

**Empowering language professionals
Achievements of the ECML programme 2008-2011**

Proposed table of contents

Module 1:

ECML as primary reference point for language education in Europe
(ECML mission and list of unique “selling points”)

Module 2:

Record of achievements

- Document 2.1:
ECML 1995 – 2012: Quantitative data (ie numbers of participants, workshops, publications etc) - 1 page
- Document 2.2:
Empowering language professionals – achievements of the ECML programme 2012-2015 (including information drawn from the evaluative scheme) - 12-15 pages
- Document 2.3:
How an ECML publication can make a difference – case study on EPOSTL - approximately 8 pages
- Document 2.4.:
Catalogue of selected ECML publications
- Document 2.5.:
External publications on the ECML

Module 3:

Sample studies of impact of ECML work in 2 member states– approximately 10 pages

Module 4:

Learning through languages – the ECML programme 2012-2015 offering European cooperation at the service of member states

Module 5:

Overview of services to member states

At the meeting of the Governing Board on 14-15 March only documents 2.2 and 2.3 will be presented. It is envisaged that the modules indicated above will then be (further) developed upon the basis of the feedback provided by the Board members and ultimately made available both as ‘stand-alone’ documents and in the form of a single report to allow for flexibility of use.

Document 2.2

Empowering language professionals – achievements of the ECML programme 2008-11

Christopher Tribble / Frank Heyworth

1. Preamble

1.1 The programme

The ECML programme for 2008-2011 focused on four themes: Evaluation, Continuity in Language Learning, Content and Language Education, and Plurilingual education. Under each of these areas of activity, the Centre worked towards achieving 4 core objectives:

- Enhancing the professional competence of language teachers
- Strengthening professional networks and the wider community of language educators
- Enabling language professionals to have greater impact on reform processes
- Contributing to better quality of language education in Europe

In this section of the report, we bring together a summary of the extensive statistical and qualitative data which has been accumulated through the ECML evaluation system. This system comprises a set of on-line survey instruments which have been designed to provide formative and summative feedback information to project and programme managers throughout the life of the project, and in the period following a project's formal closure.

The key surveys which are summarised below are:

In the following sections, we summarise the main areas which are:

- Post event surveys of participants¹
 - 2009:
8 Workshops / 2 Network Meetings / 1 Regional Workshop / 6 National meetings / 24 Expert meetings
 - 2010:
6 Workshops / 10 Network Meetings / 1 National meetings / 16 Expert meetings
 - 2011:
5 Workshops / 10 Network Meetings / Regional Workshop / 6 National meetings / 15 Expert meetings
- Impact Surveys of participants 6 months after a major event and at Project End
- Post project survey of Project Team Members after the end of the 2008/2011 programme
- The Reader Survey for ECML Publications

1.2 Evaluating impact

Given the time frame within which this report has been completed, and the fact that project impact can only be realistically evaluated some time after an intervention has been completed, the kinds and extent of impact which we will be able to comment on in this section will be limited. The case study of EPOSTL (in this report) gives a fuller and more satisfactory account of the impact of a project whose main product was delivered four years ago and which has recently completed a major consolidation and dissemination phase and a further study of the impact in two countries is being carried out. In this section we will first consider the formative evaluation which has been available through the post event surveys as these provide a valuable insight into the effectiveness of the processes during the 2008-2011 programme and their *immediate* impact on individual participants during project implementation. We will then review the

¹ Due to changes made to the questionnaires following piloting in 2008 the data related to the 2008 activities is not included within this first version of the report.

evidence of impact post project completion which is provided by the recently completed impact survey of project teams and key learning points from the final specialists' report on the Thematic Areas.

2. Immediate impact

In terms of immediate impact we have taken two main themes from the Post Event surveys – the extent to which an event has met participants' expectations, and the extent to which they are satisfied with the services provided by the ECML staff. These were chosen as they offer an insight into participants' experience whatever the professional focus of the event.

2.1 Participants' post-event reports

2.1.1 Summary – meeting expectations

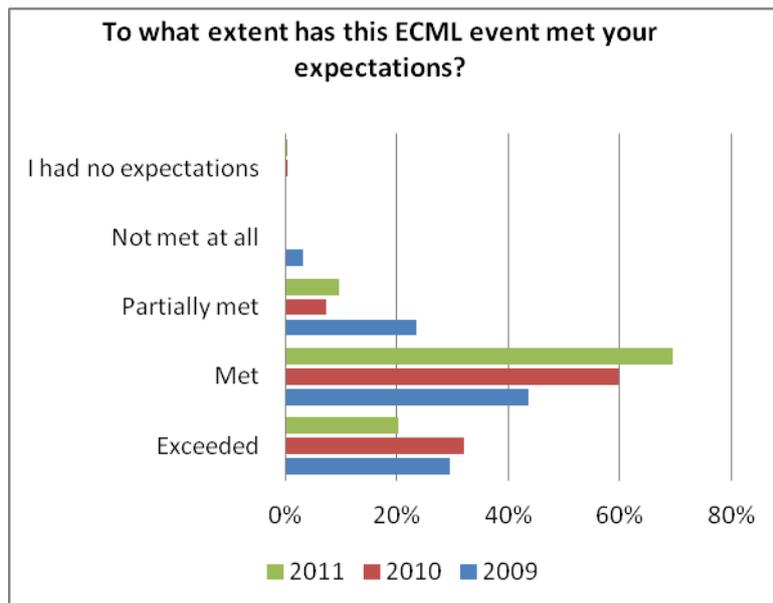


Figure 1: meeting expectations

Participants overwhelmingly reported that their expectations of the events and meetings in which they participated were met or exceeded. It is interesting to note that there was an overall increase in the "met" report between 2009 and 2011 (from 42% to 69%), with a small and not unsurprising drop in the "exceeded" response over the same period.

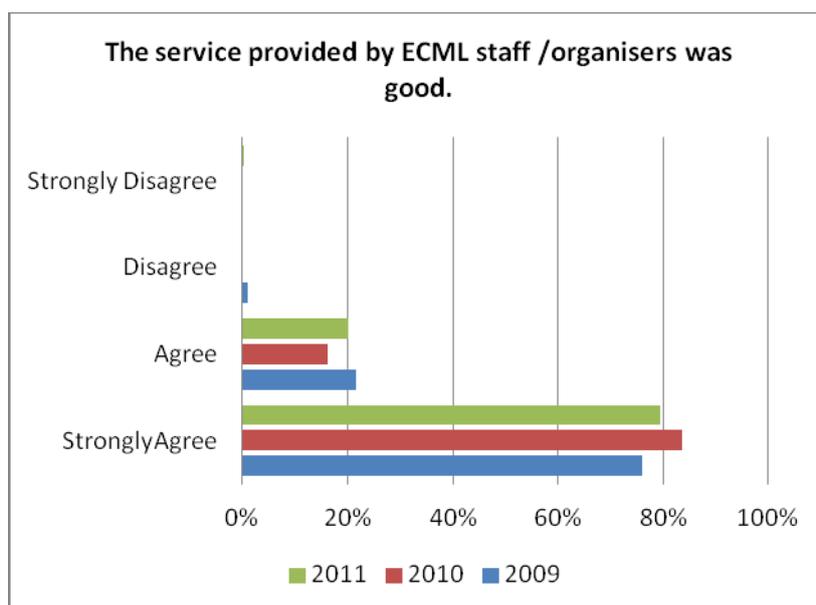


Figure 2: ECML services

Alongside meeting the expectations of participants, the ECML itself clearly provided excellent service to participants and project teams. This very high level of satisfaction related to both pre-event information and the support and services provided during and after meetings.

