting the summary of research and empirical observations may be explained by words "taught is not learnt". This statement, however, does not provide any clues to the identification of ways how to ensure quality. Uniqueness of each teaching situation and thereby relevant, meaningful and effective pedagogical approach to teaching, requires special awareness of necessity to understand their inner logic and dynamics seen through the manifested identity of each participant as a member of a socio-cultural or professional group.

Personality, attitudes and beliefs, even life experience, influence how the participant of the teaching-learning process interprets and interacts within the process itself. Although indirectly, even the writer of teaching materials exerts a strong influence on modes of interaction in the classroom by giving it a mental and socio-pedagogical framework. Teaching thus enables cross fertilisation of communication and socialising factors as well as controlled and autonomous activity.

There is no doubt that communicative approach prevailingly adopted in methodology of nearly all surveyed educational institutions in FL, contributes to learning group dynamics. Yet we must mention other quality factors that make a difference in the teaching outcomes of language teachers namely:

a. the quality of Teaching theory they acquired during the pre-graduate training

b. connections they made between the Theory and classroom realities

c. regularly updated knowledge, language skills and methodology of teaching

d. use of appropriate counselling techniques

e. new learning environments deliberately created for the sake of student`s learning outcomes

f. raised awareness of similarities and differences in physical manifestation of emotional states in students

g. giving and receiving positive feedback to students based on giving information on progress in a non-judgemental, factual way.

The major trends and concerns in tertiary language teaching which were presented in the National Reports state, that there is great variation in structures and approaches not only between countries but also between and within institutions operating in the same country. Accessibility of technical support for teaching and learning overshadows pedagogical issues and often becomes the goal of findings without necessary changes in institutional organisation, methodology and day-to-day running. Staff in the process of teaching and learning on the one hand did not successfully cope with the new role a teacher in the technically changed environment and on the other hand, shifted fulcra to independent learning rather than to contact teaching, lacks certain parts of a new role.

Higher education language teachers have a different profile from academics in other fields, they often do not aspire to the traditional academic path of getting tenure and they prefer an explicitly pedagogical role. Most reports showed that language teachers are judged on the same criteria as other academic staff and they do not receive credit for what they are best at, namely, day-to-day teaching. For this reason language teachers may have less bargaining power when resources are allocated, or when it comes to pay rise.

Another tension is between research experience, often labelled as academic excellence, and pedagogical excellence which discourages the latter. In Belgium and France, however, there is an institutional solution to this problem. These negative aspects of teacher's appraisal also reflect on learning culture in lack of enthusiasm and willingness to innovative approach in teaching.

As stated in former communist block countries` reports, help of foreign cultural, educational and charitable institutions aimed at cooperation and increased cultural awareness in foreign countries of the target language, helps overcome initial humps of implementation and increase their confidence how to make the innovations more appropriate to the student needs and to the realities of the classroom context.

Predominately students in post communist countries are found not to be aware of learning strategies at an appropriate level how to become autonomous learners based on their learning history in authoritarian school system. A new phenomenon is witnessed in post communist countries applicants and later HE students do not belong to the category of knowledge seekers, alas, they very often solve situation on the job market and social benefits in the country, sit for entrance exams and try to manage their studies so that they avoid unemployment.

Many of the reports highlight the necessity to develop more materials related to self-study, preferably accessible on the web. After the fall of communism all Eastern universities experienced a tremendous increase in the number of educational and scientific events within the framework of conferences, study trips, peer teaching, retraining and inset courses or mentoring programmes organised by foreign language institutes such as the British Council, Goethe Institute, Italian Institute, etc. Cultural studies have also become more important for language studies than ever before.

In terms of language teaching materials increased access to world wide language resources via the Internet has had a major impact on language teaching, enabling teacher to access a much greater variety of source materials, particularly in LSP areas. Only recently, many direct contacts with life broadcast via satellite TV has been limited as some European countries e.g. the UK and France started using digital TV.

Teaching methods and organisation are gradually being tailored to make best use of the new resources available, many language departments have their own websites; many teaching staff has been redeployed in the design and production of multimedia language resources. All reports state a shift in learning culture over the past decade towards a student centred approach a more varied range of language learning activities and the introduction of quality systems. The most

institutionalised system is in operation in the UK offering networking opportunities both national and international.

New modes of learning have become objectives of several research projects. Their results are planned for three-year period that is why their impact on classroom realities will be seen only in future.

One of important ways how to enhance quality in teaching is to incorporate students` insights into the organisation and content of teaching as well as into aspects of pedagogical repertoire and style. Even though students may be inclined to evaluate quality on the basis of interpersonal relations rather than on teacher's commitment and skills, students` questionnaires represent an indispensable means how to trigger dialogue between teachers and students and at the same time the questionnaires act as a control measure for the individual teacher with respect to his/her pursued excellence.

Many language departments at state Higher educational institutions have taken up the position of leading centres helping secondary schools and other institutions involved in research and transfer of students from one stage of the educational system to another.

Mobility

The nature of the student's programme and the role of language within the course influence when, why and for how long the students want to stay in the host location. "When" usually depends on survival skills for an oral exam on the return, completion of a project or assignment for their home location, while in the host location credits may be transferred from the host location, etc.

"for how long" has to do with the programme, international agreements, funding.

"why" incorporates motivation, wishes as well as recommendable period of residency abroad.

There is no doubt that visiting the host location broadens knowledge of culture in which the language is embedded, personally enriches every visitor with variety of experience.

Students and staff mobility has given rise to the need and desire to study other languages and cultures which were not popular or accessible in the past. Both the real and virtual learning environment broaden the learner` s exposure to target language and culture. Staff exchange

programmes allow students meet the foreign nationals, have contact hours with them and fill in the gaps in understanding certain phenomena or balancing their views.

Most exchange programmes for students and staff operate under SOCRATES SCHEME. National reports from Eastern Europe highlight the fact that whereas their staff are eager to travel and teach in a foreign country, nationals from the EU countries more reluctantly accept these destinations and when they do, they are not assigned to one single university but they rotate so that several Higher education institutions staff and larger student population may benefit from their stay.

Comparing experience across Europe, very few countries have a scheme or short programme preparing their students linguistically and culturally for going abroad. It is taken for granted that it is their responsibility or wish to travel prepared. Another problem is linked to recognition of the improved language competences and skills and acquired cultural literacy. Study or work experience abroad is either seen as an asset for the university graduates once they enter the labour market or recorded on student's transcript of record recognised as a part of their academic programme in line with the Bologna process. In some universities there are programmes for non-language specialists wishing to study abroad especially in less widely taught languages.

New methods facilitating quality learning in language teacher education
Language teacher education is as a rule subject to the general measure for teacher education, Some countries, though, experience vocational orientation, counselling and choice of future teacher`s profession as a result of necessity, unidentified potential or high dropout rates in entrants. It is worth noting that some areas in Western Europe and all Central and Eastern European departments have problems in recruiting language subjects applicants. Some local governments offer financial incentives to help attract them to teaching and they also repay students` loans for new teachers in shortage subjects including modern languages.

