

Whole-School Language Profiles and Policies (ENSEMBLE)

Project description

Updated 6 February 2006

Co-ordinator: **Antoinette Camilleri Grima**, *University of Malta*

Project team: **Andrea Young**, *I.U.F.M.d'Alsace/Univeristé Marc Bloch, France*
Elisabeth Fleischmann, *GIBS Grazer International Bilingual School, Austria*
Madlena Norberg, *University of Potsdam, Germany*

This project is carried out in cooperation with the Language Policy Division, Strasbourg.

1. CONTEXT

The Council of Europe stresses the importance of multilingualism and plurilingual competence for social cohesion, notably through its recently published *Guide for the Development of Language Education Policies in Europe* (henceforth *The Guide*). Given that Europe as a whole, and the member states of the Council of Europe are multilingual, and have taken the position in favour of promoting plurilingualism and linguistic diversity, it is important that all those concerned with language in education work together. There is a need to understand existing profiles of schools that have already implemented a plurilinguistic approach, and to give an impetus to practices that support plural characteristics at the school level. This project will focus on the school as an institution within which the desired characteristics can be fostered. It is intended to help school administrators to study, reflect and develop together ideas related to linguistic profiles and orientations for their institutions.

The acronym 'Ensemble' denotes the need for the different partners within a school context (administrators, teachers, learners, parents, researchers, the community at large) to pull together in the same direction. It would be futile for schools to organise language education with the aim of fostering plurilingualism, if this provokes negative attitudes, among any of the partners. Everyone has their own part to play, and it must be played in synchronisation (hence, the need for this project).

2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

General aims

1. To collect and analyse a selection of varied whole-school language profiles;
2. to discuss issues involved in school profiling and in the establishment and implementation of policies;
3. to provide participants with basic tools to enable them to embark on/continue a R&D phase in their own context that will result in a whole-school language profile and policy;
4. to draw on the results of the R&D phase, and to publish them for wider impact.

Specific objectives

1. To disseminate the ideas and concepts contained in the *Guide* among school administrators;
2. to collect and present a small selection of case studies (prepared by each team member) to provoke thought on central issues in whole-school language profiles and policies;
3. to outline and discuss specific possibilities for enlightened whole-school language profiling and policy formation, during the central workshop;
4. to launch/set up/embark upon a period of R&D and to bring together the results in a publication;

3. EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- a. A collection of case studies representative of a variety of linguistic and cultural contexts where whole-school profiles and policies have been in place for some time (to be ready in preparation for the workshop);
- b. theoretical discussions on a variety of specific issues related to whole-school approaches (to be ready in preparation for the workshop and with a focus to aiding and illuminating the practice of school profiles and policies);
- c. a small range of tools (e.g. check-lists, questionnaires, interview questions, fact-finding inventories) that school personnel could use when drawing up a policy or when elaborating a school language profile (to be ready before the workshop and to be further developed with contributions by workshop participants);
- d. an opportunity to 'show and tell' by workshop participants;
- e. a few 'polished' reports of 'research and development' projects by workshop participants.

The first immediate audience of items a, b, c, d, are the workshop participants themselves who will then act in a more concrete way and serve as multipliers within their home context.

The larger audience of all the items would be: all school personnel interested in the topic; university lecturers and students following studies in the area; parents who are seriously involved in the running of their children's schools; people involved in language education generally.

4. ACTION PLAN

2004

January to September

The project team will discuss the preparation of the case studies that will highlight the theoretical and practical issues involved in the establishment of whole-school language profiles and policies. The team will need to decide who of the authors (project team members and possibly someone else) will focus on which theoretical and practical issues (to be identified). The draft of each case study will be circulated among project team members just before the meeting in September.

19-20 September

2-day **meeting** of the project team in order to

- co-ordinate in detail with representative from the Language Policy Division;
- elaborate on the context/s that will be dealt with in some depth in the project;
- discuss the feedback from each member on each case study;
- identify in detail the theoretical work that will be included in the project e.g. what should be included in a separate theoretical chapter;
- present and discuss tools for elaborating on a whole-school language profile;
- finalise the framework (e.g. section headings) for the case studies.

2005

September 2004 to June 2005

Each project team member will finalize the case study. Members will collaborate also by sending any publications related to the project and which fit within the theoretical framework agreed upon.

3-4 June

Project team **meeting** in Graz

- to plan the central workshop;
- the case studies (and other parts) will be handed in to the ECML for translating and printing;
- a detailed workshop time-table will be finalised;
- a description of the work to be presented by the workshop participants will be passed on to the nominating authorities;

14-17 December

4-day ECML **workshop** to

- provide a forum for participants to ‘show and tell’ about their experiences with whole-school language profiles and policies,
- present the case studies and theoretical discussions surrounding the various issues,
- disseminate the ideas and concepts contained in *The Guide*,
- provide the opportunity for discussion among participants,
- propose the setting up of network teams for a ‘research and development’ phase.

Participants' profile:

Participants must be headteachers. They should already be experienced/involved in whole-school language planning and plan/wish to attend the workshop in order to refine their skills in the areas that will be dealt with at the workshop, namely: parental and/or community involvement; materials development; staff development within the school and bilingual education. They must also be willing to embark on (or actually continue) a research and development phase (such that the R&D will neither entail a radical innovation in the school nor necessitate the allocation of additional funds). All types of school are welcome for inclusion (small, large, urban, rural, primary, secondary, post-secondary, state, private, etc.).

The workshop participants must:

- (a) prepare a poster presentation according to the guidelines
- (b) have the possibility of contributing to a post-workshop R&D

2006

8-9 October

Final **editing meeting** in view of publication(s).

2007

May

Publication of Book and CD-ROM

5. LANGUAGES

The working languages of the project are English and French. Simultaneous interpretation will only be provided for central events (ECML workshops).

Participants are expected to be fluent in one of the working languages and have passive knowledge of the other.