EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Education and Culture
Culture and Communication
Multilingualism Policy

The main pedagogical principles underlying the teaching of languages to very young learners

Languages for the children of Europe

Published Research, Good Practice & Main Principles

Final Report of the EAC 89/04, Lot 1 study

October 2006

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To exceptionally dedicated men and women
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To all of the above, and to all of those who generously responded to our information search by completing questionnaires or other forms and by participating in discussions and informal conversations, we are happy to acknowledge a great debt of gratitude. At the same time, as authors of the report, we accept responsibility for its contents, and we hope it will prove to be of interest to a wide readership, drawing both on those who already possess an interest in and commitment to ELL and on those who may not specialise in this field but who are seeking information based on evidence.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. **The present report arises from the Lot 1 tender of the European Commission (EAC 89/04, April 2005)** in respect of the teaching and learning of modern languages in the case of very young children across Europe. Four main outputs were specified:

   i)   a review of research,

   ii)   a practical description of good practice;

   iii)   a description of the main pedagogical principles underlying the teaching and learning of languages;

   iv)   an assessment of the consequences of these pedagogical principles.

2. **The initiative is set against the background of the *Action Plan for the promotion of language learning and linguistic diversity* (2003)** and other documentation of the European Commission which strongly recommends the teaching of modern languages to young children. This serves not only to develop their proficiency in languages but also to help them acquire a wider sense of belonging, citizenship and community, and to develop a clearer understanding of their opportunities, rights and responsibilities as mobile citizens of a multilingual Europe.

3. **The main focus is on teaching of languages for fairly brief periods of time per week** beginning at varying points in children's pre-primary or primary school education. At the same time other models of the languages curriculum for young learners were taken into account, such as initiatives based on developing a broad awareness of language, languages and cultures and also initiatives incorporating bilingual or partial immersion through the medium of an additional language.

4. **The report sets out a selection of key background information on early languages learning across Europe.** This includes variables such as the spread of the initiative, official or unofficial starting age, extent to which it begins, teaching of two additional languages, number of years given to early languages learning, extent of participation, languages choice, the rise of English as dominant language of choice, profile of teachers (e.g. generalists or specialists), parental involvement, critical voices. The picture emerging is one of enormous variability across the EU as a whole.

5. **The information on research was collected** by the project team with strong support from a small group of experienced and expert researchers drawn from various parts of Europe who met with the project team and also prepared and submitted a large amount of evidence in the form of summaries of research reports considered to be potentially useful. It was found that some areas of potential interest were covered but others less

so, and consequently it was decided to draw on research conducted elsewhere in the world if this added some new insight which might be appropriate to European circumstances.

The information on good practice was based on an initial literature search which led to the development of a general questionnaire and a description sheet for recording instances of good practice. With strong support from existing networks, the instruments were disseminated to experts in each member state. When the information had been analysed, a validation meeting took place involving the project team and four experts.

The information on pedagogical principles arose from an initial map which was constructed from the initial data on research and good practice. Pedagogical principles in early language learning are difficult to grasp because they are underlying or stated as kind of formula at the beginning of curricula. The task therefore consisted in making them explicit and assess their importance – what are the main principles? Following the drawing up of a first map there was then a further identification of evidence from policy documents in a number of different countries, leading to a pre-final set of principles. Experts on research and good practice were consulted and over thirty educationalists. Finally, a two-day seminar took place attended by five leading educationalists which assisted with the eventual elaboration.

6. **Key messages from the published research are**:
   i)   advantage of an early start;
   ii)   provided there is a supportive environment and continuity from one year to the next and into secondary schooling;
   iii)   initial motivation seems mainly to be intrinsic, with some initial ideas found on how this might be developed and extended;
   iv)   value of taking account of languages which children access in their own locality;
   v)   children considered to progress through a sequence of stages in their internalised language development, at differing rates;
   vi)   key learner characteristics associated with eventual proficiency seem to be motivation and aptitude, the latter to be viewed not as fixed but as capable of development through primary school education, especially in the area of meta-linguistic awareness and sensitivity to sound;
   vii)   value of helping children progress beyond prefabricated utterances, and some initial evidence on how this might be achieved;
   viii) importance of providing feedback to children which may be positive (encouragement) or may be corrective, to help them further refine their underlying language system;
   ix)   value of introducing reading and writing at an early stage, rather than concentrating solely on listening and speaking;
   x)   value of helping children to think strategically in order to monitor and regulate their learning, with strategy-training desirably being recurrent rather than one-off;

xi) recognition that in their spontaneous play young children show a tendency to notice and play with and practise features of linguistic form as well as meaning,

xii) suggesting the onset of implicit meta-linguistic knowledge – something on which classroom pedagogy at primary school should desirably build; value of stories not only because of appeal to children's imagination but also because they help children acquire a narrative discourse structure;

xiii) potential value of technology-mediated learning and –use, though at present relatively little evidence of this on the ground;

xiv) importance of finding ways of countering negative effects of low socio-economic status;

xv) language-related outcomes are strongly dependent on the particular model of languages education curriculum which is adopted;

xvi) the evidence strongly suggests that the desirable early languages learning initiatives across Europe could not prevail if left only or mainly to schools and individual teachers.

7. **The findings on good practice show clearly** that a large and invaluable amount of activity is taking place in respect of i) creating the conditions for good practice at transnational, national, local and individual levels; ii) preparing students and teachers for good practice in teacher education; iii) supporting and exemplifying good practice through the creation of a languages-friendly environment at school and through a range of teaching techniques and materials; iv) disseminating ideas on good practice and language teaching to a wider audience. These include ideas for raising the profile of early languages learning in the public and political mind. From the widely varying evidence, it is clear that good practice does not by itself constitute one conceptual methodology, but is better viewed as a repertoire of measures on which teachers can draw as appropriate.

8. **The pedagogical principles reflect the findings on good practice and research but also reflects underlying philosophical values** such as citizenship and respect for others. Of the interpretations of pedagogical principles mentioned earlier, two proved useful in making sense of the evidence which had been obtained. These were: i) pedagogical principles in the sense of 'aims for' or 'reasons behind' the early learning of languages, e.g. 'to help develop the multilingual potential of every child by activating the language acquisition mechanisms that young children still possess'; ii) pedagogical principles in the sense of 'maxims for action'. These maxims tend to be expressed at a greater level of abstraction than the more specific ideas on good practice and probably reflect underlying assumptions, e.g. 'take into account children's learning strategies and learning styles'. It has to be kept in mind that, referring to the main principles underlying early language learning, it is always about the proportion of which a principle is related to early language learning. The main underlying principles are in a few cases different from general language learning, in most cases not. For the very young learners it should be very important to learn with all their senses. In language learning for all the learners

or even adults the multi-sensory aspect is important, but is not as important as for the very young ones. Early language learning is driven by focussing on and putting in a bigger proportion of for example holistic learning or multi sensory learning.

9. **Four main models of languages education which seem to be in operation**: i) roughly one hour per week for teaching a particular language, mainly based on given course-book and other material; ii) as for i) but with a more flexible syllabus based to some extent on relating the modern language to other aspects of the curriculum,. e.g. science and geography, but still within limited time provision; iii) a language awareness model, not dealing with one additional language alone but instead giving access to a number of languages and cultures, in order to develop underlying qualities such as meta-linguistic awareness and intercultural sensitivity; iv) provision of increased time and intensity in the form of bilingual or partial immersion education. Model iv) yields the highest level of target language proficiency but is unlikely to be generally applicable. It seems highly desirable that ways should be found of combining the unique advantages of models ii) and iii) in particular.

10. **From the above analysis of research, good practice and principles, the following positive features** seem evident: i) enormous variety of worthwhile activity; ii) continuing evidence that generally pupils' attitudes and motivation are strongly positive; iii) in many cases, substantial involvement at national level in early languages learning; iv) central role of the teacher, with many inspiring examples.

11. **At the same time, a number of areas have been identified in which further development seems essential**, if the highly commendable policy of early languages learning is really to work successfully at a general level. These are: i) need for much better balance between variety and coherence, with at present variety being dominant; ii) only limited evidence is available as to the precise nature and eventual outcomes of different models of the languages education curricula that are actually being implemented, and as such great difficulty in making judgments as to effectiveness and improvement; iii) very little strong evidence on how children's internalised language development actually takes place; iv) strong need for more information on actual processes of teaching and learning rather than simply on good practice tasks and activities; v) more evidence needed on how the benefits of 'language awareness' and 'language learning' may be combined rather than viewed as being in competition; vi) desirability of knowledge on increased collaborative contacts for children, in order to stimulate new forms of motivation and hence raise levels of proficiency; vii) need to collect more information on teacher education, particularly at the pre-service stage, and to support this more strongly in order to ensure an adequate and continuing supply of teachers; viii) need to learn more about children's motivation for learning and using languages, in order to find ways of ensuring that this grows and becomes more multifaceted as they progress through their primary school education; ix) need to publicise further examples of good practice in ensuring continuity between primary and

secondary education, in order to elaborate a variety of models which might be applied successfully in different contexts.

1.   INTRODUCTION

Considering that early language learning programmes spread dramatically throughout Europe 15 years ago, and that these could draw on previous experience, one might wonder why the implementation of something that was backed by political will has taken so long. Brigitte Millet of the French Ministry of Education (IA-IPR) provided subtle perspective for all those involved in this fascinating field of study: 'We've come a long way in just a little over ten years. What are ten or fifteen years, taking into account such a change in education and this historic decision [...] to introduce a foreign language in primary school, i.e. for all children.' (pour le Salon de l'Education, 22nd November 2003, speech quoted at europschool.net).

1.1   Rationale for the Present Study

The European Commission, in the *Promoting Language Learning and Linguistic Diversity: An Action Plan 2004-2006* (2003), has expressed its intent to extend, consolidate and develop the early learning of one or more foreign or additional languages in each of the EU member states. No one has formulated their raison d' être as succinctly as Ján Figel', the European Commissioner for Education, Training, Culture and Multilingualism. At the presentation of the new Eurydice report on foreign language learning (2005) he said: '*In an enlarged and multilingual Europe, learning foreign languages from a very young age allows us to discover other cultures and better prepare for occupational mobility.*' On the 22nd of November 2005, the European Commission published a Communication (number 596) dealing with multilingualism to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. This official document identifies early foreign language learning as an important area of action. It also restates issues from the *Action Plan 2004 – 2006* (Communication 2003: 449, II.1.3), i.e. offering another language at an early age is not inherently advantageous, but can only be effective if teachers are trained to work with very young children, classes are small enough, the learning material is adequate and sufficient time is allotted in the curriculum. Children's enjoyment, their openness towards other languages and cultures and their linguistic development must all be worked for and not simply left to chance. This viewpoint is confirmed by some studies (Blondin, et al. 1998; Edelenbos & de Jong, 2004) that also clearly illustrate that much must still be done to transform the potential benefits of early language learning into real gains in each of the EU member states.

   The Commission Working Paper *Progress towards the Lisbon Objectives in education and training* (March, 2005) outlines the strategy and steps to take through 2010 in order to make education and training systems in Europe the best in the world, and includes a chapter devoted to foreign language teaching. Two aspects of this working paper are directly

relevant to a study offered for tender in April 2005 (EAC 89/04, Lot 1), 'The main pedagogical principles underlying the teaching of languages to very young learners'. First, there is a large target audience for such insight into the main pedagogical principles of early language learning, as the current teacher age profile suggests that around 1 million teachers are needed in Europe. Secondly, present educational statistics do not sufficiently cover organisation, content or good practice. As stated in the working document, current indicators (i.e. the number of pupils per class) do not deal with the core aspects of early language learning: learning, materials, teaching methods and quality.

1.2   Specification of the Domain

Early language learning can take on many forms. In most cases, of course, children's first language will be their country's official language. An additional language at primary school will likely be either another official language or a foreign language. The term first language may carry a wide range of meanings, in that many children speak a social, regional or cultural variant of their first language that is very different from the language in its most standard form. Overall, the languages involved may be (Johnstone, 2000, 188):

- an official language of the country (possibly the majority language);
- another official language of the country;
- an indigenous heritage language that does not have an official status;
- a more recent, non indigenous minority heritage language that has no official status, and;
- a foreign language.

This definition has a subtle inner logic and at the same time excludes several types of languages. It rejects a one-dimensional concept of early language learning in which the focus is on foreign languages such as English, French or German. Instead, it is an attempt to provide a broader scope and richness of information. The umbrella term 'languages' is chosen on purpose, as it includes regional and minority languages, and improves on the more exclusive term 'foreign languages'. This makes it possible for the study to incorporate insights obtained from bilingual education, which has grown significantly over the past two decades and provides a rich source of information for scholars and practitioners (Doyé, 1997; Peltzer-Karpf & Zangl, 1996). Furthermore, the study can draw from experiences of teaching a second official national language, for instance teaching Irish in Ireland (Harris & Murtagh, 1999).

The choice for a particular early language learning model is determined by a combination of key factors: the 'time' available for language learning, 'perceived and realised intensity', 'material and financial input', 'starting age', 'social and geographical settings', as well as the 'language competence of the teacher'.

This study focuses on early language learning in Europe that conveys belonging, community and citizenship, and asserts the role of languages in helping children to

understand and assume corresponding rights and responsibilities. 'Europe' is a concept larger than that of any child's nation state, and languages are signified as a means for helping children cross boundaries, both within the European Union and beyond to other parts of the European continent.

1.3   Research, Good Practice and the Main Underlying Principles

There have been several initiatives to start early language learning programmes in a number of countries: some of these initiatives have been genuinely pedagogical, while others were motivated by the optimum-age theory, research, or politics, such as the kindergarten teacher exchange program between Germany and France that began in 1968. Whatever the motives were, surely all of these initiatives attempted to use adequate methods. The language laboratory was once seen as a way to anchor language in long-term memory; games and songs have played a central part in a number of approaches in various countries. The concept of leading a child through the zone of proximal development was influential in methods that built on Russian psychological texts. When the upsurge of early language learning began in 1989, there was already a strong base of knowledge and experience. Some universal principles, e.g. using age-appropriate methods, were adopted into the new curricula of the 1990's and in discussions among educationalists. On the other hand, as the starting age was lowered, newly derived principles were meant to distinguish the primary classroom from what existed before, namely the secondary foreign language classroom. While these principles seemed to generate consensus, at a deeper level differences existed and still exist between interpretations of seemingly identical terms (Komorowska, 1997), and the weight given to certain approaches and methods varies. For example, the principle of 'child-orientation' might be adhered to throughout a number of countries, but its interpretation and consequences vary. Similarly, whether the general principle of openness to the other culture should be obtained within the foreign language classroom, or through a programme aiming at language awareness, depends heavily on national or regional interpretations. These two examples make it clear that principles are fundamental points of orientation for professionals in educational contexts. They are maxims for action, which, in a defined scope, claim permanent validity for every concrete situation. Being of a generic nature, pure and pristine, they can be applied in a wide variety of circumstances.

The European Commission's Directorate General for Education and Culture has commissioned a study focusing on the main pedagogical principles underlying the teaching of languages to the very young. The diversity of early language learning throughout Europe and the differences at a conceptual level were not to be underestimated, necessitating the inclusion of a description of good practice and a review of research into early language learning. These two complementary activities aim to better trace, clarify, compare and describe the pedagogical principles in their relevant socio-cultural contexts. In addition, the review of research can be seen as a sorely needed update on the Blondin et al. report from

1998. The description of good practice serves one major purpose: a homogenous, high-quality description of a range of initiatives leading to good practice can help all practitioners and scholars understand the beauty of teaching languages to very young children.

1.4 Topics for Study

The specifications laid out by the European Commission (EAC 89/04, Lot 1, April 2005) identify four main outputs:

Review of Research

1. Review of main research in the field, in Europe and elsewhere, since 1999

The review of the main research undertaken is a prerequisite that influences the study in many different ways. The review should provide an update on the existing body of knowledge (see for overviews Driscoll & Frost, 1999, Edelenbos, 2003; Johnstone, 2000, 2004, Kubanek-German, 2001 & 2003a), as well as cover published or forthcoming research that has appeared since 1999. In this way it can be seen as a follow-up on the report by Blondin et al (1998). Lastly, the review should shift the focus to the influence available research has on the underlying pedagogical principles of early language learning.

Practical Description of Good Practice

2. Practical description, with examples, of good practice in a) organisation, b) classroom practice and c) teacher training

This specification is aimed at collecting, categorising and presenting examples of what is considered by professionals to be 'good practice', even when these have not been investigated by research. They may include a country's official recommendations for good practice, i.e. suggestions teachers may feel obligated to comply with.

Description of Pedagogical Principles

3. Description of specific pedagogical principles that underlie the teaching of languages to very young learners

This activity aims to identify as clearly as possible the pedagogical principles underlying the foreign-or-additional language teaching of children and to develop an understanding of their relative importance. Principles are mentioned briefly or extensively in European curricula, and often implicitly guide teacher behaviour. Therefore, once a certain number of years of implementation have passed, it is necessary to discover which principles are actually adhered to. Also, their meaning needs to be interpreted with reference to societal factors, provision factors, individual -group factors and to their consequences. Once identified, these principles must be presented to a broad audience, and their existence and importance must be validated. Ultimately the process should garner insight into what may be called 'the main underlying pedagogical principles for early language learning and teaching'. Key pedagogical principles can be identified based on empirical research and professional judgements about 'good practice', and should be annotated with descriptions of relevant contextual factors.

Assessment of Consequences

4.   Assessment of the consequences of the principles for a) organisation, b) classroom practice and c) teacher training.

After the core principles are identified, this section should outline the implications for key stakeholders such as national authorities, schools and teacher training colleges. These can be categorized as implications specific to organisations, classroom practice and teacher training.

2.   BACKGROUNDS

Early language learning has expanded since the Blondin et al report (1998). Early language learning for children is increasingly common, and the majority of parents and the public do not see it as superfluous or overburdening children. On the other hand, it cannot be assumed that all teachers work with a spirit of enthusiasm that accompanies a new and exciting subject, as was perhaps often the case in the 1990's. Other topics emerge, for instance a new impetus to develop scientific thinking, or to teach mathematics in ways which appeal to different learning styles.

2.1   Basic Facts on Early Language Learning

In 2005 the new Eurydice report on foreign-language learning was published, bringing together data from 30 countries. (Key Data) Eurydice provides a wealth of detailed and comparable information on language learning, especially early foreign language learning, in all member states of the European Union. Here, a synopsis of the report is provided in order to generate a coherent image of early language learning throughout Europe. Details about education in the mother tongue, other official languages and indigenous minority languages are not included in this chapter. These important descriptions can be found in the Eurydice report on Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) at School in Europe (2005)[1] .

Spread

The most important statistic is that approximately 50% of primary pupils learn at least one foreign language, an increase since the end of the 1990's. To explain this increase, the report points to educational reforms in Central and Eastern Europe, Spain, Italy, Denmark and Iceland. A second foreign language in primary education is now compulsory in four countries (Luxembourg, Estonia, Sweden and Iceland). In 2003/04, the year most data was retrieved, most member states expected that all pupils would have to learn at least one foreign language. All learners in that year were obliged to start in primary school, with the exceptions of Belgium (the Flemish speaking community outside Brussels), the United Kingdom and Bulgaria. Both Bulgaria (2003/2004) and the Flemish community in Belgium (2004/05) recently made a primary foreign language obligatory; in June 2005, Portugal's legislation still stated that English is extracurricular, but as of 2006 is becoming compulsory.

Official Starting Age

In some countries the first foreign language is compulsory from Year 1, as is the case in Luxemburg, Malta, and Norway, Belgium (German-speaking community), Germany (Baden-Württemberg), Italy and Austria. In some Spanish Autonomous Provinces the starting age is

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[1] 194.78.211.243/Doc_intermediaires/analysis/en/teaching_**foreign_language**s.html

even lower. Schools can choose the starting age in some Spanish Autonomous Provinces, Estonia, the Netherlands, Finland and Sweden. In Estonia this is limited to between 7 and 9, in Sweden between 7 and 10.

Pre-Primary

A survey in the key statistics, 2005, about the situation in the school year 2002/03 identified Spain as the country making the most effort to start a foreign language at the kindergarten stage (age 3). In the German-speaking part of Belgium, a regulation introduced in September 2004 requires early language learning activities to begin at age 3.

Two Languages in Primary Education

Two foreign languages are compulsory in four EU states (Estonia, Luxemburg, Sweden and Iceland). In Finland, classes taught in the second official language are considered foreign language classes, in this sense there could be two compulsory languages. In Luxemburg, children begin learning French and German in Year 2; these languages are official languages but are called 'foreign' in the curricula.

More than the Required Minimum

In Poland, the reform regulations from 1999/2000 enabled school heads and school boards to increase the minimum hours per week. In Finland, schools are strongly urged to offer a foreign language as a non-compulsory subject to pupils aged 10-11.

Number of Years of Compulsory Foreign Language Learning in Primary Education

The general trend is to start earlier and offer more years of foreign language teaching. Between 1994 and 2003 the average number of years with at least one compulsory foreign language increased from 8,4 to 9 scholastic years (p. 27, Key Data 2005). Over a longer time-span (from 1972 to 2003), several states increased the number of years by 2 or even 4 or more years. An increase of 4 or more years (measured over 30 years) occurred in Spain, Italy Austria, Sweden and Norway, all due to lowered starting-ages. In Central and Eastern European states there had been a tradition of starting very early, especially in the Baltic States where Russian was compulsory from an early age but was not called a foreign language.

Participation

The data used for the statistics in the key figures are from a source published in 2004 (Eurostat, New Cronos, May 2004, cf. Key Data, 2005, p. 39, illustration C 1). The data were gathered in 2001/02 when, in many states, 50% or more of primary pupils learned at least one foreign language. In Luxemburg, 80% learned two or more foreign languages. In Estonia, Finland, Sweden and Iceland at least 10% learned two or more foreign languages, a figure that does not include those that took extracurricular language subjects. The three measurements 1997/98, 1999/2000 and 2001/02 indicate that the number of pupils learning

a foreign language clearly increased in several countries: in Central and Eastern Europe, in Denmark, Spain, Italy and Iceland. Romania is the only country where a slight decrease is noted. However, this picture has changed since the commitment of Romania to the EU's 2010 targets. The percentage of pupils learning a minimum of two foreign languages increased in the Czech Republic, Estonia and Luxemburg.

Language Choice

The data from 2001/02 clearly show the dominance of English as a foreign language in primary education. An exception is the choice of German as a primary foreign language in the Czech Republic, the Baltic States, Hungary and Poland and Slovakia. In Luxemburg it is an official language learned by 99% of pupils. French also features highly in Luxemburg (82%), in Flemish Belgium where it is the most taught foreign language, and in Romania (26%).

Increase in Early English

Between 1998 and 2002 the number of young English learners increased. In Spain and Austria this number jumped from the 1999 levels (already high at over 70%) by yet another 10 and 20 percent, respectively. In Italy the number of young English learners increased by 30%, due to a younger starting age. There is also an upward trend for English in several Central and Eastern European states: In Lithuania, Poland and Bulgaria the number of young learners doubled; in Slovakia, which had the lowest figures in 1999, there was a six-fold increase.

Teacher profile

In 2002/03 about half of the primary foreign language teachers were generalists. One obvious finding for that year was that there were very few concrete regulations requiring teacher training students to study abroad. Only specialist teacher training students in Luxemburg were obliged to go abroad.

Processes in the Classroom

Seeking indicators for classroom processes, the authors of the key data report used the relative priority given to the four basic skills. The report uses data from 2002/03. The term 'four skills' does not appear in the curricula in three countries (Greece, Ireland and Finland). In other countries priority is either given to listening and speaking or to all four skills equally. Developing reading as a skill is only mentioned in the curricula of French-speaking Belgium, the Netherlands and Romania. Possible explanations for this are the vicinity of Flemish and German in Belgium, the exposure to English in the Netherlands and the linguistic relationship between French and Romanian. There is a ratio of 10 countries that focus on listening/speaking to 17 in which the four skills are given equal priority.

Time for Learning

The minimum amount of time devoted to learning a primary foreign language remained relatively unchanged between 1992 and 2002, with primary school children receiving 30 to 50 hours of contact time. Overall there was little deviation: the lowest figures in 2002 were found in Lithuania and the highest in Malta, which has over 150 contact hours (however it should be noted that English is an official language in Malta).

Variability

Variability is a key characteristic of the practice of ELL . Many of the problems associated with ELL are related to provision factors, such as class-size, amount of continuing professional development support for teachers, availability or otherwise of appropriate materials, amount of time made available and teachers' L2 proficiency. There are also societal factors such as the degree of exposure to the L2 outside the school, including the proximity of native speakers, the degree of political willingness and availability of national funding, societal attitudes to particular other-language groups and of course individual/group factors such as gender, social background, ethnicity, attitudes, motivation, anxiety, strategy, cognitive style and first language (majority or minority – if the latter, then the child may be learning an L3 as first foreign language). Also, variation must be taken into account in the learning outcomes, i.e. not only proficiency in the target language but also the child's development of self (cognitive, intercultural, interpersonal, physical, etc), the child's further learning and the child's links with home and local community.

Parental Pressure

It is within reason to state that parental pressure has helped foster the expansion or faster implementation of ELL , more so than with most other subjects at school. Parents were already asking kindergartens to provide modern language lessons in the 1990's. Having paid private tuition fees, parents would lobby for bilingual programmes. The consequence has been, at times, a faster implementation than expected because authorities reacted to parental pressure. Similarly, parents' desire for external validations of achievement is driving an increase in testing. In 2000, an estimated 150,000 children sat the UCLES Test for young learners (Cameron, 2003, 105).

Criticism

Early language learning also has its critics. Although the general public supports teaching other languages (see the Eurobarometer 243), it cannot be claimed that the spirit of the Barcelona Agreement has spread evenly. There are debates in some countries over whether the national language will suffer from early language learning. What is certain is that if the early learning of one or more additional languages is to achieve large-scale success, teachers will need a great deal of support in developing their knowledge, understanding and classroom approaches.

2.2   Continuing from the Baseline Study: Blondin et al. (1998)

Blondin, Candelier, Edelenbos, Johnstone, Kubanek-German & Taeschner (1998) divided their review of research into two major categories. The first dealt with research related to contextual factors at the level of society, schools, teachers and individual learners. The other category included research that revealed outcomes of foreign language teaching in primary and pre-school education. These studies dealt with communication in a foreign language with a meta-linguistic awareness, cultural awareness, the development of meta-linguistic aptitudes, attitudes, self-confidence, curiosity and interest, perceived language status and language choice. A summary of the main facts that could be established is provided below.

Societal Factors: Exposure

Blondin et al. (1998) begin by stating that the extent to which pupils are or are not 'exposed to a foreign language outside of school' facilitates or hinders children's foreign language development. Exposure is linked to the place and status of the language in the pupils' community, their neighbouring communities or in the media. Two types of interventions were envisaged: by increasing out-of-school exposure (essentially through the media and increasingly the internet) to the language chosen for instruction, or by taking into account existing levels of exposure to particular languages in choosing which foreign languages to teach. In both cases, the action envisaged may possibly serve to reinforce the dominant positions of particular languages. It is somewhat of a platitude, but time has already caught up with this statement. The amount of exposure to the target language has been increased in several countries, and Internet use (especially e-mail, conferences and web-sites) is playing an important role.

Societal Factors: The Role of National and Regional Infrastructure

A national or regional infrastructure can play a positive role in supporting innovation and associated research (see also Doyé & Hurrell, 1997). In the past, the quality of support infrastructure varied among different countries which were at various stages of development: in some it was satisfactory but in others inadequate or even highly deficient. A common trend in these earlier initiatives was to provide adequate, sometimes excellent, infrastructure during the pilot phase but to reduce the level of support at crucial points during general implementation throughout the country, sometimes even changing the basic parameters of the infrastructure. This is done despite the fact that the generalisation phase is one in which intervention is essential, increasing the need for adequate financial support.

Societal Factors: Parents' Involvement

None of the empirical studies analysed in Blondin et al. (1998) dealt with the effect of 'parental involvement' in the specific domain of foreign language learning at school.

More general research suggests that parental involvement is important, especially regarding the understanding of school objectives.

School Factors: Continuity

Discontinuity has a negative effect on pupil performance. Unfortunately, none of the studies available pointed clearly to educational variables that might enhance continuity. Although the discontinuity between primary and secondary education takes on different forms throughout Europe, Blondin et al. (1998) identified five elements which most situations have in common: a) a communication gap between staff (managers and teachers) involved in primary and secondary education; b) a lack of fine-tuning and compatibility between aims, at several intermediate stages; c) differences in approach, in topics covered and in linguistic insight; d) reluctance among secondary schools to acknowledge the learning that has taken place at the primary level; and e) shortcomings in initial teacher education and in providing teachers' continuing professional development to address the problems mentioned above. While 'discontinuity' is a well-established phenomenon that can affect all or most of a school's curriculum, it can have a particularly negative effect on a child's foreign-language development. Most evidence suggests that the interim and slowly developing competence a child has in a foreign language is fragile, and that it is difficult to transfer this from a familiar environment to one that is unknown and very different. Blondin et al. (1998) conclude that effective intervention is both possible and highly desirable in each of these domains.

School Factors: the Time Factor

The report clearly highlights the importance of the amount of time allocated to learning a foreign language. Indeed, the 'time factor' seems to be most the reliable predictive classroom-related factor for explaining differences in pupils' foreign language learning (Edelenbos and Johnstone, 1996). The current situation is characterized by considerable variation both in respect to the amount of time allocated to foreign language learning each week, the frequency and duration of lessons and their overall quantity and distribution throughout pre-primary and primary education. The opportunities for intervention regarding the total amount of time are limited, as children's timetables are full and any increase devoted to languages is perceived as being at the expense of other subjects. Any limitation on time will affect each of the four language skills - listening, speaking, reading and writing - but our review strongly suggests that the mode that suffers most is speaking (even in countries where children are most exposed to a foreign language through various media). If pupils are to develop creative, fluent speech with reasonable accuracy and breadth, then substantial time must be allowed. However, some empirical studies in our review suggest another course of action, i.e. to make more effective use of the time given. One study showed that the specific effect of 'time of learning' was clearest only in combination with other contextual factors related to the quality of teaching. Also, the effect of increasing the time devoted to languages has been shown to slow once above a certain number of hours,

while other studies suggest that the distribution of time into shorter, more frequent lessons yields better results.

Teacher Factors: Command of Language and Knowledge of Approaches

Empirical research points to several 'teacher factors' that testify to the importance of teacher education both

- Directly in respect to the command of the language (particularly their oral command) and their knowledge of children's language development, and also
- Indirectly through the knowledge that certain approaches can achieve better results. This however presupposes that teachers who have received appropriate training and support are capable of planning for and coping with change, continuing innovation once the first wave of success of a particular approach wears off, and self-evaluation.

It is worth noting that the two aspects are closely related: the new methodological approaches outlined in Chapter 5 (and partly mentioned in chapter 4) all involve interactive language use between teacher and pupils. This is only possible when the teacher is sufficiently confident and fluent in the language. Moreover, in addressing different children's needs and their diverse and evolving interest, it is important that teachers are able to spontaneously and flexibly draw from a range of different themes rather than rely on language they have more or less learnt by heart for dealing with routine or predictable situations. For now, the tendency is to allocate pre-primary and primary foreign language lessons to teachers who specialize in teaching at these levels. There are many arguments in favour of this, and the research reviewed confirms the efficiency of this approach, as long as the teachers have received adequate preparation for the specific task. In contrast to their colleagues in secondary school, primary school teachers are generally not specialized in a foreign language and its education. Therefore they have very important training needs, whether these relate to enhancing their initial teacher training or the language skills they acquired when at school. At the moment, these needs are far from being met: in most countries that have opted to generalize pre-secondary teaching of a foreign language, there is too little support for training a sufficient number of teachers with the appropriate level of language competence, effectively cancelling out the prospect of success.

Again, Blondin et al. (1998) conclude that this is a domain where positive intervention is possible, but only if the means are made available. It is also worth noting that hiring specialist language teachers who have been trained to teach at the secondary level does not eliminate the need for training. In these cases it is important to train the teachers in the pedagogy of pre-primary and primary education and the didactics of language-learning at a young age.

Learner Factors: Abilities and Backgrounds

With regard to specific 'learner factors', empirical research shows that a child's general level of verbal ability plays a determining role in learning a foreign language. 'General level of verbal ability' is an umbrella concept, and lacks coherency in the literature. In empirical

research it is often an intelligence score; sometimes it is used in reference to other psychometric indicators or to children's performance (i.e. high, average and low). Verbal intelligence scores and performance in learning a foreign language usually share a positive correlation. Despite the fact that these correlations vary considerably, it is reasonable to conclude that 'general verbal ability' has a strong influence on the results of foreign language learning.

Some empirical studies show that a lower socio-economic background correlates with lower results, whereas a different ethnic background and the accompanying bilingualism tends not to constitute a handicap and can even have a positive influence on a child's performance in the foreign language.

There is also evidence of a 'gender' factor, and while this does not appear to be a great cause for concern, in some contexts it may be important to focus on differences in attitude and performance between boys and girls. Where 'general verbal ability' and 'socio-economic background' are concerned, the problems are more deeply rooted: educational systems should make it possible for all children to receive adequate and appropriate education, in particular by reducing educational inequalities.

Learner Factors: the Optimum Starting Age

Empirical evidence has not yet definitively established an 'optimum age' for starting a foreign language. An early start offers a longer overall period of learning and has the potential to influence children's personal development when they are still at a highly developmental stage. However, an earlier start means an in increase in the importance of continuity from one year to another. On its own, an early start is unlikely to make a substantial difference. These chances will improve if an early start is accompanied by quality teaching from teachers who have developed the required range of knowledge and skills.

Other Insights: Effects on Diversity

Regrettably, no empirical studies have concerned themselves directly with the effects of introducing a foreign language during pre-primary or primary education on the diversity of languages that are offered. It was noted nonetheless that various indicators suggest these effects are negative: in most countries primary and pre-primary schools are smaller than secondary schools, and starting a foreign language at these levels can lead to a narrower selection of foreign languages. Moreover, an earlier start in learning a foreign language can reinforce that language's position, which is generally already dominant, and thereby increase the disequilibrium.

Other Insights: the Need for Commissioned Research

In their attempts to gather reliable and validated empirical data, Blondin et al. (1998) noted how few research projects there were in this field, and how little they varied, whether they focused on the results of pre-secondary education or on the factors that might influence these results. The research effort, then, has not matched the level of public interest or that

of politicians who act as educational decision-makers. This applies not only to research based on evaluation studies but also to research that has analysed the process of acquisition and learning, as well as that which covers new and developing didactical approaches.

Moreover, given that many important questions about the role of particular contextual factors remain unanswered and that many educational authorities have faced difficulty in providing the basic conditions for success in foreign-language teaching in primary schools, it is necessary to warn against over-reliance on one particular formula for offering a foreign language in pre-primary education. Research has a vital role to play in promoting a spirit of critical reflection that challenges dominant views. At the same time, complementary routes must also be explored, for example those drawing from modes of imaginative thinking or problem solving.

Other Insights: Provision and Miracles

European citizens should be able to understand people speaking languages other than their own. In some favourable situations children are well equipped to learn to speak and to understand one ore more languages: those who grow up in bilingual families often become near-native speakers of both languages, and pupils who are educated in a school where a language other than the mother tongue is the main language of instruction will, under certain conditions, become very fluent.

However it is also important to provide the much larger number of children in more common situations the opportunity to acquire a worthwhile level of proficiency in one or more foreign language. While studies of early foreign language learning have not revealed any negative effects on pupils, it is undoubtedly true that over-ambitious or inadequately planned and resourced initiatives can frustrate parents, teachers and possibly pupils. This is especially the case with ELL, as the notion of learning a foreign language tends to generate ambitious expectations in the first place. Blondin et al. (1998) have shown that success is dependent on a range of factors, and that miracles cannot be expected.

