

**CARAP /
FREPA
PROJECT
TRAINING
KIT**

***FREPA and
educational
language
policies***

We shall start by looking for what is desirable ...

- Desirable – about what ?
- Desirable – according to whom ?

Desirable – about what ?

What we intend here to qualify as “desirable” is **what one can / should wish to achieve through or in teaching, as far as languages are concerned.**

Of course, this varies according to contexts and scholastic levels.

Nevertheless it should be possible to set out **some general principles**

concerning :

- **what should be achieved and for which languages**
- **how to go about achieving this**

This is what we are going to try to do together now. Then, we will see to what extent this is being achieved or not and formulate hypotheses about possible shortcomings, before we envisage what could be done in order to proceed towards what is desirable.

But let us not go too fast as yet ...

What is desirable – according to whom ?

Let us proceed to the second question: **desirable, according to whom ?**

We are principally interested in what **YOU** yourselves think, as professionals (teachers specialising in the teaching of languages), teachers, teacher trainers, Heads of School, curriculum designer ...), but also, and why not, as an interested member of society.

We are also very much interested by **what is proposed by the Council of Europe**) but **also** by what is requested or prescribed by **the educational authorities** of your country / region, or even what is stated by **the teaching materials** in use in your country, whether it is stated explicitly (in the instructions and advice given to teachers) or implicitly (through the content and tasks proposed).

Let us therefore start by you ...

What is desirable – according to you

We are not going to ask you to discuss this at length. What is important is that you manage to express what you consider to be essential in a few sentences.

But before you do this: **some very important clarifications** :

Do not limit yourself to what you are doing today, within the context where you work. You may of course already be achieving part of what you wish to achieve, but it is very likely that you are experiencing certain obstacles or features which slow you down: how teaching is structured, curricula, examinations, the methodological traditions, number of students ...

You must not, either, describe a utopic world where all the problems disappear magically: short of being in exceptional circumstances, learners cannot be expected to do 25 hours of language learning per week, in classes not exceeding twelve individuals ...

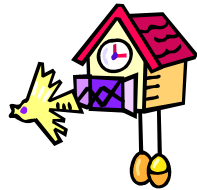
What you describe as desirable must be **workable** as a result of reasonable effort.

What is desirable – according to you (a writing task!)

Shall we start ?

Now, let us examine the questionnaire meant to support your ideas.

This is our **Sheet 1...**



What is desirable – according to the Council of Europe

We are now going to have a look at what the Council of Europe recommend.

The Council of Europe has developed instruments which are distinctly complete in their thoughts and recommendations about the teaching of languages (in particular, the **Common European Framework of Reference for Languages** (Council of Europe, 2001*) and the educational linguistic policies (especially the ***Guide for the Development of Language Education Policies in Europe***, Beacco & Byram, 2007).

Let us look at **extracts from this second work**. We invite you to **read these extracts while keeping in mind what you have just written**.

At the same time you may, if you wish, **note down your personal reactions** in a sheet which is meant for this purpose:.. **Sheet 2**.

But even before that ... some indications of the founding thoughts which inspire the ideas behind the « Guide » as well as the terminology which is being used.

What is desirable – according to the Council of Europe

Terminological references which will come in useful when defining what is « desirable », as defined by the Guide ...

<§1> **Multilingualism**, the presence of different languages at the same time in a given geographical area, is distinct from a speaker's **plurilingualism**, as a repertoire of languages at his or her disposition. (p.67)

Note : this distinction is not yet applied by all authors !!!

<§2> All the varieties available to a speaker or group of speakers are referred to as **linguistic repertoire**. (ibid.)

<§3> **Plurilingualism**, which is a fundamental principle of Council of Europe language education policies [...] **should be understood as:**

- [**competence**] the intrinsic capacity of all speakers to use and learn, alone or through teaching, more than one language;
- [**value**] an educational value that is the basis of linguistic tolerance, in other words, positive acceptance of diversity:

What is desirable – according to the Council of Europe

What principles for language policies for Europe?

<§4> The definition of principles for European language education policies is part of a continuum ranging from technical choices to choices concerning identity. All these options are present in the debate about the future of Europe in that they arise from different interpretations of European cohesion, which see it in economic (movement of goods and persons), cultural, social (social cohesion), political (democracy and minority rights) and even anthropological (what form of community identity for Europeans?) terms.

<§5> Europe is not a political entity of the same kind as a nation-state, to which it would be sufficient to give one (or more) official national language(s) in order to derive a form of unity or identity from it (them). It is a fundamentally novel grouping, a plural space, where numerous linguistic varieties are used – the expression of the cultural diversity of which it consists – which have enriched each other, but where no linguistic variety has had a dominant position for long. There is probably no single language which Europeans could experience as the language of affiliation to this space.

<§6> The establishment of principles for language education policies should also take into account current developments: on the one hand, internationalisation, the commercialisation of most human activities, the increasing role of multinational companies, the formative influence of the economy on society and the impact of television culture and, on the other, the re-emergence of feelings of identity and the resurgence of ethnocentrically based nationalism.