In some former communist countries, a number of Russian teachers underwent requalification in English as a foreign language as the demand shifted to English. Yet employability of those teachers who have a good command of languages is very high and many former language teachers or graduates from teacher training programmes, start a new career in the private sector

where they can acquire other professional skills in a comparably shorter time than language skills.

Even in countries traditionally considered to be of highest standard the new style teacher training colleges set up in the early 90-ties showed the necessity of ongoing updating and quality enhancing. Very few programmes are judged against benchmarks laid by national or international authorities, however, didactic theory and the design and use of teaching materials have proved to be the most important basics of a language teacher.

Reports are rather sceptical about change in paradigm in foreign language teaching methodology in future. Departments still adhere to rather traditional types of teaching aimed at students` skills. A kind of shift can be seen from transferred practices of bilingual or trilingual natural, administrative or educational settings into HEIs. (Belgium, Switzerland) To enhance quality it is needed to have a global framework providing for general guidelines and philosophy of quality enhancement in the area of languages that would guarantee rigour, relevance and good pedagogical outline of the course content for the accreditation process, and they are meeting the objectives with the principle of liberty of teaching. The workload of students is seldom taken into account by individual teachers and only some universities co-ordinate course design, credits and workload. Besides, workload of student majoring in language is usually heavier than in other humanities. Simultaneously, quality enhancement requires local initiatives providing for specific responses to local needs, taking into account historical roots and identity, yet encouraging new innovations in the line with global guidelines

What emerges from most national reports is the need for regular/periodic in-service professional development. Such training should concentrate on both general pedagogy courses as well as subject specific ones. There is a general trend across Europe to favour subject specific professional development although this one is more difficult and more expensive to organize.

Next relevant issue is whether this training is based on free choice or obligation. Here we have a plethora of combinations, starting with no system and ending up with a two tier system. Substantial part of the obligation must be on the part of a teacher; however, on the part of the employer must be obligation to acknowledge participating teacher either in promotion or in

remuneration. There are many university language teachers without any special training programmes, yet, most Higher education institutions have induction schemes, that originated mainly in the framework of Tempus projects and mentoring programmes. In some countries, teacher's professional development is subject to financial and organisational possibilities at the institution, in others it is subject to country's legislation.

Belgian CAPAES Certificate of Pedagogical Aptitude for further Education, a dossier which is required for obtaining a tenure in the French community, in Hungary it is 120-hour-training in seven years show growing awareness of the need to cater for specific teaching skills along with the traditional criterion of academic achievement. Quality of in-service teacher training is assured either on market principle e.g. Poland or by special institution, e.g. Hungary, the UK.

Conclusions and recommendations:

There is no magic rod to change the negative elements affecting efficiency of implementing necessary changes in organisation, staff and other participants of the teaching learning process. What we can do is to start dedicated work towards achieving the following measures to change them. We as teachers should clearly manifest the shift from teaching to learning, from knowledge acquisition to development of competences, in all component of our work.

It is not the technical support that decides whether the student learns independently, his/her ILL is always based in course design, materials, direct exposure to the target language, effective learning strategies and language advising he/she gets from any member of the teaching staff, that create the new learning culture. Autonomous learning is obviously more difficult to be pushed forward in the remnants of authoritarian educational system yet surprisingly, when it is brought about in an atmosphere of excessive administrative support, it is not working either. What would be more desirable are self-study materials developing competences accessible on the web.

Both real and virtual learning environment broaden the learner's exposure to the target language and culture. However, there is a lot of room for improvement. First of all, staff mobility from western parts of Europe to Eastern and Central Europe might help change learning culture and it does seem to be necessary to have a scheme or a short programme preparing students

linguistically and culturally for going abroad. Both study and work experience there contributes to acquired cultural literacy and among many other positive impacts it has, we must also mention newly developed competences, that are distinctly different before and after mobility. Their recognition along with dissemination of experience is desperately needed.

Last but not least, all these changes require changed concept of language teacher education having an European dimension embedded in the programme and in the learning outcomes and profile of future teachers. In-service teachers must be aware of the learning opportunities that are available not only in her/his university but elsewhere. We should persuade teachers to become language learners themselves in order to be able to empathise with language learners` difficulties and to serve as a model of multilingualism.

Naturally, we do not want to create imbalance in this process highlighting only what teachers should do but we expect students to assume their part of the responsibility not only for learning outcomes but also for developing an attitude to true European citizenship.

SESSION FIVE

Quality measures relating to the organisation and management of the process of teaching and learning
Chair: Juliane Besters-Dilger, Universität Wien, AT

Presentation of interim outcomes of Sub-project 3, with special emphasis on
Calculation of student workload in language teaching/learning
Systems for the external evaluation of programmes and courses in the area of languages
Systems for the internal evaluation of programmes and courses in the area of languages
Elisabeth M. Lillie, University of Ulster, UK

Different European countries have their own traditions and national cultures arising from their history, political systems and approach to organisation. Given the centrality of education within national life, it is no surprise that the distinct national cultures should be reflected in educational systems and that in turn these should impact on the quality procedures employed. The foremost distinguishing feature is perhaps the level of centralisation and direction from the centre that is

found in some countries as compared to the greater autonomy enjoyed by institutions in certain other countries.

Calculation of student workloads

A spread of practice emerges very clearly concerning the approach to calculating student workloads. While at one end of the spectrum, we find a centralised system laying down the minimum number of hours that must be taken in different areas by students wishing to obtain a particular degree, in other reports there is no reference to student workload, suggesting a somewhat laissez-faire approach. I suppose that in this case, we may assume that the students either choose the course elements, taking account themselves of the workload involved or that they simply submit willingly or unwillingly to the loading judged appropriate by their academic taskmasters (or mistresses). Some reports do indeed indicate that it is seen as the responsibility of the department to determine the student workload. Despite this divergence among some, the majority of European countries have in fact adopted (or are in process of adopting) credit schemes. A number of countries have ECTS based schemes or other credit systems which are convertible to ECTS. While these schemes may exist in the majority of universities in a country, it is not always obligatory for universities to implement them. One country suggested that the allocation of ECTS credits was at times somewhat arbitrary and did not always take into account the students' actual workload. In another country , pressure from the student members of faculty in one university was said to have led to a definition of what constitutes an hour of individual work: pages to be read; essay pages to be written. Elsewhere the workload calculation would be seen as an average input, given that individuals work at different paces and in different ways.

The very clear movement towards credit schemes would seem to have been motivated not only by a concern with equity towards students and quality of learning but also by the need to promote mobility. It was thus particularly interesting to note that in one country (Hungary) the use of credit schemes had been pioneered by modern language departments.

External evaluation systems

Where external evaluation is concerned, variety is once again the spice of (quality) life and yet, at the same time, certain clear trends may be said to emerge.