2.3   Good Practice: Coming to Terms with a Concept

The key question for early language learning is: How can quality be created, maintained and improved? Quality emerges from the interplay between positive external conditions, instruction and insight into children's language learning processes. The current situation for early language learning is still marked by the changes in the early 1990's, when substantial efforts were undertaken across Europe. The question of quality is subdivided into the following:
1.   Has the work carried out been effective? (Accountability)
2.   When is practice 'good'? (Interpretative and judgmental processes)
3.   What are the indicators? (Anchor points for description and comparison)

4. How can improvements be made? (Following policy lines, e.g. Action Plan for Languages)

'Good Practice' as a Dynamic Concept

Good practice occurs in specific social circumstances. The underlying concepts are socio-culturally embedded within a society and at an international level, and therefore subject to change. Political events have had a direct impact on ELL. When the Sputnik shock led to a wave of support for ELL in the United States, it was part of a larger effort to improve the education system and avoid lagging behind the Soviet Union; competition between political systems motivated change. The fall of the Iron Curtain changed the world of primary foreign language teaching and learning in two ways. First, the small field, with just a few devoted teachers and authorities, quickly became part of a priority topic in EU educational policy. Second, there was a new drive for European co-operation with a particular emphasis on language learning. The great number of children involved means the organisation is vitally important – but this occurs at a level hardly perceived by the individual teacher aiming to deliver quality instruction. Apart from taking the fundamental political change into account, there are other dynamics:

- Change within a school versus in a region or a country, linear or varied
- The types of agents of change and their specific roles
- The direction of change: top-down, initiatives at the school level, initiatives by the individual teacher, through networks
- Geographical transfer of ideas via exchanges, conferences, political events (like the fall of the Iron Curtain, which led to a an influx of Western European concepts into the former communist states)
- Similarities and differences between concepts of good practice and quality across foreign languages, but also across subjects in primary education.

The Teaching Process Cannot Always be Planned

In every specific scenario of instruction, be it in a regular classroom or in an encounter with the target language, quality is the result of a complicated process of negotiation. A simple feedback model is not adequate, as it relies on the idea that aims are set, and the achievement of the aims can be measured against such aims. It assumes a 'learning institution' and the controllability of processes towards better practice. The limitations of such a model can be demonstrated by one example taken from encounter programs for children: teachers expect learners to use and practise the target language, but the desire to communicate may drive the learners to resort to English. As this small example shows, there are various moments when the teaching process cannot be planned. Because of this, divergence must be accounted for and integrated into the concept of 'good' in an established or emerging practice. When assessing quality, it must be clear that learning achievements cannot be produced like a teacup or a hammer in a factory; rather, the achievement occurs through the construction of meaning by the learning subject who reorganises and augments

his knowledge and experience base (Lenk, 2001). Therefore, one can state that it is <u>likely</u> that learning occurs under such and such conditions, in the arranged situation of education, but not that it will definitely occur to an expected degree. Guidelines for good practice can be given, and are given, but there is no automatism, and they are no guarantee for success.

The Perspective of the Child versus a Systemic Perspective
Good practice can be rephrased as child orientation. This concept, however, has two perspectives:

'good' early language learning – from the perspective of the child	'good' early language learning from the perspective of the educational system
Examples of aspects to consider:	Examples of aspects to consider:
Meaningfulness of a lesson or topic for the child	Amount of teacher training
Coherent development of sense in individual lessons, and throughout the year ('Spannungsbogen')	Content of teacher training
Contribution of each lesson to the individual language acquisition process	Budgets available (time for learning, financial resources)
Quality learning for the individual child with his /her strengths and weaknesses	Motivation of teachers
	Quality assurance
	Monitoring of change

Semantic Analysis and Connotations
'Good practice' as a term originated in business studies, designating a smooth flow and efficiency of work and production processes. It is therefore different to a pedagogical sense of 'good', the way a layman or teacher or student might interpret it at first sight: a good relationship between teacher and pupils, a teacher who explains well, a teacher whose pupils achieve high marks. This second image of 'good' puts the individual teacher with the class into the foreground, whereas in business studies it denotes a smoothly running organisation.

'Good' is a deceivingly simple term to use. It is a value judgment with a private and professional dimension. In the manifold documents studied for this report, the terms 'quality', 'good', 'good practice', 'best practice', 'effective educational practice' were found. It seems that that term 'good/best practice' is used more often in papers with an Anglo-American background, and is not as common across Europe. The UNESCO series on educational practice uses the term 'effective'.

The term 'quality' has two main interpretations:

- Quality in the sense of property: a descriptive level
- Quality in the sense of an implied value judgement

The term 'best practice' was identified in two contexts. It is used as a comparative to 'good practice'. In educational research it can have a specific meaning: in a large study on learning achievement, for example, the consistently best classes are identified and there is a retroactive attempt to find the reasons for success (features of the teachers, teaching methods) (Helmke, 2003/05). In ELL, the European Language Label given to pre-primary and primary projects gives the impression that they constitute best practice. However, this would be misleading because often the label is given to innovative projects, whereas classes and schools described as best practice in school effectiveness research are within the mainstream. Second, in ELL, the European Language Label is often given to schools in border regions or in other special circumstances.

Private and official concepts of good practice merge: it remains the task of each individual to retrace how his or her judgment about what is good practice and quality has been formed. A hermeneutic analysis of selected literature about young learners (curricula, EU documents, articles in journals) was conducted, revealing the variety of connotations and pointing out the overlap between teacher belief, experience belief, official knowledge, political desirability, academic insight and pedagogical vision.

Connotations and their Argumentative Patterns

From the child's perspective, offering a foreign language in primary or pre-primary education is good because it is developmentally appropriate - it is in the nature of a child to be open to languages. This is a neurobiological 'window' that must be made use of, as the potential for learning a language is highest at a young age. Also, children are entitled to an education that helps them reach their individual potential. A different perspective is taken if the focus is on outcomes, where there is the element of accountability. This second line of thinking is to connect quality and good practice to children's actual language use in authentic situations (language put to use). However, there are several caveats. The A1 descriptors of the CEF (= Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) are not refined enough; countries have different standards they want to set for a primary foreign language: perhaps they do not want to set attainment targets that can be tested. At the classroom level, the emotional quality of the lesson itself needs to be considered. At the context level, quality at the classroom level and, accordingly, the results, depend on the provisions in terms of teacher training, material, and support structures. If the focus is on outcomes, tested

outcomes and certificates, it might lead to an assessment industry, parents sending their children to private schools and a gap between rich and poor. It depends on the weight and function of the assessments: whether they are part of normal activity, for determining professional careers, used by school inspectors to improve the educational system, etc. Yet another perspective is taken if one considers that ELL has value as cultural education. The content should help the children understand the world, as well as improve their knowledge and study skills. More recent documents are, for example, official guidelines in France and Portugal (2005). The document with the most enduring influence is probably the 'Nuernberger Empfehlungen' from 1993, 2nd ed. 1997, a guide for German as a foreign language in primary schools, drawn up by teachers and the Goethe Institut. This document begins with the question, 'Which topics are meaningful for the child?' and seeks to build language learning around these. The reports of the European Commission and the Council of Europe understandably follow a model that is 'expansionist'. Both the Eurobarometer (winter 2005/06) and the Eurydice report (2005) implicitly ask: How many more competent speakers of foreign languages are there? Is there an expansion downward (early start, start in pre-primary)?

The Knowledge Base for Good Practice

Good practice in early language learning is discussed by a diverse range of groups: policy makers, curriculum writers, textbook authors, parents, teachers, educational theorists, teacher trainers and their students, empirical researchers, journalists, etc. The children form their own ideas of 'a nice lesson'. Children learning languages also feature in novels (e.g. Hugo Hamilton, The speckled people, London 2003; Maxine Hong Kingston, The woman warrior, 1976). Therefore there is an abundance of implicit and explicit ideas of what good practice is and should be. The discussion of programme types (ranging from immersion to systematic language courses, playful introduction and language awareness) is one indication, with others being the discussions of the relative merits of various methods, the linguistic competence of teachers, continuity, and the relationships between linguistic and intercultural aims. In short, there are several ways in which good practice can be identified. The survey employed here largely draws on current evidence. Given the enormity of potential material, an expert approach was necessary. Examples were collected directly from experts in the various countries covered in the study. Possible sources for knowledge about good practice are:

1. Collecting examples from educationalists who are well-informed about the national situation
2. Feasibility study and ex post programme evaluation
3. Direct observation of model teachers
4. Democratic participation (cf. Special Eurobarometer, 243): asking citizens about the best approaches and places of learning
5. Proficiency tests

6. Long-term evaluation, e.g. effect of primary language learning or intercultural learning in primary school on teenagers
7. Asking schools to report what they perceive as good practices
8. Asking individual teachers about their best ELL lesson
9. 'Fertilising' good practice by giving incentives and evaluate effects
10. Interviewing children after 1 or 2 years of ELL (e.g. topics which motivate them, how they memorize, how they would teach, how they would design a textbook)
11. Asking teenagers to look back at primary school and record their suggestions for improvement
12. Portfolios
13. Change in material conditions and study effects
14. Ethnographic research
15. Case studies, e.g. big city provisions, or best practice in very isolated areas

Indicators of Quality and Good Practice from Educational Research

Educational studies (cf. Helmke, 2003 / 2005) have deduced a number of indicators of good practice. A very influential list of indicators is presented in the educational practice series of the International Academy of Education, a Unesco-related institute, Brophy, 2000, www.ibe.unesco.org

1. A supportive classroom climate
2. Opportunity to learn
3. Curricular alignment
4. Establishing learning orientations
5. Coherent content
6. Thoughtful discourse
7. Practice and application activities
8. Scaffolding students' task engagement
9. Strategy teaching
10. Co-operative learning
11. Goal-oriented assessment
12. Achievement expectations

Another widely cited model is from Slavin (1997) and comprises four important factors:

1. Quality of instruction
2. Appropriate levels of instruction
3. Incentive
4. Time

Classroom management and time on task are two decisive factors in instructed learning. According to Kounin, indicators of good classroom management are: 'With-it-ness', overlapping (doing routine activities like incidental media use, without giving it too much attention and continuing to teach content), momentum, smoothness, group focus, managing transitions and avoiding mock participation.

A model of six 'explanatory blocks' suggested by Helmke (2003/2005, p.42) refers to effective instruction at the class level:

1 Teacher personality	2 Teaching / instruction as process	3 Individual predispositions of learners, cognitions, ways of

6 Class context, Academic context	5 Effects of instructed learning	4 Learning activities (time on task and extra-curricular learning)
		understanding, motivation, perception and interpretation of the instruction

Other supporting factors mentioned are: the quality of teaching materials, diagnostic competence, individual support, explaining to learners why a certain content is worth learning, the learner's perception of quality and of good teachers, and teacher beliefs. The list of supporting factors could be written up in an if-then model: if they occur, or the more they occur, the better the learning outcomes. In their sum, these conditions represent an ideal.

2.4   Pedagogical Principles: A Profound Concept

Current EU Policy Context

The EAC 89/04 tender requested a study into 'The main pedagogical principles underlying the teaching of languages to very young learners'. The European Commission introduced the concept of a pedagogical principle into educational policy with the 2004 – 2006 Action Plan *Promoting Language Learning and Linguistic Diversity*. The Commission Working Paper *Progress towards the Lisbon Objectives in education and training* (March, 2005) outlines the strategy and steps to take through 2010 in order to make education and training systems in Europe the best in the world. In the Special Eurobarometer 243 'Europeans and their languages', published in February 2006 (full report, English), chapter 3.1 uses the term 'principle'. Citizens were asked if they agreed with the five 'key principles' related to EU policy about languages. In the same section, the expression 'idea behind…' is used as an alternative to 'principle'. The five principles are:

* EU citizens should be able to speak one language in addition to their mother tongue
* All languages should be treated equally
* Everyone in the EU should be able to speak a common language
* EU institutions should adopt a single language for communication
* EU citizens should be able to speak two languages other than their mother tongue.

As can be seen, the five principles represent both vested policy and ongoing policy issues. 'All languages should be treated equally' is EU policy (the protection of minority and lesser used languages) whereas the other four are expressions of ongoing discussions. The m+2 formula is the goal, and the principles regarding whether one or two additional languages should be taught aim to display the level of acceptance for each formula. This degree of public acceptance may affect the priorities for early modern language teaching, if taken into account by policy-makers. The other two principles refer to the influence of English. Given the positive response to the Eurobarometer question about whether to start at a young age (see chapter on background), the questions about these principles might be seen as raising the topic to a higher level of abstraction.

In the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, published in 2000, the term 'principle' appears in chapter 1 (Political and Educational Policy Context), specifically in 1.2: The language policy aims of the Council of Europe. Three basic principles, it is stated, guide the work of the Council of Europe:

- to protect the rich heritage of linguistic and cultural variety;
- that only via better proficiency in modern European languages will it be possible for citizens with different mother-tongues to interact, so that mobility is enhanced and, instead of being an obstacle, variety can be a source of enrichment and mutual understanding;
- that European cooperation of the member states will lead to a greater convergence of political measures.

Clarifying the Concept

Pedagogical principles are the fundamental points of orientation for professionals in educational contexts. They are maxims for action, which, in a defined scope, claim permanent validity for every concrete situation, be it in pedagogical practice or in educational science as one type of societal practice (Handbook on Educational Science, (2004, p.122). They are more general than didactical principles which are oriented towards an action and exclusively refer to teaching / learning. Didactic principles seem to provide a feasible number of orientation points for the very complex field in which practising teachers work.

According to Castillow (2004) an important characteristic of pedagogical principles is that they are pure, pristine, and packed with pedagogical power. With their generic nature, they can be applied to a wide variety of circumstances. For example, *learning is facilitated when the instruction demonstrates what is to be learned rather than merely telling what is to be learned.* Pedagogical principles are also very pragmatic, in that they synthesize a rich set of practical, instructional experiences and can be used to deal with new practical problems.

Grimmitt (2000) takes the concept of pedagogical principles to a very abstract level, defining them as substantive hypotheses or statements about teaching and learning. Pedagogical principles facilitate the process of devising pedagogical strategies which, in turn, determine how pupils will experience, engage with and respond to content. Ideally, pedagogical principles should first be expressed in generic terms and then in terms specific to the actual learning environment. Thus, pedagogical 'strategies' are the more concrete actions designed to implement pedagogical principles and thereby fulfil or contribute to stated aims. Pedagogical principles are more important than the pedagogical strategies, because the principles are transferable and invite teachers to invent their own pedagogical strategies for implementing them.

Commingling of Principles and Objectives

The meaning, scope and applicability of pedagogical principles have always been a serious topic in curriculum theory and in the philosophy of education. Therefore it comes as no surprise that the differentiation between 'educational principle' and educational goal or aim or objective is not always clear. Landwehr, as early as 1980, identifies pedagogical principles as the highest general educational aims, because general aims take the form of practical principles. Sosniak (1994, repr.2005, p. 1803) states that there is a 'commingling' of principles and objectives. He notes that statements of principles, as an alternative to lists of objectives, appear to be growing in popularity in educational programmes. Because the terms principle and objective are sometimes used interchangeably, it seems correct to refer to some educational objectives in order to further clarify the concept of a pedagogical principle. For Sosniak, objectives can be understood in two ways. The first is as pre-defined sets, with much time devoted to the pre-defining. In a 'naturalistic' approach to educational planning, on the other hand, they can be regarded as a platform from which one moves forward. The most common use for carefully stated objectives is to satisfy administrative or bureaucratic concerns, while their form can change from long lists to a few consistent principles focusing on the most important goals. Statements of principles can serve educators as a reminder of the values embedded in decisions about objectives (aims) and activities. A pedagogical principle has a pragmatic dimension (praxis), and a normative dimension (to do it right, to do it in such a way that ensures quality).

In philosophy of education, pedagogical principles are discussed as value principles which describe norms and ideals (values) for the learners. They are 'indispensable' to educational inquiry. Since the suggestions made by educational philosophers can carry influence for generations, it is vital to rationally justify or critique of educational aims. There are five types of justification: logical, legal, empirical, discursive, and ethical.

One voiced criticism is that principles are just formulas or slogans. While all books for teacher training at the primary level have sections on principles for teaching children, the authors rarely state where the principles come from or how they operate: unique hits in major databases never exceed 100 references. However, handbooks use pedagogical principles or principles of good instruction as clarifying concepts (Helmke, 2003/05; Pienemann et al. 2006, Nieweler, ed., 2006).

Pedagogical Principles within the Process of Ongoing Change

A pedagogical principle is influenced greatly by national, cultural and contextual circumstances (Sosniak 2005). Kubanek-German (2003a) observes that pedagogical principles are changing within a complex process of enduring educational innovation, itself due to societal change. Change occurs through a democratic dialogue or is enforced. The rationales for pedagogical principles change over time. During periods of innovation, pedagogical principles are refined and adapted based on experience. This occurs through the perception of day-to-day viability and the influence of the market, competition between authorities, research, parents and new societal developments such as ICT.

A pedagogical principle is expressed at different levels, from the very abstract down to the micro context of individual teacher beliefs that form the basis for his/her planned and spontaneous classroom action. Classic writers such as Humboldt, Dewey and Montessori formulated epoch-transcending Western pedagogical principles, some of which mirror a political consensus. For example, a political consensus looks to preserve Europe's cultural richness, as expressed in The European Charter of Regional and Minority Languages. In the Special Eurobarometer quoted above, this is expressed in the statement 'All languages should be treated equally'. The content of this general ethical principle and how it affects education, in this case language education at the primary level, is developed from the top down in a dialogue with experts and educationalists. The Eurobarometer questions can be seen as a parallel democratic validation through direct participation.

Aligning Pedagogical Principles with Learners

Pedagogical principles should be aligned with the personality of a learner and cognition. From there, one derives and expands didactical concepts, giving teachers a manageable number of points of orientation. The next step involves making methodological changes and consulting psycholinguistic insights to bring the principles closer to the process of instruction and language learning on a day-to-day basis.

Lesson plans can be derived from general principles, but contextualisation is necessary. Two examples show how a principle can lead to different lessons[2].

Principle	Lessons to be derived
Encourage active learning	1. Pupils should present projects 2. Pupils should interview speakers of the foreign language
Communicate high expectations	1. Provide challenging tasks 2. Praise for quality work

A general (pedagogical) principle is reduced to a simple statement, which in turn has an impact on actual classroom instruction. However, it should be kept in mind that it is never one isolated principle but several principles together that have this impact. Secondly, very general principles, for example 'education should be child-oriented' have an impact through sub-principles such as 'taking into account age-related types of learning styles'. In textbooks for children, pedagogical principles are implicit and can be deduced through textbook analysis. The accompanying teacher handbooks generally present evidence of the authors' underlying ideas and convictions.

Pedagogical Principles and Teachers

During initial teacher training, students become acquainted with principles both in their general courses in education and in seminars on the methodology of foreign language teaching. They discuss implications and learn to plan lessons that apply the principles that underlie language teaching in their country. They also observe model teachers and can come to understand what putting a principle into practice means. Depending on how they are trained, 'principles' may be discussed explicitly or in the context of their transformation into aims, methods and psycholinguistic insight. For example a seminar session could deal with motivation and the principle 'Language learning should motivate children as well as maintain their motivation'. Motivation would be explained from a psychological perspective, recent research might be presented and students would be asked to develop concrete lesson plans for safeguarding young learners' motivation. It should be noted that teachers are not necessarily fully aware that they apply principles, as the principle has already become a teacher belief, perhaps of a deeply internalised, implicit nature. Principles, for practising teachers, become a topic

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[2] http://kitkat.wvu.edu:8080/files/4296/Zhang_Jinsong_dissertation.pdf

for discussion when something new occurs. For example, teachers may be confronted with new curricula. But in day-to-day practice, teachers might not necessarily state the principles that guide them or the precise objectives they want to achieve in a particular lesson. Some teachers will not have the time to ponder objectives, whereas for others the objectives may be so integrated into their thoughts on particular subjects or activities that they are not externally visible (c.f. research on teacher beliefs Brophy et al, 1998, Woods, 1996). Of course, a pedagogical principle can have a direct impact at the practitioner's level. However, these principles are stated at a higher level and do not guide teachers' minute-to-minute conscious decision-making.

3. METHOD

Forms of early language learning vary greatly throughout Europe, and the differences at a conceptual level are enormous. The study of the pedagogical principles can be improved with a description of good practice and a review of research into early language learning. Each section of the report focuses on one activity and can be read independently.

3.1 The Review of Research

Purpose

The study's first product is a review of the main research in the field, in Europe and elsewhere, since 1999. The review of research is a prerequisite that influences the project by adding to the existing body of knowledge. The year 1999 was chosen so as to complement the 1998 review of research concerning foreign languages in primary and pre-school education by Blondin, Candelier, Edelenbos, Johnstone, Kubanek-German & Taeschner. In this way, the cohesion and continuity of reviews of research are secured. The present study shifts the focus to the influence available evidence has on underlying pedagogical principles and the organisation of foreign-language teaching, classroom practice, and teacher training. The full load of available research in this field is reviewed, with a twofold purpose:

1. To collect research on early language learning, especially on 'good practice' across member states of the EU and (where appropriate) elsewhere in respect to modern foreign languages (main category in pre-primary and primary education)

2. To produce a consolidated report that brings together key findings and, where possible, draws links between good practice and particular outcomes e.g. attainments, proficiency and motivation.

Different types of research have been sampled. Some studies are based on a positivist ideology, while some are more interpretive or phenomenological; some are quantitative and others qualitative; there are ethnographic studies, and those opt for a mixture of approaches; some of the studies are the work of experienced teams conducting large-scale policy-related research, while others consist of localised research (e.g. for an individual PhD). In the Blondin et al. (1998) study this diversity was welcomed and there was no a priori preference for one approach over the others. In the present text, each published study has been examined, first of all on its own terms and in relation to its own context, aims, approaches, findings and recommendations, and secondly by considering how it fits into the bigger picture.

Procedure

A number of activities were undertaken to acquire publications. Some of these were:

1. Identifying high-quality research published in each member state, associated country or elsewhere via well-established databases such as ERI and PSYCHLIT.

2. Obtaining research publications not written in English, French or German. Often, these publications are neither easily available nor accessible to an international audience because of the language they are written in.

3. Synthesising the research publications into practical and scientific overviews, analogous to the annual reviews by Johnstone (2000 ff).

The international research was collected and processed by the three project leaders and a team of six expert researchers. The national research was collected, summarised and sent in by a contact in each member state. With the research publications and the summaries in hand, a group of six researchers met to discuss the findings. A preliminary inventory, consisting of abstracts of the research studies found so far, was sent to the participants.

3.2 Developing the Description of Good Practice

Purpose

The description of good practice has two main purposes.

First, to collect and categorise examples of what is considered by professionals to be 'good practice', even when this has not been investigated in research. These may include a country's official recommendations for good practice that teachers may feel obligated to follow. Such contributions are welcome and will be distinguished from notions of 'good practice' taken directly from practitioners through our own inquiries.

Second, to elaborate on similarities among different member states' notions of good practice and aspects that seem specific to particular situations (both observations being equally valuable).

Procedure

The sub-chapter on the concept of good practice and quality was developed in tandem with a search for examples and their classification. A normative approach, i.e. classifying the examples according to pre-determined conditions for success, was one option. However, this would be inappropriate for both epistemological and ethical reasons: the authors would assume the position of arbiters over countries and initiatives they do not and could not possibly know first-hand. Furthermore a normative approach would probably lead to an unbalanced outcome i.e. some positions are overstated and some countries would not be covered or only to a limited extent.

Instead, a realistic picture of ELL was sought through the principle of triangulation (Guba, 1978), where different sources and perspectives are combined. The procedure thus comprised several instruments and moments of reflection, validation and renewed data gathering. The first step was to carry out a major literature search, and the information gathered led to the development of two instruments; a) a general questionnaire and b) a description sheet of realisations of good practice. The outcomes of the questionnaire were discussed with experts at a validation meeting. In addition to this there were informal consultations with experts throughout Europe.

The questionnaire and the description sheet were sent to each of the national representatives from the Goethe Institut as well as to experts within the networks of the three key researchers. For the general questionnaire quality indicators were taken from official and academic literature. For the description sheet, a rather detailed explanation of what might constitute good practice preceded the actual description sheet sent out to the informants. The general questionnaire aimed to retrieve information on the status quo regarding provisions, educational principles and assessment, and was sent to one or two experts per country. Their responses were descriptions of what happens in the field. The examples sent in complied with the criterion of <u>relative stability</u>, meaning that the measures or initiative described were sent in with the <u>accordance</u> of the teachers. Often, the initiatives described by the informants involved large groups of teachers. The authors used available materials to add to the information provided by the respondents, and the resulting sum applies to large numbers of children, teachers and audiences.

3.3   The Main Pedagogical Principles

Purpose

The study's third product is a description of specific pedagogical principles that underlie the teaching of languages to very young learners. The principles must be clearly identifiable, i.e. they must be grounded in empirical research and professional judgements of 'good practice' that are meaningful and accessible to classroom teachers. The fourth product is a discussion of the implications of the main pedagogical principles for key stakeholders such as national authorities, schools and teacher training colleges.

Procedure

A provisional map of pedagogical principles and any contextual factors which seem to be associated with them was drawn up in consultation with research colleagues (product 1), and the agencies and experts in the field (product 2). The map of

pedagogical principles was then extended and refined with more systematic reference to sets of principles from countries such as Germany, Holland, Denmark, Scotland, Italy, Greece, Hungary and Bulgaria. The product is a preliminary set of pedagogical principles. This set consists of political, socio-cultural, psycholinguistic, didactical, methodological and pedagogical principles. The complete set was submitted to two groups for discussion. The first group, made up of five research and agency partners, met during a two-day seminar. The set of principles was discussed in relation to the descriptions of good practice with five representatives. The second group consisted of high-profile educationalists and educational policy makers from various towns, regions (local and border), national governments and supra-national organisations. A total of 56 persons were addressed and asked to cooperate in this project.

The second group was sent a questionnaire that integrated the set of pedagogical principles. On the whole, this questionnaire was designed to obtain a mixture of quantitative and qualitative data. It would have been impossible for any of the experts (from the EU, EFTA, Bulgaria and Romania) to answer questions without background information, so examples and locations of each of the principles were provided. The questionnaire consists of five parts:

1.   Three essential questions about the professional backgrounds of the person a) profession, b) responsibilities and c) the perspective used when answering the questions (i.e. country, state, province, area, border, selected schools or project)

2.   Three questions about a) the motives for introducing early language learning, b) aims and c) discrepancies between blueprints and final versions

3.   Selection of the main principles underlying early language learning in his or her country (6 – 8 maximum), assessment of the importance of the selected principles (single type of Likert type of rating scales)

4.   Assessment of the 6-8 principles for a) organisation, b) classroom practice and c) teacher-training

5.   Assessment of concrete manifestations of principles i.e. whether these pedagogical principles could be translated into teaching hours, classroom management, teaching materials, amount of time to be spent on teacher-training, etc.

The complete questionnaire can be found in appendix 1. The results of the survey were presented in tables and overviews during a 2-day seminar attended by five educationalists.

4. PUBLISHED OR FORTHCOMING RESEARCH STUDIES

There is a welcome increase in the number of studies coming from central or eastern Europe, indicating in some places a highly developed research scene for early languages learning.

Not only European research is incorporated, but also to a greater extent than in Blondin et al. (1998) global research, e.g. in the USA, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Australia. The great majority of studies are located in Europe, and no claim is made to have covered comprehensively the global scene for early languages learning.

4.1 Introduction

This part of the report covers published or forthcoming research studies which are concerned with early languages- learning. The corpus on which is drawn for present purposes is impressive. Compared with the 41 studies which formed the core of the Blondin et al. report (1998), the present corpus consists of over more than 100 studies. To a greater extent than in Blondin et al (1998), published research is incorporated that extends beyond the fairly narrow confines of a modern language as a discrete subject or curricular area. Increased prominence is given to forms of early languages provision which entail an increase in 'time' (possibly arising from an earlier start) and increase in 'intensity' (learning aspects of other curricular areas through the medium of the target language). The reason for this is it seems evident that the early languages learning scene has 'loosened up' somewhat and that a somewhat greater variety of models of provision are now being attempted. No claim is made, however, to cover the 'immersion' or even the 'partial immersion' scene fully. A number of projects have been chosen to exemplify these areas. Most of the research in the next section does deal with the more modest form on non-intensive early language provision.

The published research studies are divided into five categories:
1. those exemplifying provision (4.2);
2. those exemplifying process (4.3);
3. those exemplifying attitudes and motivation (4.4);
4. those exemplifying assessments of skills (4.5), and;
5. those exemplifying language awareness and intercultural awareness (4.6).

It must be emphasised that this categorisation is not exclusive or bound by strict scientific rules. In fact, most of the research reports deal in one way or another with three or even more categories.

4.2   Research Illustrating Provision

Some of the research in the present review helps to clarify the influence (in part at least) of certain provision factors. By this is meant what educational systems or schools provide for the learning of a modern language by young learners. Among the most common provision factors are:

provision of a particular 'starting age', e.g. Do students beginning at (say) Grade 1 as opposed to (say) Grade 4 show any advantages?

provision of particular amounts and distributions of 'time', e.g. What advantages (if any) arise if the time for a modern language is increased from (say) one hour per week to (say) three hours per week?

provision of 'intensity' e.g. If students are asked not only to learn an additional language but also to learn important subject-matter through that language (thereby increasing the 'intensity' of the process), does this show any advantages over more conventional provision?

provision of 'continuity' e.g. If primary and associated secondary schools collaborate in order to provide children with continuity of experience (including provision of the same language) from primary into secondary, does this show advantages over systems in which such continuity is not provided?

provision of 'national developments', e.g. In some countries major national initiatives have been 'provided' in support of early foreign language learning at primary school. Some examples are given below.

provision of 'transnational developments', e.g. Some initiatives (including those sponsored by the European Commission) have embraced several different countries and would not have been possible but for the provision of transnational support.

It is important to note, however, that the research studies which are quoted below are not necessarily exclusively concerned with the particular provision factors. In most cases they were interested in other factors also. It should also be noted that, although these factors are presented separately, in fact they tend to come together, e.g. an earlier start ('starting age') is likely to lead to an increase in overall 'time' available and may lead to greater 'intensity' of learning and use.

Table 4.1.a Provision factors: Starting Age

Garcia Mayo & Lecumberri. (Eds.). (2003).	Important standard publication on age and language acquisition of EFL.
Garajova (2001)	Comparison of children with six years of German as a foreign language at primary school, with children with four years and a later start.
Bagaric (2003)	Compared children in Croatia learning German in Grade 1 with those beginning in Grade 4.
Lasabagaster & Doiz (2003).	Compared three different starting-age groups in Spain.
Dlugosz (2000).	Study into the introduction of reading in the foreign language at kindergarten.
Braccini & Gemignani (1995)	Classes at Grades 2, 3, 4 and 5 as taught by the same teacher, were compared for progress in speaking.
Bagaria (2002)	Comparison of speech production in Grade 1 and Grade 2 beginners.
Garcia & Gallardo (2003).	Compared three different age-groups with regard to phonetic perception and production of English as third language.
Brumen (2001/2)	Compared young beginners (aged 9-11) with older beginners (aged 11-13) learning German in Slovenian schools.
Stotz & Meuter (2003)	Progress of pupils in Switzerland in their first three years of primary school was followed, English for 20 minutes daily.
Macht (2000)	Study in Rhineland-Palatinate into the effects of starting the second foreign language one year after the first foreign language in grammar school age 10/11 and the next language one year later.

Garcia Mayo & Lecumberri (2003) edited a standard volume on 'age' and the acquisition of EFL. They noted a tendency for older beginners to outperform younger beginners on measures of phonetic perception and production; also on measures of fluency, accuracy and complexity. However, it is not entirely clear that the effects are always due to 'starting age'; they may have possibly been influenced by instructional practices, and by teachers' fluency, accuracy and motivation.

Garajova (2001) found that children in Slovakia with six years of German as a foreign language at primary school outperformed children with four years and a later

start. In an oral test the early starters performed significantly better; also in repeating phonetically difficult words. Findings by Bagaric (2003) were similar. She compared children in Croatia learning German in Grade 1 with those beginning in Grade 4, and found that the earlier start helped pupils in their writing. Lasabagaster & Doiz (2003) compared three different starting-age groups in Spain. They found the older group to be superior in avoiding errors. Also three age-groups were compared by Garcia & Gallardo (2003) and they found that the oldest performed better in phonetic perception and production of English as third language.

Dlugosz (2000) found that the introduction of reading in the foreign language at kindergarten, even when reading in the first language was also only just starting, helped speed the process of understanding and speaking the foreign language. Braccini & Gemignani (1995) compared classes at Grades 2, 3, 4 and 5 who were taught by the same teacher. A comparison of progress in speaking was made. The most marked progression was at Grades 3-5. It was found that productive competence in speaking could not be predicted from comprehension competence. Bagaria (2002) found that the speech production of Grade 1 beginners was superior to that of Grade 2 beginners. Brumen (2001/2) compared young beginners (aged 9-11) with older beginners (aged 11-13) learning German in Slovenian schools. Older beginners were able to form whole sentences from the start while younger beginners drew more on words or short phrases to keep their conversations going. The younger group were more fluent and developed a richer vocabulary. Errors of both groups were of the same type and frequency. The older group began to acquire structures consciously and to exercise a critical and selective relationship to their learning. Younger learners were gradually learning to see 'order' in the language systems of their first and target languages. Stotz & Meuter (2003) researched the teaching of English for 20 minutes daily in a content-and-language-integrated manner. It was found that a minimalist partial immersion programme of this sort did not satisfy the expectations of teachers, parents and authorities.

The longitudinal study by Macht (2000) followed learners from Grade 5 (age 10/11) until Grade 10 (n= 326: experimental group; n= 322 control group) in grammar school who learned 3 foreign languages (the normal sequence being that every 2 years another one was added). The experimental group started the second foreign language already in grade 6. The languages investigated were English, French and Latin. Various constellations were compared: English as second foreign language from grade 6 vs English as second foreign language from grade 7, English from grade 6 as second foreign language versus English as first foreign language. The aim of the study was to establish any effects of the concentration of foreign language teaching in the foreign language (i.e. two foreign languages parallel already in grade 6) and possible negative effects on achievement in other subjects. Tests were administered at the end of every

school year and consisted of subtests in text production, reading comprehension, grammar and vocabulary. The experimental group with English as second foreign language from grade 6 reached the same achievement level after Grade 10 as the group which started English as second foreign language in Grade 7. The learners who had English as 2nd foreign language from grade 6 were also compared to the learners who started English in Grade 5. The learners of French who started this language earlier than in the traditional programme, reached in grade 9 the level which the group with a start in grade 7 reached at the end of grade 10. This study showed that it is no overburdening if a consecutive foreign language is already introduced one grade later. This way more time for language teaching between 10 and 15 could be gained.

Table 4.1.b Provision factors: Intensive programmes

Bors (1999).	Learners in an intensive programme outperformed those that were on more conventional programmes.
Johnstone (1999)	Evaluation of the first two years of the UK's first initiative in early partial immersion in a foreign language (in this case, French) in a primary school set in an area of multiple social disadvantage.
Johnstone, Harlen, MacNeil, Stradling & Thorpe (1999)	Evaluation of the attainments of pupils students receiving their primary school education through the medium of Scottish Gaelic rather than English, based on a range of models (e.g. early total immersion, early partial immersion and L1 maintenance).
Jäppinen (2005)	Pupils in Finland learning science and mathematics via English, French or Swedish.

