# How to Train Language Teacher Trainers

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Edited by

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To my sister Angelica

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# PREFACE

This book is an examination of major issues and case studies in language teacher training, and it is designed as a state-of-the-art compendium of current researches on quality teacher training in Europe. While reading it, answers to the following questions will be found: what are the guidelines of European language policy regarding learning, teaching, and assessing of language teacher training? What European documents have been published over the last few years and what are their purposes? How can quality be promoted in language teacher education? What are the implications for language teacher trainers in Europe for pre-service and in-service teacher programmes? How could teachers and language teacher trainers benefit from the use of reference works, such as the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*, the *European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages*, the *European Profile for Language Teacher Education*, *QualiTraining*, *The TrainEd Kit* or the *European Profiling Grid*?

In our ever-changing world, training has to rely on solid values, such as the promotion of multilingualism, social inclusion, and intercultural understanding of different cultures. Many documents have recently been published following these values and the guidelines provided by European language policy. These are aimed at, firstly, language learners, then at language teachers, and, finally, at language teacher trainers. Since the publication of the first of these documents—the *Common European Framework of Reference* (2001)—many other documents have enriched our view of what teacher training is and this book is a unique opportunity to explore them and to put them in perspective.

The authors included in this book cover many issues related to teacher training: multilingualism, training courses, the development of teacher competence, certification, assessment and self-assessment, qualifications, examinations, quality teaching and training. It is thus a comprehensive overview of several issues in teacher education, regarded from a training perspective.

It will provide researchers, managers, senior teachers, teacher trainers, mentors, inspectors and curriculum designers with data for self-reflection and examination. It describes research issues and research findings in teacher education, which are needed to design teacher education programmes, and it reports significant and innovative practices in teacher education. It therefore ensures a consistent and standardised approach to quality language teaching.

*How to Train Language Teacher Trainers* is an outstanding contribution to the field of second language teacher education, and will prove to be a valuable resource book for teacher trainers and teacher educators. It is the result of the efforts by a hardworking team, led by the great enthusiasm of Pierangela Diadori. She gathered us in Siena in several meetings that facilitated the interchange of knowledge and experiences, which is now crystallizing in other contributions to the field, such as the *European Profiling Grid* project. We are sure that the book will help to articulate a theoretical framework for second language teaching education. It will also clarify some of the central issues and provide new insights on how to train and assess language teacher trainers for a wide range of users.

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# INTRODUCTION

PIERANGELA DIADORI

This is not another book on foreign language teaching which analyses the various phenomena related to teaching and learning. This is a book on foreign language teaching seen from the point of view of language teacher trainers. It is about what they should know and should be able to do, and about how they can organize training courses and assess language teaching competencies.

The reason for choosing this subject, and for using examples from a variety of languages (English, French, Italian) and educational contexts (Canada, Great Britain, Italy, Malta), is due to recent worldwide social changes that have caused a rapid increase in the demand for language courses; in the diversification of foreign language teaching according to different learners' profiles; and, as a consequence, in a huge need for training, at both an academic and non-academic level.

There are various reasons for the growing importance of training and qualifications in the field of foreign language teaching. In Europe, it reflects the great impulse given to this sector by a clear language policy in favour of multilingualism and social inclusion, with a focus on mobility and lifelong learning. But in the wider world it may also indicate a trend towards deregulation and ad hoc solutions, as a consequence of high demand and limited quality control. The phenomenon is somehow similar to the spread of methods of securing privacy in a society that has less and less respect for individuals and their private life.