The term evaluation is in fact used in connection with slightly different processes. It may in certain instances mean the initial approval or accreditation to run a particular course or programme in an institution. Yet, prior to this the university in question will have had to effect some form of assessment or evaluation of what it intends to put forward. Accreditation and evaluation also merge into one another in countries where after an initial period of approval, the course/ programme has to be submitted for re-accreditation.

In other instances, evaluation is taken to mean a periodic review or evaluation of a field to ensure that it is in good health.

Here again a distinction may be observed between countries with a greater level of centralisation and those that accord more autonomy to universities. The latter do, however, frequently have in-built controls or checks on the procedures of universities.

Where accreditation or the first authorisation to mount a programme is concerned, the more centralised countries will have established a general framework at ministerial level for particular categories of programme (after consultation with relevant stakeholders). Depending on the country, such frameworks will be more or less tightly prescribed. However, even if there is a firm level of prescription (as for example in France), the individual institution will still have some latitude within the given framework to evolve its own course to reflect local needs, conditions and specialisms.

A number of countries indicate that Ministerial approval must be given for new courses (in addition to France, Denmark and Finland may be mentioned).

In other systems, universities may have the right to mount new programmes without ministerial approval but, in general, such freedom is hedged about (and increasingly hedged about) with conditions. This is the case, for instance, in the UK where national guidelines indicate that course approval should be undertaken by a university evaluation panel that includes representation from outside the institution and where there a also a range of benchmarks to be taken into account. In the UK compliance with such practices would be checked when the university as a whole is audited.

Some countries where newer institutions have grown up alongside long established universities operate a dual system of evaluation. While more autonomy is given to older universities, there is a validating body for the new sector. (Ireland is a case in point with its Higher Education and Training Authority from which the more recent institutions must seek accreditation).

Whatever the characteristics of the approach, many countries have now established a body or national agency which is generally charged with Institutional review as a whole as well as the accreditation and evaluation of courses and programmes (in some countries, however, there are a number of different bodies exercising slightly different functions but the move towards a national body with overall oversight or responsibility still emerges clearly.

There are a number of permutations in the conduct of evaluation in the various countries and, while not all stages may obtain in every country concerned, the following seems to be the general pattern (see also figure 1)

It is customary for a self-evaluation or assessment report to be prepared by the institution. This will then be considered by a committee of the agency which may be a generally established committee. Sometimes the report will be sent to a specially constituted panel of experts either nominated by the agency or (occasionally) by the university. In general, the members of this panel would be peers, most frequently from within the country. Much more rarely, international reviewers would be included on the panel.

After receipt of the self-evaluation report, there may well be an on-site visit (it is not universal). During the visit, discussions may take place with those concerned - most normally managers (heads of department; heads of centres); teaching staff and students. The visit also permits the accuracy of the self-evaluation report to be checked. Visits may last for one or two days, although they may occasionally be of slightly longer duration.

More freedom is sometimes allowed, as for instance, in Finland where institutions are responsible for their own evaluations although they are, as the report puts it, 'assisted' by the Finnish Evaluation Council.

On the basis of the panel's deliberations, there will be a report containing conclusions and recommendations. This will be sent to the institution and to the national agency concerned. The country reports did not always indicate if the institution or department could comment on a draft for accuracy, although this would certainly be good practice.

The period of time between external evaluation varies with different periods between eight and four years being common. Compulsion is becoming widespread and where the system is voluntary (as in Greece) the take-up is not necessarily very high. (6% including only one languages department).

Criteria for external evaluation vary from country to country. There is also some overlap between criteria for external evaluation and those used in internal procedures. This being the case, the criteria for both internal and external evaluation will be considered after the discussion of internal procedures

Normally, even if external evaluations include international experts, they are conducted by the national authorities. Reports indicate that very occasionally in areas other than languages accreditation might be sought from an international body. Thus, for instance, in Switzerland, St Gall had its Management School evaluated on a European level and, again in Switzerland, Medical Schools are going through a process of international recognition. Similarly Denmark reports that some universities have participated in international evaluations but not in the area of languages.

Figure 1: NATIONAL EVALUATION AGENCY
(conducting/overseeing evaluation)

COMMITTEE OF AGENCY
or
PANEL OF EXPERTS (PEER REVIEW) (AGENCY/UNIVERSITY NOMINATED)
USUALLY NATIONAL RARELY INTERNATIONAL INPUT

Receives

SELF-EVALUATION REPORT

May make

ON-SITE VISIT

REPORT:
CONCLUSIONS; RECOMMENDATIONS
(institution may comment on draft)

SENT TO INSTITUTION/NATIONAL AGENCY

FREQUENCY c. 4 - 8 years

COMPULSORY / VOLUNTARY

Internal evaluation

Where internal evaluation is concerned, there is once more a range of practice, with different degrees of autonomy and types of quality procedures being found. Yet again, however, certain clear trends emerge.

Internal and external procedures are often closely intertwined, in that, prior to external evaluation, there will be an internal procedure preparing the curriculum or evaluation report that has to be sent outside (whether to the Ministry or National Evaluation Agency).

In other countries, however, institutions will effect their own evaluation or accreditation procedures internally (although as has been seen these will normally be constrained by national guidelines or benchmarks where these exist (as in UK or Switzerland) or checked on audit or subject review. Elsewhere , there may be a requirement that a review be conducted by the university every so many years.

As well as larger scale reviews, internal procedures may also cover yearly re-consideration or updating of curricula at the level of the department or teaching group.

While there is some variation in nomenclature and in the levels and extent of review that may be found in different countries and universities, (reflecting in part existing structures and hierarchy), the following pattern and stages may be discerned.