Bors (1999) found that Hungarian young learners in an intensive programme outperformed those that were on more conventional programmes.

Johnstone (1999) conducted an evaluation of the first two years of the UK's first initiative in early partial immersion in French in a primary school set in an area of multiple social disadvantage. The attitudes of the students (aged 5-7), their parents and teachers were highly positive. Parents felt that, in stark contrast to the conventional model of a foreign language as a school 'subject', the early partial immersion model was making them feel 'special' and was helping them to raise their aspirations. The students were well able to cope with fast, wide-ranging and fluent input and interaction from their native speaker teachers in areas such as physical education and arts & crafts, with no apparent difficulty and without becoming anxious.

Also in Scotland but In an altogether different setting, Johnstone, Harlen, MacNeil, Stradling & Thorpe (1999) investigated the attainments of students receiving their primary school education through the medium of Scottish Gaelic rather than English, based on a range of models (e.g. early total immersion, early partial immersion and L1 maintenance). The great majority of students were from English-speaking homes and families. Their attainments in science, mathematics and English were compared with the attainments of pupils being educated through the medium of English in the same primary schools, local authorities and nationally. Overall, the findings showed that the Gaelic-medium pupils, educated through their second language, were not disadvantaged in comparison with those educated through English as first language. The Gaelic-medium pupils' eventual attainments by the end of their primary school education were superior to the English-medium groups in mathematics and in English.

In Finland, Jäppinen (2005) investigated three age-groups (7-9, 10-12 and 13-15) learning mathematics or science through the medium of English, French or Swedish. All three groups were able to cope, though the youngest group had some difficulty with more abstract scientific concepts. The middle group seemed cognitively more advanced than the comparison group which was taking these subjects via Finnish. Central to the success of the CLIL initiative was the strong use of the pupils' first language in other areas of their curriculum.

Table 4.1.c   Provision factors: Continuity (or the lack thereof) from primary to secondary

Nikolov (2001)	Secondary analysis on data in order to explore what lay behind unsuccessful adult learners' lack of success.
Vollmuth (2000)	Small sample study to track experiences of students who had begun English at primary school and were now at the post-primary stage.
Schwob (2001)	Study of an approach where primary and secondary teachers cooperate (= partenariat) in grade 3-6 of primary education.
Bolster et al (2004)	Small-scale study in England showing problems of continuity.
Chesterton et al (2004)	Large-scale initiative in Australia designed to address problems of continuity.

Nikolov (2001) explored what lay behind unsuccessful adult learners' lack of success. One possible factor was their early learning of a modern language at primary school,

since many had not been able to continue with their particular primary school modern language when they transferred to secondary education, but instead had to switch to another modern language. Students whom Vollmuth (2000) followed had begun English at primary school and were now at the post-primary stage. The students found their current learning of English to be more difficult than and also different from what it had been at primary school. Schwob (2001) tested an approach to get a shared image of German teaching in the primary, in order to arrive at a better continuity. The teachers cooperated also outside lesson time. Children like to be taught by the unfamiliar teacher from secondary, the primary teachers appreciate support by secondary teachers. Partenaire meant that for one period of the week the 2 teachers work together in class. The presence of the secondary teacher is considered valuable as motivation, and authentic factor. Observations and interviews were done in 1999/2000. 170 pupils of primary were involved. In the whole canton of Geneva, 70.6% reached the expected level the canton German test at the end of grade 6 of primary, 73.0% of the children who had been in partenaire classes attained that level.

In a small-scale study in England, Bolster, Balandier-Brown & Rea-Dickens (2005) found lack of liaison between primary and secondary school teachers to be an obstacle to successful continuity in foreign-languge learning. Chesterton, Steigler-Peters, Moran and Piccioli (2004) on the other hand report on a large-scale initiative in New South Wales (Australia) which was designed to address the problem of languages continuity. It did so through a variety of measures which included strong co-operation across the participating schools, the development of an agreed 5-year syllabus plan covering the later stages of primary and the earlier stages of secondary, and the provision of an adequate supply of appropriately trained teachers.

Table 4.1.d   Provision factors: Teachers' professional needs

Raya & Hewitt (2001)	Survey of primary school teachers of a foreign language in Austria, Italy and Spain.
Bondi (2001)	Analysis of an international survey on teachers' perceived needs
Franceschini & Ziegler (²2005)	Research into foreign language learning (French) in the Saarland, from Grade 1,
Dupuis, et al. (2003)	Survey among 59 people from across Europe. The main aim was to find out a true work profile of teachers, and their needs.

Using an international survey on teachers' perceived needs and of consultation with teachers and trainers, Bondi (2001) proposes a language profile for the primary teacher. The survey was meant to provide an overall picture of a typical foreign language primary teacher, identifying his/her background knowledge, language proficiency and study characteristics, together with the typical uses of the foreign language needed and the difficulties experienced. The profile suggests that the teaching of a foreign language to foreign language primary teachers should be regarded as a case of languages for special purposes, designed to meet specified needs of the learner, and based on task rather content. The competencies needed by the primary teacher can be related to the kind of teaching and learning that takes place in a primary language class, thus including both communicative competence and language awareness, but should also include the language needed for autonomous professional development.

Raya & Hewitt (2001) surveyed the teachers' self-rated proficiency in the target language, which was roughly similar across three different countries, ranging from intermediate to advanced. Similar difficulties were experienced, e.g. coping with a teaching methodology which assumes language to be a code and to be mainly based on reading & writing. The highest-ranking professional need which they identified was 'techniques for motivation'. It was concluded that teacher education programmes should be less prescriptive and more inquiry-based; peer-observation of teachers should be encouraged; continuing professional development support for teachers should focus both on foreign language improvement and on pedagogical knowledge and skills; and all teachers should be accessed, not simply those who are the most motivated.

Based on data from commissioned research into foreign language learning (French) in the Saarland, from Grade 1, Franceschini & Ziegler ([2]2005) present a teacher-training manual on language acquisition. This is unique in the German context because the readers are pulled into the research process, they are shown what research questions are, they learn about the uses research can have for their own work. The examples do not, as often is the case, derive from a general data-base of the researchers but from a regionally anchored project. This makes the argumentation plausible even for lay readers. As the research team followed a double approach from the beginning, namely to improve knowledge about language acquisition, but also to be of use for the teachers involved, the data were collected both to a high research standard and with the layperson in view.

Dupuis, et al. (2003) found that an overall job profile implies not only the activities teachers do in teaching, but also other aspects such as job satisfaction, biographical data, and also their views as to what makes a good teacher.

Table 4.1.e Provision factors: Information & Communications Technology (ICT)

Waschk(2004)	Investigated how ICT can facilitate more open ways of learning and can relieve teachers of some of the responsibility for providing input, for being a source of knowledge and for being a tutor.
Nutta et al. (2002)	Comparison of a conventional text-based approach (Group 1) with a computer-enhanced multimedia approach (Group 2) at Grades 2-5.
Morris (2005)	Computer-mediated peer-tutoring involving pupils from Grade 5 in an American elementary school learning Spanish.

According to Waschk (2004) the use of multimedia reference works, learning software and video-or -audio sequences enabled a greater degree of oracy to prevail, which in early foreign language learning the author claims to be a basic principle.

Nutta, Feyten, Norwood, Meros, Yoshi & Ducher (2002) compared a conventional text-based approach (Group 1) with a computer-enhanced multimedia approach (Group 2) at Grades 2-5 in a USA elementary school. Both groups (which were carefully matched) found the experience to be fun and interesting. There were no clear measured differences in attainments. However, in the actual day-to-day processes of teaching and learning in classrooms there were qualitative differences between the two groups. The experimental group were more interactive, had greater access to immediate feedback, were more precise in pronunciation, showed a smoother flow of reading and produced larger chunks of language. The research suggested that ICT approaches, if suitably thought-through and implemented, can help younger learners in integrating their languages skills and in developing important strategies of monitoring.

The subjects of the study by Morris (2005) were pupils at Grade 5 in an American elementary school learning Spanish, all with English as first language. An aim of the investigation was to ascertain whether they would be able to engage in successful computer-mediated peer-tutoring. This proved to be the case, as the children were able to draw attention to many of their peers' errors, and subsequently repairs of the errors were produced.

Table 4.1.f Provision factors: National initiatives

Muijs et al (2005)	Clarifying and evaluating nationally different models of local provision
Driscoll et al. (2004)	Taking stock nationally of actual provision on the ground, and highlighting possible ways forward
Powell et al (2000)	Moving from primary to secondary school, and use of ITT
Harris & Conway (2002)	Taking stock nationally of an important national ELL initiative

In England, early language learning is being piloted through a diverse range of models of provision. The study by Muijs et al (2005) aims to describe and evaluate these models as piloted by different Local Education Authorities. The models may vary on several dimensions, e.g. starting-age, amount of time made available, level of experience of the teachers. In England a large-scale survey (Driscoll et al 2004) is being conducted of local authorities, schools and teachers in order to develop baseline estimates of provision on the ground. This entails building up a nationally validated picture of what languages are provided and by whom, as well as the resources put into languages and transition issues from primary to secondary school. In addition, there are 15 more detailed case studies which have been conducted within the larger sample and which are intended to focus on best practice in contrasting local environments. Also in England, Powell (2000) investigated a national sample of local authorities, primary schools, secondary schools, and Initial Teacher Training (ITT) institutions. This was combined with 11 school case studies. It entailed looking in detail nationally at how 'languages at primary school' (in England, Key Stage 2) articulate in real local contexts with pupils' subsequent learning at secondary school (in England, Key Stages 3 and 4) and also at how issues of teacher supply and competence for early language learning may be addressed through modes of ITT.

In the Republic of Ireland, Harris and Conway (2002) undertook the first evaluation of the National Pilot project on Modern Languages in Primary Schools which was launched in 1998, within a sample of schools that initially was small but which grew as

the project developed. This entailed undertaking a first systematic exploration at national level of key questions (e.g. What are teachers' views? What do pupils seem to be able to achieve? What is the nature of pupils' attitudes and motivations? To what extent do these seem linked to their achievements?). It also entailed providing independent research-based feedback to stakeholders at all levels, e.g. national authorities, school management, teachers, parents.

Observations from Research relating to Good Practice

Success in teaching and learning a modern language to young learners, if it is to extend beyond the individual school and the individual inspired teacher, is heavily dependent on a whole range of provision factors such as those outlined in the present section. The evidence of the present section suggests that early languages learners will tend to be more successful if the following provisions are made:

- there is an early starting age;

- a sufficient amount and distribution of time, intensity and continuity are built in;

- teachers are well-trained initially and further supported professionally in areas such as the target language, languages pedagogy & evaluation, intercultural awareness, teaching and learning strategies, language awareness and the creation of a supportive environment;

- ICT of an appropriate sort is made available to help young learners to access a greater range of input, interaction and feedback;

- national authorities and transnational bodies support early languages learning through planned initiatives which include systematic research and development.

4.3   Research Illustrating Process

This section is the one most closely linked to teaching and learning and most readily influenced by teachers and learners. Firstly, the processes of listening, speaking, pronunciation, reading and writing are touched upon. Secondly, a number of processes such as learner strategies which cut across these are described. In the discussion of listening, speaking, reading and writing, each skill is not dealt with exclusively. In many cases a combination of skills is implied.

Tables 4.2.a until 4.2.e summarise several research studies which have yielded important information on the processes of listening, speaking, pronunciation, reading and writing.

Table 4.2.a: Process of listening

Edelenbos (2001)	Young French children in the region Nord Pas de Calais learning Dutch at Primary 1 with little or no contact with the target language outside school.
Peñate Cabrera & Bazo Martínez (2001)	Children in Year 2 of Spanish primary schools learning a foreign language.
Huppertz (2004)	Assessment of listening to French in Kindergarten. French speakers were assessors.
Hagen et al (2004)	The project "GanzOhrSein" aiming at developing listening skills with children as cultural basic skills. 475 learners in primary and secondary school were involved, partly extracurricular.
Benvenuto & Lopriore (1999)	National Evaluation Project of teaching and learning foreign languages in Italy

Edelenbos (2001) assessed what French children in the Region North Pas de Calais had learnt from their lessons in Dutch at Primary 1. These children had little or no contact with the target language outside school. They were soon able to understand individual words, questions and short phrases and to respond appropriately, often with very short answers. Penate (2001) showed that Spanish children in Year 2 while learning a foreign language found interactional support from the teacher helpful in enabling them to follow the gist in story-comprehension tasks. Huppertz (2004) assessed the listening comprehension in French of children in kindergarten. External fluent French speakers were assessors. Children (791) understood routine instructions and they acted adequately according to instructions.

The project "GanzOhrSein" was designed to develop listening skills with children as cultural basic skills. Hagen et al (2004) involved 475 learners in primary and secondary school partly extracurricular. A comparison of the control group with the project group shows that pupils in the project group were more active in listening activities, such as playing a music instrument and listening to music. Furthermore, the project pupils showed a more differentiated taste for music and were more sensitive towards sounds in nature and noise in the classroom. When interviewed about the effect of the

programme, the learners also identified better comprehensibility of the teacher's voice, their perception of letting the other children finish their utterance, and a perceived improvement of the social climate. The project teachers report that they cared more to create conditions favourable to listening comprehension in class.

Benvenuto & Lopriore (2000) present the results of the National Evaluation Project carried out in 1999 in Italy and aimed at assessing the competencies in English and French of 2900 (2500 for English, 400 for French) of Italian-speaking primary students with three years of study of one foreign language. The sample was drawn through a sophisticated regional and urban sampling procedure in order to constitute a representative sample of children from primary schools throughout Italy. Benvenuto & Lopriore (2000) give a detailed account of the development of questionnaires to assess what was going on in classrooms. The outcomes provide an impressive view of the wide range of variables that determine foreign-language teaching. Between teachers of English and teachers of French there were rather large differences in the amount of time that they spoke their language in the classroom. The specialists seemed to differentiate themselves from ordinary classroom teachers.

Table 4.2.b Process of speaking

Bosisio (2005).	Study in primary aimed at a variety of communicative target language strategies
Oliver & Mackey (2003)	Study into teacher–child learner exchanges in early second language classrooms in the USA.
Mackey & Oliver (2002).	Study into the interactive feedback by teacher. Design incorporating experimental and control group.
Oliver (2002)	Comparison of native-speakers and non-native-speakers in communication.
Watanabe (1997).	Learners of Japanese at elementary school. Free-form interviews elicited students' abilities to the fullest.
Lugossy (2003).	Study into language-use of non-native speaking teachers of English in their use of Hungarian as first language.

Bosisio (2005) gives an overview of the literature on children's interlanguage in general and on the interlanguage of children aged 3-5 in particular in order to provide teachers with the relevant theoretical background and with especially useful methodological tools. Specifically, the main emphasis is on observing L2 interaction to assess the children's cognitive, emotive and socio-affective development. The object of her

analysis is the interlanguage of learners in data collected in various pre-primary schools focusing on instances of spontaneous production. The data are analyzed according to the communication strategies that are displayed by children, ranging from onomatopoeia to integration of mother-language meanings into foreign language morphology. The data allow a comparative analysis of immersion programmes and foreign language classes following the "Hocus and Lotus" project (Taeschner 2002). Immersion programmes seem to lead pupils to a higher level of communicative competence, but format-based foreign language teaching seems to create spontaneous production outside the foreign language class. The research suggested that young children could be taught a story-format which would enable them subsequently to show spontaneous target language production outside their classrooms.

Oliver & Mackey (2003) studied teacher–child learner exchanges in ESL classrooms in the USA. The context of the exchange was found to affect the teacher's provision of feedback and the learners' modifications of their original utterances. Teachers tended to provide feedback on mistakes when the focus was on language rather than on content; and learners tended to repair incorrect utterances when the focus was on language rather than on content. Mackey & Oliver (2002) found that interactive feedback by the teacher (if children produced incorrect utterances) benefited the children more than did a strategy of non-correction. The experimental group (receiving interactive feedback) made the greater progress in question-formation. Oliver (2002) studied dyads of native-speakers and non-native-speakers in communication tasks. The outcomes suggested that the most negotiation for meaning came from pairs that were the least proficient and the least native-speaker-like in the target language.

Watanabe (1997) found, in the case of learners of Japanese at elementary school, that free-form interviews elicited students' abilities to the fullest; also, tasks with motivating topics could lead to dramatically improved performance. Lugossy (2003) discovered significant differences among non-native speaking teachers of English in their use of Hungarian as first language. It seemed that the first language might be used as a conscious strategy to promote target-language learning rather than simply as s shortcut to meaning.

Table 4.2.c: Process of Pronunciation

Mordellet-Roggenbuck (2002).	French articulation of 8- to-10 year-old German-speaking primary school pupils.

Mordellet-Roggenbuck (2002) were concerned with the pronunciation of beginners of French as a foreign language in Grade 3 and 4. After an analysis of phonetic errors and a presentation of phoneme inventories an intricate case study of lessons in one Grade 3 class is presented. The aim of the study was to investigate communication between teacher and children and between children as regards the acquisition of the articulatory basis of French as far as possible from an inside perspective of children and teachers, using a fine-tuned repertory of research methods. The term "geste articulatoire" is used which refers to the cultural character of pronunciation. Results and suggestions for the classroom:

- the pronunciation of the children's first names in the French language caused strong emotional reactions. Laughter is seen as indicator that children realise the different phonetic realisation. Children who willingly interact with the French-speaking hand puppet show less surprise and hesitance when their French first name is used.
- The listening strategies of the beginners, their perception ought to be taken into account, the acoustic expectations of the learners should be trained as well as the mémoire musicale de la parole (musical language memory).

Mordellet-Roggenbuck (2002) in this study suggests a cognitive approach to pronunciation and prosody, a listening-training to discover the "paysage sonore" (the soundscape) of French, and a separate teaching aim: pronunciation.

Table 4.2.d Process of reading

Lugossy & Nikolov (2003).	Study into impact of authentic picture-based reading materials with pupils aged 7-10.
Lugossy (forthcoming).	Analysis of reasons of EFL teachers in Hungary, using or not using stories in classrooms.
Jelic (2002)	Follow-up study of learners aged 14 in Croatia in their 8th year of learning French.
Andrzejewska (2004)	The strategies used by children aged 7-9 learning German in Poland when reading.
Dlugosz (2000).	Study into reading in a foreign language in Grade 1.

Lugossy & Nikolov (2003) investigated whether authentic picture-based reading materials stimulated pupils' (aged 7-10) motivation, language development and group dynamics, in a context where there is very little target language exposure outside the

classroom. There were benefits to the teacher also in becoming more open and resourceful. Lugossy (forthcoming) analysed the reasons EFL teachers in Hungary gave for using or not using stories in classrooms. Several expressed reluctance to use narratives as part of their regular syllabus because they feared it would be too time-consuming and beyond their pupils' capabilities. At the same time, the idea aroused interest and seemed worth developing further. Jelic (2002) did a follow up study of learners aged fourteen in Croatia in their 8th year of learning French. They were found to be less independent and less motivated in their target language reading than in their first language reading. They attributed this to uninteresting texts and to linguistic difficulties with which they could not fully cope. Andrzejewska (2004) investigated the strategies used by children aged 7-9 learning German in Poland when reading. The most commonly used strategy was guessing and the least common was asking the teacher for information. They were also aware of differences between English, German and Polish (which for most was their mother tongue). Dlugosz (2000) came to the conclusion that the introduction of reading in a foreign language in Grade 1, in parallel to the development of first language reading, helped children to develop more fluent foreign language speaking skills.

Table 4.2.e The Process of Writing

Mertens (2003)	Study into children in Grade 1 learning French in Germany.
Vickov (in press)	Children in Croatia learning English at Grade 1.
Kielhöfer (2004)	Study into oral and written skills in French and German, in a bilingual class at end of Berlin primary (aged 12 years).

Mertens (2003) found that children in Grade 1 learning French in Germany benefited from being introduced to written French immediately. He considered the results superior to those in purely oral, playful approaches. Vickov (in press) claims that children in Croatia learning English at Grade 1 were not disadvantaged in their writing in Croatian by being introduced to writing in English. Finally, Kielhöfer (2004) investigated oral and written skills in both languages, French and German, in a bilingual class at end of Berlin primary (12 years). Written French was the skill in which the least achievement was demonstrated – compared to written German, oral German, oral French. 95% of pupils placed at CALP level (Cummins, 1979), were able to write texts in 2 languages. The acronyms BICS and CALP refer to a distinction between basic interpersonal communicative skills and cognitive academic language proficiency. The

distinction was intended to draw attention to the very different time periods typically required by immigrant children to acquire conversational fluency in their second language as compared to grade-appropriate academic proficiency in that language.

Tables 4.3.a through 4.3.e sets out a number of strategic and other processes which cut across the particular languages skills of listening, speaking, reading & writing:

Table 4.3.a Self-assessment

Krajnovic & Digunovic (in press)	Young learners at Grades 1-3 showed themselves to be capable of self-assessment, under the guidance of appropriate teaching.
Tsagari (2005)	Explored the introduction of portfolio assessment with young learners in Greek primary schools.
Hasselgreen (2003)	In the project the European Language Portfolio was adapted to the context of learning in the lower secondary school.

Krajnovic & Digunovic (in press) report on a study where young learners at Grades 1-3 showed themselves to be capable of self-assessment There were clear benefits to their self-concept and capacity to control eventual languages outcomes. The evidence by Tsagari (2005) suggested that this can be beneficial, provided that teachers are well-trained and engage in action research of their assessment practices.

Hasselgreen (2003) however adapted the European Language Portfolio to the context of learning in the lower secondary school. The general 'can-do' statements were made appropriate to the age-group. The task was to supplement the European Language Portfolio, so really continual assessment could be done, with consideration also given to how assessment of linguistic aspects could be included, to systematic reflection on learning, how to give responsibility to pupils, and how to involve teachers. The main elegance of the study is that the forms and sheets were tried out with pupils. Spoken interaction 'can-do' statements had to be made understandable for pupils. The survey investigated when, how and to whom pupils speak English. The levels were reworded. 280 pupils completed questionnaires about their use of English, using the categories: 1) situations, 2) type of language, 3) recurrent themes, 4) language functions, 5) conditions that affect the speech, 6) perceived measure of success. 28 'can-do' statements evolved as "good" at the level for which they were intended. In the process of re-writing, it became easier "to write can do's that both capture the pupils' world , and at the same time preserve the level intended." (Hasselgren 2003, p. 19).

Table 4.3.b Teacher & learner strategies

Coyle, Valcárcel & Verdú (2001)	The control group followed a textbook, while the experimental group followed a more open, task-based approach.
Kubanek-German (2003b)	Strategies for memorising vocabulary in the case of children aged 9 towards the end of Grade 4.
Huszti (2005)	Survey involving 35 experienced EFL teachers in the Ukraine.
Reichart-Wallrabenstein (2004)	Study into children aged 8 to construct meaning when confronted by a text in the target language plus pictures.
Szulc-Kurpaska (2001)	Identified the positive effects of strategy-training by learners of English as foreign language aged 9-10, in a longitudinal study of five years beginning in primary school Year 1.
Mihaljevic Djigunovic (2001)	Study with learners aged 6-9 into strategies for explaining how they would teach their doll a few words in English.
Haudeck (1996)	Study into different ways of internalising grammar rules
Baur (2006).	Study into the quality of implementation of the curriculum
Gattullo (2001)	Study into classroom behaviour at Grade 3 and the role of corrective feedback.
Hatipoğlu Kavanoz (2006)	Iin one private and one public primary school in Istanbul 4 teachers were observed, with before and after reflections.
Becker (1999)	Analysis of 224 German-speaking children in grade 4 and 6 who learn English as first foreign language
Lyster (2004a and 2004b)	Importance of form-focused instruction, corrective feedback and other strategies in preventing plateau-effect in immersion children's language development
Rantz & Horan (2005)	Use of Language Portfolio by children learning a foreign language at primary school, with benefit to cultural awareness.

Coyle, Valcárcel & Verdú (2001) compared two groups (experimental and control) of 8-year-old children in Spain learning English. The control group followed a textbook, while the experimental group followed a more open, task-based approach. Six major groups of strategy were identified: activating prior knowledge; organising the learning environment; presenting / modelling new foreign language content; scaffolding / correcting learners' use of language; promoting social / cooperative interaction;

creating a supportive learning environment. These reflected the support provided by the 'experimental' group teacher. For each of these strategy areas a number of more specific strategies are identified and exemplified, within a generally constructivist, collaborative approach based on partnership, in which the role of the teacher is critical in guiding the learners forward. Kubanek-German (2003b) identified strategies for memorising vocabulary in the case of children aged 9 towards the end of Grade 4. These included Total Physical Response, classical memorising, formal, associative and academic. This suggested that learners at Grade 4 are well able to reflect on their learning.

Huszti (2005) gives an account of a survey involving 35 experienced EFL teachers in the Ukraine. A particularly interesting feature of the study concerns the context in which it was conducted: Hungarian schools in the Ukraine, where the majority of the learners are bilingual and want to study English. Huszti explored what classroom techniques these teachers applied most frequently in their EFL classes with learners aged 10-14, what problems they faced, and how they thought they could be solved. The most frequent task types included translation from English to Hungarian, vocabulary practice, and reading aloud. Teachers' problems were related to the lack of appropriate teaching materials, low number of weekly classes, lack of streaming, and low level of motivation. In their view, improvement would involve these areas. Reichart-Wallrabenstein (2004) studied children aged 8 at Grade 4 at primary school in Germany who were actively able to construct meaning when confronted by a written text in the target language plus pictures. They were able to make guesses about words belonging to English, French or German and able to give reasons for their classifications. Szulc-Kurpaska (2001) identified positive effects of strategy-training by learners of English as foreign language aged 9-10, in a longitudinal study of five years beginning in primary school Year 1. The most and the least successful learners did not benefit immediately from the strategy training, and the effects took some six months to come through. Gradually also the effects of strategy-training tended to wear off, especially among the weaker learners. This implies that strategy training should not be viewed as a 'one-off' but rather should be recurrent. MihaljevicDjigunovic (2001) showed that learners aged 6-9 in Croatia were well able to reveal a range of strategies for explaining how they would teach their doll a few words in English. Haudeck (1996) found that many learners had difficulty in internalising grammar rules, despite the intensive teaching of these. A number of possible alternative strategies were explored which would achieve the same effect.

Baur (2006) made an analysis of the quality of implementation of the curriculum for German as a second language in Südtirol which became obligatory in 1995. This was a very open curriculum. The overall study consisted of two analyses. The first consisted of 32 individual interviews with teachers, either with 10-20 years of teaching

experience or under 8 years of teaching experience. The second consisted of group discussions, with 110 primary teachers and 65 middle school teachers were involved. 11 categories were asked: approach to the curriculum in general, usefulness of the organisation of topics in curriculum as content for the experiences of the children, the language functions contained, the approach of the spiral curriculum, the curriculum versus personal beliefs, the function of the didactic workshop and more. The detailed analysis of answers of a random sample (20%) showed that a third of the teachers used the curriculum regularly. Young teachers worked with the curriculum more intensively than experienced ones. 'Using the curriculum' was considered by one quarter as too time-consuming compared to a textbook. More experienced teachers liked the openness of the curriculum, younger teachers felt insecure. The primary teachers considered the selection of speaking situations and speaking impulses for conversation useful. The primary teachers rarely expressed a need for vocabulary lists and level descriptions. The lack of a linear progression in the curriculum was considered as a shortcoming by half, especially younger teachers. 40% of the sample state that the "spirit" of the curriculum comes close to their ideas about SLA. 30-40 % state that they are involved in class exchanges. Half of those who answered were disappointed by the slight linguistic progress of learners in exchanges, the other half considered these possibilities as the only authentic ones.

Gattullo (2001) describes a large study of primary-school English-language teaching in Italy. The results emerging show that primary teachers who adopt a teacher-centred style give more opportunities to learners to engage in sequences of error treatment, which in turn are more likely to lead them to self-repair. In particular, the analysis of the transcriptions reveals that these teachers draw on a wider range of corrective responses, including elicitation, clarification requests, metalinguistic clues and repetition of error. Findings suggest that teachers should become more aware of the function and value of different types of error feedback.

Hatipoğlu Kavanoz (2006) reports on a key study conducted for the Turkish government. The 7th five year plan of the Turkish ministry of education is targeted to rearrange teaching methods, curricula, and training in accord with international standards. A premise of the new trend is to involve learners in their own learning and to pay attention to different learning needs. Learner–centred principles have been included in the curricula. For English at primary, renewal is on the way. The basic principle here is learner-centeredness. The traditional method is rote memorization, and teachers are considered the source of knowledge. The aim of the study was to find out in depth beliefs of English teachers. The salient themes that emerged from data analysis showed a difference between private and public school teachers. Public school teachers understood learner centeredness as: making the students active by having them do grammar focused exercises with worksheets. The private school teachers

defined it as learning by doing. Their definitions of learner-centredness was consistent with the way they implemented it, the ones giving out handouts and letting students do them, the private school teachers using a variety of methods.

Becker (1999) investigated how learners of another language make use of prosodic signals to understand the syntactic construction – a strategy competent mother tongue speakers employ from infancy. Are young foreign language learners also able to use prosody to understand syntax in sentences they hear? The related question was whether their musicality influences the degree to which they use prosodic signals. She begins with the observation that in the early stages of learning in the schools used for her experiments, prosody is hardly taught, rather regarded as a special extra, apart from songs and rhymes. She found a difference between children of Grade 4 and Grade 6 (this is secondary level in Germany). The younger children made use of prosodic features when stating whether they had understood the content of sentences read aloud to them. The older children focussed on the content. In the interviews the learners stated that they hardly noticed the prosody. Prosody use appears to be an implicit process. The assumption that exaggerated use of prosodic features by the teacher is of profit for all children needs to be re-examined.

In two related studies Lyster (2004a and 2004b) was interested in what might be done in order to help immersion pupils keep their target language development on the move rather than levelling off at a particular plateau, as had often been found to be the case. In one study (2004a) the emphasis was on the role of form-focused instruction (FFI) and corrective feedback in the case of Grade 5 children. These two strategies were found to be more successful than an approach based on no-FFI. The other study (2004b) found that it proved useful to encourage pupils in 'noticing' particular formal features of the target langue, to help them develop an awareness of language and to provide them with controlled practice and feedback.

In the Republic of Ireland, Rantz & Horan (2005) identified good use of the Languages Portfolio in the case of children learning a modern language at primary school, with particular benefits to their cultural awareness.

Table 4.3. c Social learning

Takahashi (1998)	Young learners of Japanese in a elementary school programme were followed for three years.
Cekaitè & Aronsson (2005)	Children engaged in collaborative language play
Xu et al (2005)	Class-wide peer-tutoring by children at Grade 2.

According to Takahashi (1998) the role of the teacher in providing a model of social use of language in interaction with her pupils was found to be central. Learning from this model, the pupils themselves gradually were able to give each other mutual assistance and to progress in a more dynamic, learner-centred way.

Cekaitè & Aronsson (2005) worked with children aged 7-10 in Sweden who had first languages other than Swedish. Of particular interest was their capacity to engage in collaborative language play. They seemed to be able spontaneously to produce their own meta-language without necessarily realising they were doing so, and they were observed to pay considerable spontaneous attention to language form as part of their play activities such as collaborative repetitions and variations. Xu, Gelper & Perkins (2005) were interested in the extent to which children at elementary school Grade 2 in the United States would be able to engage in what they termed class-wide peer-tutoring (CWPT). The children were in a mixed class of native-and non-native-speakers of English. Regular instances of cooperative play, and reciprocal initiation & response were identified, and the researchers concluded that CWPT had significantly helped the children in their social behaviour

Table 4.3. d Progression and Aptitude

Pienemann, Kessler & Roos (2006)	Test of the use of a universal language acquisition theory for a better understanding and diagnosis of phenomena
Kiss & Nikolov (2005)	Aptitude testing of 12-year-old children in Hungary

Based on a corpus of samples from early beginner classes in 3 countries, Pienemann, Kessler & Roos (2006) show which of the levels outlined in the theory were actually reached by the learners in the sample. With the theory, he states, it is possible to draw up learner profiles which again have concrete didactic consequences in class and at the end of primary school they investigated what enables learners to attain linguistic competence and what causes the development to take certain describable routes. The authors subscribe to the assumption that all learners follow the same developmental sequences in the same order, with variation and speed being the individual factors. In the case of L2 English, the processability theory argues, the acquisition is similar across mother tongues. Six developmental stages were constructed. Teaching cannot make learners jump one of these stages. Certain learning arrangements like task-based learning can contribute to a faster passing through the stages. In every stage a syntactic structure can be acquired in a communicatively functioning simplified form

(he Jim) or in the standard form (he is Jim. Teaching ought to insist on the "good" form. Using the 6-stage model, individual learners can be diagnosed. In the Paderborn research learner-language from three contexts (regular primary English, early immersion in Germany, and English in Sweden) was analysed. Almost all learners reached level 2, while a few of the early immersion children in Germany reached level 5. This is on the one the one hand not remarkable due to higher input. However, in the approach used, no error correction was used whatsoever. Pienemann, Kessler & Roos (2006) deliver a plea to take language acquisition theory into account much more than has been the case so far. This research highlights a major issue in relation to progression in children's development of an additional language. Two notions seem to be in competition with each other. One is the notion of progression as climbing a ladder, step by step, ever upwards, and indeed the term 'languages ladder' is officially used in England. The other view derives from second language acquisition research, where a number of theories have been developed, one of them associated with Pienemann (above), but none of them subscribing to the 'ladder' metaphor. In criticising the 'ladder' notion of progression, Mitchell (2003) claims that second language learning is a complex and recursive process with what she describes as multiple interconnections and backslidings and complex trade-offs between advances in fluency, accuracy and complexity. Arguing in similar vein, Pelzer-Karpf & Zangl (1997) found that children's utterances progressed from short to longer chunks of language, but then went through a phase of 'Systemturbulenz' in which their grammar control seemed to fall apart, but eventually sorted itself out.

The 'ladder' notion of progression may be helpful in affording children and their teachers sense of moving in the right direction and may be equally useful as a means of providing feedback and generating discussion. There is a big task for researchers and teacher educators to find ways of helping very busy teachers to understand the limitations of the 'ladder' metaphor and to gain understanding of the complexities of the acquisition process, as identified by second-language acquisition research.

Kiss & Nikolov (2005) report on the construction and use of a special language-related aptitude test devised for 12-year-old Hungarian children learning English. When the pupils' aptitude scores were related to their subsequent performance in English, aptitude accounted for 22% of the variation in performance, with motivation (at 8%) coming next. This raises the vital question of how aptitude for learning an additional language might be developed during the process of a child's pre-primary and primary school education, since there is no reason to believe that aptitude of this sort is fixed at birth. Among the components that are generally considered to be associated with aptitude are the ability to discriminate between similar but different sounds, the ability to detect underlying pattern and the ability to create sentences based on the

application of rules. As such it seems important at primary school to help children develop their sensitivity to sound and their meta-linguistic awareness.

Observations from Research relating to Good Practice

- the central role of the teacher in providing encouragement, input, interaction, feedback, a supportive learning environment and guidance;

- the capacity of young learners to benefit from an early introduction to reading & writing in the target language;

- the capacity of young learners to be strategic and reflective, if given suitable stimulus and guidance from their teacher;

- the capacity of young learners to internalise target language structures implicitly as well as explicitly, given suitable input, interaction and support from their teacher;

- the importance for teachers of understanding that true progression in a language is not based on the 'ladder' model but is a more complex and recursive process; and the importance of understanding those strategies which are likely to keep children's language development on the move rather than levelling off at a plateau.

