
LANGUAGE STUDIES AT ADVANCED LEVEL FOR NON-LANGUAGE PROFESSIONS

1. Introduction to section

As the European Union expands and ever-closer links develop amongst its peoples, it is becoming increasingly important to ensure proficiency in languages as part of a portfolio of qualifications. Current and future growth of interconnections and exchange in Europe mean languages are (and will continue to be) crucial at various levels of responsibility including not just the higher tiers of management but also the middle management category. Free movement, whether it be of labor, goods or services, implies interaction in transnational modes and this, in turn, if successful outcomes are to be achieved, requires high levels of linguistic and intercultural knowledge commensurate with the speaker's professional expertise and seniority in the field in question.

While languages are important for contacts and work between Europeans, they are also essential if Europe is to properly respond to the demands of a globalized environment and play a full part in the world of the new millennium. This chapter of the report focuses specifically on the needs of students intending to enter non-language professions at advanced levels, a group with a crucial role to play in the future of Europe. Such professionals must emerge from their studies equipped with the linguistic and intercultural skills necessary for careers within the information-based society and an environment driven by the forces of internationalisation.

2. Context and definition

In the countries of Europe, both within and beyond the European Union, Government, Local and Regional Administration as well as Universities are responding to the challenges of the contemporary world and their implications for the education and training of European citizens.

Crucial to a consideration of advanced education (as indeed to other stages of Higher Education) within Europe is the Bologna Declaration of 19 June 1999, signed by the Education Ministers of 29 European countries. This document (building on the Sorbonne Declaration of May 1998 and facilitated as well by the wide-ranging project report on Trends in Learning Structures in Higher Education) offers a vision of education in Europe for the first decade of the new millennium. It foresees a more convergent educational system, promoting mobility and employability in addition to a capacity to look outward beyond the confines of national communities on a European and, also, on an international level.

Earlier consideration had, of course, been given to education and the role of linguistic and intercultural competence in a number of papers: the SIGMA Report of 1995; the European Commission's 1995 White Paper on Education and Training: Teaching and Learning; Towards the Learning Society which identified competence in several community languages as being necessary for mobility, mutual understanding between citizens and personal development. Language skills and intercultural awareness together are seen as playing a crucial role in the adaptation of professionals to a range of working environments and to the promotion of tolerance in their working relations as they appreciate the diversity and richness of the multifaceted European heritage. The 1996 Green Paper on Education Training and Research: Eliminating obstacles to Transnational Mobility also showed concern with issues of language and interculturality and their importance emerges too in the Council of Europe's Common European Framework for Modern Languages of 1996.

These studies thus highlight the fact that the provision of language and intercultural education at advanced levels are crucial to the implementation of the vision of a more convergent Europe in which regular and productive professional exchanges in transnational contexts are a routine occurrence. As increasing numbers of graduates take jobs outside their own countries and linguistic communities in

response to needs in the employment market, they will require levels of language competence that enable them to operate professionally and creatively in a variety of contexts in the target language community both inside and outside the workplace. For professionals of this calibre, a basic level of language competence is not enough to ensure effective communication.

This report took as the definition of advanced study that given in the Bologna declaration for the second cycle of studies: "access to the second cycle shall require successful completion of first cycle studies, lasting a minimum of three years."

It is also guided by the advice that the second cycle should prepare students for work in the European labour market: "the degree awarded after the first cycle shall also be relevant to the European labour market as an appropriate level of qualification".

The level of study on which this report will focus is thus already agreed in principle by the Ministers of Education in the countries concerned: "the second cycle should lead to the master and / or doctorate degree as in many European countries". While professional doctorates exist in some fields, it is envisaged that the main focus for post first-degree education for non-language professionals is most likely to take place at a level equivalent to that of Masters.

The following sections attempt to identify in broad lines the current situation, issues and future needs as well as pointing to some areas of good practice and making a number of recommendations on the basis of the work of the Thematic Network Project in Languages.

3. Higher education and the language needs of intending professionals

3.1 Provision of languages for future non-language professionals

Language is traditionally a wide-ranging subject which interfaces with a number of other disciplines. In response to professional needs, the subject area of Applied Languages has become established and has developed a tradition of study in fields which are particularly relevant to non-language professionals. A variety of multi-disciplinary approaches to language use in the commercial world, nationally and internationally are in place, already underpinning courses for those making their careers in business and international trade. Work has taken place too on the languages of scientific communication globally and locally, supporting the international outreach of the scientific community. There is also provision for language in relation to specific professional arenas such as the law, health, social work and public administration. In addition, paralleling the rapid advances in communications, applied languages may also be found in conjunction with fields such as technology, language processing, and the media.

3.2 A Variety of Practice

In response to the new environment and labour market needs at this stage of study, Universities have already established a number of relevant courses. Needless to say, practice in offering languages to future non-language professionals varies from country to country and institution to institution. It is conditioned as well by the varying educational traditions that exist within the countries of Europe.

3.3 Pattern of provision

While the Bologna declaration suggested as appropriate for the European educational space a first level of study lasting three years with the advanced level or Masters coming after the first degree, this pattern is by no means the only one found at present throughout Europe. While some European countries, such as France, Sweden or the UK, certainly have Masters level of study following a three or four year undergraduate course, other countries have longer first level programmes of 5 or 6 years duration which may culminate in a Masters as is the case in Germany or Denmark. Other countries such as Spain may traditionally not have offered the Masters level at all although such countries, no

doubt in response to factors such as the Bologna declaration and labour market needs, are now moving towards the introduction of some Masters level programmes. In the Netherlands, for instance, there is on-going discussion on the establishment of a 3+1 or 3+2 structure (depending on discipline area) and the process is expected to be complete by 2010 which implies that 2004, if not before, should see the start of the new programmes. In those countries where the Masters level exists, it normally consists of a taught programme lasting for approximately a year as in Sweden, the UK or in France. It is usual for Masters level degrees to include a taught course element and some form of dissertation.

