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European research partnerships in multilingual and multicultural education

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Resumen

La investigación europea en educación multilingüe y multicultural tiene planteados tres retos: integrar la investigación de los dominios multilingüe y multicultural; conectar la investigación académica con la investigación dirigida a los problemas que se plantean en la práctica educativa; y coordinar la investigación en el marco del Área Europea de Investigación a través de consorcios, con objeto de abordar el problema en toda su complejidad y evitar la fragmentación de los esfuerzos investigadores. Este artículo se centra en el último de los retos: la necesidad de consorcios europeos para abordar los problemas de la educación multilingüe y multicultural. El recién creado Consejo de Investigación Europeo y el Séptimo Programa Marco para la investigación y el desarrollo tecnológico proporcionan oportunidades de crucial importancia para la cooperación en investigación educativa. Una de las diferencias fundamentales frente a los programas de investigación previos de la Comunidad Europea es la inclusión del programa "Regiones de conocimiento" a través de "Consorcios de grupos regionales de investigación o un grupo de investigación con participación multinacional". Un modelo interesante es el Consorcio Estratégico para la Investigación Educativa, un plan audaz y ambicioso diseñado por la Academia Nacional de Ciencias de Estados Unidos que propone un programa revolucionario de investigación y desarrollo en educación. En Europa se han llevado a cabo distintas acciones de coordinación de las estrategias nacionales en el ámbito de la investigación educativa, con objeto de desarrollar una nueva cultura y nuevos consorcios de investigación. La Comisión Europea aprobó un Plan de Acción en el año 2004 para promover el multilingüismo y el diálogo intercultural, subrayando la necesidad de investigación en el área del desarrollo del lenguaje. El nuevo Programa de Aprendizaje Permanente incluye como actividad clave la creación de consorcios de investigación y la cooperación entre institutos europeos de investigación y los investigadores en este campo. La ESF, COST, la EERA, la TNTEE y el ECML se encuentran entre las múltiples organizaciones que prestan apoyo a la investigación transeuropea en educación. Una de los consorcios más prometedores en el campo de la educación multilingüe y multicultural es LANGSCAPE, una red de investigadores de varias universidades europeas que propone distintas medidas para evitar la fragmentación y promover la integración en el ámbito de la instrucción multilingüe. A pesar de las muchas iniciativas, la investigación educativa en Europa todavía aparece muy fragmentada y compartimen-

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tada. En tanto en cuanto la integración europea depende fuertemente de la investigación estratégica en este campo, la necesidad de políticas comunes en educación sustentadas por investigaciones en el marco de consorcios internacionales y multilaterales constituye un reto crucial.

Abstract

European research in multilingual and multicultural education has three challenges: Integrate the research of multilingual and multicultural domains; bridge the gap between academic-driven research and problem-driven research; and coordinate research within the European Research Area through partnerships, in order to address the problems in their broad complexity, and to avoid the fragmentation of research efforts. This article focuses on the last challenge: the need for European partnerships to address the problems of multilingual and multicultural education. The new European Research Council (ERC) and the *Seventh Framework Programme* for research and technological development (FP7) provide opportunities for critically important cooperation in educational research. One of the key differences to earlier EU research programmes is the inclusion of *Regions of Knowledge*, aimed at bringing together the various research partners within a region, through 'Consortia of Regional research driven clusters or a single research-driven cluster having multinational partnership'. An interesting model to learn from is the *Strategic Education Research Partnership* (SERP), a bold, ambitious plan designed at the US National Academy of Sciences that proposes a revolutionary program of education research and development. The European Educational Research Association includes a network on "Research Partnerships in Education" aimed to support and conceptualize research partnerships in education in the widest sense. But educational research in Europe is seen as fragmented and compartmentalised. Ongoing attempts to develop a new research culture and new research partnerships in Europe, should try to link the national educational research development strategies, and to facilitate progressive collaboration between research communities. In Europe, different actions attempt to link the national educational research development strategies, in order to develop a new research culture and new research partnerships. The European Commission delivered an Action Plan in 2004 to promote multilingualism and intercultural dialogue, stressing the need for research on language development. The new *Lifelong Learning Programme* (LLP) include as a key activity to promote the creation of research consortia and cooperation between European research institutes and researchers in the field. The ESF, COST, the EERA, the TNTEE, and the ECML are between the multiple organizations that support transeuropean research in education. One of the most promising European partnerships in the field of multilingual and multicultural education is LANGSCAPE, a network of researchers from various European universities, addressing the fragmentation of the research community by taking diverse integrative measures and promoting multiliteracy. In spite of the many initiatives, educational research in Europe is still seen as fragmented and compartmentalised. As far as European integration depends heavily on strategic research in this field, there is a challenging need for common policies in education that should be supported by research conducted in the framework of international and multilateral partnerships.