2.2 6 month impact reports

2.2.1 Summary

The impact questionnaire was sent out to participants in workshops 6 months after the event. The rate of return was very high, over 70%, and this in itself indicates a high level of commitment to the ECML's work. We have also reviewed responses to the possible impact categories which were included in the regular post event impact surveys, and have collected and reviewed comments from participants across all three years of the programme. By consolidating these results we are able to see a striking consistency across the three years both in terms of the benefits which participants feel they have gained through their participation in the programme and actions they have taken in the period immediately after the event.

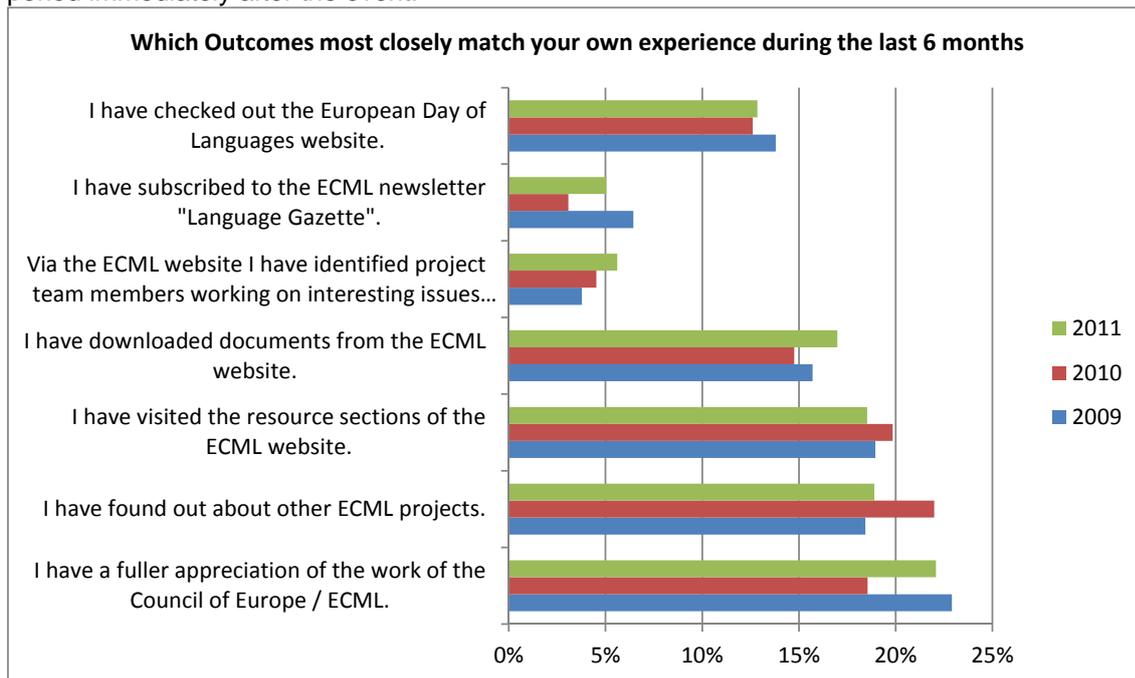


Figure 3: outcomes

The strongest immediate impact arising from these workshops and events related to participants having an enhanced appreciation of the work of the Council of Europe and ECML. The second greatest impact was on their understanding of other ECML projects. Although these immediate outcomes may appear to indicate a purely personal level of impact, they are important as many of the participants in workshops and events only have one-off contact with ECML. The fact that the event has enhanced their understanding of the work of the Council of Europe and that they have a better understanding of ECML projects is a positive gain and the fact that they have gone on to download documents from the ECML website is a further indication of an impact which resonates beyond the meeting itself.

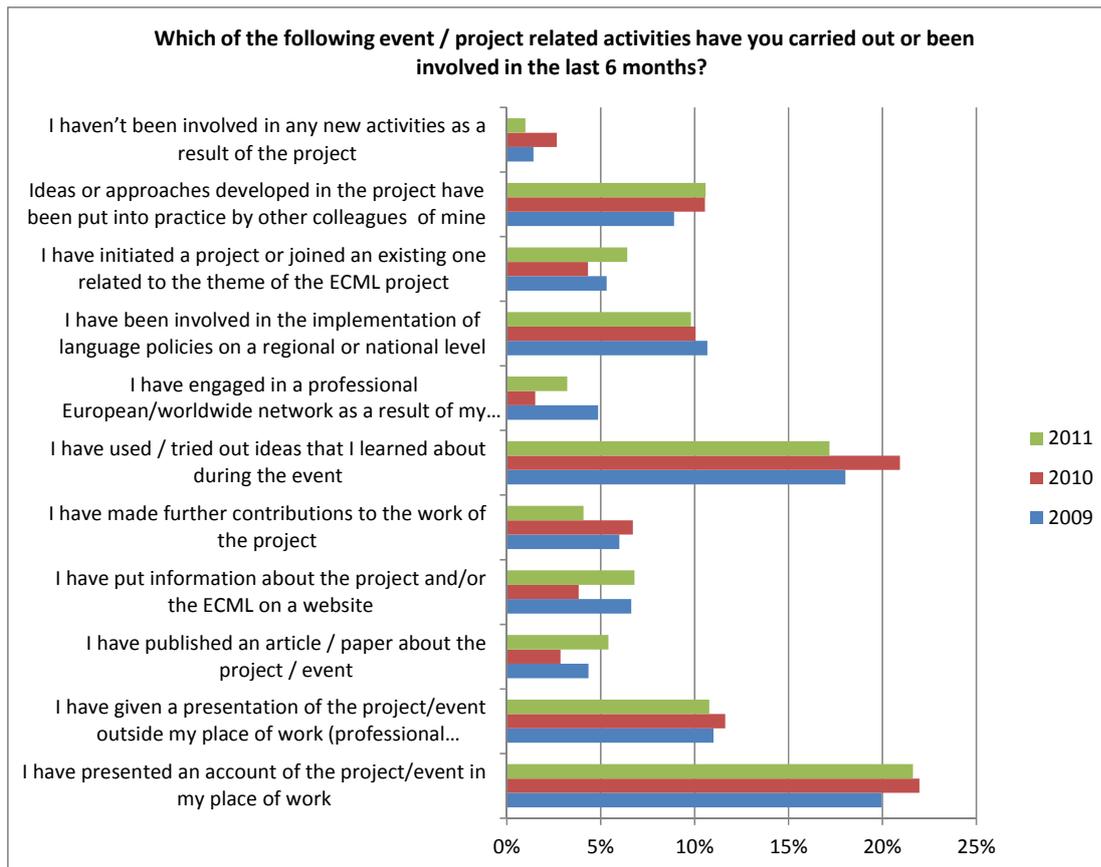


Figure 4: post event activities

The two outstanding aspects of post event impact are the fact that over 20% of respondents report that they have disseminated the results of work done so far within the project with colleagues, and that they have used ideas that they have learned about during the event. Here we begin to see a more direct impact from the different meetings and events organised during the programme. In addition, we can also see that 10% of respondents report that their *colleagues* have started to put these ideas into practice and that they themselves have become engaged in new projects which relate to the ECML project theme.

2.3 National Participants' comments

A review of comments from participants across the three years of the programme has been revealing both in relation to the main topics which have been the focus of participants' attention, and also their sense of the benefit and applicability of the different events in which they have taken part. The comments themselves responded to a request for information about the benefits which had arisen as a result of participating in the 2008-2011 programme, and the extent to which it was proving possible to apply the results of the programme at a national level. Comments were collected from the participants from the countries listed below.