- the capacity of young learners to teach and learn from each other, especially when these processes have been well-modelled for some time by their teacher;

- the benefits for teachers as well as for learners of strategy-training, provided that this is seen as recurrent and not one-off;

- the capacity of young learners to engage in self-assessment and self-monitoring, given suitable initial support and guidance from their teacher;

- the value of narrative in helping learners understand the structure of certain kinds of discourse and in developing capabilities in guessing and making inferences;

- the benefit of intensified teaching in helping children develop and use particular strategies;

- the value of negative as well as positive feedback, provided that this does not undermine confidence or self-esteem;

- the value of open-ended questions and stimuli in encouraging children to be free and creative.

4.4 Research Illustrating Attitudes, Motivation & Other Affective Factors

The Blondin et al. study from 1998 showed clearly that the most significant and wide-ranging benefit of introducing a modern language at primary school lay in the positive attitudes and motivation which children developed and sustained. The present section on affective factors confirms that this highly positive effect continues to be achieved,

but it also suggests that children may be learning to become more reflective and strategic in the types of attitudes and motivation which they form, including types of motivation which are linked to concepts of self or identity.

Table 4.4.a. Attitudes, motivation and other affective factors

Nikolov (2003**)**	Questionnaire study of 28,000 young Hungarian learners.
Hardi (2004)	Investigated the characteristics of Hungarian learners' language-learning motivation, between ages 9-14.
Mihaljevic Djigunovic (1998)	The attitudes, motivation, language anxiety and attributions of children in Croatia learning a foreign language.
Lamb (2004)	The motivation of Indonesia children aged 12-13 years learning English
Nikolov (1999a)	Three cohorts of children, each investigated for eight years, with the same teacher.
Marschollek (2002)	Study in the last two years of primary education in Germany.
Kennedy et al. (2000)	Study into students' attitudes at elementary school in USA with foreign language programmes.
Wu (2003)	Children aged 5 learning English as a foreign language at primary school in Hong Kong, in a monolingual Cantonese context.
Austin (2003)	Study of foreign-language learning in one French primary school focused on pupils' attitudes.

Nikolov (2003) offered a questionnaire to 28,000 Hungarian young learners. She established that communicative activities with a focus on meaning were the least frequent to occur in all year-groups surveyed. What children enjoyed were watching videos, listening to tapes, pair & group work, and acting. Hardi (2004) investigated the characteristics of Hungarian learners' language-learning motivation, in the case of two cohorts between ages 9-14. The research focused on likes/dislikes in classroom learning; also on language choice and language learning. Both cohorts were highly motivated but in those studying English as optional subject instrumental motivation was dominant, whereas with those younger learners in compulsory foreign language groups, classroom-related motives were dominant. Mihaljevic Djigunovic (1998)

investigated the attitudes, motivation, language anxiety and attributions of children in Croatia learning a foreign language (English, French, German or Italian).

Lamb (2004) investigated the motivation of Indonesian children aged 12-13 years learning English. Very high levels of motivation were found, but the traditional concepts of instrumental and integrative motivation tended to be indistinguishable. This was possibly because integrative motivation tended to be seen not as integration into Anglophone culture but rather into global culture. As such, individuals seemed to aspire to a 'bicultural' identity involving a global and a local version of the self. Nikolov (1999a) followed three cohorts of children. They were investigated for eight years and were taught by the same teacher. It was found that learners' motivation could be maintained by intrinsically interesting and cognitively challenging tasks, and that their attitudes were shaped by what happened in the classroom.

Marschollek (2002) found that the classes he studied maintained their motivation throughout primary school. Where there was a decrease of interest, this showed in those children who had not had the opportunity to meet foreigners. The contact with native speakers was found to be the strongest factor as regards motivation. There was evidence for a significant influence of social context and parents on interest to learn a foreign language. The didactic consequences, according to the author, are: to acknowledge all types of success in learners and to give opportunities for autonomous learning. Kennedy, Nelson, Odell & Austin (2000) found that students at elementary school in USA with foreign language programmes showed positive attitudes to school, to perceived difficulty in language acquisition, to perceived desirability of foreign language study, had positive cultural views, self-esteem and confidence, in contrast to their peers who were not learning a foreign language at that stage. It was concluded that learning a foreign language at elementary school helps develop motivation to participate, to persist and to succeed in their foreign language studies.

Wu (2003) studied children aged 5 learning English as a foreign language at primary school in Hong Kong, in a monolingual Cantonese context. The main focus was on intrinsic motivation and those classroom activities which seemed to foster it, directly or indirectly. These included a predictable learning environment, moderately challenging tasks, necessary instructional support, evaluation that emphasises self-improvement, and attribution of success or failure to variables that the learner can do something about. These encouraged self-perception of target-language competence. Also, some freedom in choosing content, method and performance outcomes encouraged perceived autonomy. Both perceived target language competence and perceived autonomy seemed to promote intrinsic motivation. Austin (2003), to conclude with, found that pupils' attitudes were highly positive. Their acquisition in the early stage was limited to words or lexical clusters and formulaic expressions. It was considered right to be proud of the children's achievements, even though their

competences seemed rather atomised and disconnected, hence a need to think further about how a more integrated underlying competence might be achieved.

Table 4.4. b. Socio-economic status

Nikolov (in press) Edelenbos, van der Schoot & Verstralen (2000)	Questionnaire study of 28,000 young Hungarian learners. National assessment of English at the end of primary education.

Nikolov (in press) claims that socio-economic status (SES) plays a differential role, depending on the format in which early foreign language learning is set. In contexts where the foreign language is high-status and a privilege, SES can exert a strong influence on children's learning. Inequality in social systems can exacerbate differences between young learners. Edelenbos, van der Schoot & Verstralen (2000) show that differences in linguistic performances exist between pupils from higher and lower social economical levels.

Table 4.4. c. Gender

Hajdu (2005) Edelenbos, van der Schoot & Verstralen (2000)	Study in the highest Grades of Australian primary schools. National assessment of English at the end of primary education.

Female students at Grade 8 in Australia showed a higher interest than male students in communication and in meeting persons from another culture. According to Edelenbos, van der Schoot & Verstralen (2000) boys outperform girls by the time they reach the end of Dutch primary school (age 12).

Table 4.4. d. Influence of minority home language

Hull-Cortes (2002)	In the San Francisco Bay area a study was executed into attitudes of students with different home languages.

Hull-Cortes (2002) found that students at Grades 3-8 with home languages other than English showed more positive attitudes towards foreign languages and a higher degree of parental support than did students whose first language was English. There were no gender differences but a clear difference between the two schools surveyed.

Observations from Research relating to Good Practice

- Children in some cases appear to be developing new forms of identity (e.g. global identity, national identity, local identity, ethnic identity) in a changing, global world, and languages motivation can be part of this;

- young children tend to respond very well to intrinsic and cognitively challenging activities and materials;

- there can be differences between classroom motivation during the period when a modern language is compulsory, and subsequent forms of motivation (perhaps instrumental) when learning a modern language has become optional at some stage in secondary education;

- learning a modern language at primary school can develop qualities of participation and persistence as compared with children who do not receive a modern language at primary school;

- a range of classroom activities has been identified which seem causally linked to the development of intrinsic motivation in young children, possibly through the intermediate processes of perceived autonomy and perceived achievement;

- socio-economic status can still have a negative influence on the early learning of a modern language at primary school, and hence good practice consists of finding ways of reducing or eliminating this influence;

4.5   Research Illustrating the Assessment of Skills

The diversity of early language learning in Europe can easily be identified from the previous chapters. This is not surprising as twenty-five EU member states and eight additional countries all show their priorities, strong points, priorities and good practice. At the pupils level the outcomes must be equally overwhelming.

The description of the skills learnt or acquired is based upon an abundance of assessments carried out all over Europe. Before 1998 only in Sweden (Balke, 1990), the Netherlands (Vinjé, 1993) and Scotland (Low et al. 1995) were assessments carried out in the sense mentioned above (comprehensive, linking language competence to

other factors). Since 1998 throughout Europe assessments have been conducted in Scotland, Spain, Italy, Greece, and the Netherlands. In years to come, most probably France and Belgium and other states will follow.

In **Sweden**, however, national assessments are no longer held. Through educational reform an alternative use of national tests has been implemented. Teachers and schools have an access to use tests for English at several points in education in the primary, but they are not mandatory for each school and child. The school and the teacher can draw on and conduct the tests that are provided for children in the primary, but they do not have to use them.

The longest-running assessment scheme and the most elaborate is to be found in **the Netherlands**. The Netherlands national assessment program in education (PPON) measures a level of performance on school subjects at the end of Dutch primary (elementary) education. Two assessments, in 1991 and 1996, of English as a foreign language have been conducted. In both assessments several sub domains of English have been studied: listening, reading, receptive word knowledge, use of a bilingual wordlist, speaking and productive word knowledge. The approach in PPON (see Vinjé, 1993; and Edelenbos, van der Schoot & Verstralen, 2000) allows two kinds of interpretation. First the results of the children can be measured against a set of predefined standards which are related to cohort goals for English in primary education. Secondly it is possible to measure whether children's performance overall has degreased or increased. For listening Edelenbos, van der Schoot & Verstralen (2000) have concluded that the level of command of the second cohort was not lower than the level of the pupils from the first cohort. The substandard "sufficient" for listening was attained by only forty-six percent of all pupils, whereas it had been expected that seventy to seventy-five percent of the pupils would reach it. The minimum standard is to be attained by ninety to ninety-five percent of the pupils, but is only reached by eighty-four percent of the pupils. Also for speaking the level of command has not dropped since the first assessment. But then again students fail to reach the minimum level and the level 'sufficient' which was specified by experts. The assessment published by Edelenbos, van der Schoot & Verstralen (2000) furthermore makes clear that large differences in performance exist between pupils from higher and lower social levels. Boys outperform girls by the time they reach the end of Dutch primary school (age 12). Time emerges clearly as the stable and significant variable in early language learning and teaching. Unfortunately these two assessments have provided important insights into the possibilities, but especially into the limitations of foreign language teaching and learning at the level of the teacher and at the level of the pupils.

In **Scotland** McPake et al (2003) illustrate what a nationally representative sample of pupils in Scotland are able to achieve in Listening and Speaking towards the end of

Primary 7 (final year of primary school, pupils aged 11-12 after two years of learning a foreign language); and in Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing towards the end of Secondary 2 (pupils aged 13-14, after four years of learning a foreign language). The survey was commissioned by the Scottish Executive Education Department. This entailed developing processes and instruments for measuring pupils' achievements in French and German in late primary and early secondary at national rather than individual school levels, when pupils are assessed independently (listening and speaking) by visiting native speakers and by externally set assessment tasks (reading and writing). It also entailed developing a nationally validated picture of pupils' attainments at these two points which pinpoint current areas of strength and weakness and which will serve as a benchmark for future national assessments, thereby showing whether or not national norms are rising within a key nationally-sponsored initiative. The results show that by the end of Primary 7 the great majority of pupils had reached a level of proficiency which was robust enough to be capable of measurement by external national measures, that by the end of Secondary 2 their proficiency had progressed further (suggesting they were able to build on what had been acquired at primary school); and that the performance of Scottish pupils in German was clearly higher than that of Scottish pupils in French, in tests that were made as similar as possible between the two languages.

The process of examining and assessing foreign languages in the lower Grades of primary school **in Slovenia** is regulated by the existing education legislation, and it also undergoes changes dictated by the contemporary understanding of the learning and teaching of foreign languages. Čagran & Brumen (2004) present an overview of empirical research into the examination and assessment of the knowledge of foreign languages shown by pupils in the lower Grades of primary school in Slovenia. The data was collected in the 2003/2004 school year by means of a copied survey questionnaire from a non-random targeted sample of Slovenian teachers in the lower grades of primary school. The existing practice of examining and assessing pupils was presented from the point of view of the characteristics of implementing this process on one hand, and the opinions of teachers on the other. The research shows that, in order to examine knowledge, teachers most frequently use traditional tests which they prepare themselves, and among other forms they most frequently use oral interrogation; more modern (authentic) forms like language portfolio are rare. Teachers agree that pupils in lower Grades who learn foreign languages should be assessed, although more with descriptive than numerical marks.

The highly differentiated scene of language learning in **Spain** is of course also reflected in several studies which were carried out in autonomous regions. These studies used identical instruments, but were used for different purposes, such as studying the effects of starting in Grade 1 vs starting in Grade 3 (Canary Islands); in

studies on the effectiveness of English education with large samples (the Basque Country); and in Catalonia with a small sample of students through a longitudinal study. In these studies several skills were assessed, such as listening, reading and writing. Here, some the major results for listening and reading are presented.

Listening In the Spanish national evaluation of English, Catalunya (2001), the scores were 71% at the end of primary in the oral comprehension test / listening test. Children were able to understand words from familiar fields, identify words in context, recognise daily routines and transfer meaning from a situation. The Spanish national evaluation of English, Madrid (1999) resulted in 68% achievement in the aural comprehension test. The national evaluation of English, Canarias, revealed a score of 77% among the early starters, Grade 1, vs. 72 % of the Grade 3 starters. For listening comprehension, it was found that 90% of the pupils can follow a text in temporal sequence, follow instructions, can carry out a task which is given orally. The national evaluation of English, Basque area (1999), found that achievement in the aural comprehension test was 80%, and that the age of starting played no role.

Reading According to the Spanish Evaluation, Catalunya (1999), the average score on the reading test was 51%. At end of primary English pupils were able to read for facts, and organise information in a text, identify cultural elements and key words, and search for specific information. Learners who started early (anticipation group, i.e. age 6) were better in reading. A positive attitude to English led to better achievements in all skills. The Spanish Evaluation, Canarias (1999), revealed that 90% of children at end of primary can understand a text and relate it to images, but only 50% can search for specific information. The Spanish Evaluation, Madrid (1999), reports an average score on the reading skills test of 57%. Global and specific comprehension was found to be related to learners' interests. The Spanish Evaluation, Basque area (1999), states that the reading skills average score was 65 %, and that the age of beginning played no part.

4.6   Research Illustrating Language Awareness and Intercultural Awareness

Blondin et al. (1998) identified relatively few studies into the results of language awareness and intercultural awareness. Both are of vital importance in early language learning. In several European countries the " l'éveil aux langues "– project (Candelier, 2003) attracted much attention. In the table 4.5 two evaluations of the project are incorporated, one qualitative Tupin et al. (2001) and one qualitative Genelot (2001) in nature.

Table 4.5 Language Awareness programmes

Young & Helot (2003)	Study into language awareness initiatives
Genelot (2001)	Quantitative evaluation of the Evlang project (Eveil aux Langues) which took place in France (including Réunion), Switzerland, Italy, Spain & Austria
Tupin et al. (2001)	Qualitative evaluation of Evlang (see above).
Wenzel (2004)	investigated the emergence of language awareness in pre-primary German children acquiring Dutch in the context of a newly founded bilingual kindergarten close to the Dutch-German border.

Young and Helot (2003) question the automatic assumption that one foreign language should be taught from an early age, and favour instead a 'language awareness' model for the early years of primary school education which draws among other things on the various languages which may be spoken in the primary school's neighbourhood, including possibly by the pupils themselves. At present, they claim, such pupils' bilingualism and biculturalism run the risk of being disregarded and undervalued by their school system. In one particular 'language awareness' initiative, closer links were achieved with the local community, pupils felt more valued and teachers gained a greater understanding of the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of their pupils. Genelot (2001) reports on a quantitative evaluation of the Evlang project (Eveil aux Langues) which took place in France (including Réunion), Switzerland, Italy, Spain & Austria and which aimed to introduce learners to aspects such as non-verbal communication, how language functions, using language, spoken and written language, varieties of language, diversity of languages and cultures, how languages may be learnt. The quantitative evaluation established a positive influence of Evlang on children's aptitudes in terms of memorisation and auditory discrimination in non-familiar languages, with the effects becoming stronger in the long-term rather than short-term. There were some benefits to children's writing, a positive effect on children's sense of linguistic and cultural diversity and sense of openness to other languages and cultures with which pupils were not familiar. There was some increase in children's desire to learn other languages, and an increased interest in metropolitan France in learning the

languages of immigrant groups. There was however a lack of impact on the competences of children in the language of the school.

Tupin et al (2001) found, in the case of a qualitative evaluation of Evlang, that there was evidence to suggest that children learnt to identify differences between different languages, to note that languages borrow words from each other, to learn how to go about learning other languages, to learn to listen more effectively, to learn that not all alphabets are the same, to learn that masculine and feminine may vary according to the particular language, to identify the languages spoken by members of the extended family (e.g. grandparents), or in the neighbourhood and to gain some access to these.

The study by Wenzel (2004) is unique because of the age group involved and the fact that a smaller and less widely used language is involved. Wenzel (2004) explored age appropriate procedures to get a grasp of language awareness in very young children (between 3 and 5) in a partial immersion context with Dutch and German. Observationsheets were used (L1, L2, reacting in the bilingual context, meta-commentaries), word-reception test with picture cards and assessment of intuitive understanding of grammatical correctness of sentences. Along the lines of investigations in other bilingual kindergardens, productive competence was not observed beyond individual lexemes and ritualised sentences. German children, after 2 years in the part-immersion kindergarten, were able to identify highly frequent Dutch words as Dutch as well as unknown words with a high similarity to their L1 (cognates).

Table 4.6 Intercultural awareness

Löger, Wappelshammmer, & Fiala (2005)	Evaluation of 80 kindergartens with 2,800 children, aged 3-6 who received Czech or Slovakian, taught by mother tongue teachers
Brunzel (2002)	Investigation of intercultural awareness acquired in instructed foreign language learning in the primary.
Likata (2003)	Study into learner attitudes and teacher attitudes in different geographical locations, close to border versus mainland.
Francescini & Ehrhart (2002)	Study of children in their learning of French from Grade 1.
Francescini, Müller & Dauster (2004)	Study of perceptions of parents whose children had opted for French as first language at the secondary school
Abali (2000)	Study of the cultural identity of children of third generation Turkish immigrant workers and the role of language

Löger, Wappelshammer & Fiala (2005) report on the evaluation of 80 kindergartens with 2,800 children, aged 3-6, who received Czech or Slovakian, taught by mother tongue teachers who came across the border. Those teachers were well qualified, some with university degrees. 1,6 – 2 hours per Kindergarten were allotted [note: this means that if there are several groups in the kindergarten, the time must be divided] The aim of the programme evaluation was to find out which methodology was best, to find out the beliefs about success from all stakeholders and to find indicators for quality. The evaluation has an extensive list of quality indicators. The kindergarten staff and the mother tongue teachers considered the results of the whole initiative as good to very good. The effect they saw on the children was: some progress, visible pride, and an effect on the general language education. The grandparents were involved and partly remembered their own intercultural biographies. The attitudes of the parents were at the beginning partly in favour, partly they would have preferred English . After 1 year their appreciation for this programme in border languages and its usefulness grew, according to a perception of staff it increased from 0/1 at the beginning to 5 (scale of 10), so the programme can also be seen as adult education. The perceived reaction of the children by the staff was from 2 at the beginning to 10 at the end of the year. The most important conditions for success are according to staff: sufficient time, professional quality and the exchange with colleagues. 75% voiced the programme should go on indefinitely. Professional/programme quality means: to prepare the kindergartens and let them participate, to give at least 30 minutes per week, to give time for staff discussions, to have support measures, to have supportive parents, to inform parents, to involve parents, e.g. in story telling. The staff that travels from across the border should be paid the travelling costs beforehand, and not have to pre-finance.

Brunzel (2002) investigated intercultural awareness acquired in instructed foreign language learning. The cultural connotations of lexical units are described. Research was conducted in 4 classes about the development of cultural connotations in learners when learning lexis and this was linked to motivation interest and experience of the learners.

Likata (2003) writes about the limitations of intercultural education in the primary foreign language classroom. Teachers are not sufficiently trained to actually promote in their classes the cultural openness proclaimed as aim in curricula. The study focussed on learner attitudes and teacher attitudes in different geographical locations, close to border versus the mainland. Her analysis of the teacher questionnaires showed no notable difference in the Saarland (i.e. close to the border) as regards realisation of the aim of intercultural learning (in other words: the closeness to the border, in spite

of the engagement of teachers) does not mean that a Saarland programme type stands out as superior when contrasted with the other Bundesländer.

Abali (2000) researched through the use of questionnaires the cultural identity of children of third-generation Turkish immigrant workers. It was found that the identity of these children changes very gradually and that language plays an important role in this process.

Likata (2003) distributed questionnaires to primary foreign-language learners and teachers in three Bundesländer of Germany (Saarland, Bavaria, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern) to learn about their attitudes towards the other country. It was found that learners of French had a significantly lower degree of ethnocentrism than learners of Italian (the French pupils were from the Saarland, where exchange practice is common; the learners of Italian from Bavaria where actual exchange is less common). Learners in big classes proved to be significantly more open-minded than pupils in small classes. Learners who perceived their parents and the interaction with them as positive showed significantly higher self -mage concepts (feeling accepted, own competences and attitude to foreigners) than those who did not have this perception. Learners who perceived a positive parent behaviour („induktiv") showed a significantly lower readiness for aggression than those who did not have that perception about their parents. The first group had a significantly higher degree of openness. Their degree of ethnocentrism was significantly lower. They scored significantly higher in items referring to tolerance-empathy. They also had significantly lower scores in the items referring to prejudice.

German pupils had higher scores in the measurement of ethnocentrism compared to non-German pupils. The latter group of pupils scored significantly lower in the items relating to self-esteem, self-competence and dealing with others. Foreign pupils scored higher when checked for readiness be aggressive. Girls scored significantly lower in the items measuring ethnocentrism than boys. They had significantly higher scores in the dimension of tolerance/empathy. They had clearly lower scores in the items measuring prejudice. They had significantly higher scores than boys for perceived self-esteem in intercultural encounters. They were less ready to be aggressive.

Francescini & Ehrhart (2002) followed children in their learning of French from Grade 1. One of the dimensions researched was cultural awareness. First and second Graders in the study showed a cultural competence which went beyond mere "sensibilisation". They appreciated the presence of teachers from across the border when this occurred.

Francescini, Müller & Dauster (2004) report on a study where a questionnaire was handed to parents of children at the beginning of secondary school (i.e. age 10/11 children). Among the parents who stated in the questionnaire that they had opted for French as first language at the secondary school, the reason that cross-border

friendships of the children played a part, was not given often . For 74 % this played no role. Interpretation: In spite of the closeness to the border there are no or hardly any contacts with peers. However, 67 % stated that French is of practical use when going across the border.

4.7   Relationships between Research and Pedagogical Principles

This review on research has been stated very cautiously - a necessary way of acting because of the huge diversity in research, the outcomes and especially because of the enormously wide domain from which the studies are drawn.

The outcomes of the section on provision suggests that early language learners will tend to be more successful if they start earlier. However, it should be kept in mind that an earlier start ('starting age') is likely to lead to an increase in overall 'time' available and may lead to greater 'intensity' of learning and use. The evidence is not absolutely conclusive. Several research studies indicate the first pedagogical principal that is of importance for early language learning: starting earlier will lead to an increase in time and intensity and though that to better performances in the foreign language at the end of formal education.

Research into provision furthermore indicates that a fair amount of prerequisites needs to be built in. Sufficient amount of and distribution of time intensity and continuity need to be provided, in order to create a successful environment for early language learning. In fact, these findings are in line with the conclusions in the Blondin et al. (1998) study. The same goes for the outcome that teachers have to be well trained and supported professionally in areas such as the target language, language pedagogy and evaluation, intercultural awareness, teaching and learning strategies, language awareness and the creation of a supportive environment. This tentative conclusion is essential and probably underlying any pedagogical principle. It is also desirable that there should be a greater general understanding of how progression in the development of a child's additional language(s) actually unfolds. The notion of 'climbing a language ladder' may be useful for certain purposes but second-language acquisition research suggests the process is more complex than that, and if teachers (and pupils themselves) are to help diagnose children's language development, then some understanding of the actual complexities – of the ups and downs, the twists and turns of the process - becomes important.

When ICT of an appropriate sort is made available to help young learners to access, then a great range of input and interaction and feedback is made feasible. This latter conclusion might indicate a new pedagogical principle, namely that ICT will lead to greater input, interaction and feedback.

Research into early language-learning and teaching clearly points to the central role of the teacher in providing encouragement, input, interaction and a supportive learning environment. Still there are very few studies available that clearly point to central principles for the teachers that really work. Young learners benefit from an early introduction to reading and writing in the target language. Children are also capable of building up a capacity to learning strategic and reflective acting. An important principle might be that early language-learning should provide possibilities to develop language awareness and meta-cognitive skills.

Furthermore, research into the process of early language-learning hints at the necessity of strategy–training that this should be recurrent and not one-off. An important principle might be that language learning must incorporate the learning of strategies and strategy training in a recurrent fashion.

Several studies have shown the value of narrative in helping learners understand the structure of certain kinds of discourse and in developing capabilities in guessing and making interferences. The narrative is part of larger principle, mainly that language learning should be personalised through several media in order to be effective for the child.

Feedback, be it negative or positive, always has its value. Research into effective instruction has shown that if provided correctly, positive feedback is most valuable. Feedback most not undermine confidence or self-esteem. Without a doubt it is possible to state that an important principle will be that early language learning most built up on and incurrence positive motivation.

Research into attitudes and motivation made clear that early language learning has a major impact. Children, in some cases appear, to be developing new forms of identity. For early language learning, the principle of tolerance towards others and the encouragement of learning new sets of values seems to be highly important. This review, but also the meta-analysis of Curtain and Dahlberg (2005), have shown that learning a modern language at primary school can develop qualities of participation and persistence as compared to children who do not receive a modern language at primary school.

5.   GOOD PRACTICE: CONDITIONS AND PRODUCTS

Good practice is complex and dynamic and cannot be put into boxes. One very small example may serve to illustrate this: the initiative to lend teachers rucksacks with up to date authentic language learning material (Mobile material, reported by the Goethe Institut Paris). As a type of improvement, this initiative affects teaching directly. It is however also an incentive for the motivation of teachers (professionalisation aspect), and it is one small contribution to the conditions for success. All the examples reported in this chapter can be looked at from several angles.

A survey of good practice in primary teaching of languages which has a Europe-wide scope and limited space available can only deliver an inventory of types of good practice. The examples were grouped into four main types:

Creating Conditions for Good Practice (section 5.1)
Teacher training – pre- and in-service (section 5.2)
Teaching (section 5.3)
Dissemination (section 5.4)

The chapter ends with a number of tentative indicators for good practice, extracted from the practice descriptions available and augmented by some transferable recommendations of research reports (section 5.5).

5. 1   Creating Conditions for Good Practice

5.1.1   Information

Measures to improve the flow of information can be looked upon both at a supranational level and at a national level. Some developments at a European level are reported first. Web portals (europa.eu.int) and more classic information agencies like Europe direct and other bureaus within educational administration or European liaison departments act as intermediaries between citizens and institutions. The **EU web portal about languages**, established at the end of 2005 (europa.eu/languages) aims at answering, and widening interest in the topic of languages. The introductory paragraphs are written in a style personally addressing the readers. This attempt at user-friendliness is in accordance with EU communication policy. A special **European information centre** for language policy and projects is the ECML [European Centre

for Modern Languages] in Graz, set up by the Council of Europe in 1994 (www.ecml.at).

In order to give comprehensive and up-to-date access to information about education systems in Europe, Eurydice (www.eurydice.org) was set up. With its database **Eurybase** detailed plurilingual information is available. Because of the ongoing changes in the field of ELL, a database cannot possibly give a comprehensive account of the most recent situation. The **Eurobarometer** (http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/) gives statistics on public opinion about many topics of concern in current EU societies. A new barometer on language competences and lay ideas about language learning was produced. (Barometer 243, published in February 2006, available in 19 languages [August 2006]). **Eurostat** (epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu) also offers statistics on foreign language learning. In 2005, a special statistical report on foreign language education in Europe, the **Key Data**, was published. It attempted to obtain a picture of teaching processes, for example by giving statistics about the relative weight given to the four skills, the number of lessons reserved in the curricula and special provisions like maximum class size (cf. also chapter 2 of this report). The European Commission, Directorate General Education and Culture, has asked for **key studies** on aspects of language learning. *The European profile for language teacher education – a frame of reference*, is one of the recent studies (2004). The 40 key competences teachers ideally would possess can partly help to identify the competences a primary modern language teacher should have. Information about the **European language labels** helps schools across Europe to receive information about outstanding initiatives. (http://ec.europa.eu/education/language/label/index.cfm). The work of **foundations and associations supporting multilingualism and tolerance** can only be acknowledged.

Journals on foreign language teaching are a traditional source of information. New journals for language teachers, which contain information on national research projects, have been founded, like *poliglota* in Poland. Journals specifically addressed to teachers of young learners have been founded. *Frühes Deutsch*, (founded under the title of *Primar* in 1992), reaches all the countries where primary German is offered as a foreign or second language. (www.goethe.de/dll/mat) Other journals edited by teacher associations of various languages are, where appropriate, printing articles about ELL or passing on information about national and international contexts. Journals for primary education tend to have regular contributions about teaching ELL. In general, the **regional and national quality press** report about new initiatives in the young learner field. British newspapers, for example The Guardian, contain (online) information for all teachers of English, including primary modern language teaching, for example with news stories from abroad (TEFL button in,

www.education.guardian.co.uk). The growing interest in teaching the modern language together with content from other subjects is obvious from looking at the web portal Euroclic: The European Network for Content and Language Integrated Classrooms (www.euroclic.net).

With the spread of new technologies, access to information is much easier for practising teachers in a specific country compared to the publication time of the Blondin et al. (1998) Report. Websites have become an important source of information, and a tool of democratic participation. Working documents of institutions and draft curricula are put into the web for comment. In France, a comprehensive website, primlangues, was set up for several languages with lesson plans, legal documents and material graded by difficulty (www.primlangues.education.fr).

Some countries have installed national (information) centres for foreign language education, for example Austria. (www.sprachen.ac.at) Germany has a documentation centre for research and didactic literature in modern foreign languages which publishes the so-called IFS Bibliographie, an abstracting service. (www.uni-marburg.de/ifs) CILT, the National Centre for Languages in London (www.cilt.org.uk) and Scottish CILT (SCILT) in Stirling (www.scilt.stir.ac.uk) distribute information. In England, a national advisory centre on early language learning was set up at the end of the last millennium. (www.nacell.org). Norway has the Centre for Foreign Languages in Education (www.fremmedspraksenteret.no). In Ireland, a National Coordinator for early modern languages was appointed in 2001. (www.eckildare.ie). The Netherlands has a small coordination centre, the National Action Agency Modern Foreign Languages (www.nabmvt.nl).

One small but useful initiative of the Irish coordination centre were the **information sheets for principals** (2004). In countries with a federal structure, information about curricula and modern languages for children is given by the respective ministries of education. With other types of national informative material, like a **teacher trainer inventory** disseminated in Poland via the National Centre for In-Service (www.codn.edu.pl) it is hoped that teachers may be induced to attend in-service courses because of the more personal approach.

Resource centres and foreign language libraries at a more regional level have given teachers more chance to get hands-on information and look at didactic material. In 2003 and 2004, in Hungary, for instance, 80 resource centres were set up.

National conferences are a way to present new approaches, bring together the various groups involved in education, combine theory and practice and make known developments abroad. In Poland, in 2002, 2003 and 2004 such conferences were held as a pioneer initiative, in Slovenia a similar event took place in 2006.

5.1.2 Legal provisions or recommendations/directives

The **Common European Framework of Reference for Modern Languages**, which with its level A1 also refers to primary schools, has the character of a recommendation, but it is a key document which has influenced national language curricula. In a different way, the so-called "Nürnberger Empfehlungen" [Recommendations], written by high profile teachers of primary German from many European countries in 1992-93 and still to be found on the website of the Goethe Institut, have had an influence on national or regional curricula for German, the content of in-service training and the material written for children regionally. Compared with such documents, a **binational treaty**, like the German-French friendship treaty (1963) is on the one hand example of a legal document, on the other hand the educational measures planned needed to be brought to life by teachers. This document paved the way for the exchange of kindergarten-teachers. In 2003 it was renewed, and new targets were set, for example to increase support for the pre-primary and primary level and support for the Mediterranean countries and new EU member states. Current legal texts or regulations can, for example, be found on the web portals of ministries, euregios and other cross-border support organisations.

Many countries have new **school laws** and have written **new curricula for early language learning**. The Czech Republic has had a new law since September 2004; from 2007 a new curriculum will be effective. In Hungary, the so-called World-Languages programme was launched in 2003: this aimed at initiating and supporting change at all levels. Curricula in Europe vary considerably in how detailed they are. There is an ongoing discussion about the status of English as an early language.

Along the borders, it is now even possible **for kindergarten children to cross the border**. Special **bi-national or Euregio agencies** provide support in legal matters, like filling in forms for classes crossing a border to visit a partner class.

Regulations ascertaining language rights protect and promote regional and minority languages. Many countries have made English the standard primary modern language. Others allow several languages to be offered at primary level. The Basque country, Belgium, South Tyrol/Alto Adige, Alsace and Lower Austria are examples for more complex linguistic situations. In Spain, for example, there are five Autonomous Governments with two official languages in education; in such cases a foreign language is a third language, mostly English, but this is not mandatory. Many Autonomous Governments tend to introduce a second foreign language in primary education. In the Basque country, the Eleanitz plurilingual project comprises Euskera, Spanish, English and French. Euskera and Spanish are taught to a high level, from age 3. English is introduced from age 4. French is introduced at age 12. This project started in 1991 with 8 schools and now 24 schools are involved (primary and

secondary). In infant education, English is taught for 2 ½ hours per week, 3 hours in primary. Euskera is the language of instruction from age 3-10, and for 3 hours per week it is taught as a subject from the third circle (grade?) of primary. Spanish is taught 3 hours per week as a subject, from age 8. (www.ikastola.net)

The **starting age** can be fixed in legal documents like curricula. Some countries allow flexibility in the starting age; others have a fixed starting age. In Spain, all Autonomous Governments have promoted and generalised foreign language instruction from the age of six. The process of **accrediting portfolios** is not strictly speaking a mandatory measure, but it is both a "focalising" measure and a form of quality control by the Council of Europe. Spain has developed a continuous series of portfolios: age 4-8, age 8-12, and age 12-18 and 16 +. Also in Poland, portfolios for all age groups exist. Even though the Council of Europe has no legislative power, the example of Spain, as well as of many other countries shows that the guidelines of a European body like the Council of Europe (www.coe.int/portfolio/) are respected and put into practice.

5.1.3 Financial aspects

One aspect of prioritising an educational field is the **amount of money spent on in-service training**. Of similar magnitude is the funding given for **new pre-service training colleges and courses**. The third area is the budget available at school level. In Portugal, which started ELL in 2005/06, the Ministry of Education stated in a **regulation**, how much money each school would receive, in order to give security to the schools. The way financial aspects of ELL have been (publicly) discussed, and the degree to which teachers themselves are aware of budget questions apart from their own in-service training contribution or the money the pupils' class trips cost, seems to vary from country to country.

Studies on the economic side of foreign language learning and language competence and language as an economic factor are outside the scope of this report. Only a few indications are given. In a national report about the state of foreign language teaching in the Netherlands (Edelenbos & de Jong, 2004) figures on expenditure were given. In Britain, English is part of the export industry. In 2005, a study about the costs of installing an English only policy versus a plurilingual approach versus Esperanto, commissioned by the French government, was published by a Swiss economist (Grin, 2005).

Money from **foundations** supports the implementation of ELL. One example is the foundation "Praktisches Lernen", (Munich), which has financed meetings of primary language professionals from ministries and universities for several years. (www.praktisches-lernen.de) The Soros Foundation is active in Central Europe

(www.soros.org). In Hungary, a special programme ("Help the disadvantaged") was begun in 2003 by the Ministry of Education, which also included the modern language initiatives for children. Countries with a less developed infrastructure obtain large sums from European funds, foundations, and organisations like the World Bank. The **sums made available for research** and received via external funding in this field of the humanities, compared to funding for research on education in general and funding for the sciences could be investigated. At a classroom level one financial aspect is the fact that **"cover teachers" need to be financed** when the class teachers are attending in-service training.