The challenges of research and development in multilingual and multicultural Education

Europe is growing as an increasingly complex multicultural and multilingual society. Education systems face a critical challenge in order to faci-

litate communication and interaction among Europeans, promote European mobility, mutual understanding and co-operation, and overcome prejudice and discrimination. The *Committee for Education of the Council of Europe* (1982) already stated twenty-five years ago that a major educational effort was needed to convert the European diversity from a barrier to communication into a source of mutual enrichment, considering the rich heritage of diverse languages and cultures in Europe a valuable common resource to be protected and developed.

Developing policies in multilingual and multicultural education may achieve greater convergence at the European level by means of appropriate arrangements for ongoing co-operation and co-ordination. The main issue concerning these policies is to promote research and development programmes leading to the introduction, at all educational levels, of methods and programs best suited to enabling different classes and types of students to acquire appropriate multilingual and multicultural competences, that will allow them to satisfy their specific communicative needs and in particular:

— to deal with the business of everyday life in another country, and to help foreigners staying in their own country to do so.
— to exchange information and ideas with young people and adults who speak a different language and to communicate their thoughts and feelings to them.
— to achieve a wider and deeper understanding of the way of life and forms of thought of other peoples and of their cultural heritage.

In the *Preamble* of a new recommendation in this matter, The *Council of Europe* (1998) emphasized the challenges for multilingual and multicultural education programs:

— to equip all Europeans for intensified international mobility and closer co-operation not only in education, culture and science but also in trade and industry.
— to promote mutual understanding and tolerance, respect for identities and cultural diversity through more effective international communication.
— to maintain and further develop the richness and diversity of European cultural life through greater mutual knowledge of national and regional languages, including those less widely taught.

— to meet the needs of a multilingual and multicultural Europe by appreciably developing the ability of Europeans to communicate with each other across linguistic and cultural boundaries, which requires a sustained, lifelong effort to be encouraged, put on an organised footing and financed at all levels of education by the competent bodies.

The main educational tool in order to develop European standards in multilingual education is the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (2001). It is based in a broad concept of plurilingual and pluricultural competence (Ciekanski, 2005; Coste, Moore y Zárate, 1998). Whereas the traditional view of 'monolingual' communicative competence in the 'mother tongue' suggests it is quickly stabilised, a plurilingual and pluricultural competence presents a transitory profile and a changing configuration. Depending on the career path, family history, travel experience, reading and hobbies of the individual in question, significant changes take place in his/her linguistic and cultural biography, altering the forms of imbalance in his/her plurilingualism, and rendering more complex his/her experience of the plurality of cultures. This does not by any means imply instability, uncertainty or lack of balance on the part of the person in question, but rather contributes, in the majority of cases, to improved awareness of identity.

However, beyond language teaching, the CEFR is rather limited by its taxonomic nature. It describes in a comprehensive way what language learners have to learn to do in order to use a language for communication and what knowledge and skills they have to develop so as to be able to act effectively. This inevitably means trying to handle the great complexity of human language by breaking language competence down into separate components that interact in complex ways in the development of each unique human communicative competence. This confronts CEFR with psychological and pedagogical problems of some depth. In an intercultural approach, it is a central objective of language education to promote the favourable development of the learner's whole personality and sense of identity in response to the enriching experience of otherness in language and culture. It is left to teachers and the learners themselves to reintegrate the many parts into a healthily developing whole.

The CEFR provides a good background for multilingual teaching and learning, but leaves undefined the ways for the integration of the linguistic competences in a broader multicultural education context. Although, it recognizes that communicative existential competences are culture-related and therefore sensi-

tive areas for inter-cultural perceptions and relations, that knowledge, awareness and understanding of the relation (similarities and distinctive differences) between the 'world of origin' and the 'world of the target community' produce an intercultural awareness, that the ability to learn a language includes being disposed, to discover "otherness"' – whether the other is another language, another culture, other people or new areas of knowledge, and that all language communications between representatives of different cultures are affected by the sociolinguistic and pragmatic components of interactions and cultural environments in which linguistic abilities are constructed.