Albania	France	Romania
Andorra	Germany	Slovak Republic
Armenia	Iceland	Slovenia
Austria	Ireland	Spain
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Latvia	Sweden
Bulgaria	Liechtenstein	Switzerland
Croatia	Lithuania	"The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia"
Cyprus	Luxembourg	
Czech Republic	Malta	
Denmark	Montenegro	
Estonia	Netherlands	
Finland	Norway	
	Poland	

All responses which were not originally provided in English were translated into that language using Google Translate (which provided a sufficiently accurate translation for our purposes).

2.3.1 TOPIC – keywords in participants' responses

Using tools from corpus linguistics, it was possible to bring identify a set of keywords² which clearly indicate the topics and themes which were a focus of interest or concern for participants. The top 30 from this list is given below.

1	language	9	foreign	17	evaluation	25	DOTS
2	teaching	10	framework	18	developed	26	bilingual
3	project	11	ELP	19	portfolio	27	descriptors
4	languages	12	modern	20	materials	28	ICT
5	education	13	intercultural	21	CEFR	29	curricula
6	CLIL	14	context	22	multilingual	30	plurilingual
7	learning	15	skills	23	mobility		
8	different	16	reference	24	multilingualism		

While none of these constitute a surprise, we found that the emphasis on CLIL (rank 6), ELP (11) and intercultural (rank 13) revealing as they indicate an alignment between the National Participants' comments on the programme and the main themes which the 2009-2011 programme addressed. A review of the immediate collocates of *teaching* in these reports confirms this view, with the following words being closely linked in this context: *online / support / bilingual / CLIL / colleagues / training / skills / materials / practice / methodology / content / language*.

2.3.2 TOPIC – ngrams

Ngrams (sometimes known as lexical bundles) also give a very powerful way of seeing the frequently occurring phrases and arguments within a collection of texts. In the case of the reports from National Representatives two of the most frequent three-word ngrams in the data collection: *the use of*, and *the context of*, offer strong evidence of the orientation and focus of the National Participants' responses.

- THE USE OF (in participants' responses)

lished in 2008 a series of referrals on ning to adapt to the Time and integrate pean languages, whose main Objective is g and intercultural awareness, but only of foreign languages ??probably due to the teaching of languages, work on he quality of language teaching through uation. The content of the workshop and ers to teaching approaches that involve tain context. In case the project is on he new requirements of the European and people to build knowledge and skills in dedicated entirely to the promotion of s a communication tool. These tools and apid sharing of innovative practices in ng in regards to the CEFR and promoting ge learning, the "e" in front of it for he opportunities offered by Web 2.0 and urricular coherence. Ello proponent for xperts, each of whom reported regarding

the use of the CEFR and promotions pluri
the use of the ICT. The first part of th
the use of the majority tongue in eac
the use of the ELP in the context of the
the use of the Common European Framework
the use of Social Networks like Facebook
the use of online technologies. So-calle
the use of new technologies are part of
the use of multiple (or at least more a)
the use of language portofolio all teach
the use of language as a communication t
the use of language in real situational
the use of Information Technologies and
the use of ICT combined with language te
the use of ICT for teaching and learning
the use of ELP-based teaching. Objective
the use of electronic media and ways of
the use of electronic whiteboards in lan
the use of communication tareas usadas d
the use of CLIL from a di fferent perspec

the use of ngram demonstrates the ICT and CLIL focus of attention in the National Participant's comments.

² see Scott, M. & C.Tribble (2006). *Textual Patterns: Key words and corpus analysis in language education*, Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

- THE CONTEXT OF (in participants' responses)

areness, but only the use of the ELP in the whole school at an an
 kill possessed in that language. ELP in the whole school (ELP-WSU
 ses in the implementation of the ELP in the whole school. The Eur
 osal to extend the idea of ??the ELP in the whole school. The fir
 s about projects already implemented in the whole school, to plan
 ion eu other tools ECML, spread them in the context of mobility, as a key instru
 dad the use of the language acquired in the context of university education. The
 s, either in the original format and in the context of the broader (the entire s
 of the countries). The ELP workshops in the context of the whole school (May 201
 for the chosen example from Austria in the context of the school, using differe
 nd after she joined the project "EJP in the context of the whole school," began
 also parents. The effects of the ELP in the context of the school were: - awaren
 language teaching language portfolio in the context of the school, the Austrian
 uages ??"European Language Portfolio in the context of the whole school" (ELP in
 o in different countries and its use in the context of the whole school. If at t
 ??in official instructions directly in the context of such a workshop as a pool
 l schools in Hamburg c) (most likely in the context of foreign language Hamburg
 l constituerai for language teachers in the context of group languages of the
 roject: "European Language Portfolio in the context of the whole school" languag
 l make a presentation of the project in the context of student animations from M

the context of ngram shows the strong focus on the whole school.

2.3.3 EVALUATION

A review of negative and positive evaluative terms reveals that the National Participants value examples of *good practice* above all else, and that they also comment on the value of better *harmonization*. The dissemination of good and best practice is one of the main missions of the ECML. By contrast, there is only one occurrence of any of the negatively evaluating terms *bad/worse/worst/unsatisfactory/unacceptable*, and this use (*unsatisfactory*) has no bearing on the ECML programme!

- good / better / best / excellent / outstanding (in participants' responses)

es. Awakening to diversity also means a **better** and real diversification of the r
 foreign language) and characterizes the **good** aspects of CLIL teaching. The final
 urope. There was, at the same time that **good** CLIL practice requires qualified te
 owledge I use the following way: - by a **better** definition of the difference betw
 the reform process, and contribute to a **better** education for languages ??in Euro
 reference framework already provides a **good** evaluation tool for the performance
 hop with European colleagues to achieve **better** harmonization. In an environment
 ing in particular. They are antennas to **better** identify the needs of teachers an
 at multilingualism of these students be **better** integrated and all other students
 to think about the characteristics of a **good** language teaching. Within a small g
 so that a work can be characterized as " **good**" or "satisfactory". Looking to the
 r in the "Network Group" to promote the **best** possible combination of all finding
 yoritaria in the field, get examples of **good** practice at different country and 0
 having these tools and see examples of **good** practice in different countries, wi
 having these tools and see examples of **good** practice in different countries, wi
 iences with other teachers. Examples of **good** practice With my colleagues in the
 ork together in workshops I can pass on **good** practices and examples from my prof
 May 2009 the liberty of my info to view **Best** Practices Assessment that realizan
 ed in the workshop is part of a Project **Best** Practices in the teaching of a lang
 you will ye them that incluyan ejemplos **Best** Practices TO USE OF THIS tools. Al
 h them / as Teachers with materials and **Best** Practices Absolutamente recomendabl
 orkshop consisted of a presentation of " **best** practices" and training materials,
 a foreign language) - efforts to ensure **better** sharing system already finished t
 oncrete ways to implement them and help **better** situate the changes in the thinki
 mework. Using the characteristics of a **good**, that is communication directed to
 nd the benefits of ELP, which is a very **good** tool for reflection, understanding,
 ent models bilinguismescolaire ect. The **good** translation and Erklahrung the word
 the culture of folks collectivities, to **better** understand the differences, and s
 hole school, to plan new and reflect on **better** ways to monitor their implementat

3. Post Project Impact

3.1 'end of project'

3.1.1 Summary

The end of project survey was administered with team members from all the projects that were implemented under the 2008-2011 programme. We have focused on two key questions in the survey – one relating to achievement of outcomes, and the other on where the projects have achieved greatest impact.