5.1.4 Monitoring

Classifying language centres as innovation centres and creating an institutional framework to support innovation via such centres is exemplified by the Resources Centre for Foreign Languages in Barcelona (founded in 1986). It is a documentation centre, but has the explicit task to develop and monitor innovations. In 2005, for example, 208 teachers were sent abroad under programmes run or co-organised by the centre.

Providing structures for teacher training is a central aspect of "organisation". Stable structures for in-service training are set up and specific courses for teacher training are offered in order to raise quality, and with it the profile of the profession, i.e. primary teachers. Frameworks for in-service training are developed to make measures more long-lasting and raise their quality. The national or regional examples themselves are presented in the section on teacher training.

Consecutive curricula tackle the problem of continuity. One such system is that of "key stages" in the national curriculum in England. Whilst those stages refer to all subjects, the term "language ladder" was coined more recently to indicate continuity of language learning from early childhood into adolescence. (www.nacell.org; www.dfes.gov.uk) In how far the linear metaphors of stage and ladder adequately reflect the actual language learning processes is a question still unanswered.

Careful planning of earlier starts aims at avoiding unexpected problems at the following stage of extension. In Norway, where schools are now encouraged to start a modern language earlier, 15 schools which voluntarily set up pilot courses were invited to a start-up seminar by the ministry and coached by international experts. (www.fremmedspraksenteret.no; www.utdanningsdirektoratet.no) The pilot schools are grouped in a network. In England, in 1999, the Early Language Learning Initiative was set up and funded for 2 years. It was extended because of the positive results and because a report on the status of modern languages, presented by the Nuffield

foundation (2000), strongly advocated a massive increase. A national strategy on primary modern languages was developed.

Setting up networks of teacher-coordinators regionally is a measure to achieve quality in all geographical areas.

Setting up teacher development networks nationally is, in most cases, an initiative by the authorities, but also supported by agencies like the British Council, the Goethe Institut, Institut Français, Instituto Cervantes, Nordic Culture Centres and others or by associations of teachers of a specific language. One example is Poland, where the contact persons for training initiatives are integrated into a national network ("Young learners/Delfort"), coordinated by the National In-service Training Institute in Warsaw (www.codn.edu.pl) and by the Goethe Institut Warsaw. In the Czech Republic the networks for teachers of German have installed frequently accessed mailing-lists. Also, an association of teacher educators has been created there (www.amate.cz). The Association of Teachers of English of the Czech Republic was founded in 1990 and currently has about 700 members (www.atecr.cz).

5.1.5 Mobility and Flexibility

Allowing for flexibility does not stand in contradiction to securing quality by continuity. Finland, for example, is one of the countries with a very general, framework type of curriculum. This educational belief in decentralising curriculum making is not per se an expression of good practice. But, if it is in accordance with the educational principles of a country and produces acceptable or high learning outcomes, it is a strategy of an education system that has been proven to work. Austria is another country where the curriculum is more of a framework type so that schools can also offer contact with two modern languages or slightly extend the time for learning. In the Czech Republic, from 2007/08 schools will work out their own curriculum, taking the Common European Framework for modern languages into account.

Denmark and Sweden also hand over curricular responsibility to the schools. From the point of view of a national ministry, de-centralisation to a large extent might mean that activities occur at grass root level but are not necessarily reported to authorities.

Creating and extending encounter possibilities has become a highly popular enterprise. There are solid structures, like teacher exchanges supported under Comenius Actions, but in this area flexible measures seem to be essential. Interest and attractiveness of countries selected for exchanges depend on context and region. In the Alsace, 1% of the German teaching is done by German exchange teachers. Arion study visits make it possible for experienced teachers and persons in responsible positions, in teams composed of one member each from a certain country, to visit schools in an area or city in a different country for one week. The objective of this

decentralised Socrates initiative is to bring educationalists into direct contact with good practice in a member state, thereby gaining a fresh perspective on their own educational context, as an incentive to improve quality. A second objective is to increase mutual information. These study visits go back to 1978. Study visits can be concerned with aspects of language teaching, including the primary level (www.arion-visits.net). For children, class trips have been organised for decades. In the 1990s, gradually, school authorities have made provisions to allow primary age children to cross a national border for a class trip. In Bavaria, for example, the first French class of 9-year-olds which was allowed to spend a week abroad in the Alsace with a partner class travelled in 1992. In border areas, depending on the political contexts, exchange initiatives at primary level have existed for a longer or shorter time. Obviously, travelling abroad is easier close to the border, but hardly possible for continental children learning English. In Spain 11-12 year olds in their last year of primary school were placed, in 2005 for the first time, into a fully funded, innovative short immersion programme: 1200 children from all across Spain enjoyed a week or two of English immersion. They met in a school or camp in Spain. Children from 2 different regions were put together. In many Comenius projects for the primary level, mutual visits are suggested to form part of the initiative, at least in virtual form. Summer camps with a component of foreign language teaching and a component of games, fun, and intercultural learning exist for early learners. Due to limited space only one initiative is mentioned. This is an initiative in Hungary which started back in 1989. For ten days, the camp turns into a theatre of learning: different lifestyles, communication styles and teaching styles become apparent to the approximately 80 participants per year. This particular camp is open to various age groups so younger ones are helped by older learners. Language material is prepared at 8 levels. The children are taught by native speakers and can experience a rather wide range of methods. (Babb & Horvathne, 2002).

At the trinational border of Luxemburg, Germany France there is the new "Schengen grammar school", and nearby is a secondary school, in Perls. The curricula are exchanged and shared, apart from intensive encounter programmes. Such schools for the secondary level can only be set up because there are children who learned the neighbour language intensively at primary level, where through short exchanges, a climate is prepared on which the secondary schools can build. In order to pursue the aim of the European Commission and the Council of Europe, to increase encounter possibilities, there is also the chance to bring together children in the city where they live. The summer camp is put up in a park in the city, for example, or the English adventure camp organised by the authorities. These public initiatives enable children from socially disadvantaged families to participate. In Lower Austria, there is the opportunity to send children across the border for free during the summer.

Support for cross-border initiatives at a communal level may have existed for decades or may be a very recent phenomenon. Flexibility as good practice in this case refers to quick and appropriate reactions to political, economic and cultural changes along the border. The Saarland and the Baden-Württemberg Upper Rhine valley can be mentioned as examples for long-standing initiatives along a border which, like all border-regions, has reacted to new opportunities. After 1990 initiatives have been helped on by newly founded agencies in the Euregios. Some started very soon after the fall of the Iron Curtain, some more recently, like Pontes in the Czech-Polish-German border area. A trend is for initiatives of originally bi-national institutions to become tri-national or at least to include tri-national activities in the programme. For example, the Deutsch Französisches Jugendwerk/ OFAJ increasingly has tri-national initiatives. Similarly Tandem, the German-Czech Coordination-Centre (www.tandem-org.de) is cooperating with the German-Polish Youth Exchange Office (www.dpjw.org). One recent product of these two agencies is a CD-Rom called explicitly "Trio linguale" (2004). The organisations promoting language and culture for one specific language, like the Goethe Institut, Europees Platform, Instituto Cervantes and Institut Français have their headquarters in the country where the language is spoken as the mother tongue, but they radiate into Europe and beyond, creating interest in a regional approach.

Big city provisions have been developed because of their high influx of immigrants – that is, of speakers of other languages. The models designed on how to support integration by early language learning vary greatly as a consequence of demographic changes, politics, and educational policies. From Brussels, for example, the Foyer model (www.foyer.be) is reported as good practice. This is a model which has trilingualism (mother tongue, Flemish and French) as its aim. 30% of the children are supposed to be immigrant children. The history goes back to 1981. There is permanent external assessment. The immigrant target group children who are in this programme end up less frequently in vocational secondary education (long-term effect). Another program from Brussels is STIMOB (stimulerend meertalig onderwijs in Brussels). This is a content and language integrated program, in operation since 2001. In the whole city of Gdansk, a start in grade 1 with the foreign language (in this case: English), is possible because the city gives financial support, also for language development and methodology training. The initiative will continue to 2020.

Structures to make use of new media are a reaction to technological changes and have affected all levels of school. Educational responses need to adapt to new developments and the change in popularity of types of new media. E-mail partnerships are known to all teachers, whether they use this way of creating authenticity or not. There are many support schemes for teachers, from lists of interested schools to step-by-step guides on how to proceed. Two initiatives for virtual encounters organised at

supranational level are netd@ys, and e-twinning. Netd@ys took place for 8 consecutive years until 2004. In 2004 there were 624 participants. The aims were to bring together learners from different countries via the internet, by giving them a task to be completed in one week, like producing a web-newspaper, a movie or a report about a study project. The participating countries organised special events, like multimedia workshops, to bring together the teams. The events were open to the public. In Poland, in 2004, for example there were digital entries in 5 formats: film, gallery, comic, reportage and billboard, the youngest participants being 7 years old. (www.netdayseurope.org) Information on how to start similar projects is now integrated into the web portal www.elearningeuropa.info. A more recent initiative is called e-twinning. Two or more schools work on a common topic, chats and email and forum function can be used. The objectives are education for tolerance and learning incentives via authentic exchange. There are ready made downloadable project kits available; also, special education schools can participate. The initiative is addressed to learners from pre-primary onwards. In less than a year since the start of the initiative, 11.000 primary and secondary schools have registered; by December 2006 2000 schools were already participating (www.e-twinning.net). Within a country, official agencies support and prepare guidelines, for example the Belgian Carnet de route pour élaborer un projet d'échange à distance. (Hubin, ed. 2006).

The degree to which schools make use of ICT varies depending on the acceptance and local necessity, for example in remote rural areas. The argument often put forward by primary teaches that time needs to be spent on face-to-face interaction and hands-on, non-virtual material, and that social competence is more important than media competence is understandable.

Effective small scale changes need a certain incubation period before they show themselves to a wider audience. Therefore the very first steps are hardly visible. It may be that a large percentage of what comprises good practice are small measures at a school level which are never reported and function over years. These would be the true grass roots level. The following examples give an indication of such small scale measures. In Greece, extracurricular courses for kindergarten and primary school children are popular. Often they are given on Saturdays. For German, the Goethe Institut Thessalonica designed the concept of the "Aktive Pause" (active break) in 2004. This means that the children find activity outdoor material in the school yard to use during breaks. The institution says that especially town children need stimuli for movement games in groups to balance the cognitive learning and their limited access to nature. These activities have a backwash on motivation for language learning and attention. The children know that these activities exist and ask for them. The offer is unique, compared to other language schools. In the same Goethe Institut (this is an example because such activities are offered in many countries and for many

languages) preceding the major holidays like Easter and Christmas arts and crafts afternoons are offered. Children tandems are formed. 120-150 children attend; also, there is a lot of support from parents and the Protestant German church. The offer is for children with Greek, German, or other language background. Children are highly motivated and work with full concentration for a whole afternoon. The event has been on offer since the mid-nineties and will remain popular as it is an excellent platform for encounters. In French kindergartens, German or a different language is put at the centre of attention during the afternoon programme.

5.1.6 Influencing Provision

For the very young, age 3-7, there is plenty of activity in the private sector as regards kindergarten languages (mainly English). But state pre-school or elementary education is in the process of introducing ELL as part of the regular programme in certain countries. In Spain, all autonomous governments promote a start in pre-school (age 5, in some cases age 4) with set requirements. In a school in Bologna, to give an example set at a local level, English is introduced as a task-based activity in pre-primary and then continued as a language–oriented activity. Classes for the 5-7 year age bracket have been institutionalised. The *Hocus-Lotus* programme in Italy reaches small children through a variety of media (www.hocus-lotus.edu) In Slovakia, a new initiative for children aged 3 upwards has been started at the ELC in Kosice. Parents are involved; therefore a new project is called "Mum, Dad and me". English, French or Italian can be learnt by the toddlers and their parents together. (www.elc.sk)

Plurilingual curricula are often initiated in regions where several languages are spoken, for example in the Susa Valley in Italy. Three languages – French, Italian and English are learned in parallel and at the same level from kindergarten to the end of primary. There are 2 hours of French and 2 hours of English per week. CLIL is practiced in science and geography; high quality textbooks have been written in English. The approach is a way towards European integration through different languages and cultures. In South Tyrol/ Alto Adige, some classes have the possibility to learn four languages: German, Italian, Ladin and English; a CLIL approach is used for several subjects. Another reason for offering plurilingual programmes is the response to parent interest or the perceived economic needs of a society. In Lithuania, in 2004 a kindergarten was started with a German-Lithuanian and an English-Lithuanian group which has a model function, in the country in that it is based on an initiative of a lobby group. In the city of Magdeburg, Germany, a trilingual primary school started in 2005 offering English immersion from grade 1 and French as a subject from grade 2. The school opens at 6 in the morning and children can stay until 18.00. The school programme is evidence of the professionalism with which new initiatives are planned

and draw on experience in organisational questions. There are mother-tongue English and French staffs, and teaching assistants for English and French were requested from the outset. Explicit reference is made in the web pages to the mother-tongue plus 2 formula of the EU (www.stejh.de/Grundschule/). Apart from such measures, which have a very special character, bilingual schools at borders or in areas of dialects or lesser used languages would often want to add English as the third language. In Saxony, a few schools offer the obligatory 2 hours of English, and French or Czech or Polish 3 hours per week. Trilingual education occurs in some regions in Europe. A book about trilingual primary education in Europe has been published by Beetsma (2002; cf. also: International Journal of the Sociology of Language, issue 171 (2005) Trilingual education in Europe).

Increasing the length of a primary foreign language course by lowering the starting age is seen as one way to come closer to the mother-tongue plus 2 languages aim of the European Commission. Early on, Austria lowered the age to grade 1, making provision for one lesson per week in short embedded units. Lowering the age is also considered good practice in Austria because the principle "the earlier the better" is thus adhered to.

Extending the range of languages offered depends heavily on political and cultural traditions and policy, as well as the delineations between minority language, lesser used language and foreign languages. For precise descriptions, in each case the status of the regional languages, the strength of lobby groups like parents, and the stance of the political parties would have to be taken into account. In Ireland, Gaelic is the official language. To a number of Irish children, it is like a foreign language and would need to be taught with those methods. In border regions, where languages are linguistically related, such proximity can be made use of. In areas with many language groups living close to each other and members of such groups intermarrying, the situation is again different. Immigrant languages in school can officially have the same status as the foreign language, French or English. It is democratic practice to allow the teaching of the smaller languages. On the other hand, if a school opts for English and therefore presents other languages heard in the school and neighbourhood in a project week or via other small-scale measures, this can equally be called good practice in alignment with the EU policy to create a languages-friendly environment.

CLIL (content and language integrated learning) initiatives change the factor of time for learning by making the other language the medium of instruction in modules or subjects of the primary curriculum in general. CLIL is an umbrella term with many definitions. It is a keyword which is appearing increasingly and can be interpreted very broadly, from teaching a 15-minute sequence about apples as part of a lesson on fruits, to teaching some topics within a year in the foreign language, to teaching one or more subjects in the other language. Even if the term CLIIL is not

mentioned in a curriculum, combining the foreign language teaching with other lessons or activities, where appropriate, e.g. short counting exercises, sports, arts and crafts and music has been suggested in ELL for many years. To make the decision to offer a certain subject completely in the foreign language is a bigger step, which depends on trained teachers and availability of material. If the term CLIL refers to programmes with at least 50 percent of subject matter teaching in the other language, "immersion" is also used. Immersion is only hinted at in this study, because the authors were asked to focus on what occurs in the mainstream.

European classes/ international sections of schools were piloted in the 90s by authorities in several countries as a way to promote the aims of the European Union. One type is a class where the children are 50% speakers of the national language and 50% of another European language, and the whole primary curriculum is taught, following a carefully worked out timetable, in both languages. The teachers are highly fluent. The Europaschule Berlin is one example. The first classes started in 1992, in different locations across Berlin. In 2006, 5,600 children enrolled. 9 language combinations are on offer, e.g. German-Portuguese, German-English, German-Russian or German-Turkish. (www.berlin.de/sen/bildung). In Wolfsburg / Germany, the German-Italian primary pilot class started in 1993; in 1997 the school was turned into a state comprehensive school and since 1999 it has been entitled to offer classes from grade 1-10; since 2004 a secondary upper level programme can be offered. The language combination reflects the demographic situation, since it was Italian citizens who came to Wolfsburg originally as the first "guest workers" for VW. (www.home.wolfsburg.de/italges). In some countries, European classes might be called international classes, or international sections. A new initiative, for example, is the opening of an international section/Portuguese, from September 2006, at the Cité scolaire internationale de Lyon. This is for primary and secondary learners. At primary level (cycle 3), 6 hours of Portuguese per week are planned in this class. It unites French and Portuguese speaking children. Several thousand Portuguese live in Lyon (www.cite-scolaire-internationale.org).

5.2   Teacher training

5.2.1   Initial training and continuing development

Extending and renewing teacher training provisions is an ongoing process in an educational system. Initiatives in initial training and continuing professional development to inform about language acquisition, methodology, the intercultural dimension – to name only a few areas where competence is necessary - have become

extremely widespread. Teacher training colleges and universities are academic institutions and therefore have academic freedom. Even if there are ministerial guidelines regarding the content of teaching modules, it is up to the university or college to create the course plans, to integrate emerging didactic ideas or research results, to delineate the practice-theory relationship and the emphasis given to neighbouring academic disciplines like linguistics, psychology, literature study, educational theory, culture studies. The proportion in the content of teacher training between primarily practice-oriented sessions and theory of education, linguistic theory, literature and culture study and methodology has been a long standing topic of discussion. Considering the list of competences in the European Profile for Language Teacher Education, a purely practice-driven approach would not appear adequate. Strong efforts were undertaken by the new member states in the 1990s to reform teacher training. In Poland the first courses for ELL teachers, for example were already offered in 1995, when special educational colleges were set up. The majority of those now offers courses on ELL (30-60 hours). In the Czech Republic, it is possible to study the subject "teaching a modern language to children" as part of the training for primary teachers. There also exists an accredited university training course for kindergarten teachers. In France, the element of foreign language competence was strengthened in the training for students who want to become primary teachers. In Cyprus, a special programme for future primary teachers will be implemented from 2007.

   Attitudes towards the necessity of ELL specific initial training have varied. There have been claims, for example, from among secondary teachers in Germany that the learning events in the two years in primary school are so minimal that they in fact have to re-teach the language offered at primary level. At the other end of the spectrum is the stance that the ELL teacher needs to be more qualified than a secondary teacher because the learning processes of children are very subtle and teacher discourse needs to be fine-tuned very carefully. (cf. for a very reflective model of teacher education www.provincia.bz.it/intendenza-scolastica/hermeneutik/default.asp) . **The type of teacher** was often a factor of discussion. The classroom generalist teacher is the favoured model in most countries, with itinerant secondary school teachers as an option in some cases (cf. Driscoll & Frost 1999). In Italy there is a different approach in that three teachers teach two classes, one of them being a language specialist.

   Sustainable in-service training is one measure that can lead to success. Due to changes in staff, often also due to political changes, it is not always possible to maintain in-service measures beyond the initial period funded. "Sustainable", however, also means improving the quality of a programme as time goes on. One example is the RALF initiative of the Goethe Institut Budapest. 205 sessions, 135 in Hungary, 75 in Germany, make up a RALF course. From 1997-2005, 300 participants in 200 schools

from 150 usually small towns and villages were trained. The designers of the model report that they do not know of a similarly intensive, integrated long-term model. The model was adapted in Bulgaria, Serbia and Croatia and is also currently used to train teachers of multicultural classes in Germany. This type of teacher training is more sustainable than several short in-service-courses, according to the organisers. The groups are formed autonomously, teacher portfolios are used. (www.goethe.de/ralf). In Sofia, as German is one of the primary foreign languages on offer, in accordance with the new Bulgarian curriculum (a foreign language from grade 2), by 2006 150 teachers from the whole country will have received training 8 young teacher trainers were qualified. The teaching methods demonstrated had not been common in the old Bulgarian primary curriculum (learning stations, morning circle/show and tell). Therefore, the training for German as a modern language had an effect on the schools in general because the participating teachers possessed a broader repertoire of methods for use in the classroom in other subjects, which they passed on to the team of primary teachers in their school. The "didaktische Werkstätten [workshops]", South Tyrol, put the "hermeneutic approach" into practice in the teacher meetings (Debiasi & Gasser, 2004).

In Poland, from 1999 – 2003, courses for the educationalists in teacher training (training the trainers) were conducted, with the result that a network of highly qualified trainers exists. 60 English teachers and 30 German teachers passed through a 240-hour course in methodology and theory of ELL up to age 12. The recruitment campaign itself raised awareness among university officials and educational authorities. Intensity can also be increased by including aspects of CLIL teaching into the in-service programme. This approach calls for a different teacher profile: a content-oriented language competence and specific methodology. Spain for example is offering a programme of intensive study in the home country and stays between 4 and 10 weeks in the UK.

Accredited teacher trainer courses are yet another measure for quality assurance. A new teacher development course was started in autumn 2005 at the PH Aarau in Switzerland. It lasts for one year and has four modules: teaching English to children in the Swiss context; skills; teaching English; assessment, evaluation and intercultural learning.

Teacher portfolios used as instruments in continuing professional development give the teachers impulses to investigate thoroughly their personality, beliefs and teaching style. They are, for example, an integral element of the RALF courses.

Courses improving professional language use, with a culture component and country specific primary pedagogy are reported from France (Education in the regional language). They have existed since 1989. One of their central features is that the language to be taught to the children, e.g. narrative language, is also explained and

practised with the teachers (parallelisation). The modular course *Fokus Grundschule* (2006) by the Goethe Institut is the continuation of *Lehrer erzählen*, a well-received course available with explanations in four languages. But if only a part of the linguistic competences for the teacher, as described by M. Bondi (2001), are to be aimed at as objectives for ELL teacher education, then just being able to speak the language well is not enough. A module in literature studies might be considered unnecessary for ELL teachers. However, to make well-founded judgments about the content of textbooks, to select among story books is easier with some knowledge acquired in a course in literature. Similarly, the significance of the world of storytelling for a child is understood better by a teacher who has read and analysed some fiction herself, instead of merely being told about the value of stories by the teacher trainer.

To adapt content to different learning needs raises the quality of instruction. It requires special attention in training, i.e. insight in psychology and second language acquisition. As part of the high quality in-service training in Poland, for example, teaching material and classroom observation material was developed in joint efforts with the British Council and the Goethe Institut. (CODN, 2003) Recently, material has been published that supports teachers by making use of empirical psycholinguistic data. Based on research about French from grade 1 in the Saarland, the research team designed a training manual, with examples from class contexts the teachers know, not examples found in anonymous databases. Corrective behaviour, code-switching by teachers or the usefulness of a database is explained via primary data from the context familiar to the regional teachers. (Materialien für den Frühunterricht Französisch, Saarbrücken, ²2005). The video "Faszination Sprachenlernen" (2002) developed under the supervision of A. Kubanek, TU Braunschweig includes samples from teaching three languages and there was an attempt to zoom in onto individual children as much as possible, catching their emergent understanding. A booklet and a CD-ROM containing methodology support (ten video extracts from classrooms, English and German, children aged 6-8) was distributed free in Hungary. The focus is on observation tasks. In countries where English is the first language and German the second, the similarity between these two languages is pointed out as a means of facilitating the language learning. The Polish material "The singing class" is innovative because it does not merely contain songs for little children, but also the classroom instruction is offered in the form of songs following the intonation patterns (Zaránska, 2003). To teach intercultural skills requires sensitivity on the part of the teacher as well as information and fine-tuned teaching suggestions. EMIL is a Comenius project which will provide modules for teaching on intercultural topics in primary education (www.emil.ikk.lmu.de). A web portal in Braunschweig (www.interkulturelleslernen.eu) uses a highly visual approach, but also shows the user a range of tools which can be used to assess growth in intercultural learning.

Multimedia in-service can be a quality measure. One reason might be that it allows access to educational information to teachers who would not be able to attend traditional courses. CD-ROMs with video clips, DVDs and more recently video streaming can be valuable tools in courses for teachers. Some years ago a CD-ROM with small video clips from lessons in several countries, ILIAD (2002), was designed. Even if the clips are short, such material can initiate discussion about cultural habits, teaching styles, the role of pronunciation, differences between languages. The intention is to help study cultural differences in teaching and approaches to subject matter. The CD-ROM is excellent for self-study or autonomous learning in tandems. More sophisticated and expensive are complete in-service courses using a blended learning approach, which means extensive use of resources in a web platform with tutored online sessions, plus face to face sessions. Practicals in the target culture can form part of the course. Such courses can lead to a degree, or be a module towards a degree course. Examples are the distance learning MA primary fl teachers course at the University of Warwick and the course E-lingo at the Pädagogische Hochschule Freiburg which qualifies primary teachers of English and French in a 1 year course leading to an M.Ed. (www.e-lingo.edu.de). Another course in blended learning format or for self-study is "Faszination Sprachenlernen" from Braunschweig, 2004; it can be used in pre- and in-service. The costs of producing and managing a quality blended learning course need to be compared with the costs for a traditional approach where the extra money is invested in study visits or other ways of enriching the studying experience. The Centre for Information on Language Teaching London has published a training DVD in 3 parts, based on 3 previous videos (2005). The examples are taken from a variety of schools, to show good practice as well as planning a programme, articulation and conditions for success.

To acquaint teachers and initial training students with effective pedagogical approaches can take many shapes and forms. In the Netherlands, for example, in schools near Amsterdam, pre-service teaching students teach primary school children. They plan lessons based on the language encounter model, teach them and evaluate them, being coached by a lecturer in teacher training. The "story-line" approach was developed in Glasgow since the 1970's for mother-tongue teaching with the purpose to reduce the artificiality of learning situations. It has been transferred to foreign language teaching and is often mentioned in teacher training. A curricular topic is selected which is then divided into episodes. The learners, instead of doing traditional textbook work, develop the episodes with dialogues etc. in groups and train all competences. It is suggested that the course should start after one year of foreign language training. Examples of modules can be seen at http://creativedialogues.lernnetz.de.

5.2.2   Internationalisation of teacher training

A **double diploma** is the result of an effort to help teachers widen their cultural and educational horizon as well as creating more job opportunities for the person holding it. In teacher training in the border regions, provisions have been made so that primary teachers can acquire a double diploma, like the so-called "Europa teacher training course" in Baden-Württemberg. Legal provisions for teachers (recognition of diploma) are gradually modified so they can teach in a different country in Europe. There are new MA programmes, e.g. a master offered by seven teacher training institutions along the Upper Rhine in France, Germany and Switzerland. (www.colingua.com)

   Language assistants have been increasingly sent to primary schools. The classic role of language assistants was augmented by Comenius language assistants who go abroad for a varying period of time and can select their target country within Europe as a whole. The flow of teaching assistants depends on the requests from schools within the EU. It is no longer a requirement for the university students applying for the teaching assistant programme to be in the Arts faculty /languages. Initial teacher training students are expected to study abroad or do a practical abroad, but only in some cases is such a stay obligatory.

5.2.3. Networks for and by teachers

Networks are a measure to achieve consolidation, but part of their dynamic is that they can collapse. Active networks require more than sending out newsletters. Here, it must suffice to name a few types of networks.

   Networks set up by associations are plentiful. The number of teachers who are members of an association depends on tradition and needs. One example of a very active network within an association is the IATEFL young learner special interest group (www.iatefl.org) The teacher associations themselves offer activities to improve practice. Self-help has a high value. The work of teachers' associations can be considered as "social capital". This accumulates when networks of people share values and understandings. "Cooperation within groups and between groups increases. Networks that serve as bridges between different groups are seen as powerful agents of social well-being and economic growth, creating bridging social capital."… They do not just bond people of identical interests, but bring together groups of related but different areas of activity. Such institutions maintain links with education authorities and participate in educational reform, for example by offering teacher development courses and voicing their opinion during discussions on educational change (cf. *Guardian Weekly*, February 19, 2004, online edition, report about a study by Catherine

Walter, Institute of Education, from 2004 about the role of teacher associations in Eastern Europe after the communist era.)

In **networks in border regions** political, cultural and economic interests are represented. Along the German-Polish-Czech border, a network has been established especially for kindergarten teachers as a part of a Pontes Euregio initiative (www.pontes-pontes.de). The languages at borders network, run by the Talenacademie Maastricht attempts to bring together members from many European border areas, including the young learner sector (www.labsite.org).

Networks set up by lobby groups and/or parents have been quite influential. For Hungary, even the term "parentocracy" was used (Enever, 2004). In the Alsace, the association ABCM successfully promotes bilingual (French and German) classes (www.chez.com/abcm). In the north of Germany, the " Verein für Frühe Mehrsprachigkeit" attracts schools, parents and linguists as members and supports the setting up of immersion schools. (www.fmks-online.de)

Networks set up to promote or develop further a certain educational approach have a long history. In France, for example, the Freinet approach (www.freinet.org), which originates in the educational reform movement of the early 20th century, was transferred to the foreign language primary class in the 1990's. The children produce their own, small books with texts they write themselves, even as beginners in the foreign language. The small journal *Tracer* about innovation in foreign language teaching contained many articles about the Freinet approach. It was edited by Gerald Schlemminger, now PH Karlsruhe until 1999. In Italy/ Südtirol, kindergarten and primary teachers following the hermeneutic approach to foreign language teaching, are cooperating to exchange experiences. The teachers' processes of understanding events and learning activities in class are made a topic of discussion, as well as practical questions. (Debiasi & Gasser, 2004). In Liechtenstein, there is an initiative to promote brain-friendly learning. (www.neueslernen.li)

Networks financed by sponsors are not very often seen. However, since 1999 a German publisher has financed meetings of experts from universities and ministries of education, to discuss important questions of early foreign language teaching and learning, like curricular aims, and standards which lead to publications addressed to policy makers. (www.praktisches-lernen.de)

Networks set up for a specific innovation, initiated by a university can be found for example at the University of Amsterdam. It promoted, very early, the use of the internet for school exchange projects. It is also addressed to the primary classroom. The members meet regularly. This network has existed for a long time. The 20th conference took place in March 2006. (www.europeanschoolsproject.org)

Autonomous organising of teacher development is emerging in different contexts. In Turkey, as there is no state in-service for German at primary level, the

schools organise their teacher development courses by themselves, paying fees with their own money. 4-5 times per year there are courses to which experts from Germany or Austria are invited. A low barrier initiative is reported from teachers from France, Germany and Switzerland at the trilingual border. They meet informally to discuss their educational practice.

Teacher-tandems are highly autonomous systems. This type of "seminar" was designed by the University of Bochum a long time ago and has evolved into a fairly large international language learning approach with different sub-types. (www.slf.ruhr-uni-bochum.de) Primary teacher tandems exist, for example, between France and Germany. As an in-service measure, 20 German and 20 French teachers learn with and from each other, in tandems. They receive materials and counselling on how to organise this autonomous in-service effectively, and how to use intercultural differences and similarities as stimuli for conversation. Also the German – French Stammtisch should be mentioned, where teachers meet and exchange information, all done without funding.

Cooperation of teachers to create curricula may originate if there is no state initiative. In Turkey, so far, there are no state curricula for German at primary level. Therefore the teachers of the 6 private German schools in Istanbul and of the one private German school in Izmir have jointly developed, since 1994, their own curricula. When the schools in the Czech Republic need to write their own school programme, such dialogues will also take place.

5.3.   Teaching

The individual lesson is the venue where children are confronted with the modern language, in a unique personal encounter. Almost completely, these everyday teaching and learning events occur without observation, without lesson protocols sent to authorities. This report needs to use secondary sources and secondary ways to turn to teachers and teaching. The quality of the teaching is influenced by conditions (cf. 5.1. and 5.2). For this report, good practice in class could not possibly have been sampled by direct, not even sample, observation nor by direct interviews or questionnaires for the teachers. As teachers across Europe base their teaching on some kind of teaching material, it seemed a feasible and tangible way to describe good practice partly by using "material" as one main way to look at teaching. Underlying methodologies, themes and stages in the classroom emerge. There is the limitation in this survey that commercial textbooks are not included. The textbook is probably the main medium for instruction. It is a cultural product and for children a guiding factor in creating an image of the other culture. Because of the sheer mass of books it was not possible to

create an analytical tool and apply it to a representative range of books. The spread of multimedia as a central tool alongside the textbook is uneven. In the Czech Republic, for instance, multimedia in primary school is as good as non-existent. In France, it is not used a lot.

5.3. 1 Printed material for the classroom

Material to promote linguistic diversity was developed in Austria at the National Language Competence Centre (www.sprachen.ac.at). One series was begun back in 1995, (*Zoom*), another series was started in 1998 (*Kiesel*). They are for the age group 6-10. The languages include the minority languages in Austria. In the *Zoom* material, ten languages are dealt with, i.e. all languages allowed in the primary curriculum, all neighbour and ethnic minority languages and the languages of the bigger immigration groups. For use in Germany, Poland and the Czech Republic, a CD-ROM called "Triolinguale" was published by Tandem, the German – Czech coordination centre in Pilzen/Regensburg and the German-Polish Jugendwerk Warschau/Potsdam. It is helpful in a very direct way because it presents a lot of games for easy use in groups which have no mutual understanding of the partner language, and also a so-called language animation: small, often witty tasks to get into the language without having to follow a course. (cf. www.tandem-org.de) For use in the Netherlands and Germany, the trilingual material "Aktive Mehrsprachigkeit mit Jan Kiepenkerl" was published in 2005, on paper and as a website with audio files of the conversations (www.jan-kiepenkerl.de). One prominent feature is that puppets of children are photographed in natural surroundings. The "magnifying glass event" is a project that makes children look for words in the foreign language in the streets in France (www.goethe.de/paris). In Latvia, multilingual games were created together with children. Such games raise children's awareness of language and the culture of the other language group in the country, and also give a wider European context through the labelling in English and German. The learners' cards are produced by a professional publisher and can be used in class and at home, as card games. (information via the Goethe institut Riga) During the major language awareness initiative organised by Michel Candelier, Evlang, the participating schools in many countries contributed with suggestions for multilingual worksheets and tasks for the children. The *Kiesel* material mentioned above is one of such products.

Efforts have been made to offer lesser used modern languages. For example, material for Spanish to be used in Poland is distributed via the National In-Service Training centre in Warsaw. In a pilot study in Poland/Gdansk two languages (English and German) are offered in primary schools parallel to each other in the same class. This approach is different from immersion contexts (like Basque and Spanish in the

Basque Country), because the languages are not heard in the normal extramural surroundings of the children.

Material developed on the basis of preceding research came from Czechoslovakia in the mid-nineties. Construction of material for German as a modern language in primary teaching had already begun. Research on typical errors of learners and a needs analysis preceded the writing of the material produced within the country (cf. Maroušková & Eck 1999 ff.) When English was to be introduced in Latvia in the mid-nineties, teachers and children were interviewed about their attitude to English learning. The insight was fed into the construction of a textbook made for the concrete cultural environment. In a pedagogical experiment pupils learning with this material were compared with pupils using textbooks published abroad. (Fedjukova, 1998). Based on the psycholinguistic research findings it is suggested that textbook authors should present grammar structures by following a certain sequence. The underlying "processability hypothesis" postulates that language structures are learned in a sequence (Pienemann et al, 2006).