On the other hand, while an important body of theoretical knowledge about the objectives and conditions of multicultural education has been developed, the gap between academic research and educational practices and resources has been growing up steadily (Banks y McGee Banks, 2003; Díaz Aguado, 2003). Intercultural education remains much of the times a question of including information or contents about other cultures in the curriculum, keeping in the rest of activities a monocultural focus. Teachers in multicultural contexts face very complex problems and have insufficient training and resources to cope with them. The academic orientation of the field has focused mainly on human rights, tolerance and equality of opportunity, often ignoring the crucial role of linguistic competence in the construction of knowledge and in the teaching and learning processes.

Thus, from a multilingual theoretical orientation there is a claim that pluriligualism improves cultural identity, and from a multicultural theoretical orientation a claim that pluriculturalism improves communicative competence. On the contrary, from the practical view of teachers, the arising lack of cultural identity and of communicative competence in multilingual and multicultural school contexts may become insurmountable barriers.

From this point of view, European research in multilingual and multicultural education has three challenges:

— Integrate the research of multilingual and multicultural domains, increasing both the intercultural profile of language teaching and the linguistic profile of intercultural teaching.
— Bridge the gap between academic-driven research on the objectives of intercultural education, and problem-driven research based on the needs expressed by teachers in daily practice.
— Coordinate research within the European Research Area through partnerships, in order to address the problems in their broad complexity, and to avoid the fragmentation of research efforts.

The last one is a prior need, since integrating research and bridging gaps between academic research and school practice can only be addressed efficiently through well designed cooperative research policies and coordinated research networks. Educational scientists stand in the face of increasing demands for short-term, often action and policy-oriented forms of "expertise" that fit media and political expectations (Florence y Martiniello, 2005). The construction of the European Research Area and the new European Research Council provide a unique opportunity to coordinate and promote educational research on the hard core of European reality.

European research framework

From the beginning of the new century, European scientists, scholars and research umbrella organisations have been engaged in widespread discussions on the need for a structure at EU level to support fundamental research of the highest quality and combat the prevailing fragmentation of research efforts in Europe.

The ERCEG (2003) projected a strong and structured European research landscape with nodes of real excellence, pointing out that effective interfaces need to be established with the research bodies of the member states and with other national and European research organisations, as well as with universities and research institutes.

EURAB (2003) recognised that a new European impetus was needed to mobilise and maximise European investment in research and to attain a world-leadership position. The advisory board also considered that a European Research Council, covering all areas of science, including the humanities and the social sciences, would provide a central focus for integrating national programmes and, while drawing on the strength that diversity of national structures provides, reduce fragmentation.

Following the EURAB recommendations, the ERC should have to give emphasis to new integrative approaches combining different disciplines and so foster multi-, inter-, and trans-disciplinarity at the European level, and it should be the catalyst for rapid scientific progress in Europe becoming an essential part of the development of the ERA within the triad of education – research – innovation.

In the long term, the ERC looks to substantially strengthen and shape the European research system, helping universities and other research institutions gauge their performance and encourage them to develop better strategies to establish themselves as more effective global players. Ultimately,

the ERC aims to make the European research base more prepared to respond to the needs of a knowledge-based society and provide Europe with the capabilities in frontier research necessary to meet global challenges. From a societal perspective, the ERC should provide a mechanism for investing rapidly in research targeted at new and emerging issues confronting society.

In 2005, the European Commission proposed the establishment and operation of an autonomous European Research Council through the 'Ideas Programme' of the Seventh Framework Programme (2007-2013). The *Seventh Framework Programme* for research and technological development (FP7) (2007) is the European Union's main instrument for funding research in Europe. One of the key differences to earlier EU research Programmes is the inclusion of *Regions of Knowledge*, aimed at bringing together the various research partners within a region: universities, research centres, multinational firms, regional authorities and SMEs can all link up and strengthen their research abilities and potential.