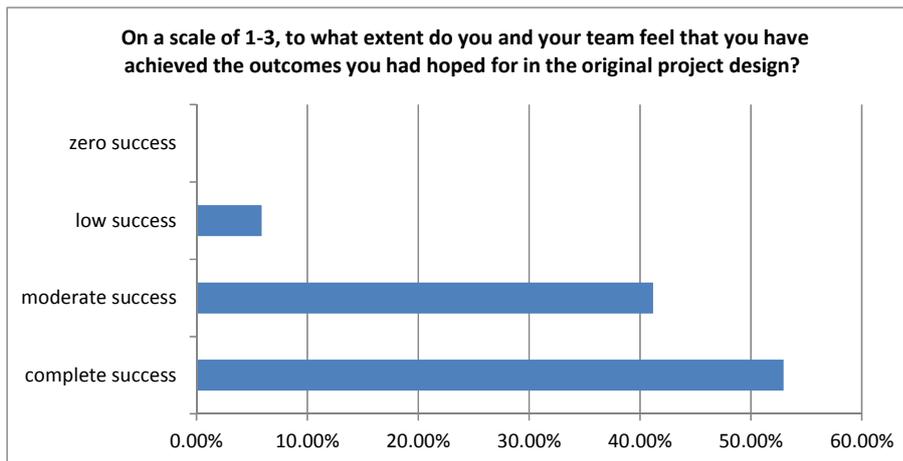


Figure 5: final outcomes

Team members' assessment of achievement is very high – with over 40% reporting moderate success and over 50% reporting complete success. No team members reported zero success.

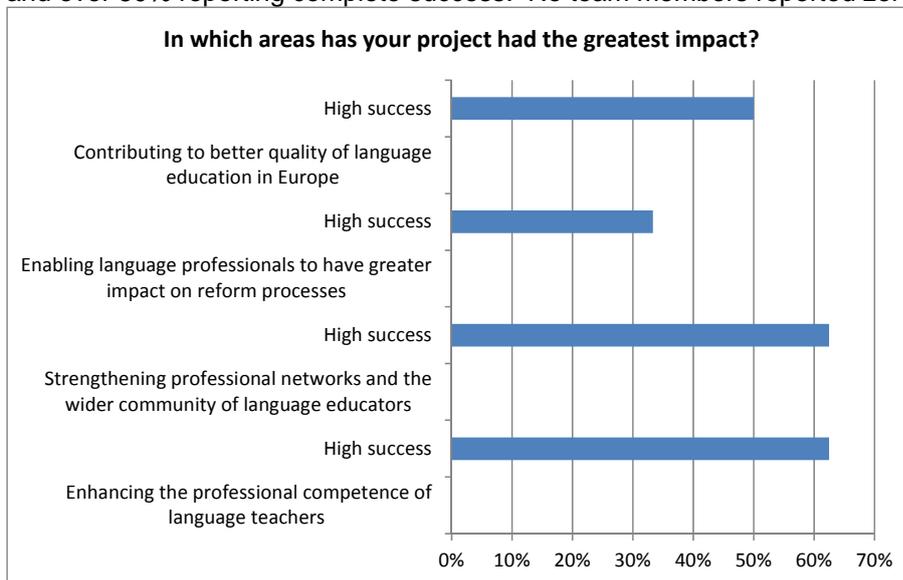


Figure 6: impact

The areas of greatest impact which are reported relate to *Enhancing the professional competence of teachers* and *Strengthening professional networks and the wider community of language educators*. Even in the case of the lowest reported High Success category (*Enabling language professionals to have greater impact on reform processes*), 30% of respondents felt that their project had had a positive impact in this area.

3.1.2 Evidence of institutional change

When the comments that respondents have made are reviewed, we find strong evidence of real institutional change. An insight into the extent of this impact can be gained from the following comments from participants' responses:

- According to updates on impact received from QT-WS participants, the QT-Guide, training and dissemination events have inspired new approaches in the implementation of QA-system reform e.g. at national level (Finland, Cyprus), at institutional/programme level (the Univ. of Zaragoza, Spain; the Univ. of Economics, Bucharest/Romania; it has contributed to improving a project evaluation system in Austria (the SPIN-project eval. system/ÖSZ); Dissemination within EAQUALS has inspired and informed new EU projects with a focus on national QA system improvement (e.g. 'IPALE' - Grundtvig Learning Partnership among 5 national QA Associations <http://acert.cz/grundtvig-final-product/>; New Grundtvig project 'ISQALE - Improving Standards of Quality in Adult Language Education', etc.); Requests for & conducting QT-seminars beyond the ECML context, e.g. at the Univ. of Siena, Italy, plus the translation of excerpts of the QT-Guide into Italian; etc.

- *The development of a flexible tool which can be used as a basis for the design of CLIL teacher training courses in any context, and can help develop a European profile of the CLIL teacher.*
- *We have material that teachers find useful and are being asked to give several workshops on this .. It gives primary school language teachers a way of assessing writing constructively, using the CEFR in a way that is tailor made for their pupils*
- *There is evidence that certain Ministries of Education are advocating the use of the EPOSTL in teacher education. Lithuania and the Czech Republic are 2 examples.*
- *I have been invited to act as consultant for the group working on reforming the school curriculum for English in Norway. The group have been given the mandate of integrating the CEFR more closely in the curriculum, and I am going to demonstrate how this can be done, with the AYLLIT project as part of this, alongside the ELP.*

3.2 Publication feedback

Feedback from a survey of those who have downloaded ECML publications gives an indication of both *which* publications have received the greatest attention, and the uses to which they have been put. The survey is based on 106 responses to a survey sent to 3,000 persons registered as having downloaded one or more publication resulting from the *Empowering language professionals* programme in the latter part of 2012.