The evaluation or request for accreditation will be put together at the level of the department. This is the first stage and also - self-evidently - the point of delivery. Good practice would suggest that this assessment would be undertaken through consultation so that the teaching team themselves effect an evaluation of their practice rather than a report being just written up by managers or professors. It may include evidence of student assessment on teaching and feedback on a range of course related issues.
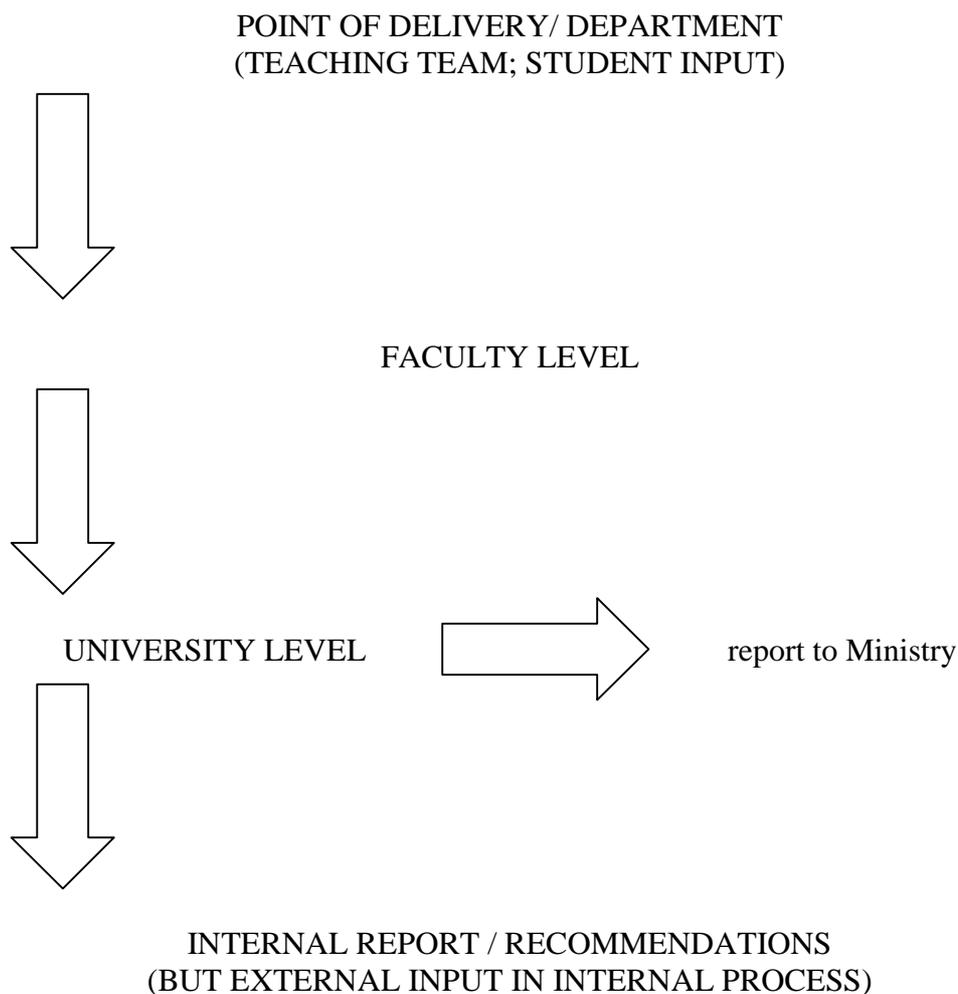
Above the level of delivery, there is often some form of oversight from a body to whom the teaching team may be said to be responsible but who may be considered to be at a certain remove from them so there is also an element of distance and somewhat greater objectivity. This intermediate level is often that of the Faculty although it may be some other unit. (In one country, however, it is indicated that quality control is the responsibility of the head of department, so presumably a check at this intermediate level above the department does not exist). At the Faculty - or other similar - stage of consideration , there may be consultation with the department and suggestions or amendments before the report is sent on to a university body charged with Academic Affairs or more specifically with Quality matters. If the evaluation has been driven by the need to send a report on to a ministerial body or quality agency, it will leave the University at this stage (although ideally there will later be feedback from the external agency into the university system).

If, on the other hand, the process has been a review conducted by the university itself to evaluate its own curricula, programmes or courses the process will generally involve a report back from the university evaluation body to the other levels within the university, such as the faculty and department. Perhaps because internal evaluation is so frequently driven by the external

mechanisms, there is relatively little within the reports on purely internal processes. The United Kingdom, where institutions are expected to develop formalised procedures for internal review is an exception and there is also evidence from the reports of internal procedures in countries such as Switzerland, Finland, Hungary and Austria. The scope that universities have to develop their own criteria for review varies according to country, and such freedom may also be constrained by a framework of national guidelines. In Denmark, institutions may choose to have their own evaluations on certain themes as well as the required national ones. In Hungary, in addition to the more periodic national reports, there is an annual self-evaluation held in the institution.

For a diagrammatic summary of the various stages that may be included in internal evaluation, see figure 2 below.

Figure 2: Internal Evaluation / Accreditation Systems

POINT OF DELIVERY/ DEPARTMENT
(TEACHING TEAM; STUDENT INPUT)

FACULTY LEVEL

UNIVERSITY LEVEL   →   report to Ministry

INTERNAL REPORT / RECOMMENDATIONS
(BUT EXTERNAL INPUT IN INTERNAL PROCESS)

Evaluation criteria

The criteria that may be employed in external and internal evaluations include the following, itemised below, which, it must be stressed, do not necessarily all appear in any one country or report but represent the various criteria that have been found in the reports as a whole. It is obvious that some (such as the assessment of staff capacity) are particularly appropriate to external evaluations.

Staff (number; qualifications; publications)

Curriculum (content; structure; appropriacy; currency; teaching and learning methods; conformity to national guidelines; benchmarks)

Resources (teaching areas; specialist language provision; new technology; staff facilities)

Students (feedback; mechanisms; issues; progression and achievement; profile)

Staff evaluation (evidence from course committees; study councils)

External comment (eg from external examiner where this system exists)

Employment (destinations; employer feedback; alumni feedback)

Key objectives

Looking at the various reports and the different systems that prevail in the countries under consideration, it seems appropriate to ask what seem to be the main objectives of the quality procedures used in the different countries of Europe. These emerge as being principally, I think, the following, although not all the reports give prominence to the full range of potential categories.

First of all, there is a concern with the maintenance of standards in the sector (seen, for instance, in the concern with the curriculum or the quality of the teaching staff). Then - at both national

and intra-university levels - there is a recognition of the need for regular review and updating of the curriculum (something which is, of course, likely to happen more frequently within the university than within the context of an in-depth review conducted by a national body). As well as considering the curriculum, it is also the case that some quality procedures may focus on the identification of areas where there is a risk of deficient performance. To do this they may consult statistical material on matters such as student progress and achievement or they may draw on more qualitative sources of student comment. Finally, the principle of peer review may be seen as a key element in the system. In addition to ensuring the input of evaluators with specialist knowledge and a genuine understanding of the area, this also serves the purpose of introducing a comparison with national (and sometimes international) trends and a greater awareness of subject developments. The comparison with national trends may also be undertaken through the use of national statistical information in addition to that supplied by the institution.

Issues for further discussion

From the evidence of the reports, there are a number of issues that merit further discussion.

Further work might profitably take place on credit schemes and their application to the languages area.

A range of questions emerges regarding the promotion of a European dimension in evaluation. Should evaluation panels include as a matter of course representatives from other European countries? What constitutes best practice in evaluation in the area of languages and should a set of European benchmarks for quality be developed?

Conclusion

Quality in the sense of excellence is an enduring aim of higher education. Faced with an increasingly competitive student market, certain reports signal the importance of quality procedures as a means to the achievement of a high quality learning environment. Students are concerned with the quality of their education and universities now exist in a market that is no

longer just regional or national but global. Universities may speak of the need to publish or perish; but perhaps we should now also suggest that they must promote quality or perish.

The presentation as well as the comments by *Achim Hopbach*, HRK, *Bram ten Cate,* Riksuniversiteit Groningen, and Peder Ostergard, Tuning, were discused in three working groups.