The culture of lifelong education, certified skills and professional development is growing, together with a higher demand for experienced and successful trainers. Teacher trainers are no longer just scholars and university professors in charge of specific subjects (language and literature, linguistics, pedagogy, etc.). They are high quality teaching professionals, who have a strong background as language learners and language teachers, and who are competent in classroom management,

cooperative learning and assessment of teaching competencies. They are familiar with ICT both for personal development and for training purposes, and they are connected to an international network of colleagues and relevant institutions. They have a role as mediators between the emerging social needs in the field of language contact and the possible responses that education might offer depending on local priorities and constraints. They have a role as resources and guides for less expert colleagues, acting as links between them and the new information coming from academic researchers and language policy makers. Most of them have developed their new role through experience, without specific training as "language teacher trainers", learning from their errors and being uplifted by their successes. But it is now time to give a new impetus to this emerging profession, which is likely to be so crucial in generating a positive cascade effect on future generations of successful foreign language teachers and learners. This is what I have tried to do, by asking some of the most renowned experts and colleagues in the field to collaborate on this volume.

The documents produced by the Council of Europe and by the European Commission as guidelines or frames of reference for the implementation of a European language policy that should foster both mutual understanding and economic growth are precious tools for teacher trainers. The first four chapters of this volume, which are devoted to these documents, are preceded by an introduction by Fiorella Perotto on behalf of the European Commission (Directorate General for Education and Culture – Multilingualism Policy Unit). This is followed by the articles by Michael Kelly, Hanna Komorowska, Laura Muresan and Mercè Bernaus as co-authors of four of the most relevant European projects on language teaching and training completed between 2004 and 2007.

In Chapter 2, Michael Kelly presents the *European Profile for Language Teacher Education* (Kelly & Grenfell 2004), which proposes a framework for developing the initial and in-service education of foreign language teachers in primary, secondary and adult learning contexts. In Chapter 3, Hanna Komorowska describes *EPOSTL – A European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages* (Newby, Allan, Fenner, Komorowska, Jones & Soghikyan, 2007), which is a tool for reflection and self-assessment designed for use in the pre-service education of modern language teachers. In Chapter 4, Laura Muresan explains the objectives of *QualiTraining - A Training Guide for Quality Assurance in Language Education* (Muresan, Heyworth, Mateva & Rose, 2007), which aims to

encourage an integrative approach to quality assurance and professional development in language education, with examples of concepts, systems and practice in action. In Chapter 5, Mercè Bernaus outlines the *TrainEdKit* (Matei, Bernaus, Heyworth, Pohl & Wright, 2007), a document developed to help facilitate the transition from language teacher to language teacher trainer.

A "case study" of the application of these guidelines to a real case of language teacher training is presented in Chapter 6, on the DITALS Project, at the Università per Stranieri di Siena, which I have guided since 1994 and which, in almost 20 years, has generated a network of centres for the certification and training of qualified Italian language teachers and expert DITALS trainers.

Having presented a number of key points to define what future language teacher trainers should know and should be able to do, the second part of the volume is devoted to describing how such competencies can be assessed, bearing in mind that teacher trainers are often asked to prepare trainees for specific teaching qualifications or to contribute to test design and evaluation.

And in this second part, four case studies are presented. In Chapter 7, Jim Cummins offers an overview of French programmes in Canada, discussing their implications for teachers' assessment. In Chapter 8, I illustrate the complex organization and the different examinations currently provided by the DITALS Centre of the Università per Stranieri di Siena. In Chapter 9 Nick Charge presents qualifications and examinations on teaching English as a second/foreign language delivered by Cambridge ESOL. In Chapter 10 Mario Pace and Joe Navarro describe the Professional Development Portfolio of the Faculty of Education of the University of Malta, designed for future teachers of Italian as a foreign language.

The last two contributions are devoted to the *Profiling Grid for Language Teachers*, originally developed by EAQUALS as a means of describing a team of teachers and potentially as a classroom observation tool for accredited language schools. This has recently become the focus of a European co-financed international project (*EPG – European Profiling Grid*) to be completed in 2013 (www.epg-project.eu). Brian North (in Chapter 11) and Richard Rossner (in Chapter 12) describe the key features of qualifications and competencies that, at different stages,

exemplify a language teacher's development. These can be summarized in a series of descriptors that acquire a clearer meaning when used in a grid inspired by *CEFR* and *ELP* that identifies on one axis a vertical 3-level progression (*basic – independent - proficient teacher*), and on the other a horizontal division into a series of areas: "*Language*" (proficiency / awareness), "*Qualifications*" (qualifications / teaching practice / experience), "*Core Competencies*" (methodology knowledge and skills / planning / interaction management / assessment) and "*Complementary skills*" (teacher development / digital literacy).