Regions of Knowledge is one of the priorities of the Capacities program designed to help strengthen and optimise research abilities. Suitable participants would be 'Consortia of Regional research driven clusters or a single research-driven cluster having multinational partnership' - concentrations of research organisations (public research centres, universities, not-for-profit bodies), enterprises (large firms, SMEs), regional or local authorities (local government, regional development agencies) and, where appropriate, local entities such as chambers of commerce, savings banks and banks, operating in a particular scientific and technological domain or economic sector.

The Capacities Program also includes actions to enhance the effectiveness and coherence of national and European Community research policies and their articulation with other policies, improving the impact of public research, and strengthening public support and its leverage effect on investment by private actors. There is a need for further policy learning and for assessing good practices in support of research with regard to their transferability and methods of implementation. Through this action line, European platforms will be provided to share and validate good practices.

The European Commission (2005) for the first time explicitly explored the policy area of multilingualism in a *Communication* entitled: "a new framework strategy of multilingualism", reaffirming the commitment with multilingualism in the European Union, setting out the strategy to promote it, and proposing a number of actions stemming from this strategic framework. However, very little space is given to Research and Development actions and strategies in multilingualism, with a major emphasis to translation technolo-

gies and a broad reference to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Programme that comprises miscellaneous research on language issues in relation to social inclusion and exclusion, identity, political participation, cultural diversity and cross-cultural understanding. This includes questions of linguistic diversity, minority and regional languages, and language issues for migrants and ethnic minorities. As actions for multilingual society, it promotes the creation of chairs in fields of study related to multilingualism and interculturalism, and the support to language diversity networks through the new integrated *Lifelong Learning Programme*. Developing the academic field of multilingualism is one of the "Key areas for action in education systems and practices" where research into linguistic diversity could be complemented by networks of such Chairs, along the lines of the successful Jean Monnet action.

But nowadays, interdisciplinary and emerging areas of research serve mainly national interests, with scarce mechanisms for European level collaboration. European funding in most disciplines and in interdisciplinary areas, supported by an open and transparent international peer review system, is largely absent. Opportunities for critically important cooperation in basic research are not fully realized, as funding of projects involving collaboration across borders is difficult to achieve. The governing body of the proposed European Research Council (ERC) declared that its early strategy development "*should aim to learn from and complement existing successful national, European and international programs*" (ERA, 2006). Improving educational research in Europe, within the ERC and FP7 research policies, will necessitate in-depth studies of successful and best practice in the international context, particularly in the USA.

International best practices in educational research: the SERP Project

One of the priorities in the US Department of Education strategic plan (2002) was to strengthen the quality of educational research and to transform Education into an evidence-based field. In response, the National Research Council's Center for Education developed the report Scientific Research in Education (2002) to articulate the nature of scientific education research and set the foundation for future efforts in this area. One of the NRC related efforts is the Strategic Education Research Partnership (SERP), a bold, ambitious plan that proposes a revolutionary program of education research and development. Its purpose is to construct a powerful knowledge base, derived from both research and practice, that will support the efforts of tea-

chers, school administrators, colleges of education, and policy officials with the ultimate goal of significantly improving student learning.

For two years, a distinguished committee of leaders from business, education, and public policy engaged in a productive effort at The National Academies to conceptualize and design a new organizational structure capable of achieving an historic breakthrough in linking educational research and development, policy and practice. The committee's report, Strategic Education Research Partnership (2003), details a vision and strategy for launching a bold and innovative partnership. The SERP vision is that the field of educational research will become more productive, and more closely linked to both education policy and practice. Thus, SERP would dramatically change the knowledge and tools available to schoolteachers, administrators, and policy makers, and the conduct of education research and development.

The committee's proposal is designed to grapple with difficult issues of linking research with development, creating incentives for R&D focused on the problems of the classroom, and opening new opportunities for researchers and practitioners to work together in classroom settings. The plan addresses the need for coherence in the development and steering of a sustainable program and the need to work in school settings throughout the country on agendas that are responsive to the needs of those schools. The committee proposes a novel, long term funding structure that is a public-private partnership anchored by the contributions of a compact of states. The proposed compact provides the potential for stability that is critical to the success of R&D in any sector, but has never before existed in education.

The Strategic Education Research Partnership is intended to mobilize political will and financial resources, the power of scientific research, and the expertise of teachers and school administrators in a collaborative effort to improve student learning.