3.2.1 Summary

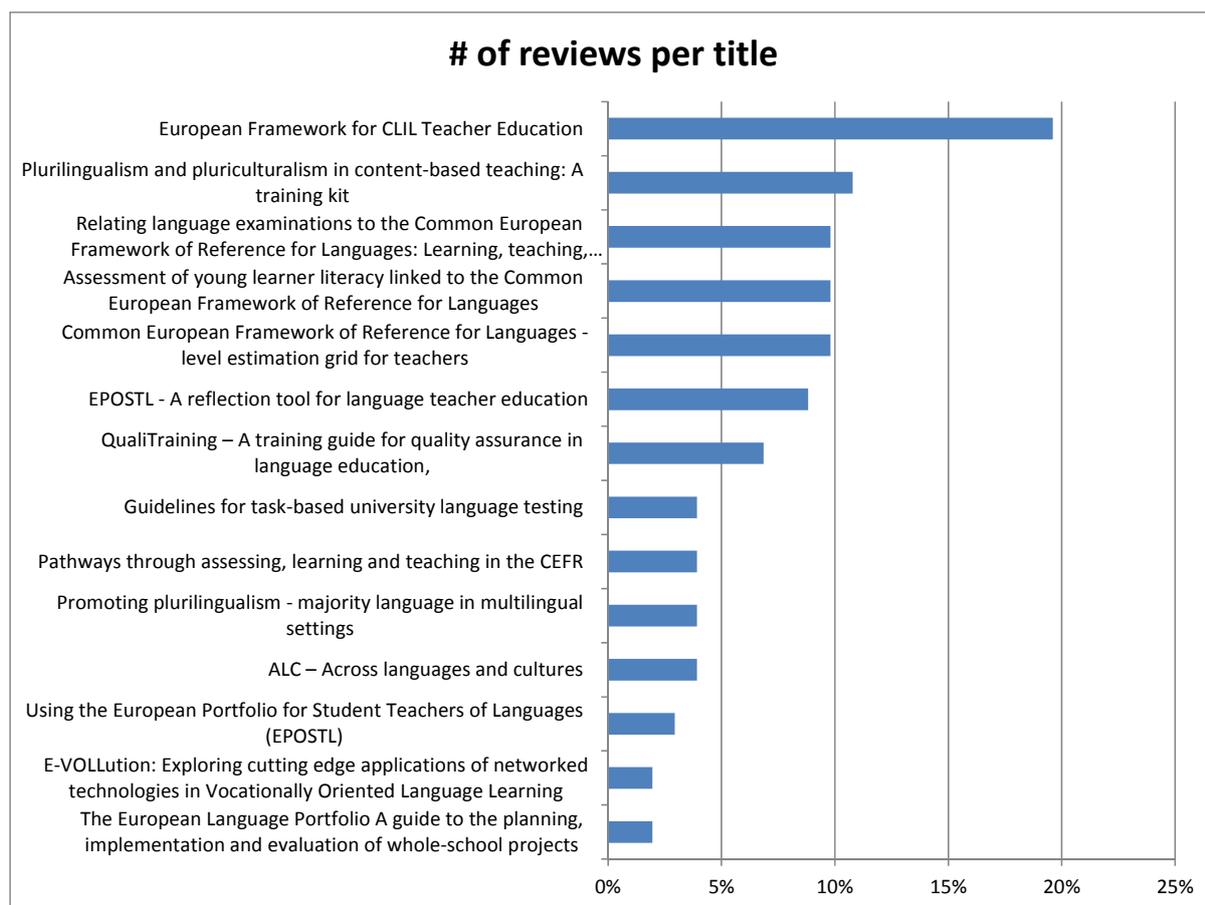


Figure 7: reviews per title

It is interesting to note that the majority of the reviews received related to the *EF for CLIL* (20%), followed by a group of 5 publications: *Plurilingualism*, *Relating exams to CEFR*, *Assessment of YL Literacy in relation to CEFR*, *CFER level estimate reference grid*, and *EPOSTL* (8%-11%). This might indicate a clear interest in publications which have a direct, practical application at classroom or institutional levels, and could be helpful in future consideration of publications.

Evaluations of the quality and relevance of the publications (see Figure 8 below) were consistently very high, with 90% of respondents assessing the relevance and clarity of the professional content at

Good or Excellent, and over 80% evaluating design, up-to-dateness and usefulness as Good to Excellent.

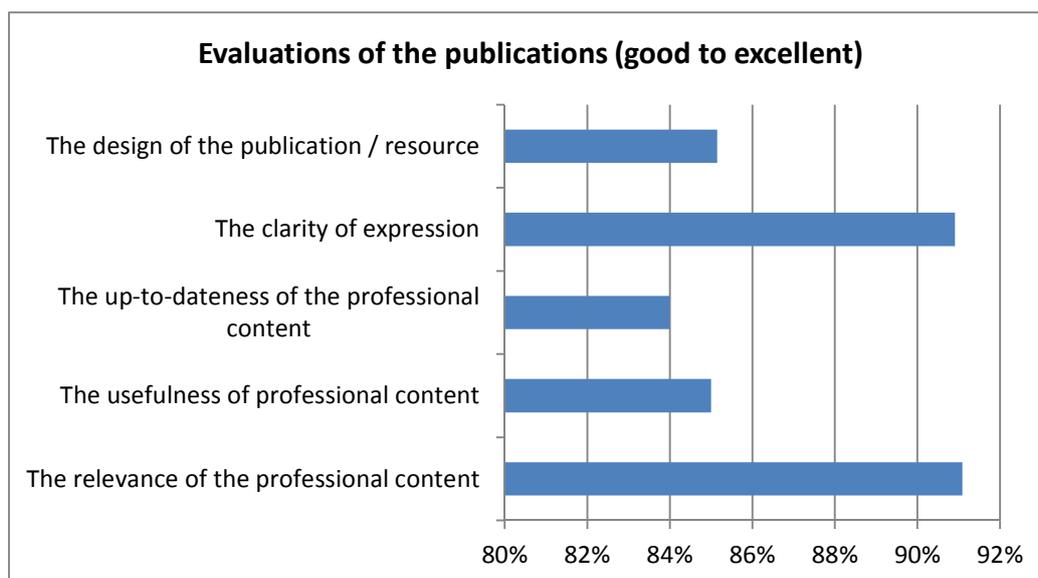


Figure 8: excellence of publications

The summary of ways in which publications have been used is also encouraging as it clearly demonstrates a direct link between the publications and input into in-service and pre-service teacher education, as well as into materials development and curriculum design. It is in these areas that long term, sustainable impact will continue to be generated by ECML publications.

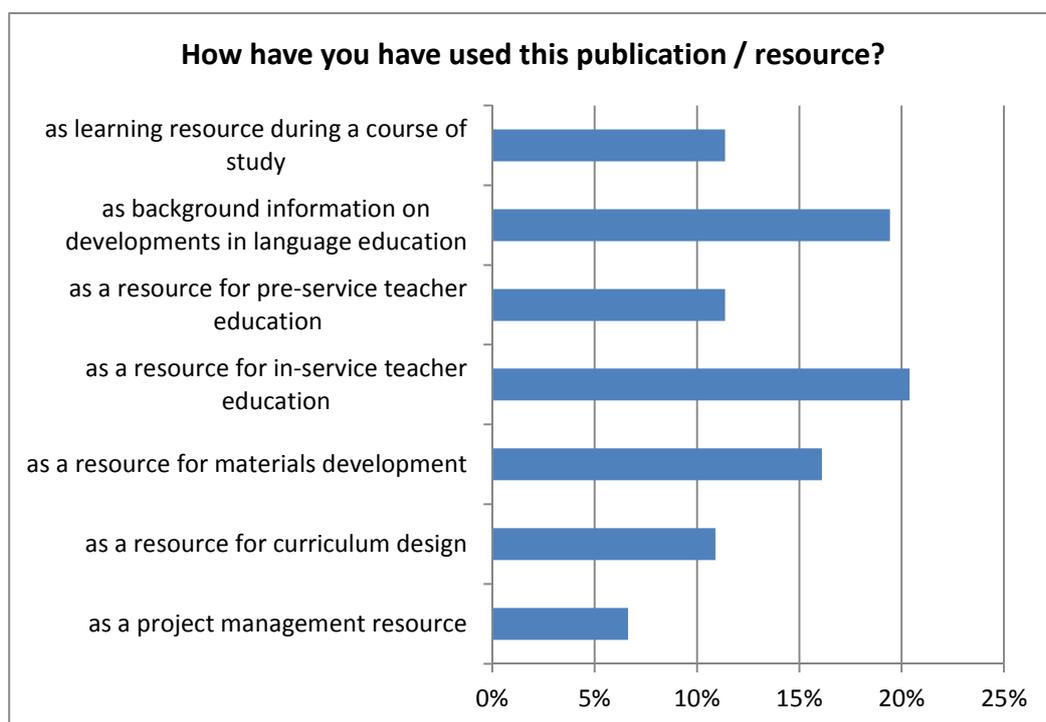


Figure 9: applications of publications

4. Conclusion

This report has commented on the immediate and post-project impact of projects within the ECML 2008-2011 programme. Given the 4 core objectives of this programme:

1. Enhancing the professional competence of language teachers
2. Strengthening professional networks and the wider community of language educators
3. Enabling language professionals to have greater impact on reform processes

4. Contributing to better quality of language education in Europe

... I feel that it is reasonable to draw the conclusion from the data available from the ECML evaluation system, that the overall impact of the programme has been high and has contributed significantly to the objectives stated above. The one area where the programme may not have had such a high impact has been in area 3 *Enabling language professionals to have greater impact on reform processes*. This, however, will be more to do with the overall reduction in funding that member states are facing as a result of the current Europe wide financial crises and recession than with the effectiveness of the ECML programme and perhaps also the fact that institutionalisation of educational change tends to take place over a number of years . In all core areas where impact is needed (competence, networking, and enhancing language education) the evidence to hand underscores both the relevance and usefulness of the projects under the 2008-2011 programme, and the effectiveness of ECML in identifying and supporting these projects throughout the process of implementation.