If we relate the *Profiling Grid*, based on the concept of levels, scales and teacher's development, to the framework of objectives of Kelly and Grenfell's *Profile* and to the *EPOSTL*, the circle closes. In this process, a crucial role is played by language teacher trainers, as described in the *TrainEd Kit* and in *QualiTraining*.

One final word on the team of experts who have agreed to contribute to this book: I am honoured to say that it is unique to find papers by so many relevant authors in the same volume. Their presence in Siena during the international meetings on "*Training, Quality and Certification in Foreign Language Teaching - TQAC*" that I organized in 2008, 2009 and 2010 as part of the development of DITALS teacher trainers, was highly stimulating and created favourable conditions for rich personal and professional exchanges. This volume is the product of that international TQAC network, which was born in Siena and opened up new intellectual challenges in the field of language teacher training.

# WHAT FUTURE LANGUAGE TEACHER TRAINERS SHOULD KNOW AND SHOULD BE ABLE TO DO

# CHAPTER ONE

# MULTILINGUALISM: AN ASSET FOR EUROPE AND A SHARED COMMITMENT

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This paper outlines the context and key features of the multilingualism strategy of the European Union and its implementation instruments. It delineates the strategy's implications for education and training as well as its potential impacts in a broader socio-economic context. Finally, it provides an overview of the latest EU policy initiatives on multilingualism and suggests some future perspectives. Within the scope of this paper, multilingualism means the coexistence of different languages (language diversity) in a given context, but also an individual's ability to understand and use several languages.[1]

[1] This paper does not deal with the administrative use of languages, translation or interpretation within the EU institutions, which are covered by Regulation Nr 1/58 determining the languages to be used by the European Economic Community, as last amended by Council Regulation (EC) No 1791/2006 of 20 November 2006 (http://eur-lex.europa.eu/Notice.do?val=1346:cs&lang=en&list=1347:cs,1346:cs, &pos=2&page=1&nbl=2&pgs=10&hwords=languages~&checktexte=checkbox& visu=#texte)

## 1.1. Policy and legislative context

One of the milestones of EU language education policy was the EU summit held in Barcelona in March 2002, when European Heads of State and government recommended further action *"to improve the mastery of basic skills, in particular by teaching at least two foreign languages from a very early age"*.[2] This recommendation is still valid and has been repeatedly confirmed by the EU Education ministers.

Within the European Commission, multilingualism is part of a comprehensive portfolio also covering Education, Culture and Youth, under the responsibility of Cypriot Commissioner Androulla Vassiliou.

Between 2007 and 2010, a specific portfolio was devoted to multilingualism under Romanian Commissioner Leonard Orban. This created a unique opportunity for highlighting how multilingualism can transcend the mere acquisition or improvement of language skills and also cover the effective use of sometimes ignored or neglected language resources, for example in immigrant communities or in the working place.

This led in 2008 to the adoption by the Commission of the Communication *Multilingualism: an asset for Europe and a shared commitment,*[3] outlining a new EU strategy for multilingualism and pointing at a number of dynamic developments and initiatives. The rationale of the 2008 Communication draws inspiration from the EU *Lisbon strategy for growth and jobs,*[4] which is expected to be followed by a renewed strategy for the next decade—*EU 2020*.[5] The Lisbon strategy

[2] Barcelona European Council – Presidency Conclusions, 15/16 March 2002 (SN 100/1/02 REV1) (http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/ec/71025.pdf)

[3] COM (2008) 566 final, 18.9.2008 (http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/pdf/com/2008_0566_en.pdf)