SERP is a program of "use-inspired" research, development and ultimately, the mobilization of proven practices. *SERP is an organization*, designed to provide the infrastructure to make a coherent and sustained research, development, and implementation program possible. *SERP is a partnership*, a broad coalition of the "powerful" partners most involved in the delivery of education. Its mission is expressed in four key objectives:

— Building deep and reciprocal connections between practice and research.
— Producing a research programs noted for coherence, quality, and the accumulation of useful and usable knowledge.

— Bringing together top talent for this collaborative work, and expanding future capacity in the research and practice communities; and
— Having impact on what teachers do, how schools operate, and foremost, on student learning.

SERP is conceptualized as an independent, non-profit organization that, in its mature state, will plan and steer a program of work carried out primarily in school-based "field sites" around the country, where scholars and practitioners are both present, so that the work of bringing disciplinary knowledge to the problems of classroom practice is the primary focus of the team rather than a supplemental translation activity. Snow, Treisman y Donovan (2005) presented the first proposal for establishing a SERP Field Site in the Boston Public Schools. The problem-solving terrain where research and practice intersect is highly fertile ground for better understanding both theory and practice. Work across field sites, research protocols, and data collection efforts will be coordinated from the beginning and planned in accordance with key SERP principles, so that knowledge can accumulate across projects and over time.

The SERP enterprise has been compared to the Human Genome Project, in the sense that it would represent a concerted effort toward a well-defined goal, would require and encourage collaboration across groups of researchers rather than the more typical competition, and could open up myriad possibilities for the improvement of practice.

A new research culture and new research partnerships in Europe

The European Commission has supported social science research collaboration with an educational dimension, but educational research in Europe is seen as fragmented and compartmentalised. National research councils recognize the need to internationalise their research as a strategic objective and to develop a new research culture and new research partnerships. One example of this has been the attempt to link the national educational research development strategies of Finland, France, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom (Brown, 2004). The intention is to facilitate progressive collaboration between research communities through: development of a cooperative decision making system; web-based knowledge sharing; cooperative analyses of best practice; joint examination of common policy problems and opportunities; and pilot implementation of new approaches to research training and dissemination. Additionally, another significant aim is

to lay the foundation for substantive and continuing transnational research in education, through the development of new and durable support arrangements for the funding of educational research in areas of strategic importance for individual countries and for Europe as a whole.

An action plan to promote linguistic diversity was delivered by the European Commission (2004) stressing the need for research on language development and dissemination of results and good practice to the people that can make use of them. The regions, towns and villages of Europe "are called upon to become more language-friendly environments, in which the needs of speakers of all languages are fully respected, in which the existing diversity of languages and cultures is used to good effect, and in which there is a healthy demand for and a rich supply of language learning opportunities" (p. 30). According to the plan the Socrates and Leonardo da Vinci programmes, and their successors, could play a greater part in promoting linguistic diversity by funding projects, but they are not oriented towards research. Just some key activities within the above mentioned *Lifelong Learning Programme* (LLP), like "Policy Co-operation and Innovation in Lifelong Learning" (Key Activity 1), include as an objective: "to promote the creation of research consortia and cooperation between European research institutes and researchers in the field" (European Commission, 2006). The "Languages" (Key Activity 2) supports Networks that will contribute to the development of language policies; promote language learning and linguistic diversity; support the exchange of information about innovative techniques and good practices, especially among decision-makers and key education professionals; adapt and disseminate products of former projects to potential end-users (public authorities, practitioners, business, language learners, etc.). All languages (European official languages and regional and minority languages, migrant languages and the languages of significant trading partners) may be targeted, provided that the proposed activities are relevant to European multilingualism policy, show a clear European added value and are additional to the work done at local, regional and national level). The decision acknowledges that the "Community is to take cultural aspects into account in its action under other provisions of the Treaty, in particular in order to respect and to promote the diversity of its cultures. Particular attention should be paid to the synergy between culture, education and training. Intercultural dialogue should also be encouraged" (European Commission, 2006, p. 47). Surprisingly, intercultural issues are mainly absent from LLP beyond global references to multilateral research groups and research in the field of European integration.