An evaluation of long term, sustainable impact will need to go beyond the methodology and scope of this present report, and will be best achieved through the case study approach adopted in the EPOSTL review (See document 2.3). However, this survey clearly indicates that the direction of travel which the ECML has adopted has been appropriate and that there is every chance of excellent long-term sustainability to the majority of the outcomes from the programme.

5. Appendices

5.1 IMPACT

Now that you are at the end of your project, what do you and your team consider to be its main outcomes (i.e. the positive changes or improvements that have arisen from the project)?

- *We have developed modules for teaching a foreign language in primary subject content. This joint work has allowed us to innovate and improve our practices.*
- *Through discussions on the approach to implementation, we were able to refine our theoretical and conceptual.*
- *The workshop allowed us to confront different points of view allowing us to better understand diversity and otherness for ourselves.*
- *Increased collaboration amongst language teacher associations, and cross fertilisation of ideas on how to organise them effectively and how to support teachers PLUS greater awareness of ECML projects amongst members of associations*
- *The ECEP has produced a timely necessary document which is potentially very helpful for teachers to grasp the underlying philosophy of the CEFR and the strict link between assessment and curricular and methodological options. As the project has arisen from an expressed (and sometimes unexpressed) need of the practitioners, the result is hopefully going to bridge a gap between language policy and professional development, as it offers teacher educators a good and rich basis for their activity.*
- *Collaboration and network creation during the central workshop and among the team*
- *Encourage our colleagues and the colleagues of the participants to the workshop as well as our students to use the created material*
- *The main outcomes are those predicted in the project proposal: a guide to whole-school use of the ELP and a series of case studies submitted from member states. The guide is the first ELP support to focus on L2 education at institutional level.*
- *We managed to collect more case studies than we originally expected. These outcomes were achieved via a central workshop (2008), a network meeting (2010), and a dissemination workshop (2011), all of which received strongly positive feedback from participants.*
 1. *The ELP implementation website <http://elp-implementation.ecml.at>*
 2. *That we managed to establish a network of ELP experts across Europe with whom we'd like to keep in touch."*
- *The development of a flexible tool which can be used as a basis for the design of CLIL teacher training courses in any context, and can help develop a European profile of the CLIL teacher.*
- *The final form which can be downloaded from the ECML website is the main achievement. It offers teacher trainers and teachers a rather user-friendly tool to estimate the level of their class preparations*
- *The publication of the book!*
- *1. Stakeholders' professional competence has been developed in/realizing the importance of linking language tests and exams to the CEFR*

42% of participants strongly agree; 58% agree in the impact survey.

2. Stakeholders have been successful in promoting professional competence in/realizing the importance of linking language tests and exams to the CEFR in their professional environment

50% of participants strongly agree, 42 % agree in the impact survey.
- *We have material that teachers find useful and are being asked to give several workshops on this .. It gives primary school language teachers a way of assessing writing constructively, using the CEFR in a way that is tailor made for their pupils*
- *A publication, 'Using the EPOSTL', which we are very pleased with. A very good information pack. EPOSTL appears to be used in a large variety of countries.*
- *- enhanced awareness raising to Quality related issues and to the QualiTraining approach to quality monitoring, in a variety of educational contexts*

consolidating networking and the exchange of best practice

training events, conference presentations, publications with a 'QualiTraining' focus or on QA-related topics, including seminars beyond the ECML-network, e.g. in Italy (Siena), at the University of Zaragoza, Spain, etc.

- *Revised project web site, with examples of QT-applications and additional case studies*
- *Added information on respondents, materials and situation in the participating countries; awareness especially among the participants in the network, document the important information on the subject, attention to the importance of the issue in the wider professional community*
 - *the Moodle workspace: ready, usable, translated into different languages*
 - the number of participants enrolled in the workspace*
 - workshops being offered on a continuing basis (showing the demand)*
 - publications on the project (Special Issue, reports, journal articles)*
- *Awareness raising of plurilingualism/culturalism in CLIL among participants, teachers and learners. New understanding of culture in CLIL: culture as a dynamic as opposed to a static phenomenon.*

Document 2.3

How an ECML publication can make a difference – case study on the European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages

Frank Heyworth

Introduction

EPOSTL³ (PEPELF in French, EPOSA in German) was developed in response to a request in 2003 from the Governing Board that the ECML undertake projects to contribute to improving the quality of the training of language teachers in Europe. The authors David Newby (Austria), Rebecca Allan (UK), Anne-Brit Fenner (Norway), Barry Jones (UK), Hanna Komorowska (Poland) and Kristine Soghikyan (Armenia) produced, first, an overview of the competences required by language teachers, and a comprehensive set of « can do » statements of didactic competences, to be used as a basis for teacher reflection and self-assessment. These were integrated into a European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages.

It was thought that a portfolio would be an ideal tool for professional development. The main reason for this was that combining descriptors of competences with a personal document for recording progress and encouraging self-reflection reproduces the approach used in the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) and the European Language Portfolio (ELP). These have been the most influential factors in enhancing standards of language teaching in Europe.

The Portfolio was designed « to help student teachers reflect on and assess their developing knowledge, skills and values in a systematic and comprehensive way". The EPOSTL comprises:

- a personal statement
- a self-assessment section
- a dossier
- a glossary of the most important terms used in the EPOSTL
- a users' guide

The relevance and value of EPOSTL was widely recognised. At the initiative of different countries more than 10 translations into other languages were authorised by the Council of Europe.

Following the EPOSTL publication in 2007 studies on the use and dissemination of the EPOSTL were carried out in the context of an ECML follow-up project from 2008-2011. As a result the booklet *Using the European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages*⁴ with an explanation of the theoretical background to the portfolio and with contributions from 8 different countries on how it has been integrated into teacher education programmes was published by the ECML.

During the same period two further publications have been produced. One is an account of different implementations of the EPOSTL in teacher education programmes, and the second one is a book, *Insights into the European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages*⁵, which explores the theoretical background to the work. This publication links EPOSTL to approaches to learning theory, to methodology, to inter-cultural communication, to autonomy and self-assessment, as well as giving accounts of different ways in which the EPOSTL is being used. It also describes how EPOSTL is connected closely to the principles of the CEFR and other European initiatives.

³ Newby, D., Allan, R., Fenner, A.-B., Jones, B., Komorowska, H. and Soghikyan, K. (2007). *European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages. A Reflection Tool for Language Teacher Education*. Strasbourg/Graz: Council of Europe Publishing, <http://epostl2.ecml.at>.

⁴ Fenner A.-B., Jones, B., Newby, D. *Using the European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages (EPOSTL)* Council of Europe Publishing 2012. <http://epostl2.ecml.at>.

⁵ Newby, D., Fenner, A.-B., Komorowska, H. and Jones, B. (eds) (forthcoming), *Insights from the European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages*. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Press.