3.4 Models and Areas of Provision

At the Masters level of study there have been interesting developments in a number of countries with Higher Education offering a range of options to enable their students to meet the demands of their future careers and different models may be discerned.

3.4.1 Concurrent model

In certain instances students entering a professionally orientated programme at the first level of their studies may already take a language at the same time as their professional area. When they enter a second level course, or the second level stage of the original course, they may then simply continue this language. Examples of this may be seen in business schools in France which place considerable stress on language study and where the level achieved is high.

3.4.2 Second cycle qualifications

As a preparation for the contemporary workplace, a particularly pertinent example is that of France which has fostered the growth of DESS qualification (Diplôme d'Etudes Supérieures Spécialisées) which is seen as post first level study with a professional orientation. These programmes normally last a year and include theoretical and practical study, a work placement and a dissertation. They are open to students who have completed four years of higher education and there is selection at entry. They may be run by a single university or a group of universities. While there is a good spread of provision in different aspects of the Applied Languages field, the inclusion of languages in DESS in areas other than Langues Etrangères Appliquées may also be mentioned. Advanced level language studies may be found, for instance, in conjunction with journalism, international business negotiations or tourism.

In the United Kingdom, a number of universities now offer MA's that include foreign language study in different fields for students intending to enter non-language professions. These are to be found overwhelmingly in the area of business and also to some extent in administration and law.

Following the introduction of first level courses in a number of countries in language and area studies and European Studies, there are also a range of Masters level courses which are based around an aspect of society or civilization in the target countries or on a European theme which are of particular relevance to students hoping to work with or within European or quasi-European bodies.

3.4.3 Language and New Technologies

While much education at Masters level is frequently aimed at business professionals, advances and expansion in new technologies and the communications industry is, however, also offering opportunities for courses in this field, an example of provision in this area being a course which was established in 1994 in the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. This programme in Language and Communication Sciences is a joint interdisciplinary project between the departments of French, German and Italian Studies and the Telecommunications sector of the Faculty of Electrical Engineering of the Polytechnic School. In January 1999, 23 graduate students had completed the first level of studies.

3.4.4 Conversion Courses

While the above instances focus on students who are aiming at particular professions from the start of their university studies, the UK, where there is a long-standing tradition of graduate entry from any subject into different professions (with the students acquiring their professionally focused knowledge after the first level of study) offers some instances of a different pattern. Universities there have developed a number of programmes which allow students on the basis of a degree in languages to pursue their language studies while also acquiring the professional knowledge relevant to business that will permit them to enter this field. This type of course would be postgraduate in time and in level where the languages are concerned but in the business area no prior knowledge of the subject would be assumed. In these professional fields they would take conversion courses into business or marketing, building on the generic skills acquired in the first degree as a basis for studying new subjects. This type of provision permits students, who have done their first level work in languages, to add other professional areas while still pursuing advanced language study. Again in the UK, there is also a small number of Masters available which offer professional techniques for linguists entering business (Leeds, Kent at Canterbury). Such programmes are very fully grounded in the area of languages for the professions.

3.4.5 Joint Programmes

In relation to MA provision, the development over the past decades of courses including not only languages but a period of study in a partner institution in a target country are of particular relevance. Inter-university co-operation in the provision of advanced language education has potentially much to offer, whether by fostering progress in language competence through a period in the target country or by offering a more rounded programme of study with inputs from staff from a range of institutions and particular specialisms. Such programmes have, too, the advantage of giving students direct experience of life in another country and its intercultural challenges, thus helping to create the more mobile professionals which globalisation will increasingly demand.

It may be argued that the advanced stage of study also represents a stage of intellectual and personal development when students are able to profit particularly from a period in a host community university. Programmes offering this type of experience were, more often than not, kick-started by European funding and typically involve co-operation between three or more countries but, given the time available for MA study, will normally offer the option of a period of some months or perhaps a semester, in one target language community. One example of such a programme is MEBA European Business Administration, Canterbury Business School, University of Kent at Canterbury offered in conjunction with France (Ecole Supérieure de Commerce de Reims) and Spain (ESTE, University of Deusto at San Sebastian) Spain.

3.4.6 Joint qualifications

In many such programmes (as in the one just quoted) the students are offered the possibility of dual qualifications, normally after a further six months in the partner institution.

In the programme offered by Staffordshire University in conjunction with Lille in European Management, students may qualify for an MSc in European Management Strategy and a DESS de Commerce International.

3.4.7 Delivery in the target language

In certain countries, language competence and familiarity with appropriate discourse conventions are ensured through delivery of parts of programme in a target language. Thus in Switzerland in the Polytechnic Schools in Lausanne and Zurich, subject matter in some postgraduate courses is partially taught in English.

4. Activities of the thematic network programme in the area of languages (TNP1) relevant to language studies at advanced level for non-language professions.

The TNP in languages through sub-groups, working parties and consultation exercises endeavoured to build on existing European expertise at the second level of study, to enhance course provision in the field and to highlight needs and potential developments that should enable Europe to offer a more adequate advanced language education to students seeking to make their careers in a different professional areas.