The European Science Foundation (ESF) was established in 1974 to create a common European platform for cross-border cooperation in all aspects of scientific research. With its emphasis on a multidisciplinary and pan-European approach, the Foundation provides the leadership necessary to open new frontiers in European science. Its activities include providing science policy advice (Science Strategy); stimulating co-operation between researchers and organisations to explore new directions (Science Synergy); and the administration of externally funded programmes (Science Management). The ESF's Social Sciences Unit aims to advance social sciences on a European level by supporting innovative research ideas and approaches driving from the scientific community (ESF, 2007). It includes the field of "Pedagogy and Education Research". In addition to the strategic efforts and in order to initiate international collaboration, the Social Sciences Unit is supporting several funding schemes on an annual basis, as the Research Networking Programmes (RNP) and the European Collaborative Research Programme (ECRP). These could be excellent frameworks to develop European partnerships in multilingual and multicultural research. The "TransEurope Research Network", could be a good model, providing an in-depth analysis of the development of transnationalisation and its effects on life courses in contemporary Europe, and including the role of European educational systems.

COST (2007), is one of the longest-running instruments supporting co-operation among scientists and researchers across Europe. It has close relationships with the ESF and the European Commission. COST now has 35 member countries and enables scientists to collaborate in a wide spectrum of activities in research and technology. It is an intergovernmental network which is scientifically completely self-sufficient with nine scientific COST Domain Committees. The Domain "Individuals, Societies, Cultures & Health (ISCH)" supports the development of knowledge and insights for citizens, democratic debate and decision-making in the public, private and voluntary spheres. By 2005 it had grown to support 18 current research networks ("Actions") which focus on various aspects of society, economy and politics; culture, communication and technology; development and behaviour of individuals; and cultural diversity and European integration. However, there are no actions related to multilingual or multicultural issues except for Action 33 **"**Cross-linguistically robust stages of children's linguistic performance", proposed to coordinate basic comparative research on first language acquisition in normally developing and language impaired children (COST, 2006).

The European Educational Research Association (EERA) includes a network on "Research Partnerships in Education". The purpose of this network is to support and conceptualize research partnerships in education in the widest sense. This encompasses: different disciplines, professions and stakeholders. The network emphasizes the comparison of partnerships models that are shared among all participating cultural groups and, in particular the issues raised by transferring models from one cultural group to another. Another network within the EERA is devoted to "Social Justice and Intercultural Education", and focuses upon social differences and social inequalities and their relationship to education. These might be in relation to culture, ethnicity, 'race', religion, gender, sexuality or social class. A key goal of the network is the active comparison of the ways these issues are conceptualised by researchers, practitioners and policy makers in different parts of Europe, considering the concept of intercultural education in different European countries as it is linked to each country's history, educational system and educational aims. A complementary network is devoted to "Research in Innovative Intercultural Learning Environments", dealing with cultural identity and diversity, multi-ethnic learning groups and communities, intercultural discourses and the role of inclusive intercultural education in promoting both the local identities of groups and a sense of common citizenship in Europe.

The Thematic Network on Teacher Education in Europe (TNTEE), funded by the European Commission as part of the Socrates/Erasmus Programme, includes a network on "Intercultural education on teacher education". It is based on the premise that differences in culture, in behaviour, in values and standards do not have to conflict. They can also lead to enrichment strengthening of a society. It considers essential to find new strategies for intercultural teaching and learning from early childhood to adult education in order to achieve this enrichment. Intercultural education has then to become an integral part of the curriculum at all school levels and of teacher education, providing: profound knowledge of social-cultural diversity; knowledge of the advantages and challenges of a multi-ethnic learning group; the necessary language intercultural communication skills; awareness of the differing historical background of the new inhabitants; undertaking of comparative studies of backgrounds, experiences, values and attitudes of majority and minority groups.

The European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML), created by the Council of Europe, runs international projects dealing with a variety of aspects of language education. They are primarily targeted at teacher trai-

ners, researchers and key multipliers in the language field. They aim at raising awareness, providing training and facilitating networks of mutual encouragement and support. The ECML's current programme, which runs from 2004 to 2007, has as its general title: "Languages for social cohesion: language education in a multilingual and multicultural Europe". It includes 22 projects in four groups corresponding to programme sub-themes, including "Coping with linguistic and social diversity" (VALEUR, ENSEMBLE, LDL, CHAGAL-Set up, LangSEN) and "Communication in a multicultural society" (ICCinTE, LEA, ICOPROMO, Gulliver) (ECML, 2007).