The wide range of documented contexts in which EPOSTL is being used is a good indicator of the impact it has generated.

The Impact of the publication

To judge the impact of a project we need to consider:

- its dissemination – how widely and in what depth it is known
- how it is being used – is it still at the stage of innovation, or is it already institutionalised as part of normal practice?
- its flexibility – can it be adapted to meet local specificities? does it generate new innovations ?
- its effectiveness – has it led to tangible improvements in the field?

Dissemination

Translations

EPOSTL is now available on the ECML website in 12 different versions: English, French, German, Hungarian, Spanish, Polish, Italian, Lithuanian, Greek, Croatian, Russian, Arabic. Also, an adaptation of the publication in Japanese has been recorded. All the translated versions except the English, French and German ones of the project were undertaken at the request of the countries concerned, which is a measure of the way in which it is seen as a tool to be integrated into the teacher education systems of the countries concerned. It is especially interesting that its influence has extended beyond Europe in Arabic and Japanese contexts.

Presence on the Internet

The EPOSTL is the publication which is the most frequently downloaded from the ECML website. A web search shows the extent of its impact, with links to seminars and presentations of the project in many European countries, in Turkey, in Japan, in the United States, in North and South Africa. The breadth of its applications illustrates how far it is a generative and flexible instrument. A small sample of training courses and articles posted on the web would include its implementation as a tool for developing teacher autonomy (Germany), as a yardstick for measuring how ICT can be used to innovate in teacher education (Spain), as an example of good reflective practice (UK), in a study of the attitudes of teachers in training towards microteaching (Turkey). It is also mentioned as a tool for self-assessment in language learning (France), as « potential springboard for a paradigm shift of English language teacher education » (Japan), and as an example of how synergy between projects of the European Union and the Council of Europe can be achieved (Czech Republic). The Institute Cervantes announces courses on the EPOSTL in New York, and a number of graduate students have posted questionnaire on its use, as part of their research studies.

Articles published and presentations

The widespread interest that has been generated by the EPOSTL is evident in the large number of articles in which it is either the main topic or is mentioned. These are too numerous to list in detail, but some sample titles will indicate the Europe wide and worldwide influence it is having.

- EPOSTL as a Stimulus for Reflective Teaching (Orlova, the Czech Republic)⁶
- Self-Assessment of Professional Activity of Student Teachers of Languages. (Latkovska, Rutka, Latvia)⁷
- EPOSTL as an innovative tool in language teacher education.(Urbaniak, Poland)⁸Rénovation de l'enseignement-apprentissage des langues étrangères au Vietnam –l'apport des outils du Conseil l'Europe. *Renovation of teaching-learning of foreign languages in Vietnam – the contribution of the Council of Europe's instruments* (Normand- Marconnet, France / Vietnam)⁹
- A Comprehensive Study on the Framework of English Language Teachers' Professional

⁶ Orlova, N. (2012). EPOSTL as a Stimulus for Reflective Teaching. In Haase, C. (Ed.). *English for Academic Purposes: Practical and theoretical approaches*. Göttingen: Cuvillier. (accepted for publication)

⁷ Latkovska, E., Rutka, L. (2010) *Self-Assessment of Professional Activity of Student Teachers of Languages*. The ATEE Spring University: Changing Education in Changing Society, 61.-68.lpp., Lithuania: Klaipeda University (ISSN 1822-2196)

⁸ M. Urbaniak. 2010. EPOSTL as an innovative tool in language teacher education. *Anglica Wratislaviensa*, 46, 183-192.

⁹ *Rénovation de l'enseignement-apprentissage des langues étrangères au Vietnam: quels apports et quelle contextualisation pour le CECR et ses dérivés (PEL, PEPELF) dans ce contexte spécifique ?* <http://tainguyenso.vnu.edu.vn/jspui/handle/123456789/7625>

- Development in Japan (Jimbo et al. Japan)¹⁰
- Using the EPOSTL within a bi-lateral Primary Modern Languages Teacher Training Programme (Jones UK)¹¹

It has equally been presented in Conferences and training events worldwide, as a central topic in the Semlang (Université d'été Semlang, CIEP, Sèvres 2009) and Forlang (ForLang 2011 - A European approach to language teacher training, CIEP Sèvres 2011) and in Forlang at the [Università per Stranieri di Siena](#) as a workshop topic at the Sixth International Conference on Language Teacher Education in Washington in 2009 and at countless other regional and local events across Europe and beyond. It has been the subject of a number of doctoral theses and will be mentioned as a matter of course in Master's memoirs on teacher education. Hanna Komorowska comments that in Poland « EPOSTL categories are so popular now that many directors of studies or mentors would not know they are using EPOSTL categories, perhaps would not even quote EPOSTL thinking that these are basic categories everybody interested in FLT methodology should know. »

How the EPOSTL is being used

Applications in initial teacher training

The main applications of the EPOSTL are – as it was intended to – in pre-service courses for the training of language teachers. The report¹² (Newby & Horak, 2011) on its use in Austrian universities gives a good overview of how flexibly it can be exploited. At the University of Graz it accompanies the whole of the teacher education course – as an introduction to teacher competences, as a springboard for reflection in the input on methodology, as a record for self-assessment of teaching performance in the teaching practice sessions. At the University of Vienna¹³, it is used to complement other approaches, as a tool to develop the autonomy of teachers in training and to stimulate reflection during peer teaching. In Salzburg¹⁴ it is used to focus discussions on methodology and as a central feature of student teachers' self-assessment. In other settings the focus has been on the Dossier part of the Portfolio as a way of assembling reflective evidence of teaching practice and progress (Gothenburg); and the Personal Statement has been used in Finland to help students to achieve a fuller understanding of the process of reflection. In all the applications the detailed descriptions of competences and of how these are realised in learning teaching methodology is a practical enrichment of the content of the courses.

The range and flexibility of these uses has led to it being widely adopted in teacher education courses around Europe.

Other uses of the EPOSTL

As a tool for mentors

One of the challenges of teacher education programmes is to ensure that teaching practice is effective and that teacher mentors in the schools are able to give constructive feedback to student teachers. The « can do » statements of the Portfolio provide a conceptual and practical framework which can focus the dialogue between mentor and the student and can incidentally provide professional development for teachers who have not been able to follow recent trends in teaching methodology and

¹⁰ A Comprehensive Study on the Framework of English Language Teachers' Professional Development in Japan

¹¹ Jones B. (2012) Using the EPOSTL within a bi-lateral Primary Modern Languages Teacher Training Programme in Newby D., ed (2012) *Insights into the European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages* Newcastle Cambridge Scholars Publishing

¹² Newby, D. and Horak, A. (eds) (2011). *Die Implementierung des Europäischen Portfolios für Sprachlehrende in Ausbildung (EPOSA) in der Lehrer/innenbildung in Österreich*. Graz: Österreichisches Sprachen-Kompetenz-Zentrum.

¹³ Die Implementierung des EPOSA am Fach didaktischen Zentrum Englisch der Universität Wien (Barbara Mehlmauer-Larcher) in Newby, D. and Horak, A. (eds) (2011). *Die Implementierung des Europäischen Portfolios für Sprachlehrende in Ausbildung (EPOSA) in der Lehrer/innenbildung in Österreich*. Graz: Österreichisches Sprachen-Kompetenz-Zentrum.