Group 1, chaired by *Fátima Sequeira, Universidade do Minho, PT*, came up with four recommendations*:*
1) It should be taken in account that ECTS as a credit accumulation system offers the opportunity to give proper weight to language learning.
2) Credits and other incentives linked to the workload should be foreseen for LL outside language programmes.
3) In calculating the workload, we have to pay proper attention to learning outcomes and entry levels.
4) The introduction of the Bachelor / Master structure will force us to calculate the workload much more rigorously.

Group 3 chaired by *Klára Szábo, Szegedi Tudomanyegyetem, HU,* and dealing with Internal Evaluation identified the following questions:

Who? - All relevant actors or informants.
What? - Learning Outcomes
        - the Process (organizational support)
How? - do we handle the reflection process (conflict)?
        - do you implement decisions made at stage?
        - do you manage top-down?

Conclusions, outcomes, and recommendations
Chair: Jolanta Urbanikowa, Uniwersytet Warszawski, PL

Training of university teachers and trainers
Ian Tudor, Université Libre de Bruxelles, BE

1. The role of the teacher in language programme delivery

The quality of student learning is closely dependent upon the quality of teaching. No serious consideration of quality in higher education (HE) language studies can therefore fail to devote attention to teachers' pedagogical skills and to the means of maintaining and upgrading these skills. Concern with teacher skills, and thereby with teacher training, is thus an integral component of the broader goal of quality enhancement (QE) in HE language studies. It is for this reason that TNP2 sub-project 3 on Quality Enhancement devoted one of the five chapters of the national reports prepared on each country to the question of teacher training.

2. Demands of an evolving pedagogy

Teacher skills have always played a crucial role in language learning. In the current context, however, there are reasons for according particular attention to this aspect of what could be described as the "quality cycle", ie. the cycle leading from quality teaching to quality learning. The first of these is related to the call for a more learner-centred approach to teaching: This entails a move away from the traditional content-based mode of teaching (knowledge transmission) to one based on active learner involvement in the learning process with the goal of fostering reflective and self-directive skills in students as part of the goal of life long learning. The second derives from the rapidly evolving demands being made on teachers: These include the creation of novel courses for students of different disciplines and, not infrequently, the obligation to do this within the framework of various organisational and financial constraints. The third relates to the increasingly wide range of learning options and modes of study from which teachers can choose - project or task based learning, independent study, use of ICT, etc.

Within this rapidly evolving context, the legitimate demands which institutions make upon teachers to innovate in their pedagogical practice need to be accompanied by a parallel effort to

provide teachers with appropriate pedagogical support in the form of in-service training and ongoing professional development. Indeed, it is unreasonable to expect teachers to foster life long learning in their students unless they too are engaged in the same process.

3. Costing and operationalising teacher skills

Few would question the importance of teacher skills within the overall quality cycle. This having been said, difficulties can arise in integrating teacher training into the career of HE teachers and into institutional structures. To begin with, reticences can arise regarding the cost of catering for the ongoing professional development of teachers. In part, this results from budgetary restrictions and the problem of finding the necessary resources at a time of stable or shrinking budgets; it may also, however, reflect uncertainty (or scepticism) about the added value offered by teacher training, and the difficulty of operationalising the gain which teacher training can offer. In this respect however, the message is clear: Teacher training pays! Investing in the teachers who will be responsible for course development and delivery is thus one of the most productive investments that can be made in fostering quality learning.

In this respect, however, it is crucial for language educators to develop a profile of the skills and competences needed by HE language teachers. It is only on this basis that focused and relevant teacher training programmes can be designed and implemented. It is also necessary to explore the different means by which teacher training can be organised and delivered so as to help HE teachers to respond effectively to the challenges which their institutions are asking them to assume.

4. Choices and strategies

The national reports highlighted a number of features of the current situation across Europe with respect to the last point, namely the strategies and options which are currently being tried out in the field of teacher training for HE language teachers. Some are "strategies" in the sense that they reflect specific actions already being undertaken; others are "options" in the sense that they represent poles of choice around which strategic decisions need to be made. The list below sums up the strategies and options regarding teacher training which emerged from the national reports prepared within TNP2 sub-project 3 on quality enhancement.

i. A pre-experience qualification vs in-service training?

What is most relevant, a pre-experience teacher training qualification (as is the case in most countries for secondary teaching) or ongoing in-service training spread over teachers' careers? The reports favour the latter.

ii. General vs. subject specific pedagogical training?

Should teacher training for HE language teachers be geared around general pedagogical concerns (which would simplify the organisation of such courses and make them cheaper to set up), or should it relate specifically to language teaching? The reports favour the latter as it is more directly linked to teachers' actual concerns. Such an approach is, however, more expensive.

iii. Obligation vs. free choice in participation in TT?

Should participation in teacher training be voluntary, ie. by free choice of the individual teacher or should it be obligatory (e.g. by being made part of teachers' contracts)? The reports favour the latter.

iv. Top-down vs. bottom-up strategies?

Some reports mention top-down initiatives (generally decided upon by governmental agencies) while others mention more local, bottom-up initiatives. The latter, by being more closely linked to the ongoing concerns of teachers at institutional or regional level tend to be more effective. Nevertheless, there is place for the two strategies: For example, top-down measures may impose an obligation for teachers to participate in training, with actual training programmes being organised locally.

v. Pedagogy vs. research in HE teachers' careers?

If there is a concern for quality in teaching, this needs to be reflected in the evaluation of HE teachers' performance. Nevertheless, promotion still tends to be dependent more on completion of a thesis and publication than on the quality of teachers' pedagogical production and classroom skills. This is a disincentive for investment by teachers in their pedagogical tasks which needs to be addressed.

vi. A specific status for HE language teachers?

In many countries and institutions, language teachers (esp. those involved in the teaching of language to students of other disciplines) have a lower status than teachers of "mainstream" subjects. This situation hardly serves to attract or retain the best teachers: For this reason, it can undermine the overall quality of teaching and learning: This point, too, needs to be addressed.

vii. Organisational structures?

Certain organisational structures are more propitious to the organisation of teacher training than others. For example, the presence of a language centre can facilitate the provision of teacher training courses as well as of other forms of professional development. Concern with teacher training therefore entails consideration of the organisational structures best suited to setting up such programmes.

viii. Support for new staff?

Novice or inexperienced teachers are particularly in need of support and guidance. Institutions should therefore set up systems for providing inexperienced staff with pedagogical support in their first year of two of teaching.

ix. Intervention of external agencies?

In certain countries, cultural agencies (British Council, Goethe Institut, etc) may be able to play a role in coordination with governmental or institutional actors in providing teacher training. Such collaborative ventures merit being explored.

x. Recourse to free market TT providers?

Teacher training, when it exists, is traditionally provided by the HE institution itself. It may, however, be productive to explore the possibility of engaging external providers.

xi. Training the trainers?

The quality of teacher training clearly depends of the commitment and expertise of the trainers. It is therefore crucial to set up quality control and enhancement measures relating to the teacher training programmes provided. This, in turn, can involve developing courses to train the trainers.