There is an abundance of **material collected through international projects** such as Comenius projects. In the context of this report, only a few of the examples the authors learned about can be presented. The European Picture book collection on the internet, for example, consists of stories/fairytales from 15 countries, with worksheets and interesting background information, in English, French and German. It is a course showing teachers how to make full use of narratives for children, divided into modules looking at the material from a linguistic, literary and cultural awareness perspective. (www.ncrcl.ac.uk/eset/)

Material with a special aesthetic appeal/ art and language teaching has a special effect on children. It might even be stated that, thanks to ELL, in total more beautiful material is being presented to a school child than before the introduction of this subject. Even though layout, the number of colours and paper quality of the material depend on the financial resources available – a fact that naïve "readers" like pre-service students in their first semesters might overlook – the imagination of the illustrators is impressive, revealing a great diversity of illustrative styles and a richness of aesthetic approaches in the different cultures across Europe. In France, the "blue box" and the "red box" can be ordered by teachers of German; the narrative approach of a video course, combined with cultural material appeals to primary classes and also to language assistants and secondary teachers. There is considerable demand for these boxes. Giving language material a general label (e.g. blue box) endows it with both a magical and everyday characteristic. How a famous painting can be used creatively to explain figurative language, in this case proverbs, is shown on www.literatuurgeschiedenis.nl Clicking on the sub-site "spreekwoorden" one sees the Proverbs painting by Pieter Brueghel the Elder. Individual motifs can be clicked, and

the respective proverb illustrated in the motive appears in written form in three languages. A whole CD-ROM about the painting (1998) is available through the Gemäldegalerie Berlin.

In Hungary, the Baranya pleasure reading project lasted from 1995-2004. It started out with 24 teachers, 650 pupils and 20 schools, to induce learners to read authentic material and develop a life-long reading habit. In 1996/7 for example, 300 students read over 2,200 books and handed in 647 diaries. As time went by teachers used more and more authentic material and described how the learners' self esteem increased as well as teacher pupil relationships. The majority of the schools participating were from underprivileged areas. Several examples of material based on music were received by the authors. A French-German brochure and CD about the Mozart Opera Cosi fan tutte, produced with two teacher training institutes and the National Opera of the Rhine was published in 2005. (www.crdp-strasbourg.fr) A wealth of literary texts for use along the German-Alsatian Border/ Oberrhein has been assembled by Kliewer (2006, 2005)) The increasing availability of "big books" i.e. enlarged storybooks and many subject areas has greatly helped teachers to present stories accessible to the whole class.

Material for kindergarten age is already available through publishers. Private language schools for children, which have their own methods, usually market their own material. Some examples are given from initiatives with public funding. *Hrátky s češtinou/ Wir spielen Tschechisch* is new material for kindergarten teachers (www.pontes-pontes.de; www.goerlitz-eso.de).   In *Dip, dip, dip* (Spain, 2005) a theme-based approach is used for children from age 4. The website www.europschool.net was the result of a cooperation project. It is for teachers, but also has a lot of self-study material for children in kindergarten and primary school age. For the children, the online activities are divided into three age groups. 2-6, 6-8, 8-11. A crèche surely would not place its 2-year-old toddlers in front of the monitor. Rather, the lowest age bracket points at the fact that these activities do not require word recognition. The child would have to, for example, drag a shape into a grid. Comparing the activities given per age group, educators can become more aware of levels of difficulty and perceptions of difficulty by material producers and contrast this insight with their own concepts of progression.

Material with a focus on intercultural learning can be found at many places and the material is extremely rich and creative. The initiative Teddy auf Tour [Teddy on tour] for German as a foreign language, for example, has been very successful. A box containing a teddy and presents from a certain class in Germany travels to another class, and so on. The documentation published in 2006 (www.goethe.de) informs us that already 112 schools from many countries have participated. In France, to lower the barrier for teachers to use good and current authentic material, "mobile material" was created: Mobibib, Mobinet, Mobifilm, for children aged 8-14 learning German.

Because the material is mobile – i.e. it comes into the class in the shape of boxes or rucksacks – teachers need not undergo the organising effort to arrange visits to libraries etc. The complete packages make it possible for the teachers to work with them for a longer period without much preparation. The authentic material triggers hypothesis building while watching, reading and listening.

The CD-ROM *Grenzenlos* (2004) is a course for German as a foreign language or second language for young beginners, with an intuitive user guidance. It is to be used by classes in conjunction with an e-mail project. *Mediterrania* is an e-mail game for countries along the Mediterranean coast. One long-lasting project within the European Schools Project is called the Image of the other / Das Bild des Anderen. It originated in   Denmark,   and   is   also   suitable   for   primary   classes. (www.europeanschoolsproject.org/image/index.html.) From a school in Naples it was reported that the teacher makes a homepage with the children, with online games, virtual journeys in Germany, and together with learners short animated sequences are created. The learners can access the site from home. Self-directed learning is promoted as well as cultural learning. The European Commission has set up a website consisting mainly of games, for children aged 10 – 14 (europa.eu.int/europago/). Along the border between Germany and France content is selected which refers to the same historical event from a bi-national perspective (www.Oberrheinschulbuch.org).

All textbooks and supporting material offer a range of methods and games and other activities. It would be hard to find a teacher manual for a children's early language learning textbook which does not make use of the term "holistic." How linguistic, social, personal development and intercultural aims are weighted will vary. Suggestions for plays (theatre, radio plays) may accompany a book.

Material for content and language integrated teaching Immersion teaching is well researched and an abundance of material had to be produced or adapted, mostly by schools themselves, because the school and regional contexts of immersion schools vary and one cannot simply use a British history book or science book to teach English to children in Switzerland. A huge effort has been put into material making for CLIL, which can mean teaching just small elements of a subject in the target language. In Switzerland (2006-2008), the Explorer Series is being published, aimed at content- and task-based learning at the upper primary level (pupils age 10-13). It not only follows the subject curriculum, but also takes up pedagogical and methodological principles. Cross-curricular synergies are to be achieved. Therefore, specialists from a broad range of subject areas are being consulted. The approach is constructivist, as is the approach in Swiss primary schools in general: the pupils will learn the language by dealing with tasks that have genuine outcomes in the here and now, not a language for use only at a later stage. It is the first course of this type in Switzerland.

Journals for children   Journals for children, to support their language learning, exist in various forms. One for children learning French is called "Filou". It is made by the Goethe Institut Nancy and published by Jerôme Do. Bentzinger 4 times a year. The didactic approach in journals for children is very often to use a language mix, here: German and French. This specific journal is not afraid to include topics about German-French history. Within the e-twinning framework e-journals can be created. As the starting age for that initiative is set at the early stage of primary education, it is likely that primary school partners, not only secondary schools, will develop an e-journal.

Material for assessing, for teachers (and children)   There are different opinions on the usefulness and necessity of tests for beginners. Maintaining joy and motivation is more important than checking the number of words actively used by children after a year or 2 in ELL. Teacher attitude, parent attitude and school authority attitude need to be taken into account. As for teacher attitude to assessment, in a research study, 3 profiles of teachers with 3 attitudes were "distilled" from the qualitative data on teachers in this project. A) The teachers who support assessment as a stimulus for the class. B) The teachers who believe that assessments and tests are not valid, because what is valid is the way children use language in authentic situations, e.g. encounters with native speakers, or during a class trip. C) The teachers who think that, at least in a pilot phase, tests should not be used (Kubanek, 2003b).

The European Language Portfolio is an initiative handing over responsibility for learning, even to young learners. By writing down what they can do after a unit of teaching or more generally, a period of time, compared to their competence when learning started, they are supposed to build up pride in their learning, irrespective of personal language aptitude, and also develop their learning awareness. The portfolio is a subjective counterpart to the teacher's marks and grades. The Language Portfolio development was an initiative supported by the Language Policy Division of the Council of Europe. After a pilot phase from 1998-2000, it was launched as a pan-European initiative in the European year of languages 2001. Since 2000, there has been validation and accreditation. (www.culture2.coe.int/portfolio). One of the first commercial tests in the 1990s was the Cambridge Young Learner Test. (www.cambridgeesol.org/exams/yle) Different from material developed to meet the curricular demands of a certain country, it is for international use and therefore abstract and culture free. For German as a foreign language the Goethe Institut developed the test "Fit in Deutsch" (in Italy) which is successfully used in different countries (age 12) where primary German is offered. A great effort was made to create a non-threatening situation. In Norway, a country where tests were alien in the primary school, emphasis has been placed on a multimedia approach; tests were designed which have met with acceptance by the teachers (Hasselgreen, 2000).

5.3.2 Improving interaction through additional voices

Teaching assistants   A short reference to language assistants was made earlier in this chapter. Between 1997 and 2004, 6730 teaching assistants were sent out via the Comenius programme. Over more recent years, the percentage of primary schools asking for a teaching assistant has risen. In Germany, for example, it is 50 % of the total contingent. Here, the primary sector is treated with priority. Also, there is a growing demand from schools for children with special educational needs. In a small scale study about language assistants, undertaken by Iceland for the European Commission, questionnaires were sent to host teachers and former assistants in 5 countries. (www.ask.hi.is/ABB) A good practice guide for host schools and language assistants was presented by the European Commission Education and Culture in 2002. A well laid out coloured version is available as an official publication of the EU (Comenius Language assistantships, 2004) It contains sections for the schools, and the assistants, a model agreement between assistant and school, and a wealth of activities the assistant could usefully perform in class and outside of class. To improve his or her teaching skill, "job shadowing" is one of the suggested activities. From CILT London, a brochure in the NACELL best practice guide series is available (Martin et al 2003). In France, the Centre international d'études pédagogiques also published a guide for English language assistants (web version, 2006). It contains "assistants kits", i.e. activities related to festivals, suggestions how to work with CDs.

"Intensive experience" – bringing in visitors, leaving the school building During school festivals, open days and similar events it is normal to have guests from other cultures, primarily the children's parents. Project weeks, linking the language to the everyday life and the surroundings of the child are suggested in curricula across Europe. To bring target-language speaking guests into the regular lessons is a smaller organisational matter, but a strong incentive. How often such special situations are made possible depends on the location of a school, the linguistic composition of children and staff and on the organisational problems the teacher encounters when planning such a visit. A specialist teacher who moves from one class to the next has fewer chances for planning than a class teacher. That such situations are remembered well by the children is informal teacher knowledge, but was also analysed empirically (Marschollek, 2002; Kubanek, 2003b).

5.3.3. Teaching in less-favourable conditions

Even though there is an abundance of teaching material, access is unevenly distributed within countries and Europe-wide.

   Distance learning is one way by which learners in isolated areas can participate in education. The invention of the small "100 $ laptops", to be produced from the end of 2006 onwards might provide children with enhanced opportunities – if the educational system and the teachers advocate the use of multimedia. It is easy to turn one's attention to the wealth of colourful commercial material. However, there are circumstances where it is not possible to make use of such products. A lot of freely available items need to be used, like stones, pieces of wood, buttons. The imagination of children is kindled just as well. How to make the most of available material is a question teachers in adverse conditions are confronted with. Teachers in favourable conditions might consider how to exploit to the maximum what they have in stock.

5.3.4 Children with learning difficulties or special needs

Given that all children of the European Union, regardless of their aptitudes and abilities, share the same fundamental right of citizenship, it follows that an inclusive approach to early languages learning should be adopted. Yet, there seems to be a lack of good evidence in this vital area. Accordingly, it is signalled to the European Commission as a major area for development through research and principle as well as through good practice.

   It is a theme that nonetheless at present receives some attention, e.g. not only through national information centres but also through the efforts of committed individuals. One such example of good practice is the website by Hilary McColl (http:///hilarymccoll.co.uk) which is dedicated to modern languages and inclusion and contains short sections on news, events, learning & teaching, downloads, resources, linking communities/citizenship, special needs (e.g. in the case of children on the autistic spectrum, those with dyslexia and those with hearing impairments), English as an additional language, workshops and links to other sites.

5. 4   Dissemination, Incentives, "Wirkungsqualität"

Via dissemination into a wider public, a certain image of ELL is created, interest can be raised, new learner groups can be reached and political stances can be promoted. It is claimed that an "iconic turn" has occurred in contemporary societies. The public is guided by images. It is important to consider which images of early language learning

are created in the public and how dissemination procedures make use of visualisation. This visualisation has to be considered together with other devices to create awareness and understanding of the early learning of other languages.

5.4.1 Prizes and awards

One way to reward innovation inside the school system is the European Language Label. It has been awarded since 1999 as support for innovative projects. Educational institutions or schools apply and a jury selects (per country). There is a list of quality criteria. The Net-days initiative by the EU intended to promote cross-national cooperation via electronic media in an educational setting; for example schools in several countries write a newspaper within a day or a week. Awards were given. The Elton Award is given by the British Council to outstanding innovative material for English Language Teaching. Competitions by ministries can be announced nationally, e.g. in Hungary, or by a regional educational authority. In Hungary, there were reading competitions for the children. The BMW Award "Interkulturelles Lernen" has been given since 1997 by an independent jury both to an unpublished research project which is devoted to investigating intercultural learning and to good practice initiatives. (www.bmwgroup.com/award-life-de/). As part of the Netd@ys special events, some participants have received prizes, like a trip to countries in Europe for young reporters who would then report back for the website. The new e-twinning programme also gives out prizes.

5.4.2 Special events

Turning learning outcomes into something visual: exhibitions   A classic way to inform a public of colleagues, or a lay public, is an exhibition. Accordingly, several examples of exhibitions were sent in as good practice, and the Language Label Awards descriptions often referred to exhibitions the school organised.

Advertising language learning   One example of how poor interest in modern language courses can be turned around is the image campaign for German connecting the language with football, for example offering a course where football language is explained. In Europe, this initiative has been taken by the Goethe Institut London, addressed to learners of all ages. Primary schools have booked the programme, too. The European Commission and the Council of Europe had initiated the Year of Languages (2001) and the European Day of Languages is a permanent initiative. Many activities from the primary level were/are included – these may have been reported in the local press. "Going to the market", for example, started in 2004 in France, is both simple and effective. A class goes to the market and puts name-plates

in the foreign languages between the fruit and vegetables. Small conversations begin between children and shoppers who are taken by surprise. The market visitors see and reflect that learning a language is not difficult (www.goethe.de/paris). The "Yellow box", given out by French Goethe Institutes, contains material for a taster day of German, 14 topics with all arts and crafts material.

Competitions for children are popular. They can consist of writing poems, illustrating stories, finding a favourite word (cf. Limbach, 2005). In Hungary, competitions are attractive on a large scale. It should be noted that under this heading competition does not mean competing for entry into a programme or school. In France, 350 celebrities, like actors or university people, signed an appeal that knowing the mother tongue plus 2 others is important. This was published in the national press. To convince learners that tackling another foreign language after English is not so difficult, because there might be surprising similarities and words existing in both languages, large posters illustrating such word pairs in English and German were produced (Learn English Lern Deutsch) These posters can be used in the classroom but also in the corridors of language schools to attract more interest. Promotional videos or CD-ROMs have been produced for a variety of contexts. A recent one, the MEMO – project, demonstrates how content and language integrated learning can work.

Creating public understanding Initiatives to raise the interest of Europeans in European identity, initiatives towards tolerance, in as far as schools are concerned, are certainly targeted at teachers and schools, but the general public is the focus of attention as well. The European Day of Languages, for example, would be an initiative appealing to both. The European Commission (2005) has published a brochure called "50 methods to raise motivation for foreign language learning". It describes 50 initiatives from 20 countries. (webversion: www.eurointeractions.com/projectlingo.htm)

Texts about ELL vary greatly in style. There are curricula and official documents in their dry style; there are the didactic handbooks with a lot of suggestions of what is best and what should be done; there is psycholinguistic research and research rooted in empirical pedagogy. A lot of shop talk is used. This shop talk is difficult to grasp by persons with the same mother tongue as the author of the text, the more so by readers who have a different mother tongue, as the specific terms used carry different connotations.

Guidebooks for parents in bilingual families have been available for a long time. Informative readable small books about ELL, dealing with expectations, the learning process and learning outcomes are, however, a different genre. The paperback "Fremdsprachenlernen mit Spaß", using authentic utterances of children and a more anecdotal style, was published by Kubanek & Edelenbos(2001). In France a guidebook for bilingual parents was published by Geiger-Jaillet (2005). For parents in English speaking surroundings, many books have been published (cf. Baker, 2000). *Bringing it*

home is a booklet which explains how parents can support children's language learning (Farren & Smith, 2003).

5.5   From good practice to quality indicators

To look in depth at the discussion about young learners in order to judge quality, or to draw up quality indicators seem to be two opposing ways of approaching good practice at a meta level. Both are justified.   Whether an initial teacher training course or continuing professional development is modern or old-fashioned, uses strict tests or teacher portfolios to evaluate the content, whether a school district is wealthy or poor is not the real issue: intensive discussions about children, learning, quality, material etc. can be triggered under any circumstances. Such quality of discussion and reflection will be apparent to the students or teachers who are present in the learning group. It cannot be predicted or enforced, but teachers and pre-service students are aware of such moments or sessions. In their way, teacher portfolios with questions like "why is it that I like a certain pupil more than another?/ which part of a video-taped lesson of mine would I be willing to share in a session on classroom observation?" can be triggers for   discussions . Another example would be the Werkstatt Dialogues reported from Bozen; yet another approach might be to use empirical data from the teachers' own context as starting point in seminars and workshops. The "body and languages image" task is a very visual way to start thinking about teaching. Here teachers draw the contours of a human figure and write where they experience a certain language they know, e.g. the mother tongue could be placed in the head, the stomach, the whole body. The language they teach could be placed next to the heart indicating they speak it easily and with emotion, or inside the head – indicating they relate it to planning processes. Teacher beliefs, differences between languages, cultural aspects, cognition versus emotion are topics which emerge as a sequel of such activities. They augment more typical topics of discussion like the contrast of different national or cross-border teaching cultures. Obviously topics of immediate concern, i.e. new curricula or newly introduced achievement tests or a new school programme, cause in depth discourse among the staff concerned. The personalised approach just referred to and the quality indicator approach may be seen as opposite poles, but they do complement each other. The following section turns to indicators. It is not possible to give European indicators of success in ELL. The following collection was taken from comments by the good practice informants and comments in programme evaluations. There is no attempt to provide complete or mutual exclusive sets of indicators.

Quality indicators: very general level

1. Stability
2. Acceptance
3. Openness for new impulses

General indicators

A . Society

- Exchanges between institutions, within the education sector and between education and other sectors are common
- Language learning is a topic for public discussion
- There is a match between the high appreciation of early modern language learning in the public and the prestige of primary teachers
- Schools are encouraged to follow the overarching principle of tolerance and intercultural dialogue in spite of political and cultural conflicts in their society

B . Provision

- Young students who participate successfully in initial teacher training can in fact use their competence because they are given a job
- Teachers are of mixed age; in countries with an inverted age pyramid there is, nevertheless, a balance of older and younger teachers
- There are incentives for staff to stay in the state system if there is a large private sector attracting teachers
- In teacher training and continuing professional development, there is sufficient time set aside for observation tasks and praktika
- The press and local politicians are informed about new initiatives
- Exchanges between schools exist vertically, continuity is possible
- Long-term initiatives are made possible
- There is a "language-friendly environment"
- All languages in a school are made visible
- Material from other cultures exists and is displayed
- Visitors are welcome and can be invited without bureaucracy
- Teaching of mother-tongue, home language, modern language are not seen as taking away time from each other
- Time budgets for learning are sufficient
- Activities suggested can be managed with as little bureaucracy as possible, and additional support is given (Example: e-twinning/ pedagogical kits)
- Flexible ready made boxes with material can be ordered to support teachers with a tight time-budget
- Operation of day-long schools and flexible activity zones in the afternoon allow the integration of intercultural and European topics

- Kindergartens and schools are prepared and can participate in decisions
- Parents are supportive, are being informed, are included as tutors or storytellers
- Language assistants, if they are available, prepared and given meaningful tasks

C. Child orientation as quality of educators

- Educators can tolerate cultural dichotomies
- Educators have an attitude that sees errors and mistakes not as a sin but as a stage in development, and they foster learning by positive corrective feedback
- Educators make aspects of the border (alterity and similarity, more generally) tangible
- The children show signals of enjoyment before the lesson starts
- Exchanges of letters
- Prejudices when they occur become a topic, via pictures and stories
- Educators show themselves as learners, they learn greetings etc. of the other language (in the case of visiting specialists)
- Teachers are allowed to question the mainstream methods, to deviate from standard/ standardised themes in order to promote individual children's learning
- Creativity and divergent ways of learning in children are seen as an opportunity and teachers can integrate such learning paths
- Traditions of learning in other cultures are not excluded. Rather, teachers are open to reflect the benefits all approaches to learning might bring with them
- Teachers are interested in developing their "diagnostic competence"
- The value of good teaching material is explained to children and it is exploited to the maximum

D. Language growth

- The language actually reaches the children (appropriate level)
- A climate of attention is maintained as a precondition for listening skills
- The educator is a mother tongue teacher (if teaching is close to the border), or at least there is a regular exchange
- Language acquisition is fostered, but explicit learning is promoted as well
- Learning is holistic
- "Denken mit der Hand" (think with your hands/ hands-on)
- The ability to form sentences is trained
- Creative word play is promoted
- Individual learning processes are observed
- Educators observe both individual children and the class
- Children are not forced to speak, but also not left to be silent for too long

- Errors and mistakes are taken up and corrected at the appropriate moment in a positive way
- There is cooperation between class teacher /educator and the language specialist
- Teachers have the opportunity to see video samples of teaching and are given indications how to interpret them
- In microteaching, teachers themselves can decide which part of their filmed lesson they want to share with others in order to discuss language features
- Teachers are encouraged to reflect on their teaching (e.g. through diaries and time for exchanges with colleagues)

E. Dissemination

- The methods introduced to ELL teachers in in-service, spread into the whole primary curriculum, therefore ELL is a change agent for practice in general
- The methods designed for foreign language teaching are valued and transferred into second language teaching classes and vice versa, where appropriate
- There are publications for the wider public explaining language learning, and other linguistic phenomena
- Particular public interests (e.g. football) are taken up to attract learners.
- Public discussion about language teaching presents different perspectives

6.   PEDAGOGICAL PRINCIPLES

Pedagogical principles underlying early language learning in Europe are extremely diverse in their formulation. Their lack of explicitness makes them not always recognisable, let alone comparable across disciplines, countries or situations. The reason for this is that they are partly teacher belief or taken for granted. The study aimed to lay open what was implicit to give room to reflexivity. Furthermore, a pedagogical principle is a container concept. What can be understood as a pedagogical principle for ELL has, in most cases, originated from political motives, socio-cultural opinions, psycholinguistic findings, methodological and didactical approaches.

6.1   An Inventory of Principles

Identifying the main pedagogical principle underlying early language learning can only be a cyclical process of gradually identifying possible sources, designing a grid to incorporate them in mutual exclusive categories, making them available for validation and contextualising them. Therefore an inventory of principles was seen as beneficial to inform the current discussion. Second, it was considered important to obtain information about the relevance of certain pedagogical issues. The original pedagogical issues, drawn up while conceiving the study (see above), were the collection of knowledge put to the test. The informants from the Goethe Institut along with a wide range of other national informants, who provided information about good practice, were invited to state whether those twenty pedagogical issues were relevant to early language learning. For each of the pedagogical issues they stated whether the issue:

1.   was irrelevant in the respective national context or not applied:

2.   was peripheral:

3.   was supported (e.g. a topic in pre-and in-service training, mentioned in teacher handbooks, accepted by teachers, there is implicit understanding about it):

4.   was incorporated in official texts, curricula and descriptions in courses for teacher training:

5.   was the essence of early language learning.

In table 6.1 an overview is presented of the outcomes.

Table 6.1   Relevance of the pedagogical issues for introducing ELL (N=43)

Pedagogical issues	Relevance				
	Irrelevant	Peripheral	Supported	Incorporated in official texts	The essence
1. Stimulate and foster children's enjoyment to learn a language.	3.1%	9.4%	18.8%	28.1%	40.6%
2. Cater for the development of children's intercultural awareness.	6.3%	15.6%	18.8%	37.5%	21.9%
3. Integrate foreign language learning into other subjects.	18.8%	5.6%	37.5%	18.8%	9.4%
4. Cater for the promotion of basic communication.	3.1%	37.5%	0.0%	31.3%	28.1%
5. Develop children's understanding of authentic communication.	3.1%	0.0%	43.8%	31.3%	21.9%
6. An economy where foreign languages play a vital role.	15.6%	18.8%	31.3%	18.8%	15.6%
7. Children need to be prepared for European integration.	6.3%	18.8%	12.5%	46.9%	15.6%
8. Achieve the phased introduction of the four skills.	9.4%	9.4%	31.3%	28.1%	21.9%
9. Establish an appropriate relationship between experiential-intuitive learning and formal-analytical-conceptual learning.	12.9%	9.7%	35.5%	22.6%	19.4%
10. Introduce increased cognitive and linguistic demands on children.	6.3%	9.4%	34.4%	28.1%	21.9%
11. Use of particular language-activities that are suitable for young children of particular ages and stages.	3.1%	0.0%	43.8%	28.1%	25.0%
12. Sustain the initial motivation that very young children bring.	0.0%	9.4%	40.6%	15.6%	34.4%
13. Achieve continuity from one year-group to the next.	0.0%	18.8%	37.5%	21.9%	21.9%
14. Provide contacts with native speakers of target language.	6.5%	38.7%	38.7%	3.2%	12.9%
15. Exploit modern communications technology.	6.3%	9.4%	43.8%	28.1%	12.5%
16. Links between child's target language and languages they possess	9.4%	21.9%	43.8%	15.6%	9.4%
17. Cater for progression in internalised emerging language system.	6.5%	41.9%	25.8%	19.4%	6.5%
18. Cater for the development of children's meta-linguistic awareness.	6.5%	45.2%	22.6%	19.4%	6.5%
19. Cater for their intercultural, social, affective self/identity	3.2%	6.5%	32.3%	29.0%	29.0%
20. Develop and maintain an inclusive approach`	9.7%	3.2%	45.2%	25.8%	16.1%

Five pedagogical issues stand out as having much relevance for ELL: 'stimulate and foster children's enjoyment to learn a language', promotion of basic skill communication', 'sustain the initial motivation that very young children bring', 'cater for their intercultural, social, imaginative, affective and personal self/identity' and the use of particular language-activities that are suitable for young children of particular ages and stages'.

Providing contacts with native or highly fluent speakers of the target language seems to be an issue that at best supports ELL, but in a number of countries it is peripheral. Also the issue of catering for progression in children's internalised emerging language system seems to be a peripheral issue in quite a number of countries.

The data about several issues are rather indecisive. What should we think about the issue number 6, where it is stated that children need to be prepared for an economy where foreign languages play a vital role? Several countries report that it is irrelevant or peripheral; others state that the issue is integrated in official texts. The same goes for the issue about establishing an appropriate relationship between experiential-intuitive learning and formal-analytical-conceptual learning. One out of eight respondents says that it is irrelevant, but 35.7% of the respondents mentioned that it supported ELL.

The data were then independently analysed along two lines, first a qualitative content analysis and second, through factor analysis. Though both techniques did not lead to absolutely identical results, there was enough evidence to conclude that under a wide, preliminary concept of principle, in fact five grouped aspects can be assembled that bear relevance to ELL:

1. Political and economic motives
2. Socio-cultural motives
3. Psycholinguistic issues
4. Methodological – didactical transformations
5. Pedagogical principles

In order to broaden the perspective and to find grounded evidence about the existence of motives and principles a draft grid was designed. With this grid an overview or inventory of possible principles for ELL was developed. The grid makes it possible to trace their origins and sort several similar sources into the respective section of the grid. Below, the essence of this grid is presented.

Figure 6.1   Grid for the inventory of motives, concepts and principles

	Abstraction	
Policy	**-**	**Practice**

ORIGIN		Political and economic	Socio - cultural	Pyscho- linguistic	Methodic - didactical	Pedagogical
	Normative					
	Supra national and national dynamics					
	Regional and local needs					
	Linguistics and the teaching profession					

The search process was conducted over a period of four months (December 2005 until March 2006) and consisted of two cycles. These cycles consisted of literature reviews and desk analysis. Official documents such as curricula, handbooks, overviews, reviews etc. (either printed or on-line) were reviewed with key words in mind that came from the statements mentioned in table 7.1. Whenever a citation relevant or related to a principle for ELL was found it was fed into the grid and the attached database. At the end of each cycle a discussion took place among the researchers and an external expert. When necessary the grid was adjusted, duplications or discrepancies were resolved and suggestions for more refined or elaborate searches were made. At the end of the second cycle the first version of the set of preliminary principles was established.

6.2   Validation

Two procedures for validation were applied. First, the sets of principles were extended and refined by more systematic reference to sets of from countries like Germany, Holland, Denmark, Scotland, Italy, Greece, Hungary and Bulgaria. These sets of pedagogical principles, rationales and political reasons for introducing a foreign language in the primary and pre-school education were already available through studies conducted by Edelenbos, Starren & Welsing; 1999, Kubanek-German, 2001 & 2003a; Edelenbos, 2004; Oxymoron Team, 1998). The product of this face value validation is a pre-final set of principles. This set of principles consisted of political principles, socio-cultural principles, psycholinguistic principles, didactical-methodological principles and pedagogical principles. Second, the complete set was presented to a group of experts who assisted the project by giving advice with regard to good practice (Braunschweig, April 2006). The experts reflected upon the sets of principles and specified three alterations.

1. The principles within the category of didactical-methodological principles should be split up into didactical principles and methodological principles. This exercise would provide a more clear-cut set of categories.

2. The principles within the category 'didactical–methodological' were far too extensive and some were incorporated that had no direct relationship to (early) foreign language learning.

3. The principles in the categories 'methodological–didactical' and 'pedagogical' were not clear enough in themselves and there was room for discussion about the categories the principles should belong to.

6.3   Six Categories of Principles

The overall grid consisted of six categories that are related to ELL in the primary or pre-primary:

1. Political and economic motives
2. Socio-cultural motives
3. Psycholinguistic issues
4. Didactical concepts
5. Methodological transformations
6. Pedagogical principles

Table 6.2 contains an overview of the political-economical motives that can be discerned for the introduction of early language learning.

Table 6.2   Overview of Political Economical Motives

Origin	Political Economical Motives
A. Supra national and national dynamics	**PE.1 European citizenship** For everyone in the European Union it is becoming necessary, irrespective of training and education routes chosen, to be able to acquire and keep up their ability to communicate in at least two community languages in addition to their mother tongue. **PE.2 Good citizenship** **PE.3 Life long learning** It is a priority for Member States to ensure that language learning in kindergarten and primary school is effective, for it is here that key attitudes towards other languages and cultures are formed, and the foundations for later language learning are laid.
B. Regional and local needs	**PE. 4. Cultural integration** **PE. 5. Access labour market** Economic and social contacts within Europe have become much stronger since border controls have disappeared with the establishment of the Single Market and there is free movement of citizens, capital, goods and services as well as a single currency. In these circumstances it is essential that people learn at least one foreign language. This facilitates both cultural integration and access to the labour market as well as economic growth.
C. The teaching profession	**PE.6Tolerance / value orientation** A united Europe needs citizens who are tolerant and open-minded. As a consequence, many states have introduced Early Foreign Language Learning. **PE. 7. Enhancing professionalism** To address the needs for Early Foreign Language Learning arising from societal change, teachers must be well-trained.

At a supra-national level two major reasons for introducing ELL prevail; the desire to educate pupils in European citizenship and the need for lifelong learning. In 1995 the

White Book (p. 32) already provided several explicit reasons to focus on a broad pallet of foreign-language learning in schools. One of the firmest statements is: "For everyone in the European Union it is becoming necessary, irrespective of training and education routes chosen, to be able to acquire and keep up their ability to communicate in at least two community languages in addition to their mother tongue."

In several countries debates were held to assess the political implications and, what is more important, to discuss the financial consequences for updating the educational system. This statement was still very general. The follow-up statement of the European Commission in the Lisbon process was much more explicit. "It is a priority for Member States to ensure that language learning in kindergarten and primary school is effective, for it is here that key attitudes towards other languages and cultures are formed, and the foundations for later language-learning are laid." The European Council in Barcelona called for "further action … to improve the mastery of basic skills, in particular by teaching at least two foreign languages from a very early age". http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/doc/official/keydoc/actlang/act_lang_en.pdf

In this statement the motive of good citizenship is still important, but a second aspect is seeping in as well, namely 'foundations for later language learning'. Early Foreign Language Learning in this perspective is seen as a preparation for lifelong learning. Access to the labour market and cultural integration are two motives that originate especially from regional institutions. At the level of the teaching profession also two motives are made explicit: enhancing professionalism and a tolerance/value orientation.

Socio-cultural motives can also be interpreted as rationales for introducing ELL in the primary or pre-primary.

Table 6.3   Overview of Socio-cultural motives

Origin	Socio – Cultural Motives
A. Supra national and national dynamics	**S.C. 1. Preparation for international communication** To accustom children to foreign languages is of vital importance because they are a meaningful way of international communication
B. Regional and local needs	**S.C. 2. Train a multilingual workforce** To provide encouragement of an increasingly multilingual workforce within the Euregio **S.C. 3. Focus on social and cultural richness opposing biases** To provide children with additional languages, languages found in the community, in their own heritage, in their neighbourhood and in the vicinity of their community in order to function in an increasingly multi lingual Euregio is important **S.C. 4. Prepare for the image of the other** From an early age onwards children should be provided with linguistic tools that facilitate a more realistic image of the people of the Euregio they live
C The teaching profession	**S.C. 5. Minimal focus on accuracy** In foreign-language learning at an early age the foreign language systems is to be managed with a minimum level of accuracy to ensure successful communication

Within this set of socio-cultural motives three of them clearly stand out, because they have been very influential in several countries for the introduction of early language learning (Kubanek, 2001 & 2003)

S.C. 3. Focus on social and cultural richness / opposing biases

S.C. 4. Prepare for the image of the other

S.C. 5. Minimal focus on accuracy

The socio–cultural motive 'minimal focus on accuracy' was essential for a number of countries in the early nineties when they prepared to introduce ELL, for example in Germany, Holland and Denmark. The implication is that characteristics such as 'confidence', 'motivation' and perhaps 'fluency' (e.g. in listening), were considered more important for children at that stage.

Table 6.4   Overview of Psycholinguistic issues

Origin	Psycholinguistic Issues
A. Supra national and national dynamics	**Psyl 1. General insight in language systems** An early start makes pupils learn that another language is a source where words come from, i.e. Anglicism's.
B. Regional and local need	**Psyl 2. Insight in language systems through vicinity** Linguistic vicinity between languages can be made use of
C. The teaching profession	**Psyl 3. Age related language learning using unique physical predispositions** Foreign language learning at an early age takes advantage of age-related psychological and physical characteristics of children, such as curiosity, eagerness to learn, need to communicate, readiness and ability to imitate, and ability to produce new sounds. **Psyl. 4. Language Awareness** Foreign language learning at an early age caters for the development of language awareness **Psyl. 5. Deepening relationships L1 and L2** Foreign language learning at an early age establishes links between the target language and the languages already acquired **Psyl. 6. Language acquisition device** Foreign language learning at an early age caters for progression in the children's internalized emerging language system **Psyl. 7. Meta linguistic awareness** Foreign language learning at an early age caters for the development of children's meta linguistic awareness

Curtain and Dahlberg ([3]2005) have stressed that early language learning needs to be age-appropriate and targeted at children's dispositions. Very much to the point, the issue of age-appropriateness and the child's dispositions has been expressed.