[4] - Communication from the Commission to the Spring European Council: Strategic report on the renewed Lisbon strategy for growth and jobs: launching the new cycle (2008-2010) – Keeping up the pace of change (COM(2007)803, 11.12.2007) (http://ec.europa.eu/growthandjobs/pdf/european-dimension-200712-annual-progress-report/200712-annual-report_en.pdf)
- Brussels European Council - Presidency Conclusions, 19/20 March 2009 (7880/1/09 REV1, 29.04.2009)

[5] Lisbon Strategy evaluation document (SEC(2010) 114 final, 2.02.2010) (http://ec.europa.eu/growthandjobs/pdf/lisbon_strategy_evaluation.pdf)

points at education, together with the other two sides of the knowledge triangle—research and innovation—as a key element in ensuring the acquisition of the basic skills and key competences necessary to enhance economic development and business competitiveness in the EU. Accordingly, the Communication was drafted under the responsibility of the Directorate-General for Education and Culture, but involved active contributions from a number of other EU departments in charge of enterprise and industry, employment and social policy, the internal market, research, information technologies, regional policy or freedom, justice and security.[6] Language skills are considered both a basic skill and a key competence that can improve individuals' employability and give access to better jobs, but also support EU business exports. In a globalised world where the use of one single international *lingua franca* is generally widespread, the knowledge of other foreign languages can make a difference and provide individuals and companies with competitive advantages.

The title of the communication also hints at the benefits deriving from foreign language knowledge but also at the shared responsibility between the European Union and the Member States for action on language teaching and learning. The legal framework for multilingualism at EU level is provided by Article 165 of the new *Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union*,[7] which entered into force in 2009. In line with the *subsidiarity* principle enshrined in EU legislation,[8] whereby the Commission supports Member State policies, this article states that education policy—and therefore also language education—falls under the sole responsibility of Member States. It excludes, however, any form of harmonisation of legislation on education at EU level.

Art. 165[9] also refers to the support to language diversity within the EU, stating that:

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[6] See also the inventory of Community actions in the field of multilingualism Commission (Staff Working Document) accompanying the Communication SEC(2008) 2443, 18.9.2008 (http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/pdf/com/inventory_en.pdf)

[7] As established by the "Treaty of Lisbon"

[8] Treaty on the European Union, Art.5, Official Journal of the European Communities (OJEC) Nr C115, 9 May 2008 (http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2008:115:0013:0045:EN:PDF)

[9] §2

*Union action shall be aimed at:*

*—developing the European dimension in education, particularly through the teaching and dissemination of the languages of the Member States.*[10]

In addition to the 2008 communication, two key documents on multilingualism recently adopted by the EU Education Ministers are worth mentioning in this context. The first is *Council Resolution of 21 November 2008 on a European strategy for multilingualism*,[11] which supports the Commission Communication and addresses specific recommendations respectively to the Commission and to the Member States. The second one is the *Council conclusions of 12 May 2009 on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training – "ET 2020"*),[12] which outlines the EU education strategy for the next decade and contains significant guidelines on language education.

One of these guidelines concerns the *European Survey on Language Competences (ESLC)*, informally known as "Language Indicator", the aim of which is to improve the outcome of foreign language teaching and learning in secondary education and life-long learning of foreign languages, and to develop the creation of a language-friendly environment as well as teacher training. The survey will test the competences of a representative sample of lower secondary students in the first and second most taught foreign language in 14 Member States. It was carried out in 2011 and the results are expected to be published by 2012, when the Commission has been required to submit proposals for new European benchmarks for language skills.

Language is crucial to enable individuals to enjoy human rights protected under international and regional legal instruments, to exert political and civil rights, and to attain social and economic rights. It is a significant marker and an instrument for inclusion or exclusion, and is fundamental to individual and collective cultural rights. Language and its use in the public and private sphere are thus central in the delicate balance between civil, political and cultural rights, and between individual and group rights.