Transparency and comparability of qualifications
Kari Sajavaara, Jyväskylän yliopisto, FI

The why and what of comparability

It has been repeatedly pointed out in discussions about the revision of the structure of higher education degrees through the Bologna - Prague process that it is not harmonisation of degrees that is targeted in the process. At the same time, however, it has also been conjectured that a relatively high degree of harmonisation may be an unavoidable outcome of the process. The obvious reason for a higher level of congruence of the degrees after the adoption of the new structure will be the need for the degrees to be 'sufficiently' similar to meet the necessities of, for instance, recognition and mobility. In the Bologna Declaration there is a reference to the promotion of European cooperation in quality assurance with the development of comparable criteria and methodologies in mind.

The crux of the matter is the nature of what we mean by the 'sufficient' similarity of the degrees. Establishment of similarity presupposes comparability, and comparability, for its part, requires an adequate degree of transparency. Concurrently, however, diversity should also be honoured, because it may be one of the most valuable building blocks of quality enhancement. That is why a certain level of flexibility is necessary whatever kind of quality assurance systems are going to be developed.

At the outset it is important to remember that the Bologna - Prague process is a product of European intergovernmental collaboration and not originating with the European Union. The European Commission for its part is supporting certain central issues in the process, one of them being quality. Education is primarily a concern for the individual member states, and the fact that the representatives of European governments are forging a common European framework for higher education degrees implies that a certain level of compatibility can be expected. It is also noteworthy that a large number of European countries outside the European Union participate in the Bologna process. As many as 33 countries are signatories of the Prague communiqué, and more countries are joining in.

Another process that is relevant for the development of the degree systems is the work, under the joint auspices of the Council of Europe and UNESCO, for the recognition of qualifications concerning higher education in the European Region as implemented by the Lisbon Convention from the year 1997. All the member states of the Council of Europe plus a number of countries

external to Europe, including the United States, are parties to the Convention, and the majority of the signatories have ratified the Convention.

The Bologna process involves a number of principles that make transparency and comparability in the degree structures necessary, such as

* Adoption of easily readable and comparable degrees
* A system of two main cycles of degrees
* Availability of credits (ECTS)
* Promotion of student mobility
* Observance of the European dimension in higher education

In addition, there are a number of other objectives that are also bound to promote the congruence of the degree systems.

The emphasis in the Bologna concept on mobility calls for a consideration of links with the working life. It is self-evident that transparency of the degree system is one of the primary concerns for parties outside universities. Unless the degrees are described in a way that gives a clear indication of what kind of competencies can be expected as a result from the programmes, it is impossible for employers and social partners to make reasoned assessments of degree holders' employability. This is becoming more and more important in the open European labour market as a result of the increasing mobility of the labour force.

Moreover, the fact that an attempt is also being made to boost cross-disciplinary degrees, which include a clear emphasis on transferable competencies, is also conducive for a higher level of transparency, because for competencies to be transferable they have to relate to skills that extend beyond the confines of strictly discipline-based knowledge and tasks. In many cases a certain transparency is imposed on the programmes through the fact that these new competencies draw on novel needs and demands in present day society. The principle of transferable competencies, instead of transferable credits, is the important point to be taken into account in this context. Obviously no agreement on transferability is possible if comparability of credits is expected the way it has normally been the case so far.

Aspects of quality have been highlighted in the Bologna deliberations, because quality control and quality assurance are a necessary condition for acceptance of programmes, credits, and degrees across boundaries. All parties involved need necessarily to be convinced that degrees are

up to good standard. This is also a requirement in the Bologna process through the attempt to raise the competitiveness of the European higher education institutions. One of the key issues in the discussion is the question of whether there is a need to create a European accreditation system for higher education as a guarantee for higher quality. Opinions are divided on this issue. Some proponents of accreditation think that he system should be transnational, while others are convinced that national evaluation and accreditation systems of higher education institutions are sufficient. Whatever the final outcome, it is evident that institutions themselves have to bear the major burden in the process of controlling the quality of their degrees. It is important to remember when this question is under discussion that the experiences with accreditation in countries where the procedure exists are not entirely commendatory.

Quality assurance and quality enhancement

It is important to make the distinction between quality assurance and quality control, on the one hand, and quality enhancement, on the other. Quality assurance refers to the auditing of the product against targeted standards, while quality enhancement is concerned with the encouragement of true improvement in teaching and learning. This means that quality assurance relates to evaluation and assessment, i.e. it is concerned with accountability and auditing, whereas quality enhancement deals with improvement and innovation, i.e. it is policy and strategy driven. The two are necessarily intertwined: enhancement makes use of results of assurance and control, but not the other way round. This also means that it is not possible to produce straightforward criteria or frameworks for quality enhancement the same way it can be done for quality assurance.

Quality assurance means measurement, quality enhancement means experimentation, benchmarking, and establishment of good practice. It is self-evident that an ability to recognize good quality is an essential tool in quality enhancement. Quality enhancement always starts from the evaluation of the current situation against a set of objectives and standards. All this means that quality enhancement is necessarily a process, which involves a fair amount of interactivity between the all those who are concerned, i.e. staff and students primarily, yet not to forget administration and management as well as the parties external to the actual higher education system. And if quality enhancement is a process, quality itself has also to be specified in process terms.

In quality assurance, the viewpoint should essentially be that of the student. In this way quality means quality of learning, and teaching is subsidiary to learning in that quality of teaching can be established through quality of learning. Enhancement in teaching may be the most important agent in a quality system, and that is why good practices in teaching deserve to be scrutinized in great detail.

Establishment of quality

There are three obligatory stages in the establishment of quality: readable specification and description of the programmes, agreement on the potential ways of implementation, and valid and reliable evaluation of student performance, ie. learning outcomes.

As was pointed out above, quality assurance and quality control are mainly about assessment and measurement against set standards. This means that the first condition for quality, and also for readability and transparency, is a careful description of the programmes. This means the design stage of quality assurance. All parties involved, both staff and students, have to be able to tell what the pieces are that are used to constitute the degrees. The pieces have to be validated against the goals and objectives of the programmes. It is evident that these goals and objectives have to be specified in clear and viable, i.e. readable, terms.

Implementation of programmes has to be open to a variety of possible means and methods. Learning contexts, available resources, teachers' qualifications, and students' backgrounds are so different in different countries and different institutions that no one way of implementing the programmes is possible. If the objectives relate to high level academic performance in terms of theory and processing of data, learning outcomes can be reached in a multitude of variable ways. Quantity, which may often be the same as workload, is not necessarily a sound criterion of quality: it is the substance of the programme that counts, above all the core content, which may be one of the most important tools for the assessment of comparability, because a fair degree of transparency can be expected in this area. To a degree at least, a common European measuring stick, i.e. the ECTS system, will function as a constraint on excess quantity. Adding to student work load is a deceptive way to create a false impression of quality. At its worst, it may backfire with damaging results.