4.1 Advanced Studies Programme in Applied Language Studies (ASPALS)

As a contribution to the advancement and promotion of language study beyond the first degree, the multinational team within the postgraduate studies sub-project developed a proposal for a programme in Applied Languages: Advanced Studies Programme in Applied Language Studies (ASPALS). This is a wide-ranging programme which by drawing on specialisms in European universities in different countries is able to offer to students a variety of fields in the broad area of language policy and language use in social, political, economic and professional contexts. The group in sub-project four in postgraduate studies was thus able to draw on its own joint strengths in the drafting of a programme proposal and to pinpoint other partners within Europe who could usefully contribute, offering a model for future inter-country university co-operation.

The programme is also advisedly designed along modular lines to permit flexibility of approach according to actual student need and interest. The second and doctoral level will be offered, providing in this way a route to the highest qualification in the field, while at the same time catering for the many professionally oriented students, for whom shorter periods of study in specific areas are appropriate. After an initial common core, students will choose from a variety of options that include applied language studies with reference to language in professional spheres such as Law, Business, Public Life or more specialised professions such as Social Work or Business. In addition there are tracks in Applied Linguistics and Language Policy.

Through collaboration across universities and countries and the use of a range of methods of delivery, this programme is thus able to give intending students a more varied and richer educational experience than would otherwise be possible. It is intended that modules will be offered in a variety of modes of delivery by the participating universities to home and incoming students as well as by distance education, in particular on the web. Intensive short courses bringing together participating students from the co-ordinating university and partner institutions are also envisaged. Credit transfer, following the ECTS system, will be a feature of the programme. The co-ordinating university for the programme, which has been granted European funding, is the University of Nijmegen, Netherlands with Professor Dr Kees de Bot as the project leader. The partner universities are University of Dublin; University of Vienna; University of Stockholm; University of Jyväskylä; Adam Mickiewica University, Poznan.

This programme with its multiple routes and developmental potential should support both practice in working life as well as helping to increase the body of knowledge in Applied Language fields.

4.2 Understanding Needs and Issues

The activities and discussions initiated by the Thematic Network Project enabled it to gather a wide spectrum of views on the languages, skills and competencies required by non-language professionals as well as highlighting a number of issues to be addressed. Sub-project 8 (language provision for other disciplines) undertook a survey of employers' views regarding the necessary linguistic skills for the European Labour Market. The purpose of the survey was to investigate the perceived needs of employers in targeted countries across the European Union. A detailed questionnaire was accordingly sent to employers in public and private sectors in a wide range of fields including finance, agriculture, manufacturing and service industries. In terms of size, the companies targeted ranged from SME's to

large multinationals. In all, 974 questionnaires were sent out in the summer of 1998 to employers in France, the United Kingdom, Spain, Denmark, Switzerland, Germany and Belgium.

Sub-project 8 also held a workshop organised by Ana Martin Uriz of the Universidad Autonoma de Madrid, which brought together academics and employers from a representative selection of business and service sectors as well as representatives from embassies and governmental and non-governmental organisations who were able to offer papers and observations and to contribute from a multiplicity of professional standpoints. In addition, the workshop was the forum at which the survey of employers' needs was presented.

On the basis of these activities and the wide-ranging discussions of members of the TNP project and its subgroups, it is possible to highlight perceived needs of the category of student under consideration in the light of workplace characteristics and employers' views.

4.3 Perceived Needs

4.3.1 Language education for mobility

Already university graduates in the European Union often enter employment outside their own countries in response to labour market needs and opportunities.

While business and related sectors are major employers of graduates in professional fields with language competence, other areas too are finding that a good level of language proficiency is essential. Administrative bodies and a range of public sector employers are increasingly communicating on a pan-European basis. Quasi-European or governmental agencies as well as non-governmental agencies are also actual or potential employers of linguistically competent professionals. The spread of employment available underlines the importance of equipping advanced level students with the requisite competence in foreign languages.

4.3.2 Multilingual competence and language spread

It is clear that one modern foreign language is no longer adequate; increasingly employers are demanding a third or even fourth foreign language as graduates may well move from country to country in the course of their careers.

While it is undoubtedly true that English is frequently employed in multi-national corporations as a lingua franca or elsewhere as a means of communication between speakers of other languages, multiple sources among employers indicate that English is not enough for the purposes of business. Even in companies using English for purposes of transnational communication, local success and meaningful interaction can only be ensured through a knowledge of the host community's language. Indeed some consider that local languages are gaining ground since so-called international languages do not always succeed in establishing communication inside or outside the professional arena. As language is a crucial identity factor, understanding of the host country language is essential to harmonious workplace relations and the avoidance of conflict as well as for proper social interaction. Where international business is concerned, merchandising and commercialising a product abroad, for instance, require the use of the host country language to ensure optimal success. In the negotiation of transnational deals, use of the host country language may frequently be a decisive factor. Even the English companies surveyed showed awareness of this fact with a solid proportion of them indicating a requirement to use German in negotiation

4.3.3 Intercultural competence

While language competence is a first step on the road to successful internationalisation, language study and knowledge must be complemented by education in intercultural factors or in the approaches, attitudes and modes of behaviour which are integral to particular cultures. Transnational business transactions have been known to founder as a result of gaffes resulting from intercultural insensitivity

or ignorance. As well as linguistic competence, successful integration into a host linguistic community and workplace also requires an understanding of the reality of cultural difference and key elements in the target community environment. Professional practitioners with good language knowledge are ideally placed to act as linguistic and intercultural mediators in translinguistic and transcultural settings. Language studies in the second cycle must include intercultural learning and should seek to develop cultural curiosity and empathy.