[10] OJEC Nr C115, 9 May 2008 (http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2008:115:0047:0199:EN:PDF)
[11] OJEC C 320, 16/12/2008 (http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2008:320:0001:01:EN:HTML
[12] OJEC C 119, 28/05/2009 (http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2009:119:0002:0010:EN:PDF)

When outlining the EU legislative context for multiligualism, it is therefore also essential to mention that the new EU Treaty introduced an important feature in EU legislation that could have significant implications for the multilingualism policy in the future: the *European Charter of Fundamental Rights.*[13] The Charter summarises the common values of the EU Member States and proclaims major political, social and economic rights for European Union citizens and residents. Regarding languages, it states:

> Any discrimination based on any ground such as race, colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, **language,** religion or belief, political or other opinion, membership of a national minority, property, birth, disability, age or sexual orientation shall be prohibited. [14]

and

> The Union shall respect cultural, religious and **linguistic diversity**.[15]

The Charter was first signed[16] at the European Council meeting in Nice on 7 December 2000, but was not legally binding until it was incorporated into the new treaty and therefore became an integral part of EU legislation. Any EU citizen or resident feeling discriminated against on language grounds, or deeming that linguistic diversity (for example with regard to minority languages) is being flouted in the application of EU law, may therefore lodge a complaint with the European Court of Justice in compliance with the Charter. Although language and minority rights are well known to be highly sensitive topics in many Member States, speculating on the potential concrete implications of this new provision is quite difficult at this stage.

## 1.2. Strategy implementation

The implementation of the EU multilingualism strategy is based on three main pillars: institutional cooperation with governments, structured dialogue with stakeholders, and funding programmes.

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[13] OJEC Nr C164, 18.12.2000 (http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/unit/charte/index_en.html)
[14] Art. 21§1
[15] Art. 22
[16] By the Presidents of the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission

Cooperation with governments takes place through the so-called Open Method of Coordination, in compliance with the strategic framework adopted by the Education Council in 2009.[17] It involves discussions among experts appointed by the competent ministries of the Member States to agree on common objectives and benchmarks, carry out peer learning activities and submit joint policy recommendations to governments. Two new thematic expert groups were set up in the area of multilingualism. The first one—on Early Language Learning at pre-primary level—was established in 2009 and has identified teacher training and teaching immigrant children the language of the host country as priority areas for work. The second thematic working group met for the first time in the first half of 2010 dealing with the issue of Languages and employability.[18] The structured dialogue with stakeholders is intended to complement the inter-governmental cooperation process by encouraging networking and exchanges of knowledge and good practice among citizens' associations and interest groups. Two platforms were set up for this purpose in 2009.

The Civil Society platform[19] is composed of European-level organisations or networks representing citizens' interests, non-formal education and the media. It is divided into four thematic sub-groups: Language education; Linguistic diversity and social inclusion; Translation and terminology (given the importance of language services in multicultural societies); and Language planning (dealing with the balance between national and regional/minority languages).

The Languages and Business platform[20] is composed of European-level organisations representing trade promotion organisations, chambers of commerce and social partners. It is divided into three sub-groups dealing respectively with Research, Technology, Marketing and

[17] OJEC C 119, 28/05/2009 (http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2009:119:0002:0010:EN:PDF)

[18] In 2011 the first working group has produced the working paper entitled "Language Learning at pre-primary school level: making it efficient and sustainable. A policy handbook" and the second working group has published the report "Languages for Jobs – providing multilingual communication skills for the labour market".

[19] http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/09/1574&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en

[20] http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/news/news3639_en.htm

communication. This platform will not only focus on the traditional aspects of language education in the context of vocational training, but will explore existing practice in valuing available and/or potential language and intercultural skills in the workplace, in particular in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

The promotion of language learning and linguistic diversity is also one of the general objectives of the EU *Action Programme in the field of Lifelong Learning* ("LLP programme"), the main EU funding programme for education, for the period 2007-2013.[21] Languages are a key feature throughout the LLP, both in the sector-specific and transversal sub-programmes. The promotion of language learning is in particular the core subject of Key Activity 2 of the transversal programme, which provides financial support for multilateral projects and networks through an annual budget of nearly €13 million. This budget also covers information and awareness-raising activities for the general public and for specialised audiences. The Lifelong Learning programme also provides a wide range of transnational mobility opportunities for learners and teachers. In this context, the direct link between mobility and languages comes out quite strongly, since mobility can be hindered or even made impossible for lack of language skills. Conversely, learning a foreign language without being directly exposed to it in a native speaker context can also be rather inefficient.