Evaluation of student performance in terms of learning outcomes and expected competencies is an essential part of quality control to see whether the levels achieved by students are those that have been set as standards for quality. It is also necessary to consider who the persons are who

carry out the assessment of achievement: tutors, external examiners, or students themselves; and also to see what sort of criteria are used to do this: criterion-referenced evaluation, performance-based evaluation, e.g. continuous assessment, benchmarking, or something else? In the area of languages, it is particularly important to pay attention to how student performance in terms of language proficiency is to be evaluated.

Evaluation of student performance immediately raises the problem of scales, because evaluation, in whatever way, requires a standard against which to evaluate. For comparability in European terms, it is not sufficient to compare the performance of students within each individual student body, or with the performance of past generations of students. It is necessary to know how the students in one particular university perform as against the students in the other universities of the same country, or the students in the universities in other countries.

Comparison of student performance in terms of language proficiency is a straightforward empirical problem. For this purpose we need, first of all, a common framework of reference. Today we have such a tool in the Common European Framework, which has been produced by the language programme of the Council of Europe and which has been, at least partially, validated in the empirical research for the DIALANG Project. The Framework specifies six levels of language proficiency from the beginner up to the near native. It includes careful descriptions of what language users can do at each level of language proficiency as differentiated between the skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Since the descriptions of language proficiency in the Framework are given in performative terms, a deceptive impression easily arises of their straightforward applicability to an evaluation of student performance. The existence of a framework specifying the criteria for standard performance is only a starting point: what is needed in addition is a system of standardised tests that have been validated empirically. A substantial body of data from student performance is used to specify the standards for each level in each skill. The Framework as such can however be used to establish the guidelines for acceptable performance. The expression of competencies in terms of performance scales presupposes an idea of competence that is dynamic and flexible. In the future, all language teachers should be made aware in their training of the existence of the Framework and of the ways in which it can be exploited in language teaching, materials development, and evaluation.

Target competencies other than language proficiency should in principle be evaluated in the same way: overall objectives should be detailed through viable specifications, which can then be used

for the purposes of evaluation. It is possible that here certain types of rather straightforward indicators could be used as tools to monitor the levels achieved. Such indicators cannot be considered sufficient to do the same for language proficiency; more consistent testing is required in this area.

For the most part, empirical comparison of achieved levels of competence with set standards is to be accomplished by informed peers who are given the necessary tools to do it. In every case this has to be preceded by honest self-evaluation by the parties concerned. People will have to learn, and be able to, diagnose the status of their activities against set criteria, because self-evaluation is one of the integral steppingstones to quality assurance and enhancement.

The problem of accreditation

In connection with the Bologna process, one of the solutions suggested for the implementation of the European dimension in higher education is the introduction of accreditation. Accreditation by a European accreditation authority of higher education programmes could be considered one way to solve the problem of transferability. Some member states have introduced a system of accreditation in the national scale, and suggestions have been made to establish a European accreditation agency, but there are member states that wish to rely on evaluation practices of another kind. For instance, Finnish universities are themselves charged with the task of regularly evaluating their own work, and they can be assisted by the Finnish Higher Education Evaluation Council, which works independently under the auspices of the Finnish Ministry of Education. Accreditation by an external authority means serious restriction of institutional autonomy, which is often considered the backbone of academic freedom. Since quality depends essentially on the definition of goals and objectives by the institution, a view from the outside may turn out to be in disagreement with the way in which the institution sees its own future development. Meaningfulness as experienced by the teaching staff or students of the institution may be critically different from how it is interpreted by a certain external agency.

To be successful, implementation of accreditation entails a consistent and systematised framework with transparent and readable objectives and syllabuses. In this way accreditation could be beneficial for increased comparability of degrees. Some form of accreditation as a means to guarantee the minimum standard of qualifications is obviously necessary from the point of view of students, employers, and society.

Problem areas

A large number of problem areas still remain whose solution is needed before we can expect to be able to ascertain the fundamental quality principles to build on. It is necessary to list the most basic ones here:

Structure of the degrees. - It is obvious that we need an agreement on a common European degree structure. Without such a superstructure there is no way a system of comparability can be established. We have gone a long way towards one in the Bologna process, and it looks probable that an agreement can be reached on the two-cycle model of higher education degrees. When accepting the Bologna Declaration, the signatories gave expression to their willingness to join such a transnational system.

Establishment of a common credit system. - A common degree structure is not functional without the creation of a common credit system and an agreement on a corresponding weighting of the credits. It seems that the outcome will be a system of a total of 180 ECTS credits for the lower degree and 120 credits for the higher, i.e. three years plus two years, if one year means 60 credits. The crucial point here is a consensus of opinion on the way in which the workload per credit is proportioned in different types of learning tasks. But it is important to remember that a credit system as such is no guarantee of quality. It involves a large number of problems, many of which are very hard to solve. Finnish universities has used a credit system for more than twenty years, and some major issues still remain to be solved.

Orientation of the degrees. - Careful consideration is needed in the area of the overall targeting of the degrees in terms of research orientation, applied goals, and workplace orientation. Traditionally, university degrees have been considered to be research based, and research orientation has been regarded as the major factor in the teaching for the degrees. Today there is more and more emphasis on the workplace, which is also brought up in many discussions concerning quality enhancement. Universities can no longer be divorced from what goes on outside. We can clearly see, for instance, the impact of non-observance of external developments in the diminishing powers of attraction among specialised foreign language programmes of many European universities.

European masters' degrees. - Increased mobility of students will result in a greater number of masters' degrees offered to students who have finished their bachelors' at a different university or a polytechnic, perhaps in a different country. In many cases these programmes will be taught in a language that is not the student's mother tongue, mostly English. It is possible that establishment

of such programmes will boost greater transparency of the degrees, because admission of students into such programmes will necessitate descriptions of syllabuses that are easily readable. Content of degree programmes. - There are a number of issues relating to the substance of degree programmes that should be open to discussion within the community of European language programmes, such as overall objectives in terms of theory and applications, core content, i.e. the basic ingredients of an academic syllabus in a certain university programme, indicators of achieved standards, and management of transdisciplinarity and multidisciplinarity.

Conclusion

To be able to accomplish what is expected in the future from higher education institutions, we will need novel management structures, which will be constructive and open to decision-making that will enable innovation and change as necessary tools for quality enhancement. Competitive financing and management by accountability may be efficient but hazardous tools. They may partially be the answer but they can also be highly destructive in quality terms.
Deep down, the whole question of transparency and comparability boils down to considerations of mutual trust. It is so often the case that there is no problem with the programmes of one's own while nothing is right with those of the neighbouring institutions. There is no way the programmes can be the same everywhere. Even if all syllabuses were given a common European content, what takes place in practice means a great deal of variety for the simple reason that we do not understand things the same way because of our different socialisation and backgrounds. Yet we have to learn to agree, and to agree we need the right kind of verification of each other's doings and a consensus of opinion about what we actually want and need.
Even with an extensive and robust system of European accreditation in force it may be the case that transferability and comparability remain matters of mutual trust. We have to be able to learn to rely on the quality of our colleagues' academic activity. No bureaucratic decision can be the backbone of such a freedom from any kind of doubt. What we need is dissemination of information about each other's programmes and implementation of them as well as common investment in the foundation of quality enhancement according to principles accepted by the academic community in the area of languages. It is true however that we still need a great deal of common effort to establish a solid foundation of quality work to be able to reach an agreement on a status of mutual trust.