4.3.4 Skills and needs

Language skills are required for a diversity of functions and professional graduates may expect to use their languages in both written and spoken contexts.

Skills in the target language are required in different spheres such as commercial activities, negotiation or social situations. In the survey of companies, for instance, it was found that the highest scores were in the area of international interaction. Oral skills were scored highest, for travel to work overseas, presentation of the company product and negotiating (a very advanced skill). Social skills also received a high rank. Where reading and writing were concerned, the tasks for which language was required were not at present of such complexity, reflecting more simple business communications (although this might well change as general linguistic competence increases). This finding from the survey, which highlights the importance of intercommunication in transnational contexts, is in line with the repeated views of employers. Whatever their area of activity, they would in general concur in stressing the importance of communicative ability, the capacity to interact successfully in a variety of working situations with competence and confidence, using the target language actively and creatively.

4.3.5 Adequate levels of proficiency

Currently, advanced courses offer different levels of proficiency for non-language professionals. While it is certainly useful to teach the basic tools of a language as an introduction or indeed as a springboard to further learning, employers indicate that they require much more than this. The international workplace must have professionals able to interact at a high level of competence in the target language.

5. The future

5.1 Future Consultations

The range of activities and consultations undertaken by the Thematic Network Project have enabled a number of current needs as perceived by the employers to be highlighted. It is, however, also important to look at probable future trends in order to understand better what areas of need may emerge as the context evolves. It is also the case that consultations and surveys represent a snapshot of perceived need at a particular point in time and show employers' thinking about present rather than future situations. Furthermore, the survey, despite being reasonably wide and featuring carefully selected companies in terms of size and sector, could only represent the views of the 19% who replied from the countries targeted for study. It is also the case that perceptions, inevitably, do not always represent the full reality of need. The important pilot survey, which was undertaken two years ago, now offers an excellent basis from which to proceed to wider consultations, with a range of interested parties such as representative employers' organisations in appropriate sectors. Alumni too should be surveyed about their experiences in professional employment in professional fields so that from their dual vantage point of former students turned employees they may inform an understanding of the language needs of professionals at advanced levels.

5.2 Future Trends: Introduction

A situation, where movement towards convergence in Europe combined with globalising trends is fostering (and will continue to foster) interaction in multiple spheres, has clear implications for

language educators. They will, on the one hand, wish to respond to needs in training and education as they are currently perceived by employers but they must also extrapolate from existing trends the likely thrust of future requirements so that programme provision may be adjusted to offer a more appropriate preparation for the world in which our students will pursue their careers.

5.2.1 Increased European co-operation

The agreement between countries achieved in Bologna sets a common framework for co-operation. A more convergent educational system in the various states of the EU and beyond will permit easier inter-university co-operation.

Increased interaction between universities in the provision of advanced language education has potentially much to offer, whether by fostering progress in language competence through a period in the target country or by offering a more rounded programme of study with inputs from staff from a range of institutions and particular specialisms. Such programmes have, too, the advantage of giving students direct experience of life in another country and its intercultural challenges, thus helping to create the more mobile professionals which globalisation will increasingly demand.

In the favourable context engendered by Bologna, the creation of joint programmes will be much facilitated and the level of inter-university co-operation in advanced level language provision should increase.

5.2.2 Virtual mobility

The widescale expansion in communication technologies is leading to a huge interest in and expansion of distance and transnational co-operation mediated by the Internet. At a modest level, interaction between students in different institutions via email and video conferencing offers useful opportunities for inter-European communication and student to student learning, capitalizing on the knowledge students may offer one another, particularly at advanced levels. On a wider scale, the development of courses in a distance learning mode drawing on the expertise of teachers from a range of specialisations should help to increase the scope of what is offered and add wider understanding of the topics of study. However, forward looking projects of this nature are naturally expensive in terms of personnel time. It is vital that appropriate funding both for the initial development and to some extent also for the continuing programme be made available. There are also implications regarding the technical infrastructure necessary to mount such programmes and, in certain countries, the funding is not yet in place to adequately equip universities. The potential for development in this sphere is considerable and, underpinned by the requisite finance and facilities, virtual interaction should constitute a real enrichment of programmes.

5.2.3 Actual mobility

While virtual interaction offers wider experience and opens opportunities for interaction, thereby facilitating the acquisition of deeper and more extensive knowledge, actual periods of study abroad are crucial in offering lived experience of the target community, its language and day-to-day culture. With enhanced inter-university co-operation the potential for real mobility of students will be extended, at least for short periods and this may be complemented by staff mobility. In both these spheres, funding is a major problem since mobility both on the part of staff and students represents a major outlay, particularly for students from more modest backgrounds. When this is added to the overall cost of fees and subsistence for postgraduate programmes, the expenditure on mobility can exert a dissuasive influence. Staff too are currently finding that the support available is often barely adequate to meet expenditure. The benefits in terms of promoting European interaction accruing from mobility should not be vitiated or confined to the more affluent as a result of funding restrictions.

5.2.4 Continuing education and lifelong learning

The consultations undertaken by the TNP revealed gaps in actual language knowledge and competence among professionals. Furthermore, as life and careers unfold, needs develop beyond what young people in their twenties might or could imagine. Both these factors highlight a crucial role for language courses in the context of lifelong learning, appropriately focused towards the needs of professionals. Universities should, whether in language centres or other appropriate organisational units, offer a range of provision to professionals as part of their lifelong learning portfolio.