In the framework of the Lifelong-Learning programme, the European Commission is also financing two large-scale information campaigns involving activities in the EU Member States.

One is the *Piccolingo*[22] campaign to develop foreign language awareness among children of pre-school age, which draws inspiration from the "mother tongue plus two" recommendation of the 2002 Barcelona European Council. Although the ultimate beneficiaries of the campaign are pre-school children, the activities aim primarily at raising awareness among parents. Since parents are not a homogeneous group and are difficult to reach because of the lack of representative structures at EU

[21] Decision No 1720/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 November 2006 establishing an action programme in the field of lifelong learning (OJEC L327/45, 24.11.2006) (http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:327:0045:0068:en:PDF)

[22] http://www.piccolingo.eu/ (provisional address)

level, the campaign will reach out to them through networks of multipliers such as local authorities, community associations or child carers and social workers.

The second campaign aims at raising awareness of the potential economic benefits of multilingualism among small and medium enterprises (SMEs). This initiative follows the outcomes of a study[23] published in 2006 which concluded that European SMEs have been missing business opportunities for lack of language strategies or skills. The campaign will involve a mapping of good practice across the EU and a broad range of promotional activities and publications.

In November 2011, the Ministers of Education adopted Council conclusions on language competence to enhance mobility, inviting the Commission and Member States to take a series of steps to improve the language competences of Europeans, thus helping them to build a more prosperous, inclusive and tolerant Union.

Education and languages will remain an essential element of the European Commission's policies in the coming years. Education is also an important part of the effort aimed at relaunching growth and employment in the European Union, and language competences will be needed to stimulate increased mobility, which will itself play a crucial role in the *Erasmus for All Programme*, the successor to the *Lifelong Learning Programme* for the period 2014-2020.

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# CHAPTER TWO

# EUROPEAN DOCUMENTS AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR LANGUAGE TEACHER TRAINERS: THE *PROFILE*

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## 2.1. Introduction

The *European Profile for Language Teacher Education* (Kelly & Grenfell, 2004) (Kelly & Grenfell 2010) provides a framework for developing the initial and in-service education of foreign language teachers in primary, secondary and adult learning contexts. It offers a frame of reference for language education policy makers and language teacher educators in Europe. By outlining the key elements in European language teacher education, the *Profile* aims to serve as a checklist for existing teacher education programmes and a toolbox for those still being developed. This chapter examines the implications of the context for the *Profile*, sets out what it contains, and suggests how it can be used.

## 2.2. Social and political context of the *Profile*

The *Profile* was elaborated between 2002 and 2004, in a period when the European Union was undergoing major expansion, with the accession of ten new countries and an increase in population to over 450 million. This posed challenges to the work of building unity across Europe's many diverse nations, cultures, communities and languages. In particular, it created increased pressure to develop exchange and cooperation in many areas so that Europe's peoples might strengthen their sense of mutual

respect and understanding. It was more important than ever that communication and exchange between Europe's diverse range of citizens should be encouraged and promoted.

One of the Union's key priorities has always been to facilitate mobility in many areas. Improving the language skills of Europe's citizens is a central part of this process. Over the past fifteen years, the European Union has undertaken a wide range of initiatives to promote the teaching and learning of foreign languages in Europe. The White Paper, *Teaching and Learning: Towards the Learning Society* (European Commission, 1995) was an important document which recognised the key role played by languages in the construction of European unity, and emphasised the importance of every European citizen being able to speak at least two Community languages in addition to his or her own mother tongue. The Lisbon strategy of 2000 dealt with economic, social and environmental renewal, and focused on turning Europe into the world's most competitive knowledge-based economy by the year 2010 (Rodrigues, 2009). Addressing the language skills of Europe's citizens plays a key role in this strategy. Language teacher education in particular can be seen as pivotal to the process.