¹⁴ Erfahrungen mit EPOSA im Fachbereich Romanistik der Universität Salzburg (Michaela Rückl, Isolde Seeleitner) in Newby, D. and Horak, A. (eds) (2011). *Die Implementierung des Europäischen Portfolios für Sprachlehrende in Ausbildung (EPOSA) in der Lehrer/innenbildung in Österreich*. Graz: Österreichisches Sprachen-Kompetenz-Zentrum.

approaches. At the University of Bergen it was found that mentors who had been introduced to the EPOSTL and received training in using it with their trainees were more effective and seen as more constructive by their trainees.

In in-service teacher development

Although the EPOSTL is primarily designed for initial teacher training, it can also be used as a tool for the continuous professional development of teachers; in a summer university for practising teachers in San Sebastian different categories of competence were used as tools for, first self-assessment, then reflection on present practice and then as a guide to lesson preparation and micro-teaching. The self-assessment pages can be used either individually or in an institution as a tool for quality assessment and for gauging training and developmental needs.

As a tool for curriculum development in teacher education

An incidental use of the EPOSTL has been as a tool for designing curricula for teacher education programmes. The overview and the description of the 195 competences provide checklists which can be used to decide on the comprehensiveness of the coverage of teachers' skills. David Newby reports that in its implementation at the University of Graz it has led to greater harmonisation of approaches to the training of teachers of different languages – sometimes there is little contact among the different language departments and EPOSTL is a "trans-language" instrument for doing this, covering the teaching of any language.

For evaluation of teachers in training

The main intention of the EPOSTL is to be a positive tool for self-assessment rather than as a prescriptive instrument for assessment, where the risk is that the emphasis would be on « can't do » rather than « can do ». Nevertheless where mentors have to grade students on their teaching practice this would be more meaningful if based on coherent description of competences rather than on less systematic impressions or prejudices. David Newby comments on this proposal: « Since some sort of assessment tool will be used in any case to assess teaching practice, why not continue to use the same descriptors which have formed the basis of the students' teaching and the mentors' feedback? If EPOSTL-based evaluation is seen as a complementary function to its functions of fostering reflection and self-assessment, this could be a perfectly valid role for it to play. »¹⁵

For policy-making and organisational development

The existence of a comprehensive, standardised description of teacher competences makes it possible to use the EPOSTL in issues where harmonisation is required. A common reference shared by students, tutor and mentors helps enhance communication between students, schools and universities. The detailed performance criteria can improve collaboration between universities and partnership schools in developing common (self) assessment procedures and models for tutors, mentors and students. It has been used in international exchange programmes to compare progress of student teachers in different countries, and in planning teacher training programmes as a basis for detailed curriculum content and assessment procedures in pre- and in-service programmes.

Experiences of using the EPOSTL

*« Getting to know the EPOSTL was really interesting! When I first skimmed through the EPOSTL I thought that there is so much that I still have to learn. Of course I still think that I have to learn a lot, but I realized that there is already a lot I CAN DO! I'm sure that it will be very interesting to go over the EPOSTL at the end of the year and see where I will have improved. »*¹⁶

This comment from an Austrian student is typical of the reactions of those who have used it. The Portfolio provides teachers in training with a coherent, comprehensive description of what their teacher training course is aiming at. It gives a framework for thinking about the different steps in learning to be a teacher, and a stimulus to positive, encouraging self-assessment of progress in doing this. It provides a common understandable language for dialogue with the different stakeholders in the training process – the universities and the practice schools – and among tutors, trainee teachers and mentors. Systematic questionnaires by different institutional users in many countries have indicated a

¹⁵ In Fenner A-B., Jones, B., Newby, D. *Using the European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages (EPOSTL)* Council of Europe Publishing 2012. <http://epostl2.ecml.at>.

¹⁶ Quoted in *Der Einsatz von EPOSA an der Pädagogischen Hochschule Steiermark* (Angela Horak) in Newby, D. and Horak, A. (eds) (2011). *Die Implementierung des Europäischen Portfolios für Sprachlehrende in Ausbildung (EPOSA) in der Lehrer/innenbildung in Österreich*. Graz: Österreichisches Sprachen-Kompetenz-Zentrum.

generally overwhelmingly positive response to using it. There have been some questions on how to use it – for example, « how can we know whether we can do something when we haven't tried yet? » - but no fundamental objections.

Its practicality and usability have led to it being increasingly a feature, sometimes as a central part, sometimes as a complement to teacher education programmes across Europe and around the world.

Why is EPOSTL so successful?

Frank Heyworth, ECML programme consultant documenting the impact of the EPOSTL publication, highlights a number of reasons for its success:

- It is based solidly within the policy and achievements of the Council of Europe in language education. The formulation of the can do statements reflects those that are already familiar to teachers and learners using the Common European Framework of Reference ; the three parts of EPOSTL – the personal statement, the self-assessment checklists, the dossier – have the same structure as the European Language Portfolios.
- It is based on coherent theories of learning and teaching. In the publication « Insights into the EPOSTL » there are descriptions of how its principles are linked to ideas of learner autonomy, to reflective practice, to social constructivist approaches to learning, to inter-cultural understanding.
- At the same time, it is closely based on practice. The descriptors are recognisably close to the practical methodological issues that teachers meet – how to introduce topics, establish a positive atmosphere, deal with a reading text, devise an appropriate test. And all of this is framed in clear understandable language.
- It is the result of a long-term commitment to the development of the project – 8 years of work in ECML projects, continued development generated by its usefulness, so that a body of experience, expertise and research has been built up around it.

It is in harmony with general developments in education, and brings language teaching more closely into the mainstream of education in the way in which the Council of Europe *Languages in Education* is directed. Heinz Gaderer¹⁷ comments:

Portfolio and self-assessment in schools and colleges will be the single most important contribution toward learner autonomy – portfolio and self-assessment in teacher education, and teachers becoming aware of the advantages and feeling comfortable with the new tools, will be the condition for ... (the development of learner autonomy in schools and colleges).

The EPOSTL is a significant contribution to this.

References:

Kelly, M. and Grenfell, M., *European Profile for Language Teacher Education – A Frame of Reference*, www.lang.soton.ac.uk/profile/index.html.

Fenner A.-B., Jones, B., Newby, D. *Using the European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages (EPOSTL)* Council of Europe Publishing 2012. <http://epostl2.ecml.at>.

Newby, D., Fenner, A.-B., Komorowska, H. and Jones, B. (eds) (forthcoming), *Insights from the European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages*. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Press.

Newby, D., Allan, R., Fenner, A.-B., Jones, B., Komorowska, H. and Soghikyan, K. (2007). *European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages. A Reflection Tool for Language Teacher Education*. Strasbourg/Graz: Council of Europe Publishing, <http://epostl2.ecml.at>.

¹⁷ EPOSTL – integraler Bestandteil von communication@work (Heinz Gaderer) in Newby, D. and Horak, A. (eds) (2011). *Die Implementierung des Europäischen Portfolios für Sprachlehrende in Ausbildung (EPOSA) in der Lehrer/innenbildung in Österreich*. Graz: Österreichisches Sprachen-Kompetenz-Zentrum.

Newby, D. and Horak, A. (eds) (2011). *Die Implementierung des Europäischen Portfolios für Sprachlehrende in Ausbildung (EPOSA) in der Lehrer/innenbildung in Österreich*. Graz: Österreichisches Sprachen-Kompetenz-Zentrum.

Note

This study of the impact of the EPOSTL is based on the following evidence:

- The published documents – (see above for references)
- Discussions and e-mail correspondence with David Newby, the project coordinator, and the members of the project teams
- A questionnaire sent to the representatives responsible for disseminating the EPOSTL in the ECML member countries
- A search of the Internet