Opportunities for learning in continuing education mode, as in other spheres, may also be enhanced through inter-European university co-operation mediated by new technology and techniques of distance learning. This would permit expansion in the range and scope of the languages on offer beyond what can be available to learners in any one country or region. Short intensive courses bringing together students from different home countries but with the same target language needs should also be envisaged as a way of extending the available range of languages in the continuing education mode.

While any courses offered to practising professionals should be capable of being taken as free-standing units, they should also be ECTS credit-rated so that they may be built up into a European qualification in language proficiency gained in a lifelong learning context.

5.3 Appropriately focused and needs oriented language study

As has been seen above, employers consulted constantly stressed the importance of communicative and appropriately focused approaches. It is axiomatic that language study should be focused on the needs of the learner and appropriate work should be undertaken to underpin education's understanding of these needs. At the same time, no programme can comprehensively foresee the multiplicity of challenges implicit in professional contexts and careers. Thus courses in language should be structured and delivered in such a way that students acquire a consciousness of the nature and tools of language learning as well as the modalities of intercultural difference

5.4 Conclusion

The provision of language learning to intending professionals in a wide spectrum of activity is a multi-faceted endeavour which may take many forms in tune with needs, provision and opportunity. In all cases, however, it represents an area that is crucial to individuals, to employers and to Europe if available opportunities are to be exploited and full potential achieved.

6. Examples of good practice

6.1 DESS (Diplôme d'Etudes Supérieures Spécialisés) France

This postgraduate diploma offered in France has been established as a qualification at post-first degree level with a professional qualification.

The programmes normally comprise a year's course of study and include theoretical and practical study as well as a work placement and dissertation. There is a wide range of courses available (information from university websites). Examples relating to language studies at advanced level, which facilitate European mobility in a specific field, include bilingual journalism, international negotiations and tourism. For further information see the French government's education website: <http://www.education.gouv.fr>.

6.2 Courses at advanced level including a period of study in an institution in a partner country

A number of courses lasting normally for one year after the first degree include a period of study in a partner institution. Such courses give experience of study in the target language community, permit linguistic improvement in the language field in question and enhance the understanding of interculturality. Some examples of these are:

6.2.1 MEBA European Business Administration, University of Kent at Canterbury, Canterbury Business School

In the course of this programme students spend a period at a partner institution in either France (Ecole Supérieure de Commerce de Reims) or Spain (ESTE, University of Deusto at San Sebastian). This programme will normally last 18 months. A further period in the partner institution (normally a further 6 months) enables students to obtain dual qualifications. In order to enter this programme, students must be able to demonstrate their competence in the language of the business school partner concerned. Web reference: <http://www.ukc.ac.uk>

6.2.2 MBA in European Business / Maîtrise de Sciences de Gestion (MSG), University of Coventry, Coventry Business School

This double degree is offered jointly by Coventry Business School and Institut d'Administration des Entreprises de Basse Normandie, Université de Caen. The course has a strong European dimension but within a global context. It offers students the opportunity of being taught in two distinct educational cultures, thus enhancing their future European mobility and understanding of a different European Business Culture. The programme lasts for three semesters and may be taken within a calendar year. Students seeking to enter this programme must have a reasonable level of competence, for instance in the United Kingdom entrants must offer French at an acceptable grade in their 'A' level (UK advanced school leaving examination or be bilingual) Web reference: <http://www.stile.coventry.ac.uk>

6.3 Advanced courses offering the opportunity to language graduates to convert to a professional field after the first level of study

One possibility of enhancing the number of professionals qualified in languages is to offer graduate linguists the opportunity of converting to a professional field (usually business) after their first level of study. This option is found in those countries (notably UK) which have a tradition of more generalist study at the first level of university study, followed by movement into a professional area. Examples of such courses include:

6.3.1 MSc / Postgraduate Diploma: Languages and European Marketing: Napier University Business School, Edinburgh

This programme recruits graduates with degrees in French, German, Spanish or English as a foreign language (or, at the very least, in which one of these languages plays a substantial part). As well as studying their main language students also take a second language. The business element of the programme aims to provide students with the practical export marketing, analytical and quantitative skills required to operate in international marketing. web reference: <http://www.nubs.napier.ac.uk/nubs/Langs/MSc/MSc.htm>

6.3.2 MA / PGD European Business and Languages, South Bank University

This is a conversion course for Modern language graduates to Business and Management. Students select one or two languages from French, German, Italian, Spanish and English (as a foreign language). In addition they take a conversion course into business and management. The course lasts one year full-time. It may also be taken part-time over two years (day only), thus offering additional

opportunities to those in employment and able to obtain some measure of day release. Web reference: <http://www.sbu.ac.uk>

6.3.3 PGD/MA Applied Languages and Business, University of Ulster

This conversion course for language graduates recruits from those with French, German, Spanish or English as a foreign language as a subject in their first degree. Students take two languages, one of which may be at ab initio level. The conversion course into business includes a study of Business Management, European Business and Export Marketing as well as some study of financial and quantitative techniques relevant to business within Europe and beyond. The course lasts for one calendar year and includes a short period of work experience which may be in a target language country. Web reference: <http://www.ulst.ac.uk>

6.4 Study of business language, training of language teachers

The Centre for Applied Language Studies, University of Jyväskylä, Finland

This centre conducts research in Applied Language Studies in relation to language learning and teaching; language as a means of social interaction; language testing and language policy and planning. In addition to teaching programmes in Applied Linguistics (mainly for advanced language students) and a postgraduate programme in language studies and language teaching, the centre organises annually two short programmes which offer a model of dissemination of knowledge in the field to an audience beyond the particular university concerned. In April there is a Spring School in Language Studies for young researchers and the Jyväskylä Summer School in Applied Language Studies is run for one week in early June for researchers, language teachers and students. Web reference <http://www.jyu.fi/tdk/kkkk/englanti/realdex.htm>

6.5 Continuing Education: provision of lifelong learning opportunities in languages to professionals.

The Language Centre, University of Bristol, UK.