The purpose of the European Union's *Socrates* and *Leonardo da Vinci* programmes has been to develop cooperation in the field of education and training. Many of the actions have been concerned with promoting linguistic diversity and encouraging life-long language learning. Key objectives include:

- Raising awareness about the benefits of foreign language learning
- Improving the quality of language teaching
- Increasing the number of foreign language learners
- Promoting the learning of less widely used and taught languages
- Encouraging greater provision of language teaching and learning
- Improving access to language learning

The European Commission complements the actions of Member States by using these programmes to promote innovative projects in language teaching and learning. It also supports Member States in the exchange of good practice and innovation. Diversity is one of Europe's main assets. Language teaching, language learning and teacher education all help to safeguard Europe's multilingual and multicultural heritage. Language learning encourages cooperation and exchange, and a diversity of languages

enriches Europe and highlights its cultural and linguistic variety. Learning each other's languages brings Europeans closer together and encourages openness to other cultures and ways of life.

From 2000 onwards, the European Union increased attempts to improve language teaching and learning. The European Year of Languages in 2001 showed how language learning could be promoted at a European and national level. In 2002, the Barcelona meeting of the European Council proposed that European citizens should be taught at least two foreign languages from an early age. (European Council, 2002)

Following wide consultation with European institutions, national ministries, organisations and the general public, the Commission developed an Action Plan for language learning and linguistic diversity (European Commission, 2003). The Action Plan dealt with three broad areas: the promotion of life-long learning, improving language teaching, and creating a more language-friendly environment.

The *Profile* played an important role in developing the Action Plan's focus on improving language teaching. The education of foreign language teachers is of increasing importance because of their key role in improving foreign language learning and awakening learners' interest in languages. Language teachers play a major part in achieving the European Union's objective that all EU citizens should have linguistic competence in their own mother tongue and two other languages.

The *Profile* was developed from 'The Training of Teachers of a Foreign Language: Developments in Europe', a study for the Directorate-General for Education and Culture, which analysed the situation of initial teacher education and continuing professional development (in-service training) across 33 European countries. The study found that the quality of language teacher education could be improved by giving language teachers access to a common core of knowledge, skills and values (Kelly *et al*., 2002). It envisaged a shared body of concepts, terms and analytical tools for language teacher education. The study presented a first set of suggestions for the important elements in European language teacher education. The *Profile* took that list as its starting point.

The authors of the *Profile* were asked by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Education and Culture 'to identify the core pedagogical and linguistic skills necessary for today's language teachers'.

The Action Plan referred to the values that the language teacher should promote, the key elements of language teacher education and the various ways in which courses can be delivered. In particular, it suggested that initial teacher education should equip teachers with a basic 'toolkit' of skills and techniques for teaching and learning. The *European Profile for Language Teacher Education – A Frame of Reference* outlines what such a toolkit might consist of.

## 2.3. The current context

In the period since the *Profile* was first published, the importance of languages has been recognised in a plethora of documents at European level. It was given a sharp focus in the EU Commission's Communication *A New Framework Strategy for Multilingualism* (European Commission, 2005), under the aegis of Commissioner Ján Figel and in the follow-up Communication *Multilingualism: an asset for Europe and a shared commitment* (European Commission, 2008), produced by Leonard Orban. The economic basis for giving languages increased priority was powerfully set out in the ELAN Report: *Effects on the European economy of shortages of foreign language skills in enterprise* (CILT and InterAct International, 2007).

Languages are not the single magic key that will unlock future prosperity, but they are an important component of constructing a better future. The established reasons for promoting languages are now widely shared. At an economic level, extending language competence is an effective means of attenuating the 'non-tariff barriers' to trade and mobility. Politically, languages are crucial to pursuing greater understanding between countries. Greater language competence is a key factor in promoting social inclusion. And at the level of knowledge itself, a grasp of languages gives greatly enhanced access to knowledge and ideas.