Table 6.5   Overview of Didactical Concepts

Origin	Didactical Concepts
A. Supra national and national dynamics	**DC. 1. Meaningful contexts and thematic areas** To learn a foreign language in a meaningful context thematic areas from the child's surroundings and peer culture are to be integrated
B. Regional and local needs	
C. The teaching profession	**DC. 2. Comprehension precedes production** In early language learning comprehension precedes production **DC. 3. Use of authentic material** For foreign language learning at an early age child centred sets of authentic material need to be used **DC. 4. Personalization of content** For foreign language learning at an early age, personalisation of content helps children to gain a better grasp of reality **DC. 5. Task Oriented Learning** Den Schüler anzuregen und ihm die Möglichkeit zu geben, im tätigen Umgang mit den Dingen Lernerfahrung zu erwerben. **DC.6. Exploiting ICT** In early language learning the use of ICT supports learning **DC. 7 Learning speed and learning strategies** In foreign-language learning at an early age differences in speed of language learning, use of strategies and depth of understanding are should be taken into account

The first operational didactical concept is the one of meaningful contexts and thematic areas. This didactic concept stems from early conceptions of the communicative approach (Piepho, 1974, Widdowson, 1978). Furthermore, two very important didactic concepts are:

1.   Comprehension precedes production

2. The use of authentic materials

Table 6.6   Overview of Methodological transformations

Origin	Methodological Transformations
A. Supra national and national dynamics	**MT. 1.Embedding in day-to-day classroom management** To provide optimal learning support, embedding the foreign language in day-to-day classroom management and other subjects is important
B. Regional and local needs	**MT 2. Exploiting the possibilities of the vicinity of the border** To exploit the possibilities of the border for exchanges or visits **MP 3. Maximize exposure to foreign language** Exposure to the foreign language outside the classroom needs to be maximised
C The teaching profession	**MP. 4. Visual approach** For early language learning a visual approach is paramount **MP. 5. Holisitic learning / Ganzheit** Children can benefit from ELL best if a genuinely holistic approach is adopted, not merely an additive approach. **MP. 6 Repetitiveness** A child benefits most through frequent repetition of content matter

Documents about foreign-language learning in border areas particularly refer to exploiting the possibilities of the proximity of the border and maximizing the exposure to foreign languages. A key methodological transformation is holistic learning, which means that the concept of the language and of the learner as a whole is used. The pupil learns about the meanings in an integrated meaningful, multi sensory context.

Table 6.7   Overview of Pedagogical principles

Origin	Pedagogical Principles
A Supra national and national dynamics	**PP.1. Reflection on other languages** An early start makes pupils learn that another language is a source where words come from, i.e. Anglicisms.
B. Regional and local needs	**PP. 2. High frequency of exposure** For foreign-language learning at an early age, high frequency of exposure to the foreign language is desirable
C.The teaching profession	**PP.3 Encouragement of Tolerance and provision of familiarity with different sets of values** For Europe open and tolerant citizens are needed. **PP. 4 Usage Competence** The child should experience and use the foreign language first of all as a means of communication. **PP. 5. Development towards cognitive and linguistic demands** An early start helps to introduce increased cognitive, linguistic and other demands on children **PP. 6. Take account of learner characteristics** To take account of particular learner characteristics is essential for foreign-language learning at an early age **PP. 7. Assess own progress** A child is able to take into account or assess learning progress in a foreign language, even at an early age **PP. 8. A positive approach to learning** **PP. 9 Integrative work**

An important pedagogical principle is that children perform better through early foreign language learning because it has a positive effect on learning in general. This statement can be found in several publications throughout the United States, where foreign language learning for the very young still needs to be advocated. (c.f. Appleton Area School District, Wisconsin (2006) "World Language brochure *Language learning:*

preparing all students for today's world'). The second pedagogical principle is a high frequency of exposure. In the methodological transformations the maximisation of exposure to a foreign language has already been mentioned. The difference between the two concepts is that maximising the exposure means that children are exposed to the foreign language outside the classroom while the high frequency of exposure is what needs to be realised in the classroom. The other pedagogical principles are very basic concepts: for example usage competence, meaning that the child should experience and use the foreign language first of all as a means of communication. This principle very much originates from communicative language learning. Certainly one of the most important pedagogical principles is that the basis for successful early foreign-language learning is a positive approach to learning. Besides this, the encouragement of tolerance towards others and the provision of familiarity with a different sense of values is also of the utmost most importance.

6.4   The Main Principles Underlying Early Language Learning

Through the assessment of the importance and the implications of the main principles key information is made available to stakeholders such as national authorities, schools and institutions for teacher education. A group of 56 educationalists from all countries in the EU, all EFTA-countries and Bulgaria and Romania was addressed. These educationalists had different backgrounds. They came from teacher-training, policy-making, research or consulting. The selection of the educationalists was done through an iterative process. Through experience a highly knowledgeable group of educationalists for each country or region was selected. They were invited to fill in a brief questionnaire. Prior to the questions about consequences, they were asked to assess the importance of all principles in the four categories: didactical, methodological, psycholinguistic and pedagogical. Then they were asked which principles could be seen as having consequences for the organisation of ELL, classroom practice and teacher-training. This was done to find out what tangible and non-visible consequences an implementation of these pedagogical principles could have: for example: time to be allocated to teaching, classroom management, teaching materials, amount of time to be spent on teacher training.

6.4.1   Reasons and Aims of Early Language Learning

The reasons for introducing early foreign language learning are manifold. In those reasons the unique diversity of language learning throughout Europe becomes visible. Below, a selection of reasons is provided. An analysis of these reasons for introducing

early foreign-language learning in all European countries would have to go deep into national, regional and local school history. When reading the different reasons it should be kept in mind that the educationalists answered from different backgrounds and provided the rationales for unique circumstances for ELL (state, province, town, border initiative, etc.).

A Selection of Examples of Reasons for Introducing Early Language Learning

- Developing the hidden multilingual potential of every child, which allows a natural acquisition of another language as early as possible and also a better access to other foreign languages once a child starts to understand at least one of them.

- To improve foreign-language competences of students who will be able to take part in European mobility projects and become equal business partners in the global world.

- To foster positive attitudes towards language-learning.

- The reason is the need to improve the level of communicative competence reached by students in our educational system.

- To raise awareness of foreign-language learning at a young age and thus motivate children for learning foreign languages.

- To establish links between language-learning at first and second level.

- A bilingual system is already established, that made it easy to start with a third language and a new challenge.

- Demands from parents that their children should learn languages in kindergarten.

The reasons for introducing ELL have changed from the original ones according to 38.9% of the educationalists. Reasons of a pedagogical sort by and large remain the same. In most of the cases a new law or regulation that mandates the introduction of a foreign language has been introduced. Very often this contains a refinement of the original reasons and a corresponding curriculum is being developed. As can be seen from this list, some of the reasons could be re-stated as aims. For instance "to improve language competence because the learners need to be mobile in Europe later" can be

translated into the aim: language competence needs to be developed. Similarly, a reason would be that a child has a hidden plurilingual potential. Re-stated as an aim, this becomes: the plurilingual potential of the child must be developed. In the case of intercultural awareness, the relation between principle and aim is very obvious. Tolerance is a value which can be formulated as an aim: early language learning should promote tolerance. From the point of view of the learner, the aim is competence in a certain domain.

Curricula, on the basis of principles and aims, then state in more or less detail their specifications. For example, what does the aim of "a very basic communicative competence" mean with regard to listening, speaking, interaction, the grammar structures, the vocabulary? What does it mean expressed as a competence level, like A 1 of the CFR? Which methodological competences are included? How much time is needed until an aim is to be reached, and how is this to be assessed?

6.4.2 The final four categories of principles and their perceived importance

Those sets of statements that could more rightly be called the reasons and motives behind early language learning were omitted. The sources were handbooks, curricula, and didactic articles. The invited educationalists rated the importance of the principles for ELL. They were provided with a five point scale, ranging from:

1. meaning 'not important'
2. meaning 'somewhat important'
3. meaning 'important'
4. meaning 'very important'
5. meaning 'of the utmost importance'

Respondents have a tendency to avoid extreme scores and tend to score around the theoretical mean (which is 3, ergo 'important').

Principles that really have importance for ELL should be rated higher than 4, indicating "very important" to the "utmost importance". In the following tables, the issues, concepts, transformations or principles that receive an average rating higher than 4 are presented as 'important'.

Table 6.8   Importance of Psycholinguistic Issues

Psycholinguistic Issues, ranked according	Importance of the issue

to importance, original number between brackets	(mean score, standard deviation between brackets)
1. ELL should make pupils aware of similarities between their language and those from nearby borders (Psy 2)	2.50 (1.2)
2. Meta-linguistic awareness should be developed (Psy 7)	2.57 (1.1)
3. ELL should make use of and develop relations between L1 and L2 (Psy 5)	3.10 (1.2)
4. ELL must provide general insight into language Systems (Psy 1)	3.11 (1.4)
5. Language awareness is important (Psy 4)	3.35 (0.9)
Important Psycholinguistic Issues	
6. ELL should stimulate language acquisition (Psy 6)	4.33 (0.9)
7. ELL must be age related, using physical predispositions (Psy 3)	4.52 (0.7)

In this category the least important issue can be found i.e. ELL should make pupils aware of similarities between their language and those from nearby borders. There is a clear distinction in importance between psycholinguistic principles. The first four mentioned in table 6.8 bear hardly any importance. Stimulating language acquisition and ELL being age-related, using physical predispositions are the two most important psycholinguistic issues for ELL.

Table 6.9   Importance of Didactical Concepts

Didactical Concepts	Importance of the concept (mean score, standard deviation between brackets)
1. In ELL use of computers should be fully exploited (Did 6)	2.85 (1.2)
2. Use of authentic materials is important (Did 3)	3.55 (1.2)
3. ELL should be task-oriented (Did 5)	3.57 (1.5)
4. The topics of ELL should be personalized (handheld puppets, narrator figures) (Did 4)	3.67 (1.2)
Important Didactical Concepts	
5. ELL should take into account learning strategies and learning styles (Did 7)	4.00 (0.9)
6. In ELL comprehension precedes production (Did 2)	4.14 (1.0)
7. ELL happens in meaningful contexts and thematic areas (Did 1)	4.86 (0.4)

Again, now in the set of didactical concepts, there is a clear distinction between two groups of principles. Comprehension precedes production, taking into account learning strategies and learning styles and placing ELL in meaningful contexts and thematic areas are the three most important didactical concepts. The educationalists are unanimous about the importance of the notion that ELL would have to happen in meaningful contexts and thematic areas (indicated by the standard deviation of 0.4). Two experts noted that they made the distinction between meaningful contexts and thematic areas. They rated meaningful contexts as being of higher importance than thematic areas.

Table 6.10 Importance of Methodological Transformations

Methodological Transformations	Importance (mean score, standard deviation between brackets)
1. In ELL the opportunities provided by national borders nearby should be exploited (Met 3)	3.05 (1.4)
2. In ELL skills are trained through repetition (Met 6)	3.14 (1.1)
3. ELL should be embedded in day-to-day classroom management (Met 1)	3.76 (1.2)
4. In ELL a maximum exposure to the foreign language is important (Met 4)	3.95 (1.1)
Important Methodological Transformations	
5. In ELL a visual approach and multisensory learning are required (Met2)	4.38 (1.0)
6. In ELL holistic learning is central for children (Met 5)	4.52 (0.8)

Maximum exposure to the foreign language certainly has importance for ELL, but the two main methodological transformations are the presence of a visual approach in combination with multi sensory learning and the central concept of holistic learning for children.

Table 6.11   Importance of Pedagogical Principles

Pedagogical Principles	Importance (mean score, standard deviation between brackets)
1. ELL relies upon pupils gaining the ability to assess their own progress (Ped 8)	3.05 (1.3)
2. ELL should offer opportunities for reflection on other languages (Ped 2)	3.19 (1.3)
3. ELL supports the child's development towards more demanding cognitive and linguistic tasks (Ped 6)	3.55 (1.4)
4. ELL should be integrative (Ped 9)	3.81 (1.4)
5. ELL should focus on usage competence (Ped 5)	3.85 (0.8)
Important Pedagogical Principles	
6. ELL must strive for frequent exposure to the target language (Ped 3)	4.10 (1.2)
7. In ELL the full range of learner characteristics should be taken into account (Ped 7)	4.15 (1.0)
8. ELL should encourage tolerance towards others and provide familiarity with different sets of values (Ped 1)	4.38 (0.8)
9. The basis for successful ELL is a positive approach to learning (Ped 4)	4.62 (0.7)

Within the category of 'true' pedagogical principles there are four principles to be found that are assessed as important. The notion of frequent exposure to the target language, taking into account the full range of learner characteristics, encouraging tolerance towards others and providing familiarity with different sets of values are important pedagogical principles. The topmost important pedagogical principle within this category is creating a positive approach to learning.

6.4.3   Towards the Main Principles underlying Early Language Learning

Within each set of categories of principles a distinction could be made between principles and the really important issues, concepts, transformations and principles. In

graph 6.1 an overview is presented of those principles that have been assessed as being really important.

Graph 6.1 The Most Important Principles Underlying EFLL
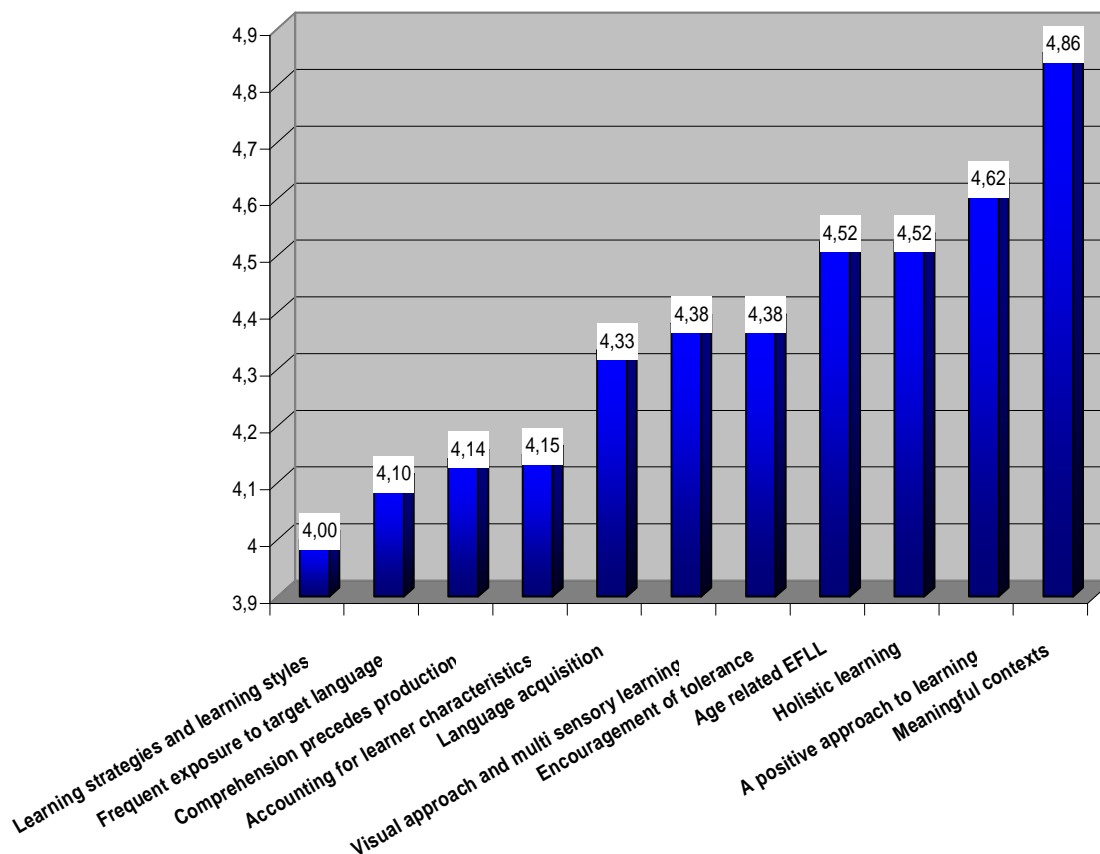
Four principles have been assessed as being important with an average score of just over 4. These principles are:

- ELL should take into account learning strategies and learning styles (Didactical 7)
- In ELL comprehension precedes production (Didactical 2)
- Frequent exposure to the foreign language (Pedagogical 3)
- In ELL the full range of learner characteristics should be taken into account (Pedagogical 7)

However important they might be, there are still other principles that have been assessed as being more important. The concept of language acquisition (Psycholinguistic 6), a visual approach and multisensory learning (Methodological 2) and encouraging tolerance towards others and providing familiarity with different sets of values (Pedagogical 1) seem to bear much more importance for ELL. The four most important principles seem to be:

- Teaching ELL age-related taking full advantage of the children's physical predispositions (Psycholinguistic 3)
- Holistic learning (Methodological 5)
- Providing meaningful contexts and relevant thematic areas (Didactical 1)
- A positive approach to learning foreign languages (Pedagogical 4).

It could be argued that there are differences in perception of importance of the most important principles, as stated above. Therefore the mean scores of educationalists answering for a country, a province, a local initiative or other situations have been compared. The univariate analysis of variance showed that there are no significant differences in the mean scores for the four groups of educationalists. Tentatively it could be stated that the most important principles underlying ELL apply for a wide range of contexts where ELL is implemented.

6.4.4 From Importance to Main Principles

The results of the assessments by the educationalists were presented to a selected group of experts during a two day seminar in Brussels. To the participants the classification of motives, issues, concepts, transformations and principles was too rigid. It was suggested that the inventory and the assessments of the educationalists had served their purpose. In order to end up with a more contextualised set of main principles the outlines of a more ELL-sensitive and less conceptually driven classification were suggested.

Principles can be identified which are all in relationship to the personality of a child and its cognitive functioning. This would include, in particular, the principles that are now under the heading of pedagogical principles. An example would be "A positive approach to learning (foreign languages". The second group of principles in fact are all of a very general nature and in general related to learning. These principles are quite identical to the didactical principles in the original classification. Examples of these so-called (learning) principles are learning in a meaningful context and age-related acting and learning. The third group of principles consists of principles related to language learning. A large proportion of the methodological and psycholinguistic principles would fit in. According to the experts attention needs to be given to the relationship of fluency and accuracy. Also because of the different age-groups that are involved in this study, the balance of skills that are learnt or acquired needs to be part of this set of principles. The fourth and last group of principles is the key to teaching foreign languages to the very young. This is a group of principles which are the most basic and are directly related to early foreign-language learning and teaching. Below an overview is presented of important main principles that are either related to ELL or represent the hallmark of ELL. In this sense the main principles of ELL need to be differentiated.

A Selection of Principles Related to Early Language Learning

1. Principles with a clear relationship to the personality of the child and its cognitive functioning - **pedagogical cognitive orientation**. The main principles are:
   - Frequent exposure to the foreign language
   - Taking into account the full range of learner characteristics
   - Encouraging tolerance towards others and providing familiarity with different sets of values

2. General principles related to learning - **didactical concepts and instruction**. The main principles are:
   - Taking into account learning strategies and learning styles of children
   - Providing meaningful contexts and relevant thematic areas
   - Comprehension precedes production

3. Principles related to language learning - **psycholinguistic issues and methodological transformations**. The main principles are:
   - Holistic language learning
   - A visual approach and multisensory learning
   - Age-related taking full advantage of the children's physical predispositions

A Selection of Principles Unique for Early Language Learning

4. Principles unique for early language learning are:
   - More comprehension than production
   - A positive motivation to learning
   - Training of the ear
   - Training of pronunciation
   - Extension and training of the relationship in a foreign language of phonetics and graphemes

These principles have no absolute features or qualities. It has to be kept in mind that, when referring to the main principles underlying ELL, we are always interested in the degree to which a principle is related to ELL. The principles underlying ELL are in a few

cases different from general language learning, in most cases not. For the very young learners it should be very important to learn with all their senses. In language learning for all the learners or even adults the multisensory aspect is important, but it is not as important as for the very young ones. In the past, early language learning was inserted before the traditional point at which learning a foreign language began. The principles, within these four categories, can be interpreted as a conceptualisation of continuity. Early language learning is driven by focussing on and putting in a bigger proportion of, for example, holistic learning or multisensory learning. In that way there is a very gradual development in language learning and continuity can be achieved.

6.5 Assessing the Consequences of the Main Principles

Principles for ELL can have implications at several levels in educational organisations, within institutions such as colleges for teacher-training and for different groups of professionals (trainers, developers and teachers). The educationalists were asked whether or not each of the principles had implications for the organisation of ELL (nationwide and at school level), at the classroom level and for teacher-training. The data are processed and presented in three steps. First the overall results are presented. This is done using an indicator of the strength of the implications. Second, a more detailed description is given for those principles related to ELL or those principles that are unique for ELL in Europe. Third, for one of the most important main principles uniquely related to ELL a case study is presented of the different aspects of the implications.

6.5.1 The strength of the implications

In order to survey the strength of the implications of the principles an indicator was created. The indicator represents the level of impact. Therefore, in this indicator 0 represents absolutely no implications seen by any educationalist and 1 represents implications perceived by all educationalists. In graph 6.2 the strength of the implications for each of four categories of principles for the organisation of ELL, namely nationwide, the school organisation, classroom practice and teacher training is demonstrated.

Graph 6.2 Implications of Principles for the Nation-Wide Organisation of EFLL, at school level, in Classroom Practice and in Teacher Training
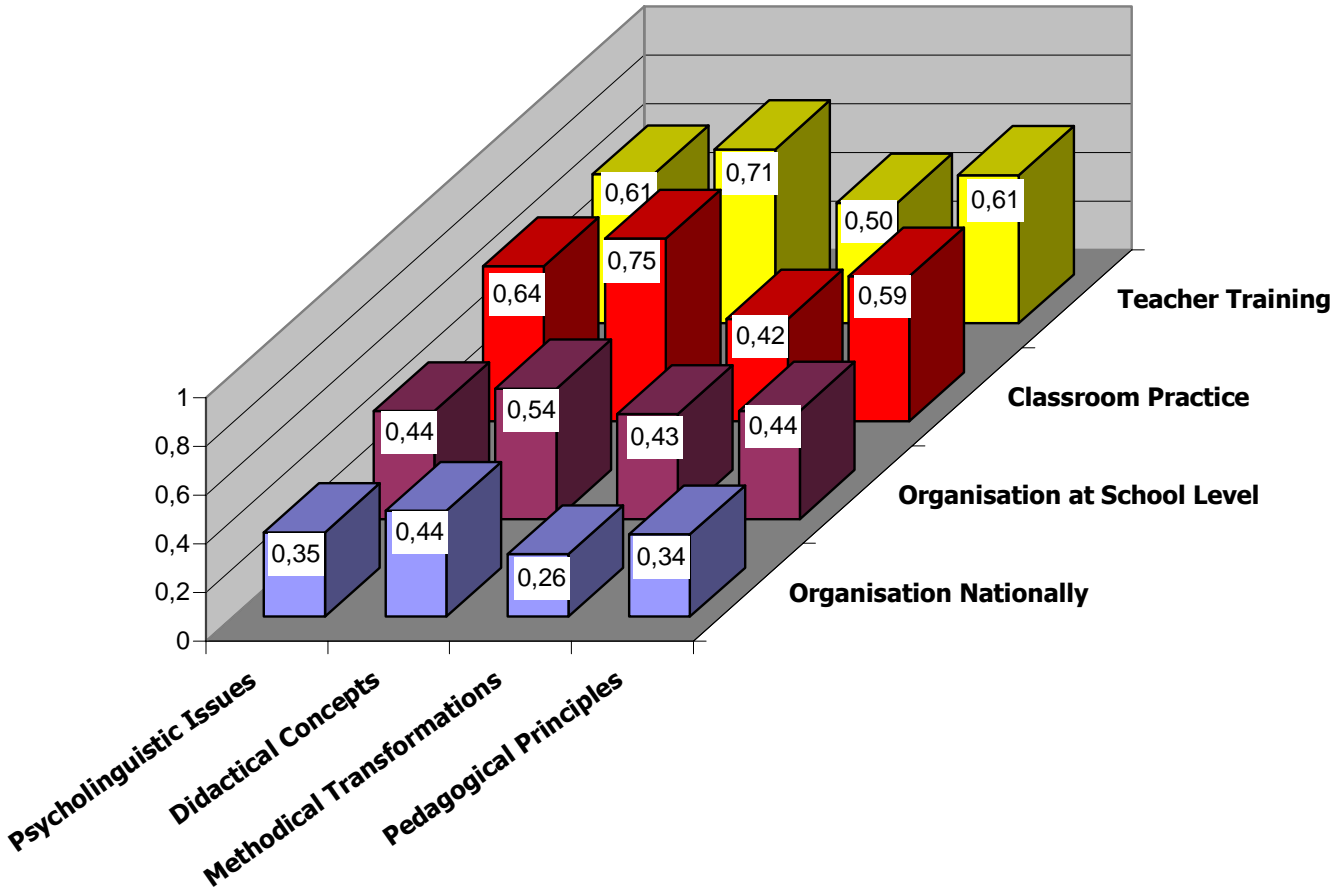
The psycholinguistic issues, the didactical concepts, methodological transformations and pedagogical principles seem to have the strongest impact on classroom practice and teacher-training. The weakest implications can be found at the national organisation of ELL. This will not come as a surprise. However, the implications of (new) didactical concepts on the national organisation have been assessed at the level of 0.44. The psycholinguistic issues, the didactical concepts, the methodological transformations and pedagogical principles all have almost the same impact on the organisation at school level. For classroom practice the didactical concepts stand out. Here the indicator has the highest level (0.75). Also psycholinguistic issues have a distinct impact on classroom practise (0.64). The indicators for implications on teacher training are slightly less strong. Again for teacher-training the didactical concepts and psycholinguistic issues as well as the pedagogical principles have the strongest implications.

6.5.2 Implications and consequences of the Main Principles

In section 6.4 important principles and the principles which are related to ELL or unique for ELL in Europe have been identified. Below an overview is presented of the percentage of educationalists that perceive implications for the main principles unique for or related to ELL.

Table 6.12   Implications of the Main Principles, in percentage of educationalists that perceive those principles having implications

Principles	Implications for:		Classroom Practice	Teacher Training
	Organization Nation-wide	At school		
Principles pedagogical cognitive orientation:				
• Frequent exposure to the foreign Language	40.0%	47.4%	78.9%	70.0%
• Taking into account the full range of learner characteristics	45.0%	47.4%	57.9%	65.0%
• Encourage tolerance towards others and provide familiarity with different sets of values	60.0%	68.4%	68.4%	75.0%
General principles related to learning				
• Taking into account learning strategies and learning styles of children	38.1%	40.0%	70.0%	81.0%
• Providing meaningful contexts and relevant thematic areas	57.1%	80.0%	85.0%	81.0%
• Comprehension precedes production	61.9%	75.0%	94.7%	85.7%
Principles related to language learning				
• Holistic language learning	20.0%	36.8%	73.7%	40.0%
• A visual approach and multisensory Learning	25.0%	47.4%	94.7%	75.0%
• Age-related taking full advantage of children's physical predispositions	61.9%	70.0%	100%	81.0%
Principles uniquely related to early foreign language learning				
• A positive motivation to learning	50.0%	57.9%	84.2%	80.0%

The principles which are related to ELL or unique to ELL in Europe seem to have the strongest implications for teacher-training and to a somewhat lesser extent for classroom practice. Between these important principles there is little variation

regarding the implications for the different aspects. An exception is, of course, the concept of holistic learning. It seems that the experts see holistic learning that is either already instructed in teacher-training colleges or is not transferable/learnable in these institutions..

Within the group of principles that have a pedagogical cognitive orientation the encouragement of tolerance towards others is especially important and has implications at school level and even more so at classroom level. For the general principles related to learning, the implications are the strongest for classroom practice and teacher training. Again one of the most important and main principles "providing meaningful contexts and relevant thematic areas" also has considerable implications at the school level. The principles related to language learning have the strongest implications for day-to-day classroom practice. The visual approach and multisensory learning as well as age-related foreign language learning taking full advantage of children's physical predispositions are almost unanimously seen as having strong implications for classroom practice. The one principle which is uniquely related to early foreign-language learning has strong implications for classroom practice and teacher training.

The principle "age-related language-learning using unique physical predispositions" can be called universal because it is one to which both teachers and educational experts adhere. In ELL, the concept of a curriculum implies proceeding along a path gradually becoming more complex as the child gets older and passes through the stages of a programme. Where ELL begins in Grade one, or pre-school, content and methods, portfolios, assessments are partly different from what is offered if the starting age is 8 years, for example. So as a very general statement, ELL is age-appropriate and practice takes the age into account as an underlying principle. In the practice the age-factor is taken into account in teaching materials. The official French website "primlangues" offers teaching material in 3 grades of difficulty, so a teacher can select what is appropriate for learners he or she is teaching. Portfolios have been made for different age-groups. In some cases the appeal and the ways of understanding a teaching material were explored before new material was developed, e.g. in Latvia. Textbooks are usually piloted in a few classes to ascertain the appeal and comprehensibility of the tasks. Tests for children reflect developmental stages of ELL. From Hungary, the use of special reading material in disadvantaged areas was reported. Guidebooks for the wider public, especially parents in bilingual families, explain the course of language acquisition and learning, helping parents to react to the (bilingual) child in an age-appropriate way. In teacher-training, learning styles and types of intelligence are addressed.

According to the experts the principle stimulating language acquisition has a definite impact on daily work in the classroom. The aim of ELL is to help children acquire basic elements of language. Language is meant to be used, i.e. listened to,

spoken, read and written, in child-appropriate activities. In this sense, the whole survey of good practice exists because ELL is supported. Textbooks and other materials are full of exercises, tasks, games, songs, stories. There is an abundance of methods, and the examples in the survey present considerable variety, charm and creativity.

The principle of presenting ELL in meaningful contexts and thematic areas has, according to all experts, an impact on teacher-training. The approach which goes with it seems to be widely, but not universally, adhered to in schools.

In the perception of most of the experts, this principle of fostering language learning strategies does not really seem to have a national impact in organisational matters. One might interpret that there is a discrepancy between a stated aim, e.g. in the curriculum (here it would have to occur near the principles about teaching in an age-related way) and what is actually happening. As individual textbooks were not sampled, no statement can be made about whether they typically contain sections on learning strategies – this applies to the books for children as well as the teacher handbooks. The Language Portfolio can be seen as a tool through which children can be made to consider the way they learn, e.g. vocabulary.

Holistic learning seems to be something that becomes real in the classroom itself. So it can be taught at university or college as a concept, but needs to be activated in a lesson. As it is connected to the individual teacher and the children, it has no perceived effect on national organisation. In the examples sent in for work in classrooms, indications are made that they are innovative, appealing or have been successfully used. If success means that they appealed to children and they learned through them, surely the methods used were not one-sided. In some of the examples sent in about teacher continuing development, reference is made to a special intensity of discussion and learning.

The principle of encouraging tolerance and providing familiarity with different sets of values is a value principle and has, according to the experts' perception, an impact in teacher-training, class and school equally and nationally. Organisation nationally might mean that in the curricula time is given to talk about such topics or time is given for exchanges and e-mail contacts. It also indicates provisions like teaching assistants, teacher exchange. The supranational texts quoted in the survey, the curricula and the teaching material give many indications that this topic is addressed. How it is taken up, and whether intercultural lessons are successful, how success is measured, is a question that needs to be answered by research. A question for discussion is whether it is possible to pursue this principle and the linguistic ones at the same level of intensity if the objective is a basic competence to actually use the language.

The principle of a positive approach to learning is of a universal nature. In pedagogical colleges and universities, future teachers become acquainted with a wealth of techniques to foster motivation. They are informed about children's curiosity

and eagerness to discover. Textbooks and additional material, training handbooks, give an overflowing bowl of ideas on how to motivate learners and maintain their motivation. It can be assumed that the examples sent in for classroom work were selected because children liked them. It is an old question for discussion how much maintained motivation of children is dependent on the linguistic competence of the teachers and their ability to create smooth lessons (according to the effective classroom research). Motivation also comes from the child's pride in being able to listen for gist, to sing a song by heart, play a role, to communicate.

6.5.3   An Example: Implications of the Principle of Training the Ear and its relation to good practice and research

The implications of an issue are often interpreted as signifying change, i.e. changes made in teacher training, classroom education and organisation. As an example the principle of training the ear was used. This came up very strongly in the two-day final seminar with several leading educationalists. First of all, including the principle 'Training the Ear' would mean that the content of the training program in pre-service training should be altered. Extra time would not be necessary, rather a shift in attention. The second implication is that a training-the-trainer course should be given in order to get a clear grip on the concept. The teachers in the training courses should re-think the devices they mention to students to have the children practise prosody, intonation, sound awareness, listening in general. In order to give the teacher-trainers and the students a real grip on the material they would need to relate the changes to those documents and methods that already exist. Re-organising existing materials would be a necessary process. The textbooks should be examined and the attention of publishers should be directed to the topic. Adaptation of course material, curricula and syllabuses is necessary.

Besides resources the change of attention would mean the creation of material through which the application of that particular principle (here: training the ear) is translated into classroom observation tasks, and it would need to be indicated which learner features and products are evidence that he or she can listen well (observable behaviour). Besides observation checklists, it would be important to present the educational approach (here: activities to train the ear and the children's reactions) visually. A video with comments upon critical moments might support microteaching and the understanding of teachers for that particular competence. As for good practice, the journal Frühes Deutsch, for example, has published an issue called "Hören" (Listening) (3/2004), which presents theoretical background and creative projects to improve attention in general, as well as specific activities to improve prosody and pronunciation. In the introduction, it is stated that many language teachers and curricula take it for granted that children listen well, which is not

necessarily the case. With the dominance given to the concept of natural paths to learning a language, the once-popular introductions to the sounds of the new language for beginners seem to have been somewhat neglected. Linking the principle to research means consulting the survey for studies focussing on listening, phonetics, prosody, considering their findings and recommendations – in case those are given. Two entries in the research bibliography are cited, to indicate how research can be consulted to develop a principle. In Becker (1999) 224 children of Grade 4 and Grade 6 (9 and 11/12 years) who learnt English as a first foreign language were studied. The question was how foreign language learners use prosodic features of a language to support their learning of grammar, and does their musicality influence the degree they can draw on prosody? The author conducted 4 experiments. First of all she noticed that prosody is hardly used in beginner teaching, but rather is seen as a refinement for later stages. In ELL only rhymes and songs are taught. The result of the experiment was that 4th Graders repeated sentences according to prosody. The older learners listened to the meaning. The ability to make use of prosody should be exploited in ELL, this is the advice of the author based on empirical evidence. Also, she found that the general assumption that all primary learners profit from an over-dramatic, over-emphasising of sounds needs to be re-assessed. Children with a low musicality - which was established via tests - were at a disadvantage when the teaching strongly stressed the musical elements as the empirical experiments showed. When those children were presented with the same sentences in a monotonous way, they performed better in the tests.

Another study about beginners of French was conducted with ethnographic methods in the first lessons of a grade 3 class (Mordellet-Roggenbuck, 2002). It is described in detail how children react when they get a new French name, how they react to the teachers' voice etc. She concludes with detailed suggestions for teacher-training. Obviously, both studies occurred in a specific context. Nevertheless, some of the methods or suggestions could be tried in other contexts. Taking into consideration the research into the lack of phonological awareness as one reason for dyslexia, and the training programmes which have been devised, yet another source to put the principle to practice can be tapped.

7. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The three previous chapters contained a review of recent research (Chapter 4), a description of good practice (Chapter 5) and a report of the fact-finding search of the main principles underlying early language-learning (Chapter 6). The data provide a wealth of possibilities to elaborate conclusions and recommendations.

7.1 Introduction

The predecessor of this report on early language-learning across the European Union (Blondin, et al., 1998) was focused exclusively on published research. The new report presents three perspectives: that of research, of 'good practice' and of the underlying principles. The present study is the first attempt to provide an evidence-based overall landscape of realities on the ground which is not country by country. It is also one of the first studies to address pedagogical principles in early language-learning in a comprehensive and evidence-based way.