One of the most promising European partnerships in the field of multilingual and multicultural education is LANGSCAPE (2005), a network of researchers from various European universities. It intends to respond to the tendencies of linguistic, cultural, and methodological fragmentation in foreign language research by strengthening plurilingualism and diversity, and by giving special consideration to the social impact of mobility, migration, and gender as expressions of linguistic/cultural empowerment and integration. In order to provide for a balanced structure of the European language community and reflect its true geographical and linguistic diversity and range, LANGSCAPE's research and training mission is fourfold:

— Plurilingualism: LANGSCAPE itself operates as a plurilingual research community. It will use this expertise to develop effective strategies to counteract linguistic fragmentation by implementing its principles of plurilingual research, transnational doctoral programmes and professional training programmes.
— Networking Diversity: LANGSCAPE will expand and consolidate the network in a gradual 3-5 year process of integrating Eastern Central European partners (initial phase), and third countries and other associated partners (subsequent phase).
— Accessibility and Transfer: LANGSCAPE will make its international expertise accessible by sharing its results with local knowledge in research, education, and training.
— Building Excellence: LANGSCAPE will strengthen research consortia by creating strategically influential Centers of Excellence at national, regional, and local levels.

Concretely, LANGSCAPE will address the fragmentation of the research community by taking the following integrative measures:

— Establish goals and guidelines to promote plurilingual Networks of Excellence settings, such as the diversified use of languages in research, interaction, and the exchange of results;
— Establish a network for the exchange of experienced researchers and doctoral students and develop international PhD degree programmes (co-tutelle);
— Develop, implement and monitor guidelines and tools for language empowerment and gender mainstreaming in research and training;
— Develop and promote research methodologies including triangulation approaches and support transdisciplinary research and training by interfacing social sciences and language sciences;
— Research and develop guidelines for the implementation of plurilingualism in the environments of learning,
— Acquire, through online survey methods, evidence about experts' subjective constructions of the role of language in identity formation and cross-border communication; in this context, conduct a survey among experts concerned with language, language learning processes, and the forging of a plurilingual Europe.

The first International Langscape Conference (2006) was devoted to "Multiliteracy and the European Educational Agenda", considering that he global migration processes of recent decades have fundamentally changed European schools. Schools have long since become plurilingual and multicultural. It is stated, though, that plurilingualism and cultural diversity alone provide an insufficient basis for training young people for living and working in an increasingly globalized world and knowledge-based society. Monolingual and monocultural notions of literacy need to be transcended and the plural dimensions of social processes and discourses need to be taken into account. From this point of view, the Conference proposed three section programmes that could constitute an excellent framework for a European research partnership in the field of multilingual and multicultural education in Europe.

Section 1: Multiliteracy, identity and the European educational agenda

— What scope do the standards and competences of the European research agenda and its language policy define for the training of multiliteracy?
— Does the discussion on multiliteracy necessitate a re-evaluation or re-definition of the goals/aims and profiles of a European language and cultural policy?

— How does the acquisition of multiliteracy influence the formation of the socio-lingual identities of young Europeans?
— How do language acquisition and plurilingualism contribute to the formation of transnational and transcultural identities and of a (common) European identity?
— How do so-called "blended public spheres" (e.g. Internet-cafés) influence the socio-lingual identity of young people in Europe? To what extent do blended public spheres contribute to the emergence of a new brand of multiliteracy?
— Which notion of culture is compatible with the concept of multiliteracy outlined above?
— Which concept of multiliteracy can be used as a basis for the concept of a European identity?
— How can the results of learning processes in plurilingual student groups be measured on the basis of EU standards and competences? – Which assessment instruments are suitable for measuring multiliteracy?
— How does ICT affect the socio-lingual identity of young Europeans? – Which new forms of teaching do the dynamics of ICT-based learning require compared to conventional learning?

Section 2: Bilingual (CLIL) education and multiliteracy

— What are the multiliteracy-promoting effects of early content and language integrated learning?
— How does CLIL education contribute to preparing young Europeans for a life in a diverse Europe?
— To which extent do existing curricula for CLIL education account for the acquisition of multiliteracy?
— What is the current state of discussion between bilingual and monolingual subject-specific methods and methodologies with regard to training multiliteracy?
— Where can the concept of multiliteracy be located within the spectrum of foreign language learning and/vs. content and language integrated learning?
— How can multiliteracy be practiced in the classroom (models for classes, presentations, curricular fields, project descriptions, didactic designs of classroom situations)?
— How can multiliteracy be realized in plurilingual school settings – from elementary school to secondary stage education?