As part of the work of the Centre, the External Services Department offers applied language courses to companies and institutions in the public and private sectors. They are also able to undertake preliminary needs analysis and linguistic auditing of companies. Contact Ray Satchell, Director Language Centre University Brighton, UK. Web reference <http://www.bris.ac.uk/Depts/LangCent>

6.6 Distance Education and inter-university co-operation

University Programme at Advanced Level (Masters type) in Applied Language studies (ASPALS)

This University Programme at Advanced Level (Masters type) in Applied Language studies (ASPALS) has been proposed following on from the work of the postgraduate studies group. This programme aims to offer students a range of specialisms drawing on expertise from different European Universities and offering courses in distance mode through web and other technologies. The programme is also structured so that it can be offered at second and doctoral level, thus catering for the needs of students with different study aspirations and career goals. Credit transfer through ECTS will also be a feature of this programme. This proposal has been offered European funding support. The co-ordinating university is the University of Nijmegen, Netherlands with Professor Dr Kees de Bot as the project leader. The partner Universities are University of Dublin; University of Vienna; University of Stockholm; University of Jyväskylä; Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan.

7. Recommendations

7.1 Expansion in Applied Languages Studies

There is a clear need for expansion in the provision of language education at advanced levels for non-language professionals. Deficiencies in this area have been signalled forcibly by employers and other bodies. Language competence is crucial to the development of a vibrant and interactive multilingual community in Europe which can fully capitalise on its rich heritage of knowledge, science and culture in its response to the challenges, both professional and societal, of the twenty first century.

This implies:

7.1.1 The inclusion of one or two non-native languages within professional qualifications

Target groups: Advanced students taking courses for non-language professionals

Actors: Universities; Language departments; academic staff

Action: Introduction of language study of one or two languages into advanced courses of study for intending professionals in a range of areas. For students who had previously had few linguistic opportunities, this might include study of a language at ab initio or lower levels as a first step towards enhancement of language competence.

Rationale: as professionals become more mobile, greater linguistic proficiency is essential if they are to draw full benefit from the opportunities available across Europe and if Europe is to draw full benefit from the expertise of its professionals.

7.1.2 Exploring ways of offering opportunities to study a language from within the full spectrum of European languages, as well as from the so-called international languages

Target groups: advanced students; university staff establishing courses

Actors: Universities; Language departments; university staff

Action: the establishment and introduction of innovative and co-operative forms of delivery across countries and between universities. Consideration should be given to forms of provision including web-based materials and interaction; intensive study periods; distance tutoring via email, phone and video links.

Rationale: while some universities are in the happy position of being able to offer a wide range of choice, this cannot be the case everywhere. It has to be recognised that there is, in many instances, a problem of 'critical mass' and viability of courses. Resources for funding groups of small numbers are not easily forthcoming; teaching expertise in minority areas is not always available locally; students may benefit from the enrichment provided by wider links and interaction

7.1.3 Wider provision of lifelong learning opportunities in languages

Target groups: professionals in a range of areas at various stages of their careers

Actors: Universities; Languages departments: University staff; national education authorities (encouragement and provision of funding)

Action: Courses should be offered targeting non-professionals which may be taken as required at different stages throughout a career.

Rationale: many professionals have not had adequate linguistic training in their previous studies and require further learning opportunities. Even good competence which has lain dormant for a while may require reactivation and up-dating. In addition, professionals may have to move around different linguistic zones and may need to acquire competence in further languages.

7.1.4 The linking of linguistically related language pairs in course provision to promote the study of less widely spoken languages

Target groups: Advanced students preparing for a professional career

Actors: Universities; language departments; university staff

Action: Course provision for advanced students should include where feasible linked language pairs where a more widely disseminated language is taken in conjunction with a linguistically related 'minority' partner (as for example German and Dutch)

Rationale: in teaching and learning the second language, the student would be able to capitalise on their existing knowledge and to make more rapid progress in their related language. Their potential mobility would also be facilitated by acquisition of the additional language.

7.1.5 Intercultural competence

Target groups: Advanced students preparing for a professional career

Actors: Universities; course planners; languages staff

Action: Intercultural competence should be closely linked to target language learning.

Rationale: for the purposes of mobility it is essential to understand the cultural norms and motivators within the target community if good integration and profitable working relations are to be achieved.

7.1.6 The encouragement of reflective language learners

Target groups: language learners at all stages

Actors: National education authorities; curriculum planners in schools and universities; teachers at different levels

Action: Language learning should be facilitated by the inclusion in courses (including earlier levels) of elements which encourage students to become aware and reflective language learners

Rationale: the whole process of language learning may be facilitated if students understand more fully typical approaches and techniques that facilitate language acquisition.

7.1.7 Expansion of language provision and spread at the earlier stages of education constituting a better basis for advanced levels

Target groups: language learners in schools and in the first level of university education

Actors: National education authorities; curriculum planners in schools; teachers at different levels

Action: Language education should be reinforced and broadened at the earlier stages of education.