Identification of reference points for a European framework for quality enhancement in Language Studies
Juliane Besters-Dilger, Universität Wien, AT

1. Introduction

During our meeting in Berlin (20/21 September 2002), we heard a lot about measures and recommendations concerning quality enhancement in Higher Education language studies. My object is now to come up with a generalized form of these recommendations which will allow us to formulate a European framework of reference for quality enhancement. By a framework of reference we mean a definition of common standards. Not all recommendations that I found in the national reports are suitable for a framework of reference.

Such a European framework can be formulated to a certain extent in accordance with the existing Common European framework of reference for languages. This was also mentioned by Jolanta Urbanikowa during the Berlin meeting. But the new framework will probably be much more complex, and I am sure that not all elements will have the form of a grid as it has been developed for language courses.

A framework has to be comprehensible, realizable and affordable. That is also why in my opinion, it does not make sense to demand - within such a framework - higher salaries for language teachers or the enhancement of their status in the hierarchy of the Higher Education institutions. These are problems that remain on a national level and cannot be solved by a European framework.

What will be the compounds of such a framework, then? After an introduction that focuses on the importance of languages for European integration and professional mobility, on new learning culture, on the importance of quality etc., the following points of reference are to be mentioned: those relating to course design, to the process of teaching and learning, to the management and organization of language teaching and learning, and last but not least to teacher training.

2. Point of reference relating to course design

The main point of reference will be the learning targets which should be clearly defined in relation to the needs of the labour market. Learning output - skills, knowledge, competences -

must be differentiated according to the type of Higher Education institution, and we must provide descriptors of proficiency for the different types of graduates.

This does not mean that the results of learning are static or limited to specific skills for specific occupations, but they must be oriented according to their applicability in a broad sense and should include such competences as mental and linguistic flexibility, adaptability, willingness to autonomous and lifelong learning etc. I very much appreciate the idea of "quality mapping" as presented in the Tuning project in Berlin. I am sure, this will be also adaptable to our project.

In my opinion, it should be possible to develop a number of scales of learning output for different course levels and different types of institutions, comparable to the scales of language proficiency in the Common European framework of reference for languages.

Three other elements of quality enhancement which are closely linked with learning targets, are
- the definition of admission criteria - skills, knowledge, competences - for every language course,
- the co-operation with graduates, employers, companies, professional organizations etc. and their participation in the elaboration and design of courses as well as in the evaluation of programmes,
- the graded certification of language competence on an international level.

3. Point of reference relating to the process of teaching and learning
I think that also in this sphere, we could elaborate something like the language proficiency scale of the existing Common European framework. The idea is the following: growing language competences (which may start from zero and finally reach a very high level), demand flexible and changing teaching methods as well as learning strategies. Of course, we do not want to define a standard of teaching methods (which are subject to permanent change), but some suggestions could be made, for example: When, at what level of language proficiency, is it useful for students to spend a half year or a year abroad? When is it advisable to introduce which type of multimedia material in the teaching process? We have to take into account the different target groups, for example translators and interpreters, philologists, economists etc.

Closely related recommendations are

- the creation of centres of in-service training for language teachers (see also point 5),

- the appropriate recognition of experience gained abroad (experience of teachers and students!),

- a better preparation of students for exchange programmes,

- more structured mobility programmes in the sense of common curricula or at least common parts of curricula.

4. Point of reference relating to the organization and management of teaching and learning

In this respect, we discussed two main points that could become elements of a future framework and be - to a certain extent - standardized,

- the evaluation process and

- the calculation of workload.

Both subjects are actual topics all over Europe, they are implemented in most European countries, and it seems to be difficult to give any substantial recommendations, since there are national regulations (in the first case) and European guidelines (in the second one). Therefore, we will only emphasize some problematic points: One can say, for example, that ECTS disregards autonomous language learning or language learning outside university; moreover, it ignores the fact that the individual workload of students participating in the same programme might be very different and that every external evaluation must consider some minimum standards:

- the involvement of external experts,

- the involvement of different types of stakeholders as evaluators (according to the programme)

- the right of the evaluated institution to react and respond to the external evaluation.

Internal evaluation aims first of all at raising awareness among the staff members, and it can be very difficult to implement a process of change, to manage the balance between top down and bottom up approach.

Related recommendations concerning management and organization are[1]:

- transparency, e.g. information about programmes and courses on the web (including admission criteria and learning targets),

- a good information system for the university management,

- a reasonable allocation of teaching and other duties among the staff.

5. Point of reference relating to teacher training

The training of Higher Education language teachers is not systematic. Secondly, it is not oriented according to the learning targets and to the new role of language teachers, either. In Berlin, we heard about an interesting project in Southampton concerning the training of future school teachers, presented by Mike Grenfell; although we concentrate on HE teachers, we can make use of many results of this project.

It will be necessary to formulate standards for the training of different types of language teachers in Higher Education. By "different types" we mean teachers for translators/interpreters, trainers for future school teachers, teachers of languages for specific purposes and so on. We should also distinguish different levels of training:

- special curricula for language teachers in Higher Education, for example "Polish as a Foreign Language" (including languages for specific purposes),

- post-graduate courses for Higher Education language teachers (as realized now in Graz/Austria),

- in-service training,

- refresher courses.

For all these levels we have to define the qualification necessary for admission, the contents of the training and its objectives, that is to say the expected output.

By "contents" of such training we mean language competence and methodological/didactic competences that have to be taught. One important element of the in-service-training might be the mentoring of young teachers.

Closely related recommendations are:

- the obligation (I am all in favour of obligation!) to participate in in-service-training and refresher courses which ideally should be organized in countries where the target language is spoken;

- the obligatory experience of staying abroad for a certain period,

- new teaching skills, and so on.

This is an incomplete list of possible elements of a European framework concerning quality enhancement in Higher Education language studies; however, it would probably be enough to adopt and elaborate just some of them.

* Les rapports nationaux pour décrire diverses occurrences novatrices ou traditionnelles ne font pas explicitement la relation constante entre les moyens, les objectifs et les résultats escomptés, la laissant plutôt dans un implicite vague. C'est pour donner plus de précision à ces derniers, qui devraient motiver et focaliser les efforts que nous insistons là-dessus.

1 These points were not mentioned at the Berlin meeting, but I found them in the national reports.

In the final discussion the panel agreed in emphasising the need of a common European Framework of quality enhancement in language studies.

At the end of the Workshop Victor de Kosinsky detailed the results of his evaluation and Wolfgang Mackiewicz resumed once more the relevance of the results.