These established reasons no longer fully capture the magnitude of the challenges facing language educators. The world is changing rapidly, and the context for language education is being rapidly transformed. At an economic level, the accelerating pace of interdependence between countries has heightened the tensions between global and local imperatives. What some commentators have called 'glocalisation' has emerged as a site of conflict (Robertson, 1992). On the one hand, the internationalisation of commerce and industry requires that global standards and common means of communication should be developed to facilitate the free movement of

goods, services, capital and people. But on the other hand, local, national and regional groups increasingly require that internationalism should recognise and respect their distinctive cultural and linguistic identities.

These pressures are increased by the revolutions in communications technology, which continue to extend the global reach of major corporations while at the same time providing increased opportunities for particular groups to build dynamic communities and reinforce their distinctive identities.

At a political level, the generous aspirations to mutual understanding have been attenuated by the overriding priorities of war and peace. The purpose of learning languages and understanding the culture of others is increasingly extended to accommodate the needs of the intelligence community and to extend the reach and capability of associated military operations.

And at a social level, the enduring requirement of inclusion has been overwhelmed by the accelerating pace with which populations are on the move. The scale of movement is rapidly increasing, from the growth of tourism and the increasing number of short and medium term work placements, to the upsurge in long term migration.

These factors have created a new strategic context for languages. In almost all countries, there is now a superdiversity of languages in contact. On many city streets, the diversity of different groups is both visible and audible. Walking round a supermarket or waiting on a railway platform in almost any city, one is likely to hear several languages spoken. It may be possible to identify the different groups living in a particular area and the languages they speak. From this information, it is possible to suggest which languages it will be useful to learn for the purposes of everyday life. But these predictable linguistic needs substantially exceed the learning capacity of any single individual. Added to this are the unpredictable needs of places one might visit, or languages that suddenly emerge as having strategic importance. Who could have predicted that European countries would have an urgent need for speakers of Pashtu, a widely spoken language of Afghanistan?

At the same time as the number of relevant languages is multiplying, the significance of language barriers is increasing. It may not be too much to say that languages are emerging as ‘hard’ borders. Language barriers

remain as difficult to cross as ever, although the need to cross them is becoming more pressing. The number of languages active on the internet continues to increase, but rather than producing a cosmopolitan space in which many tongues are heard, the Web is in fact producing a 'smart' monolingualism. Search engines and other web-based applications are increasingly sophisticated in recognising the language preferences of the searcher and presenting only results in that language. Of course, it is possible to access a much wider range than that, but it requires a conscious effort to do so, and not many people are motivated to be explorers and travellers in the virtual space of the internet.

The rapid transaction culture of the internet discourages careful attention to what is not immediately visible and intelligible. On the contrary, any 'non-standard' text on the screen tends to be skated over rapidly, almost as if it had not been seen. Information in a foreign language tends to be skated over in this way, except where the reader has a positive attraction to the language in question, for example, where it is a second or other language in the reader's own linguistic repertoire. In this context, extending the linguistic repertoire of the population is a crucial way of overcoming the mental barriers that languages can erect. And it is clear that the role of language teachers is crucial in achieving this.

The emergence of English as a *de facto* 'lingua franca' in Europe and elsewhere is producing a paradoxical result. As more people are able to communicate with each other through English, they become increasingly attached to the importance of their own language as an expression of their cultural identity. As a result, the spread of competence in English is having the effect of increasing the need for multilingualism to cross the cultural barriers, which are growing (Graddol, 2006).

There is a well-established *acquis* in European policy in relation to language, which has been articulated in many documents, with some variation over time. It may be summarised in four broad principles:

1. Linguistic diversity should be promoted, including in formal education systems
2. People should be encouraged to learn the less widely used and less taught languages
3. Every European citizen should be able to speak two languages in addition to his or her mother tongue