



EUROPEAN CENTRE FOR MODERN LANGUAGES  
CENTRE EUROPEEN POUR LES LANGUES VIVANTES

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Second medium-term programme of activities 2004-2007

**Project Y2 – EDL Workshop**  
**"Initiatives for plurilingualism:**  
**Cooperation between teacher associations and the ECML"**

**Report of Central Workshop 7/2006**  
(Graz, Austria, 29-30 September 2006)

**Project team:**

Co-ordinators:

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**Astrid Guillaume,**

Chief editor of the academic journal "Les Langues Modernes",  
Journal of the French Association of Modern language Teachers  
(APLV) / University of Franche-Comté (EA 3224), France

Team members:

**Margit Szesztay,**

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The report is accessible in English, in French and in German on the ECML website: The Executive Director of the ECML should be informed about any full or partial translation of the report and a copy of the translation should be sent to the ECML for information.

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## **Report on the workshop held at the ECML on the occasion of the EDL 2006**

### **Workshop title:**

"Initiatives for plurilingualism: cooperation between teacher associations and the ECML"

### **Dates:**

29-30 September 2006

### **Location:**

ECML, Graz

### **Co-ordinators:**

Astrid Guillaume (France, French Association of Modern Language Teachers) and Helena Hanuljakova (Slovak Republic, President of the International Association of German Teachers, [IDV]).

### **Team:**

Albert Raasch (Germany, Institute of Romance Languages, University of the Saar, Saarbrücken), Margit Szesztay (Hungary, Department of English Teacher Training, ELTE, Budapest).

### **Guest speakers:**

Cecilia Odé (Netherlands, member of the executive committee of the International Federation of Modern Language Teachers, FIPLV) and Konrad Schröder (Germany, President of the Western European Commission of the FIPLV).

### **Working languages:**

French, English, German.

### **Countries:**

25 countries present: Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Bosnia Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Romania, Spain, Russian Federation, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom.

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The workshop on "Initiatives for plurilingualism: co-operation between teacher associations and the ECML" took place as part of the celebrations for the European Day of Languages 2006 on 29 and 30 September 2006 at the premises of the European Centre for Modern Languages of the Council of Europe in Graz.

The objective of this workshop was to bring together various European language teaching associations to establish a network of language professionals in Europe able to implement initiatives for plurilingualism in collaboration with the ECML.

Participants were asked to carry out a number of tasks prior to coming to the workshop: compile a list of language teaching associations (monolingual and plurilingual) in their own country; inform representatives of these associations of plans to hold the EDL 2006 workshop, invite them, together with the ECML, to organise activities to promote plurilingualism, and publicise the workshop in their journal and/or via their website. With just a few exceptions, these pre-workshop tasks were completed.

The workshop was held over two days; the first day was chiefly to present information, theories and methodologies, the second day was devoted to practical group discussions.

The concepts of "multilingualism" and "plurilingualism" were defined and discussed at the outset. Measures and proposals for the promotion of plurilingualism were recommended, which will be useful for the ECML as well as for the associations within the scope of future projects.

### **Day one - 29 September 2006**

Introductions and preliminary discussions, presentations on theory and methodology.

- Astrid Guillaume and Helena Hanuljakova introduced the aims of the workshop and the speakers, and presented the pre-workshop tasks and post-workshop objectives;
- Susanna Slivensky, ECML Head of Programmes, presented the Centre, its 2<sup>nd</sup> medium-term programme 2004-2007 and a cross-section of the publications it has produced;
- Margit Szesztay provided an overview of the questionnaires returned by participants, which can be briefly summarised as follows:
  - The participants represented monolingual and plurilingual associations:
    - 6 English language associations;
    - 3 German language associations;
    - 6 French language associations;
    - 1 Italian language association;
    - 13 multilingual associations.

- Participants were active in the following areas:
  - 10 teachers from state institutions;
  - 1 teacher from a private language school;
  - 5 representatives from higher education institutions.
  
- Almost all participants taught a foreign language; only one participant worked in a Ministry and one participant was a general inspector.
  
- More than half of the associations represented had a website (or one being constructed).
  
- Cecilia Odé presented the International Federation of Modern Language Teachers [FIPLV] and its activities and, with together with Konrad Schröder, also proposed ways in which a plurilingual association could work in support of plurilingualism. They emphasised the importance for teaching associations of making greater impact on individual teachers, and encouraging and increasing links between language teaching associations, assisting colleagues in countries where working conditions are far from perfect and creating links with international communities in a humanitarian, industrial and business context (e.g. UNESCO, Linguapax).
  
- Helena Hanuljakova explained how a monolingual association can get involved in plurilingualism projects. Regarding a question on why the IDV is interested in closer co-operation with the ECML, Helena stressed the importance of mutual consultation in terms of linguistic policy and professional expertise. Reinforcing cooperation between associations would facilitate the work of multipliers as well as contribute to the distribution of policies and linguistic tools to the wider public.
  
- Astrid Guillaume presented 10 practical and concrete examples of initiatives for plurilingualism which have already been implemented in France and can be replicated in other countries: publications, organisation of seminars, implementation of an electronic platform, establishment of a network of experts on plurilingualism, creation of a European Observatory for plurilingualism, compilation of a plurilingualism charter, etc.

At the end of these various presentations participants were divided into groups in order to discover more on the individual associations and discuss methods for project implementation.

## **Day 2 - 30 September 2006**

Discussions and concrete implementation of the new network and project perspectives. The second day was divided into a series of group-work sessions, which were summarised in plenary sessions.

### **Summary of group work (1):**

On the first day, Margit Szesztay established three groups according to language to facilitate introductions. On the second day, Albert Raasch rearranged the groups according to thematic areas to encourage information sharing on specific subjects and thus to put an initial experience of plurilingual terrain into practice. The three languages for the workshop were English, French and German but some Slavic languages were also used over the two days.