Each of the three perspectives on early language-learning has its own logic, working procedures and textual style in the respective documents. Because of the enormous diversity of provision and practice in the field, it is not possible to present a fully integrated picture. Nonetheless a number of links between these three perspectives can be traced, of which one or two examples may be offered. In early language learning, research is at times concerned with questions and hypotheses which when pursued and answered may help classroom work. In that sense it is applied research. In the case of programme evaluations, the link to practice / good practice, is evident. National evaluations may present a picture of achievements and gaps and help redirect policy. As for the link between principles and good practice, one might see principles as the origin of developments in practice. Programme evaluations may in this sense supply indirect evidence that principles were adhered to. For example the principle 'giving children opportunities to speak' can be identified with the tool of a checklist or video-observation or others. Story telling, which was suggested from the 1990s as good practice, seems to be a case where recommendation (principle), actual practice and insight from research point in the same direction. At the same time, it is equally possible that principles may be derived from initial attempts at practice, because it is not always the case that those embarking on a new approach are fully clear at the start about the principles on which the approach might be based. New principles in the sense of new 'aims' or 'reasons for' or 'maxims for action' might in fact emerge from practice, particularly if this has been carefully evaluated.

The study should not be regarded as providing a measuring stick, but rather as constructing a scaffold to help stimulate reflection on one's own personal, local, regional or national context.

7.2   Published Research

As with Blondin et al. (1998), the main gains in early languages learning lie in the development of positive attitudes and motivation. At the same time though, research published since then adds some important detail to the picture. None of the research which has been surveyed should be considered as demonstrating universal proofs which lead directly to particular desirable practices. This is not the fault of the researchers; it has much more to do with the nature of research in our highly diverse, complex, fast-changing and contested field which cannot be as controlled and scientific as is research in various other domains of human investigation.

Key insights

1. An early start can confer considerable advantages on children by activating such natural languages acquisition mechanisms as they possess, by affording them more time overall and by providing them with a linguistic and intercultural experience which can have a beneficial formative influence on their cognitive, social, cultural, acoustic, linguistic and personal development (including qualities of persistence and participation) and on their sense of self.

2. An early start by itself however guarantees nothing; it needs to be accompanied minimally by good teaching, by a supportive environment and by continuity from one year to the next, taking children smoothly from pre-primary to primary, and from primary into secondary education.

3. Research provides some evidence that intrinsic motivation is not only created by fun and games but also by intellectual challenge and feelings of satisfaction with personal achievement.

4. Children seem to progress naturally through a number of stages of development in their target language, a process which seems to be driven in part at least by internal mechanisms which all children possess; it also seems from some research studies that all children progress through these stages in the same sequence but with considerable variation in the rate at which this is achieved[3].

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[3] Natural progression of this sort does not seem to be smooth and unidirectional (i.e. upwards) but seems to contain periods of stagnation (plateau-effect or fossilisation) and periods of confusion. It does not sit well with notions of progression built into course-books, national syllabuses or transnational frameworks.

5. Two of the individual learner characteristics which seem most strongly associated with proficient performance in the target language are 'motivation', and 'aptitude'. By the age of twelve or so, 'aptitude' seems to account for significant variation in performance. It is all the more important to understand therefore that 'aptitude' is not something which is fixed from birth. It is in fact a quality which can be developed and increased by the process of primary schooling. That is why in the early stages of primary schooling, the evidence suggests it is helpful not to focus exclusively on fun activities based solely on language-use but to supplement this with activities which help children to internalise meaningful concepts about language (thereby affording them a meta language with which to regulate their language-learning and -use) and also to enhance their sensitivity to sound and to underlying pattern, all of which seem associated with language-related aptitude.

6. While confidence is a very important quality to encourage, it is important also to bear in mind a key message of Blondin (1998) that many children (even some in immersion settings) do not seem to progress substantially beyond a stage of being able to produce largely learnt-by-heart, pre-fabricated utterances. In order to help them gain a more flexible command of their target languages, from an early age it is helpful to alternate between talk-activities focused on confident, fluent expression and those more focused on accuracy of form and meaning; and also between activities requiring spontaneous performance and those where performance can be planned and prepared.

7. Like all learners, children benefit greatly from appropriate feedback which helps them monitor their progress. The feedback may be positive (in order to offer encouragement) or it may be constructively negative (e.g. helping them identify then repair errors of grammar), provided that this does not undermine confidence or self-esteem. The feedback need not necessarily be given by the teacher through didactic instruction, it may arise from processes whereby children themselves are encouraged to focus on linguistic form as well as on meaning, to 'notice' for themselves particular features of the languages they encounter, and to evaluate their own and their peers' output. In their spontaneous play, young children can sometimes engage in activities which seem to focus on language forms (including self-repair and other-repair) as well as on meanings and communication, and this spontaneous capacity might be further developed in classrooms.

8. The evidence suggests that young children can benefit in a number of ways if their initial experience is not restricted to 'listening', 'speaking' and 'doing' but includes a gradual and systematic introduction to reading and writing from an early point. The reading and writing ought desirably to fit into a broader school approach to literacy development and equally may focus on local community languages as well as on the particular language the children are learning.

9. Children at all levels (from kindergarten onwards) benefit from being encouraged to reflect on their learning. This includes reflecting on how they might learn from and support each other, as well as on how they might learn from their teacher or others, or how they might learn things for themselves. It is worthwhile for teachers to help their pupils document, share, evaluate, supplement and refine how they learn not only in respect of languages but also in respect of their other learning at school. In this sense, a Portfolio approach has much to offer, provided teachers create time and explain the purpose to the children. Portfolios in particular offer a useful way of helping children to reflect on such strategies as they use, and on what they might do in order to make these strategies work successfully. Teachers clearly have an important role in helping children collect and share their strategies, and this is likely to be superior to an approach in which strategies are simply taught from a given checklist. Once pupils' strategies have been collected, shared, discussed and refined, then research suggests that it is helpful to revisit and refine these further, rather than cover them once only.

10. Stories play an important role in children's language-learning, not only because of children's natural interest in stories, nor in the undoubted appeal to their imagination, but also because stories embody a narrative structure of discourse which can be useful for learning more generally. The evidence suggests it is worthwhile for teaching to focus not only on the micro-structure of grammatical forms but also on the macro-structure of discourse, including the discourse of narrative. This helps children develop knowledge of how to begin, to set the scene, to link elements together in an intentional sequence, to de-centre in order to convey meaning to those who do not know the story, to deviate from the main story-line and then return to it, and to achieve closure. The generalisability of narrative functions such as these is considerable. Similarly, it is important for children to reflect on the structure of other forms of discourse such as conversations, which sensitises them to turn-taking, conventions of politeness, agreeing, disagreeing, intervening, topic-changing and negotiated closure.

11. Thus far, there does not appear to be substantial evidence of technology-mediated learning by children, and this seems at present to be more the preserve of students in senior school and post-school education. Nonetheless, there is an emerging body of research evidence which suggests that children can benefit from appropriate experiences using this medium. This is likely to take the form of 'blended' learning which integrates technology-mediated learning with classroom teaching and other forms, rather than of learning in a more free-standing, autonomous manner. Benefits initially seem to be in a variety of areas, depending on the purposes of the particular initiative, but they include facilitation of oracy, interaction, feedback, pronunciation, reading, extended production, intercultural and metalinguistic

awareness and strategy-development. A major gain would be likely to arise if the new technologies put pupils and their teachers in touch with each other in a 'virtual' sense 'across borders', aiming thereby to contribute not only to pupils' language proficiency but also to their social and intercultural development and their sense of European citizenship and identity.

12. Socio-economic status has been shown in some studies to have a negative influence on the early learning of a modern language at primary school. The term 'socio-economic' may in fact subsume a range of background characteristics, not only financial in nature but also possibly reflecting local culture, ethnicity, first language or dialect, employment, peer-group influence, family and other affiliation. It is extremely important that children should not be 'penalised' for bringing such characteristics with them into their early schooling. In a Europe based on equal rights to the full benefits of citizenship, it is essential that all children, not just a privileged minority, should receive an excellent opportunity to develop their inborn potentialities for language acquisition.

13. The languages-related outcomes which can reasonably be expected of children by the end of their primary schooling are strongly influenced by the particular models[4] of languages curriculum which are adopted. The outcomes will vary considerably as between (for example) i) teaching a particular target language for roughly one hour per week from various starting points in pupils' primary school education, and based mainly on working through given textbooks or syllabuses; ii) the same as i) except that there is a more flexible, learner-centred approach in which attempts are made to link pupils' language-learning to their personal interests and circumstances, and to their learning of other aspects, such as science or geography; iii) one which initially at least prioritises 'language and intercultural awareness' over the teaching of one particular language; and iv) forms of bilingual education, including partial or total immersion in which the factors of 'time' and 'intensity' are substantially increased. Research tells us clearly that model iv) generates the highest levels of target-language proficiency but is unlikely to be universally applicable. Models i), ii) and iv) all offer the great potential benefit of activating such language acquisition mechanisms as young children possess by challenging them to come to terms with a particular new language, but if any of these models are adopted, then research suggests it helps if elements of model iii)

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[4] If 'proficiency' in the target language (and the cognitive and intercultural benefits which arise from this) is the main aim, then one or other form of model iv) seems the strongest option, since it maximises the key factors of 'time' and 'intensity' (the greater intensity arising from children having not only to learn the target language but also vital subject matter through the medium of the target language).

can be blended in, to help children develop metalinguistic and intercultural awareness.

14. There is no research evidence to suggest that early languages-learning could possibly achieve success at a general level across the European Union or across any member state without substantial support through pre-service teacher education and the continuing professional development of teachers, and through national and transnational structures and initiatives.

7.3   Good Practice

An enormous range of invaluable activity has taken place across Europe at various levels, proof of the dedication of large numbers of professionals and of the perceived importance of the theme of early languages-learning. Based on examples which were by and large contributed by experts who had first-hand information about particular initiatives, a landscape of primary languages-teaching was sketched. The survey is divided in four sections: Creating conditions for good practice, teacher training, teaching/the classroom, dissemination. Within the sections there are sub-classifications.

It is suggested that the survey be read on two levels: a) as a collection of examples of good practice, each within a unique language context, and b) on a more abstract transversal level and therefore non-language specific. This second approach can partly compensate for the fact that only a selection of European languages could possibly be mentioned. The two main criteria given to the informants who searched for what to report for their country were stability and acceptance. These criteria were very broad and meant to guide the informants away from unique or very new initiatives. Some recent initiatives were, however, added to the incoming material in order to highlight ongoing dynamics.

The summaries which were sent to the authors gave evidence of various underlying ideas about what is considered good. Some contributors sent examples which stand for the expressed policy of the EU (e.g. CLIL, multilingualism), others sent examples of setting up structures, others again more material for direct use in the class which takes some workload off teachers. Some informants reported mainly large-scale initiatives. In Blondin et al. (1998), minimal conditions for success were listed. Similarly, many of the descriptions given are about the creation, in the past years, of conditions for successful teaching and learning.

A range of possible methods to collect information on perceived good practice was listed in the introductory chapters of the study. It was necessary to use a desk-research and expert-consultation approach, given time and budget restraints. The

advantage of this method is that the examples given as illustrating good practice represent what highly experienced educationalists considered as being worthy of inclusion in a report of this kind - meeting the criteria of stability and/or acceptance. What is reported is therefore no catalogue of 'what should be', of opinions about quality but gives evidence of what has been or is perceived to work in a particular context.

There is no automatic way of achieving good practice, be it at the organisational, the teacher-training or classroom level. Therefore neither the examples nor this part of the conclusions should be read quantitatively or with an if-then attitude. The motivation and learning success of the children cannot be predicted by ticking 10 instead of 7 quality indicators in a checklist. Nor is it possible to predict good practice in an uni-directional way, stating that success is guaranteed if x, y and z conditions are fulfilled. Creating and even improving good practice occurs as an interplay of factors through negotiations and interpretations as a process over time.

Four areas of good practice were distinguished for the classification: Conditions, teacher training, teaching, and dissemination. Conditions include the provision of information , legal provisions and/or transnational or national recommendations or directives , financial management and organisational arrangements, with a predominance of reported good practice in the last area. In the teacher education section (both pre-service and continuing professional development) examples for internationalisation were presented and a number of types of organisational changes considered to be working well by the experts consulted. As for teaching, the majority of examples focused on teaching material, but also the intercultural aspect came to the foreground, augmented by a small paragraph about teaching in less favourable conditions. Dissemination of images of ELL and information for a wider public were the topic of the fourth section. The chapter ended with a tentative list of quality indicators.

The examples reported by the informants focused to a large extent on the tangible. Good practice at the organisational level was reported in many facets, as the length of the respective section in chapter 5 demonstrates. The second tangible element is teaching material for use by the children. Again, the large variety is documented in the section 'teaching'. In contrast, little was reported on how a specific research study with its recommendations was felt to contribute to improving practice. It is clear that even if research results are heavily publicised like the national assessment studies, the effect of such findings is not immediate. Still, it seems that the discourses of research and the discourse of practice are perceived as very separate occurrences. The need currently voiced to improve diagnostic competence can lead to an intensified dialogue with researchers. Some examples of how transcripts and video data originating in the actual geographical context of teachers can help clarify understanding of teachers about language learning were mentioned.

Beyond that, approaches from other disciplines can help refine knowledge and widen the horizon for practice. The effect of story-telling can be understood better if teachers have heard about narrative from the perspective of literary studies. From the sciences, forms of visualising can be learnt from the Children's Universities. Popular experiments, for example in acoustics, or from computer animations of speech, might even be concretely enlightening when planning to stress the ELL principle 'training the ear'. Learning from outside of one's field might seem demanding but the fresh look can be of help.

Commercial textbooks were not considered in the study, but nevertheless the role of textbook writers should be mentioned. Views of good teaching in ELL as presented by foreign language educators at universities and colleges, to a certain extent also research results, are picked up by textbook writers who are however more bound by the stated requirements of particular curricula. It could be said that textbooks are a manifestation of an influence of theory of education and research and therefore function as change-factors. The European Language Portfolio has been widely recommended, and as a consequence, textbook publishers are adding such material to their books. The educational discussion about scholastic achievements has affected ELL directly in that textbook publishers produce additional material for assessment in countries where such material was not common. While it is acknowledged that publishing houses need commercial success, nevertheless they have a large responsibility for example in designing teacher handbooks but also, for example, in selecting cultural content. It is worth arguing, however, that however good a textbook may be, it is highly unlikely that a learner-centred approach can possibly work with young children if it based solely on a textbook. Good practice in teaching an additional language to young children seems from the evidence supplied to require some flexibility in approach, in order to a greater or lesser extent to cater for each individual child's actual environment, interests and needs and to exploit unpredictable opportunities as they arise. This has considerable implications for the role of the teacher in respect of, for example, their confidence in their own capacity to depart from the comparative 'safety' of the language items which are set out in sequence in the particular course-book.

Evidence exists that bringing in visitors and providing intensive cultural experiences motivates and kindles a will to communicate in the children which is different from day-to-day lessons. The opportunities for authentic encounters should be increased. Even though agencies exist which provide help, there seem to be barriers: perhaps due to extra time for preparation, perhaps because crossing the border has become too seemingly normal to arouse interest, perhaps because the border region is considered not attractive compared to a major town in the mainland. Solutions should be sought which make encounters and visits of guests more feasible for teachers. These might include for example ad hoc financial support for a cover teacher or a

teacher-training student or an 'animateur' or actor, when a class goes on a trip for a day. The range of visitors in class can be widened, for example, by a technician from another country temporarily working in a company where a child's parent is employed, by inviting target-language actors or singers who happen to be in a town. Creating such opportunities should not be left to the classroom teacher alone.

In addition, crossing borders may be viewed in a 'virtual' sense, through the use of new technologies which put pupils and their teachers from two or more different countries in touch with each other for a variety of purposes, including the undertaking of joint projects. Project work is a major characteristic of primary school education, and bi- or multilingual project work of a virtual, intercultural sort has potentially much to offer. 'Virtuality' is in fact an area for which relatively little evidence has been forthcoming in the present study, but it is surely one which must be developed. The benefits to a child's proficiency in their target language as well as their social and intercultural awareness are potentially considerable. The benefits to teachers could be equally great, in that their 'virtual' partner teachers could prove to be an invaluable source of advice and assistance in supporting the teacher's own language and intercultural development.

If measures of the sort suggested above were taken, then good practice might well be considered as exemplifying important principles of early language teaching such as 'respect for otherness', 'tolerating cultural dichotomies' or 'dealing explicitly with prejudice'. Increasing interculturality also means facilitating short visits of primary teachers to a school in a different country. Even though official EU structures exist and are successful, perhaps more might be done at national and other levels to complement this. The majority of primary teachers are women who might have younger children, and ways might be found of supporting their children as part of the travel package.

7.4   Principles

In order to arrive at a set of validated principles of early languages-learning, a sophisticated iterative process was adopted in collaboration with a range of experts in the field which allowed an initial formulation of principles to be developed and then progressively to be refined. Of the four different interpretations of the term 'principle' which suggested themselves, the two found to be most compatible with the present study were principles in the sense of 'aims of' or 'reasons for' and principles in the sense of 'maxims for action'.

7.4.1 Principles as 'aims of' or as 'reasons for'

The chapter on principles elaborated a set of statements which go well with the notion of principles as aims or reasons for. The evidence from official documents identified the following:

- to develop the hidden multilingual potential of every child which allows a natural acquisition of another language as early as possible;

- to improve the language competences of students who will be able to take part in European mobility projects and become equal business partners in the global world;

- to foster positive attitudes towards language-learning;

- to improve the level of communicative competence reached by students through their educational system;

- to raise awareness of language-learning at a young age and thus motivate children for learning additional languages;

- to establish links between language-learning in primary and secondary education;

- to establish a sufficient degree of proficiency and awareness in two languages so as to make it easer to begin with a third language and a new challenge;

- to respond to the demands of parents that their children should learn languages from kindergarten on onwards.

7.4.2   Principles as maxims for action

In addition, a number of principles were identified which may be viewed as maxims for action which are stated at a more general level than most of the measures identified as being suitable for good practice and which tend to convey some sense of the assumptions which lie behind the actions which are recommended. These assumptions may be of a pedagogical-didactic sort, or may be more oriented to acquisition or learning, or may be more philosophical in nature. A few of these maxims for actions are:

- stimulate and foster children's enjoyment to learn an additional language;

- promote basic skill communication;

- build on and sustain the initial motivation which children bring with them;

- provide particular language-activities which are adapted to suit the age- and stage-levels of children;

- provide meaningful contexts and relevant thematic areas;

- ensure that comprehension precedes production;

- make provision for holistic language learning;

- make provision for a visual approach and multi sensory learning;

- cater for training of the ear and training of pronunciation;

- help pupils become aware of the relationship between the sound and written systems of the languages they know and are learning.

It should be emphasised that the two sets of principles as set out above are put forward by the authors not as their own final, personal and fully considered opinion but rather as reflecting the substantial iterative process which took place in consultation with a body of eminent experts. What is not at all clear is the extent to which these principles have been explicitly understood and accepted as such by the majority of teachers. It seems highly likely that in many cases they are implicitly rather than explicitly understood.

What could be achieved is an overview of important main principles that are either related to ELL or are unique for ELL.

- Principles with a clear relationship to the personality of the child and its cognitive functioning - pedagogical cognitive orientation. The main principles are:
    - Frequent exposure to the foreign language
    - Taking into account the full range of learner characteristics
    - Encouraging tolerance towards others and providing familiarity with different sets of values

- General principles related to learning - didactical concepts and instruction. The main principles are:
    - Taking into account learning strategies and learning styles of children
    - Providing meaningful contexts and relevant thematic areas
    - Comprehension precedes production

- Principles related to language learning - psycholinguistic issues and methodological transformations. The main principles are:
    - Holistic language learning
    - A visual approach and multisensory learning
    - Age-related taking full advantage of the children's physical predispositions

- Principles unique for early language learning are:
    - More comprehension than production
    - A positive motivation to learning
    - Training of the ear
    - Training of pronunciation
    - Extension and training of the relationship in a foreign language of phonetics and graphemes

Although it has been pleasing to report a considerable increase in published research studies since Blondin et al. (1998), in fact the research that has been published provides relatively little information on the extent to which principles such as those set out above are understood, accepted or implemented, but there is a strong suspicion that for this to happen, a great deal of discussion and elaboration would be needed, involving all the main stakeholders in early languages learning, such as transnational and national authorities, teachers, teacher educators, advisers, inspectors, school management, not forgetting pupils themselves and their parents. Through the process of consultation with the experts, the chapter on principles provides some initial suggestions on which particular principles might lend themselves to development by which particular stakeholders, but given the diversity of provision which exists within and across countries, these can be no more than initial suggestions.

It has been the aim to present a preliminary list of principles in explicit fashion, supported by the authority of the eminent professionals who contributed to their formulation, to begin the process of 'unpacking' them and to put them forward for further discussion and elaboration.

7.5   Discussion and Recommendations

The evidence collected from research reports and from interactions with expert professionals in relation to good practice and principles suggests four positive features of ELL as it occurs at present across Europe:

1. There is an enormous variety of worthwhile activity at all levels (from transnational to individual), which is a positive testament to the large numbers of individual teachers, groups, organisations and structures which in one way or another support early language learning; there is ample evidence of commitment and initiative on a large scale.

2. There is continuing evidence (c.f. Blondin (1998)) that pupils' attitudes and motivations are generally very positive as a result of their early language-learning experiences and that this continues through much or indeed all of their primary school education.

3. It is clear that in several member states, and also at transnational levels, there has been substantial investment in promoting early language learning, in order to deal effectively with key provision factors such as teacher supply, initial training and continuing professional development, support for materials, networks, innovation and associated research. In most cases, this investment is viewed positively and is seen as belonging to a long-term sustainable development strategy which will

enable schools and teachers in turn to engage in long-term as opposed to short-term planning.

4. It is also clear that the classroom teacher occupies a central role in any successes which early language-learning initiatives achieve. The classroom teacher is the main provider of target language input and the main facilitator of target language interaction; the teacher is also the person who helps pupils acquire metalinguistic or intercultural knowledge and who helps pupils make connections between their target language and the mainstream primary school curriculum. Given that classroom teachers in many cases are not visiting language specialists but are also responsible for teaching much or all of the overall curriculum and may indeed not be highly skilled in the target language, theirs is a demanding role.

Nevertheless, areas for possible improvement have been identified.

Knowledge management

Recommendation 1: It should be considered how best to further support the
gathering, co-ordination and dissemination of key information and experiences pertaining to research, good practice and principles of early language-learning.

There is a serious lack of such co-ordinated information which would not only combine research, good practice and principles but would do so on a recurrent basis and make the resulting information available. The discourses of research and of good practice and the pictures which arise from these seem at present quite different from each other. There is also a lack of infrastructure at transnational and national levels which would put researchers regularly in touch with each other and with colleagues more engaged in teaching and teacher education. The improvement might possibly be achieved in some or all of the following ways:
1. supporting a 5-year European network for ELL research and development, in order to facilitate contact amongst those involved;
2. supporting an annual or periodic conference on ELL research and good practice, to be attended by teacher trainers, policy makers, teachers as well as researchers**;**
3. sponsoring a research & development programme on areas central to ELL.

Recommendation 2: In order to provide stakeholders and indeed the general public with systematic, evidence-based information about the 'bigger picture' of early language-learning and -teaching, at a European and

national level, a major transnational programme of studies into essential areas of ELL should be envisaged, covering issues such as the relationships between provisions, teacher knowledge, teacher traits and perceptions, content and linguistic input, classroom behaviour and instruction, cognitive and affective processes and outcomes (strategies, skills, language awareness, attitudes and identities).

Much of the best research offers insight into specific aspects, e.g. aptitude, motivation, strategies, but there is a lack of integrated research and development which could provide a 'bigger picture' of how the main variables leading to success in early language learning influence each other. Such research could result in forming different clusters of good practice. There is little information about certain key topics which can be regarded as crucial for the success of ELL. These include the early introduction of reading and writing in children's first language, home language and additional target language; the development of a discourse about local community languages and cultures; the embedding of the target language in the broader curriculum of the primary school, e.g. science, history, geography, physical education, art and design; managing the class through the use of the target language; the provision of corrective feedback by teachers but also by pupils (self-repair and peer-repair); examples of pupils striving hard to produce spontaneous utterances which they themselves have created, rather than pre-fabricated utterances; teaching an additional language to children with learning difficulties or special needs (an area of vital importance but which seems to have been more or less neglected in research and in good practice).

Recommendation 3:   Educational authorities should consider how best to arrive - via networks of teachers, researchers, teacher educators and advisers - at in depth descriptions of good practice in process.

There is a clear need to identify, describe and define what good practice is. What are the prerequisites, what are the outcomes and how can the actual implementation of good practice be achieved. For this, more classroom observational data will be required, ideally video-recorded and made available for pre-and in-service teacher education. More indicators of good practice need to be developed. We need more research and discussion about how quality as an ongoing process in class is the result of an application of principles, of material conditions, of a specific teacher profile, societal support and/ or other factors. We need much more small-scale action research on this topic, including the use of portfolios, learner and teacher diaries and the production of illustrative video-material, including interviews with pupils themselves so as to ensure that their voices are represented.

Outcomes

Recommendation 4: It should be ascertained what the main models of early languages learning are and what outcomes these are delivering.

There is no clear evidence which relates different models of provision for ELL to the outcomes of these models. Canada, by contrast, has developed a number of different models of immersion education and core French, and as a result of integrating research, good practice and reflection on principles over many years it is possible to predict the sorts of outcome a particular model will yield. This kind of information is highly useful to parents, school management and key decision-makers across the European Union. Indeed, there is considerable uncertainty as to what models of early language education are being implemented. Further, there seems to be a great deal of variety and perhaps not enough coherence. Clarity about typical outcomes for certain programmes would also allow the inclusion of descriptors for the first stages of the Common European Framework for Modern Languages.

Recommendation 5: Children's progression in ELL and the development of their motivation should be explored more. This should include a search for ideas on how to collect and analyse data. Teachers and teacher trainers should consider how best they might track the progression in language development of particular individuals and groups with whom they are in contact.

There is still very little evidence on children's progression in their target language development. What seems clear is that the picture of progression arising from second language acquisition research, which contains phases of plateauing, backsliding and 'Systemturbulenz' is not the same as the picture of progression that is incorporated into languages course books, syllabus guidelines or transnational frameworks, namely that of steadily climbing a ladder upwards.

It is evident from the observation of primary school classrooms that young children generally are highly motivated by their learning of an additional language. Relatively little is known or shared, however, in relation to how children's motivation grows and changes as they proceed through their primary school education. There is some evidence that, initially, their motivation is extrinsic and related to pleasurable classroom activities, and that with good teaching this becomes intrinsic motivation through intellectual challenge and feelings of accomplishment. But relatively little is known about the ways in which good teachers enable their pupils' motivation to grow

in this way; and even less is known about when and how other forms of motivation 'kick in'. This insight is important because it can positively affect schemes to secure continuity and raise interest in learning other languages, as well as teachers' beliefs about language learning.

Teacher Training

Recommendation 6: There should be more discussion amongst teacher trainers and authorities about how good practice is linked to a teacher profile.

Work has been undertaken to draw up a profile of the ELL teacher[5]. Clearer statements need to be made in order to discuss how teacher factors like the following contribute to success: creating a relaxed, enjoyable, work-oriented and task-oriented atmosphere in which the foreign language is used consistently (or almost), using a high level of fluency, having a high level of confidence in one's teaching skills, encouraging pupils to participate in dialogues, supporting the development of appropriate learner strategies (in line with their age, stage in development and purposes in learning), setting clear and feasible goals , helping children to do their work, providing time on task, giving sufficient time for practice, encouraging reflection, encouraging internalization of the subject matter (i.e. fostering children's internal dialogues. The discussion might possibly include a re-balancing of current principles for ELL, as far as they have been registered in this report.

Recommendation 7: It should be considered how best to audit and strengthen provision in pre-service teacher education in respect of early language-learning
Within the present study, relatively little information has been forthcoming on pre-service teacher education for early language-learning (in comparison with the large body of information on in-service). There is therefore a need to audit and strengthen teacher-education at the pre-service level, e.g. by making it available to the maximum number of pre-service teachers-in-training, by defining the competencies which should be acquired by the end of the pre-service training period and by incorporating appropriate periods of residence abroad and possibly opportunities for obtaining a diploma from a partner teacher training institution in the target language country.

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[5] Cf. the valuable work of Prof. Marina Bondi

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Appendix: The Questionnaire on Principles

Introduction

This questionnaire is comprised primarily of multiple-choice questions. Please tick (using an **X** or **O**) the answers you believe to be most appropriate. The terminology used is broad, so as to account for the diversity of European educational systems and the differences in principles underlying Early Foreign Language Learning (EFLL). Examples and sources can be found in the attachments.

Professional Background

1. What is your profession? _____

2. What are your main responsibilities with regard to Early Foreign Language Learning? [P*lease tick more than one box if applicable*]

    [   ] teacher training   [   ] research

    [   ] curriculum development   [   ] advising schools

    [   ] policy making   [   ] in-service training

    [   ] teaching foreign languages   [   ] other, namely _____

3. The context for Early Foreign Language Learning (EFLL) is important. [*Please indicate which context applies to the answers you will provide*]

    [   ] for your country

    [   ] for a province, a certain region _____

    [   ] for the border region _____

    [   ] for a specific project _____

    [   ] other, namely _____

4. What is the age range of pupils in your situation?

    Children between   .. years and   .. years old

Rationale and Aims

5.   What were, <u>at the onset</u>, the main reasons for introducing EFLL in pre-primary or primary education?

6.   Do the main reasons for EFLL in 2006 differ from those stated originally?

[   ] no
[   ] yes, if yes in what way?

7.   What where the primary aims of EFLL upon its introduction?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

8.   Do the primary aims of EFLL in 2006 differ from those stated originally?

[   ] no
[   ] yes, if yes in what way?

The Main Principles Underlying EFLL

9.   EFLL is guided by principles. An inventory has been made of principles listed in official documents (curricula, guideline, etc.) and handbooks. Those that are relevant to ELL have been divided into the four groups below. Please rate the importance of the following principles for EFLL.

Please use a scale from 1 - 5 when assessing the importance of each principle.
1. means 'not important'
2. means 'somewhat important'
3. means 'important'
4. means 'very important'
5. means 'of the utmost importance'

Psycholinguistic Principles	Importance 1-5	Didactical Principles	Importance 1-5
EFLL must provide general insight into language systems		EFLL happens in meaningful contexts and thematic areas	
EFLL should make pupils aware of similarities between their language and those from nearby borders		In EFLL comprehension precedes production	
EFLL must be age related, using physical predispositions		Use of authentic materials is important	
Language awareness is important		The topics of EFLL should be personalized (handheld puppets, narrator figures)	
EFLL should make use of and develop relations between L1 and L2		EFLL should be task oriented	
EFLL should stimulate language acquisition		In EFLL use of computers should be fully exploited	
Meta linguistic awareness should be developed		EFLL should take into account learning strategies and learning styles	

Methodical Principles	Importance 1 - 5	Pedagogical Principles	Importance 1-5
EFLL should be embedded in day-to-day classroom management		EFLL should encourage tolerance towards others and provide familiarity with different sets of values	
In EFLL a visual approach and multisensory learning are required		EFLL should offer opportunities for reflection on other languages	
In EFLL the opportunities provided by national or nearby borders should be exploited		EFLL must strive for frequent exposure to the target language	
In EFLL a maximum exposure to the foreign language is important		The basis for successful EFLL is a positive approach to learning	
In EFLL holistic learning is central for children		EFLL should focus on usage competence	
In EFLL skills are trained through repetition		EFLL supports the child's development towards more demanding cognitive and linguistic tasks	
		In EFLL the full range of learner characteristics should be accounted for	
		EFLL relies upon pupils gaining the ability to assess their own progress	
		EFLL should be integrative	

Attachments I.1 to I.4. contain overviews of all principles, including their sources, examples and origins.

10. Which psycholinguistic principles had implications for the organization, classroom practice or teacher training? "Implication for the organization" is characterised as the starting age, number of lessons, programmes for language awareness, etc.

	Implications for:			
Psycholinguistic Principles*	**Organization**		**Classroom Practice**	**Teacher Training**
	Nation-wide	**At school**		
General insight in language systems	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Use of similarities of languages near the border	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Age related language learning using unique physical predispositions	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Language awareness	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Developing relations between L1 and L2	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Stimulating language acquisition	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Developing meta linguistic awareness	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

* the list is the same as in question 9, here some abbreviations are used

11   Have these psycholinguistic principles influenced the amount of teaching time, classroom management, teaching materials or teacher training in EFLL?

[   ] no
[   ] if yes, could you please explain how these psycholinguistic principles have influenced the amount of teaching time, classroom management, teaching materials or teacher training?

_____
_____
_____

12. Which <u>didactical principles</u> have had implications for the organization, classroom practice or teacher training. "Implication for the organization" is characterised as the starting age, number of lessons, programmes for language awareness, etc.

	Implications for:			
Didactical Principles*	**Organization**		**Classroom**	**Teacher**
	Nation-wide	**At school**	**Practice**	**Training**
EFLL in meaningful contexts and thematic areas	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Comprehension precedes production	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Use of authentic materials	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Content of EFLLL should be personalised	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
EFLL should be task oriented	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Full use of computers	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Taking into account learning strategies	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

* the list is the same as in question 9, here some abbreviations are used

13   Have these <u>didactical principles</u> influenced the amount of teaching time, classroom management, teaching materials or teacher training in EFLL?

[   ] no

[   ] yes, could you please explain how these didactical principles have influenced the amount of teaching time, classroom management, teaching materials or teacher training?

_____

_____

_____

14. Which methodical principles have had implications for the organization, classroom practice or teacher training? "Implication for the organization" is characterised as the starting age, number of lessons, programmes for language awareness, etc.

Implications for:

Methodical Principles*	Organization		Classroom	Teacher
	Nation-wide	At school	Practice	Training
Embedding EFLL in day-to-day classroom management	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Visual approach to support multi sensory learning	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Exploiting the opportunities of the border region	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Maximize exposure to the foreign language	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Repetition	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

* the list is the same as in question 9, here some abbreviations are used

15. Have these methodical principles influenced the amount of teaching time, classroom management, teaching materials or teacher training in EFLL?

[ ] no
[ ] yes, could you please explain how these methodical principles have influenced the amount of teaching time, classroom management, teaching materials or teacher training?

_____

_____

_____

16. Which pedagogical principles have had implications for the organization, classroom practice or teacher training? "Implication for the organization" is characterised as the starting age, number of lessons, programmes for language awareness, etc.

Pedagogical Principles*	Implications for:			
	Organization		Classroom	Teacher
	Nation-wide	At school	Practice	Training
EFLL should encourage tolerance towards others and should provide a familiarity with different sets of values	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Opportunities for reflections on other languages	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Frequent exposure to the target language	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
EFLL originates from and builds on a positive approach to learning	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Focus on usage competence	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Support for the development towards cognitive and linguistic demands	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Accounting for the full range of learner characteristics	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Skill to assess one's own progress	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Support for integrative work	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

* the list is the same as in question 9, here some abbreviations are used

17. Have these pedagogical principles influenced the amount of teaching time, classroom management, teaching materials or teacher training in EFLL?

[   ] no

[   ] yes, could you please explain how these pedagogical principles have influenced the amount of teaching time, classroom management, teaching materials or teacher training?

_____

_____

_____

18. Which principles are most important now, with regards to improving pupil performance? [*if appropriate, please copy principles from the pages above*]

1.

2.

3.