Section 3: Multiliteracy in the context of migration processes

- What role do languages of national/ethnic origin, the *linguae francae* of their countries of residence and other European languages play in the lives of young Europeans with migration backgrounds? – What attitudes do immigrated minorities develop toward the European languages they acquire?
- How does the new momentum of global migration to and across Europe affect the language use of the majority populations as well as their attitudes toward the languages of specific immigrant groups?
- What does EU policy offer in terms of concepts to manage migration-related plurilinguality? – Which multiliteracy factors take effect here?
- How do young people from European backgrounds and migration backgrounds construct their concepts of Europe? – Which new and hitherto undiscovered multiliteracy factors can be pointed out and described?
- What shape do the language acquisition biographies of young people from migration backgrounds take? – Are there any cultural factors that determine language acquisition styles and strategies? – What role do the new media (especially ICT) play in the language use of immigrant minorities?
- Which approaches to or profiles for the development of a methodological curriculum for language teaching in plurilingual and multiethnic learning contexts do already exist?
- How can learning environments be created that are suitable to training multiliteracy? – What demands does the training of multiliteracy make on the methodology of language teaching and language learning?

Conclusion: European integration should include integration of research

Many European programs and projects stress the need for information about education policies and studies, and there is an Information Network of Education in Europe (Eurydice, 2007), created in 1980, and that since 1995 has also been an integral part of Socrates, the Community action programme in education. However, Eurydice's general aims are mainly devoted to releasing comparative information on education systems and policies throughout Europe. Besides preparing basic and readily comparable general

information on education systems, the Network has carried out work on several issues, including foreign language teaching and school measures for the children of migrants.

A recent comparative study released by Eurydice on Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) at school in Europe (2006) is the result of a new framework strategy of the EU, regarding multilingualism at the very heart of European identity. EU initiatives in the field of CLIL have increased in recent years. Underlying them is the belief that young people should be more effectively prepared for the multilingual and cultural requirements of a Europe in which mobility is expanding. Except for the UK, where the scope of pilot projects about CLIL is extended to broader more research-oriented considerations, the projects have been scarce and considerably fragmented in terms of bodies responsible for funding and management. The country where the projects are best coordinated is Italy, where they are runt and funded by regional education authorities, university faculties, and regional institutions for research into education working alone, in partnership or on a closely coordinated basis, with the existence of projects initiated by schools.

Multicultural education has been surveyed by Eurydice in the context of Integrating Immigrant Children into Schools in Europe (2004). Again, the lack of integration is evident. Just a few countries such as the UK and The Netherlands have developed programs that include skills in intercultural education clearly specified at the central or top level for inclusion in initial teacher training. Support measures for immigrant pupils have been put in place in almost all European countries, generally on the basis of a twin strategy. First, the education systems of those countries support acquisition by the pupils concerned of at least one official host country language so that they can integrate more effectively into the host society and be educated more easily. Secondly, support may also be concerned with ensuring that the same pupils remain proficient in their mother tongue and responsive to their own cultural heritage so as to maintain firm contact with their culture of origin. However, very few references concerning multicultural and multilingual objectives in the projects and policies of the different countries are included. We find a very revealing note in this work, about the integration of multilingual and multicultural education: “The development of multilingualism is regarded as an aspect of intercultural education in certain countries such as Belgium (in the German-speaking Community), the United Kingdom (Scotland) and Poland. However, it is not considered as such for purposes of this comparative overview, even though foreign language skills may have a

positive impact on intercultural relations. On the other hand, where foreign language lessons include aspects of the culture of countries in which the languages concerned are spoken, they are regarded as an integral part of the intercultural approach" (Eurydice, 2004).

In conclusion, Europe is rich in cultures and languages, and also in educational initiatives. Several European institutions support and promote partnerships in the field of multilingual and multicultural education to avoid fragmentation, but in most cases they are not oriented towards research. However, European integration depends heavily on strategic research in this field. This means there is a challenging need for common policies in education -regarding the integration of languages, cultures and curricula- that should be supported by research conducted in the framework of international and multilateral partnerships.

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