Rationale: the advanced levels of language acquisition do not stand alone and expansion here may be facilitated by expansion and a more positive and open attitude towards language acquisition at earlier stages of schooling and university education.

7.1.8 A study of the relationship between the different stages of language learning and a clearer articulation and description of the development and progress between them

Target groups: language learners, employers, teachers

Actors: European Union; national education authorities; curriculum planners at different levels; examination boards and agencies

Action: a study and clearer description of the levels of outcome attained in the different stages of language learning as well as of the various competencies acquired

Rationale: this would facilitate understanding of the actual language levels achieved by students in the context of courses (advanced or otherwise), thus making the nature of the competence attained more transparent to both student and employer. It would also support the teacher in providing appropriate language training for students.

7.2. Teachers

7.2.1 The provision of adequate training

Target groups: language teachers at the different stages of higher education

Actors: national education authorities; universities; course planners; those responsible for educational development in third level institutions; language departments

Action: adequate training should be provided for teachers in this area so that they are competent to offer appropriate, challenging and needs- focused courses

Rationale: not only are students in this area entitled to best practice provision, it is obvious that the field is suffering from a vicious circle of low status and consequent recruitment and retention difficulties. If training and qualification were enhanced, this would, in turn, have a positive impact on the standing and recruitment possibilities of the sector.

7.2.2 Provision and adequate resources for in-service and lifelong learning training for teachers

Target group: serving language lecturers undertaking or proposing to undertake teaching of language to non-language professionals

Actors: European Union; national governments; universities

Action: in-service and lifelong learning should be provided for teachers in the field. Funding should be made available not just to permit provision but to support teachers in attendance. European bursaries might be provided for mobility to engage in in-service training

Rationale: those currently working in the area would welcome the opportunities for professional upgrading and increased professional reflection which would be thereby provided. Funding would enable attendance. Mobility grants would permit both experience abroad and the opportunity to profit from expertise in institutions in target communities. In this connection, collaborative modes of provision such as that offered through the ASPALS programme discussed above would serve to ensure wider coverage and greater diversity in such courses

7.2.3 Bursaries for sustained study in the applied languages area

Target groups: students of applied languages at masters or doctoral level

Actors: European Union; national governments; funding bodies; universities.

Action: Consideration should be given to the provision of designated bursaries for study in professionally relevant areas of applied language study at doctoral or masters level.

Rationale: this would promote the field as an area of research as well as helping to ensure a pool of adequately qualified higher education professionals able to offer appropriate advanced language education.

7.2.4 Improving the links between language educators and professional life

Target groups: language educators; lecturers; departments of language or language centres; employers of non-language professionals

Actors: European Union; national education authorities; universities; staff training and development bodies; teaching staff; employers' bodies and federations; employers of non-language professionals; TNP 2.

Action: The investigation of ways in which the training of language educators might take fuller account of the needs of professional life. Discussion, survey and study in the area all need to be undertaken

Rationale: employers signal deficiencies not just in the language knowledge among their workforce but also in the ability of their employees to use target languages in professionally appropriate ways. It is crucial that language educators of the future should be able to understand the working world in which their students will participate so that they can offer a language education founded on real needs and motivate the students to expand their language base. Remedial action in this area is a matter of considerable urgency if Europe is to draw full benefit from its potential.

7.3 Course material and activities

More attention should be devoted to understanding the precise fields of language and the most appropriate activities required by students in professional situations. This would imply that there should be:

7.3.1 Fuller study of the fields of language concerned in professional life and the communicative activities in which professionals engage.

Target groups: researchers and students of language; teaching staff; universities and relevant university departments; language educators

Actors: European Union; national governments and funding councils

Action: European and other programmes should be established (or in some cases existing programmes might be extended) to offer scope and finance for this type of research which would be of direct relevance to professional performance in the workplace.

Rationale: provision-focused research and needs analysis would permit more effective and realistic teaching and learning to take place in the classroom. By increasing knowledge of the precise skills and discourses required by students in certain situations, it would also help to pinpoint the extent to which educators might in certain situations focus on partial skills and illuminate the debate in relation to general language/special purpose language appropriate to teaching this type of student.

7.3.2 More extensive consideration of appropriate pedagogical approaches

Target groups: language teachers; teacher trainers; educational researchers; language learners, in particular those intending to learn languages at an advanced level for professional purposes

Actors: European Union; national governments and funding bodies; educational researchers; universities and appropriate university departments

Action: Fuller study of the appropriacy and outcomes of different teaching and learning methods for particular professions to support language education in this area. Also important in this respect is a better understanding of learners, their approaches and the types of support they require. This study should also include work on the most appropriate modes of language reactivation for those who have earlier acquired a certain level of language competence but have not practised or made use of it in the interim. Funding should be made available for investigative work in the field.

Rationale: a fuller understanding of the most effective pedagogical approaches to provision in the field of languages for special purposes would enhance the teaching and learning experience of students and thus contribute to the improvement of standards in language competence. There are too a number of types of language learner at advanced level, which poses the need for a range of methodologies depending on a variety of learning and teaching situations. The mode of study employed may also condition the methodology used. In particular, there is a need to define methods of study and work in transnational models whether they concern mobility or distance learning.

7.4 Elimination of obstacles to advanced level study mobility and the creation of transnational programmes

A greater degree of harmonisation in the European University space should emerge following the Bologna declaration of 1999, nonetheless studies and discussion at a European level reveal the existence of obstacles which can have a decisive dissuasive effect even when the will to co-operate is strong.