1st group (French):

All were members of the International Federation of French Teachers (FIPF). Achievements were different and varied according to the respective association, as were the challenges. Direct comparison between the associations was therefore not possible.

2<sup>nd</sup> group:

The necessity of encouraging language learning was noted, as fewer and fewer students are choosing languages as one of their main subjects in many European countries.

3rd group:

The importance of language associations working together was highlighted as well as the need for complementary production rather than competition.

Other areas discussed included:

- How can language teaching associations influence linguistic policy?
- How can monolingual associations promote plurilingualism?
- How can we get over the feeling of competition?
- How can we organise a plurilingual conference?

New groups were formed around these questions.

### **Summary of group work (2):**

#### Group 1

Cooperation between associations generally works well, even if it needs to be developed and directed towards the issue of plurilingualism. The curricula offer prospects for plurilingualism. In this context, further integration of migrant languages seems to be important.

*Question:* Is there a need for universities to have one faculty for each language or would it be better to have faculties with a broader scope, e.g. Scandinavian languages or Slavic languages?

### Group 2

University review. In different countries, certain languages are compulsory; it should be possible to have greater freedom of choice everywhere. Languages within the curriculum are managed differently from one country to another, which can lead to some languages losing their status.

*Questions:* What projects could we plan together through the associations? What resources could be placed at the disposal of the associations to carry out these projects successfully? Coordination of University and Association publications and systematically ensuring the distribution of these publications is an essential consideration. A research project was proposed.

### Group 3

Importance of reacting to existing or proposed legislation when proposals for plurilingualism are blocked by rigid curricula; in this case, forming protest groups and then establishing a powerful multilingual association in countries where no such association exists was proposed.

The teacher can practise plurilingualism in the classroom. Set up a project and communicate the results. In addition, bring together international contacts, practice plurilingualism and promote mutual understanding as part of these discussions.

### Group 4

Encourage cooperation between teachers so that they are ready to collaborate with associations.

## **Presentation of the ECML's 3rd medium-term programme**

Susanna Slivensky and Adrian Butler, Executive Director of the ECML presented the ECML's new medium-term programme, comprising 4 focuses:

### **A. Assessment**

Tests, examinations, self-assessment, European standards, etc.

### **B. The continuity of language learning**

Continuity from primary to secondary school, from secondary school to higher education and also between first, second and third language, etc.

### **C. Language education and content**

Curricula, portfolio, integration of intercultural skills, CLIL, or bilingual education, etc.

### **D. Plurilingual education**

Learning the language of your neighbour, migrant languages, integrated teaching and learning, integration of intercultural competence in teacher training, etc.

The ECML essentially focuses on the implementation of methods to be practised in a European dimension. Only proposals for projects that can encompass languages and countries in the widest sense will be considered. Strictly national projects will not be accepted.

The ECML's 3rd medium-term programme will run from 2008 to 2011 and consist of short-term projects (1-2 years, mainly for the validation of existing materials) and medium-term projects (3-4 years).

The deadline for submission of project proposals is 1 May 2007. In July an initial evaluation of projects will be carried out and the final selection made by the Governing Board in September 2007.

Ideas for two projects on plurilingualism were put forward by participants which a number of volunteers proposed to develop.

Team 1: Strategies for lifelong language learning

Lenka Hulkova (Czech Republic), Konrad Schröder (Germany), Karin Dahlberg (Norway), Tatiana Illiana (Federation of Russia), Rotraud Roux (Austria).

Team 2: Cooperation rather than competition between language teaching associations  
Anneke de Graaf (Netherlands), Vita Kalnberzina (Latvia), Sigurborg Jónsdóttir (Iceland), Peter Sauter (Switzerland), Eva Kustekova (Slovak Republic), Linda Parker (United Kingdom).

These two teams will communicate via e-mail and propose their projects for the 4<sup>th</sup> focus area on plurilingual education.

### **ECML proposals for cooperation with associations:**

The ECML proposes the following opportunities for language teaching associations who wish to cooperate with the ECML:

- Provision of the ECML's infrastructure including its resource centre for associations: possibility to work there and plan visits;
- Provision of information documents, ECML publications and brochures dispatched on request;
- Link: for each member country, the ECML has set up a page on its website, in cooperation with the national nominating authority. Information for each country can be placed on this page;



- The ECML can provide support, under certain conditions, for events organised by language teaching associations on Council of Europe topics;
- Events in cooperation with associations are envisaged for future EDLs.

## **Conclusion**

The activities of the various associations were presented within the groups and provided an essential initial point of contact for future networking between heads of the associations. The discussions on how to combine actions to promote plurilingualism within monolingual and plurilingual associations enabled participants to clearly identify the directions to be prioritised when implementing specific initiatives.

The topic of plurilingualism was debated at length in working groups and then presented during plenary sessions. Several concrete proposals for action were suggested in end-of-workshop questionnaires (publications, distribution via websites, study days on plurilingualism, information sharing and exchange, project proposals for the 3<sup>rd</sup> programme, implementation of innovative didactic tools and research projects, etc.). Two projects on plurilingualism resulting from this workshop are expected to be submitted within the framework of the Call for Proposals for the ECML's 3rd medium-term programme.

The workshop enabled association delegates to make contact with the ECML and to help them better understand the ECML and its activities. Workshop evaluation questionnaires, completed by all those attending, reveal that everyone was delighted to have been able to set up a new network enabling them to plan medium and long-term projects on plurilingualism.

A new network of associations has been created as a result of this workshop; based on their experience, participants can in future develop and maintain their collaboration with the ECML and the other associations present.