7.4.1 Further study of the obstacles to European co-operation in advanced language education

Target groups: students of languages for professional purposes; universities wishing to establish courses with actual mobility for such students

Actors: European Union; TNP 2 in languages

Action: A detailed investigation of the obstacles that inhibit European co-operation at the different levels of provision and, in particular, at advanced levels where the mobility of intending professionals might have particularly beneficial effects in terms of language competence, as well as professional and intercultural learning. This should be undertaken urgently at a European level. It would seem appropriate that this area should be the subject of urgent consideration by TNP 2 in Languages.

Rationale: these factors are impeding the provision of a truly European language education for professionals and thus hindering the implementation of genuine mobility. A more extensive and explicit awareness of the actual obstacles would facilitate change.

7.4.2 Student mobility should receive further support

Target groups: students wishing to undertake mobility at advanced level

Actors: European Union (appropriate areas)

Action: There should be enhanced support to facilitate and encourage students to undertake mobility at advanced levels. This might be done in a number of ways. Consideration should be given to permitting

students of language on advanced programmes to benefit from a second mobility grant. The introduction of shorter periods of mobility would also be desirable in some instances.

Rationale: mobility is of particular benefit to students at this level but at this stage of their studies, it is not always essential for students to move for such extensive periods. A shorter time in the target community might, in certain circumstances, sit better with their professional studies while at the same time providing the necessary added value accruing from mobility.

7.4.3 Adequate resources for curriculum development and staff mobility

Target groups: curriculum developers; students at advanced levels preparing to enter non-language professions; staff teaching on programmes for these students

Actors: European Union and funding agencies

Action: Adequate funding levels should be provided to support and sustain a range of collaborative measures, including staff mobility, joint programmes and curriculum development as well as distance co-operation and interaction

Rationale: this area is crucial to future professionals, to their European understanding and to mobility within their working lives. The promotion of a people's Europe and the concept of social equity both imply that mobility be encouraged amongst all sectors of society and income brackets.

7.5 Resourcing of advanced level study (as distinct from mobility within the advanced level)

Target groups: student entering second cycle study.

Actors: National governments; European Union.

Action: Appropriate financial support for subsistence and fees should be offered to students entering the second cycle.

Rationale: While study in the second cycle is an essential part of preparation for European careers, the work of the sub-project in postgraduate studies shows in its country reports that lack of funding for students is frequently an obstacle to study.

In the UK, for instance, grants from public sources have been largely phased out and replaced by loans. However, with fees for a Masters course in the region of £2,740, study at this level is not an easy option for students often encumbered by debt from their first degrees. While University fees in France are relatively modest for this level of study in state universities, there are few grants and they are available according to parental income. Courses in private business schools which may incorporate advanced level language study for professionals are considerably more expensive. In Ireland, to take a third example, grants are available for courses at advanced level but only to those who fall into certain low income brackets and while such grants cover fees they offer minimal aid with living expenses.

A number of countries have been able to obtain funding for courses in language education with professional relevance from European sources (e.g. European Social Fund; ESF). As well as contributing towards the costs of course provision these funds also offer support for students taking the programmes. This source of funding is, however, renewable at regular intervals (annual or pluri-annual) and in line with European priorities, it is inevitable that it will only be granted to programmes for a restricted period, as regions and areas of work which are targeted change with social and economic developments.

7.6 Information provision

Up-dated and more extensive surveys

Target groups: potential students; language providers and staff

Actors: European Union and agencies

Action: the implementation of European surveys leading to compilation of web-based data on matters relating to applied languages provision which would facilitate the spread of knowledge and practice and provide a reference point for those seeking information for the purposes of professional development or teaching and learning delivery. Information about provision, courses, research and proposed developments would be of particular interest

Rationale: while the TNP sub-projects gathered a range of information, the situation is developing rapidly with the enlargement of Europe and the evolution of contextual factors such as increasingly advanced information technology and the changing needs of a range of professional activities. Databases provide immediate and useful reference points and promote dissemination and knowledge.

7.7 Promotion of language courses for professionals within the context of lifelong learning

7.7.1 Provision should be made for language courses offered in a continuing education mode and focused towards the needs of active professionals.

Target groups: professionals with higher education at second cycle level or equivalent.

Actors: European Union, national education authorities; universities; course planners; language and lifelong learning departments.

Action: Planning and provision of language courses focused on the needs of professionals.

Rationale: Studies show the need for such provision both to respond to deficiencies as currently perceived and to meet future developments as Europe evolves.

7.7.2 Encouragement of inter-University and inter-country participation in this area.

Target groups: Universities; professionals.

Actors: European Union; national education authorities; universities; course planners; language and lifelong learning departments.

Action: Finance should be made available with a view to encouraging different forms of inter-country, inter-university provision and distance learning and intensive courses, to capitalize on strengths and expand the scope of language tuition available in the context of lifelong learning.

Rationale: Co-operation of this type would permit better use of expertise and resources and would also through the creation of viable student groups and provision of additional languages help to expand the spectrum of language study available.

7.7.3 Create a recognised portfolio of qualifications at different levels for modules of language study taken in lifelong learning mode.

Target groups: Active professionals with second level university or equivalent qualifications.

Actors: European Union; universities; course planners; language and lifelong learning departments.

Action: establish a working group to draft guidelines for a raft of qualifications at different levels; pilot draft qualifications in universities.

Rationale: A qualifications framework could both act as a motivator to professionals and signal clearly to employers the level of linguistic competence attained.