* *Guide – pp. 31-32*

What is desirable – according to the Council of Europe

What is desirable according to the Guide (1)

<§7> [...] education systems and all other training authorities should: [...] develop the repertoires by increasing competences, levels of proficiency and the number of varieties known, etc. (68)

<§8> Diversifying languages offered is a precondition for introducing truly plurilingual teaching/learning pathways. (p. 104)

<§9> [...] with respect to the teaching of English (it would be best to ensure) [...] that individual linguistic repertoires continue to be developed by everyone and are not, as it were, frozen by the acquisition of one linguistic variety regarded as taking the place of all others. (p. 105)

<§10> [...] to achieve even stronger commitment to an education policy [...] (*which*) is given the means to create space for less commonly spoken and taught languages (whether national, regional, minority, community, extra-European, etc.), (p. 30)

What is desirable – according to the Council of Europe

What is desirable – according to the Guide (2)

<§11> *The authors of the Guide would like to see the expression in syllabuses of the concept that knowledge of a linguistic variety is not a matter of “all or nothing”: it is commonly thought that if one has not acquired the level of a native speaker, one speaks a language badly. Opposing this common belief, teaching will be provided which leads to diversified competences (in terms of the level of proficiency and kinds of competence: understanding, understanding and production, knowledge of the culture concerned, etc.) (40)*

<§12> *A person’s plurilingualism [...] is not necessarily a homogeneous repertoire. Being plurilingual does not mean mastering a large number of languages to a high level, but acquiring the ability to use more than one linguistic variety to degrees (which are not necessarily identical) for different purposes (conversation, reading or writing, etc.). The degree of proficiency is not necessarily the same for all the varieties used and will also be different according to communicative context (a person can read a language without being able to speak it or speak it without being able to write it well). (p. 38)*

One notes that these two statements refer directly to the notion of « partial competences » developed in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (p. 9).

What is desirable – according to the Council of Europe

What is desirable according to the Guide (3)

<§13> *Plurilingualism* [...] is regarded as a *transversal competence* extending to all the languages acquired or learnt. According to the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*, such proficiency is not “the superposition or juxtaposition of distinct competences, but rather ... the existence of a complex ... competence” (p. 168). Whatever the psycholinguistic bases of this definition, its pedagogical nature that calls for the teaching of different languages to be linked to one another should be noted, because these are likely to involve the same skills. (ibid.)

<§14> Plurilingual education is based on a contrasting educational principle [to the **compartmentalisation** which one finds presently between linguistic and other disciplines], namely that the acquisition of a new linguistic variety is based on competences and possibly knowledge developed during the earlier acquisition of other varieties. Such competences [...] can be transferred from one variety to another through a teaching approach that exploits rather than ignores them. This approach does not imply the abandoning current school subjects in favour of new, rather vague, verbal communication classes, but simply recommends that these subjects and non-linguistic subjects should be harmonised and to some extent linked with each other. (p.86)

<§15> (*Without neglecting, obviously, elements of the repertoire which have preceded or run parallel to schooling*) [...] the role of teaching will be to enhance the status of and develop learners' initial repertoires. (p.69)

What is desirable – according to the Council of Europe

What is desirable according to the Guide (4)

<§16> Language teaching should above all seek to make learners autonomous, i.e. teach them to learn languages by themselves by developing a reflective approach to how they learn, what they know and their needs: all language teaching should include the development of learning strategies and not be seen as an end in itself. (69)

<§17> Such autonomy requires at least some sort of reflective teaching/learning to which teachers of all subjects should contribute. (88)

<§18> And it is the responsibility of education systems to make all Europeans aware of the nature of this ability [plurilingual and pluricultural competence], which is developed to a greater or lesser extent according to individuals and contexts, to highlight its value, and to develop it in early years of schooling and throughout life. (10)

What is desirable – according to the Council of Europe

What is desirable according to the Guide (5)!

<§19> One aspect of enhancing the status of and developing plurilingual repertoires is education in cultural differences and otherness. (p. 69)

<§20> (*Two objectives:*) While intercultural awareness concerns understanding the Other's culture in order to ensure communication and understanding, the purpose of creating intercultural competence is to manage relations between self and others. (p. 70)

<§21> [...] contact with more than one culture is not of a kind to result automatically in cultural awareness, in the sense of awareness and acceptance of difference with respect to the collective values, behaviour, standards, representations and memory of a different society. Such awareness is a matter of education which can be linked with language teaching or dealt with more specifically. (p. 69)

<§22> [...] attitudes and personality factors underlying the ability to suspend one's judgment [...], and detach oneself from one's own culture (by explaining what is implicit or questioning consensus views) so as to perceive it from a (fictive) external point of view comparable to the way those foreign to the community view it. (p. 70)

What is desirable – according to the Council of Europe

What is desirable according to the Guide (6)

<§23> For example, language teaching may be linked to civic education conceived at national level or to education for democratic citizenship. This involves designing language courses at once as a means of exercising such citizenship (i.e. undertaking exchanges with European citizens using other linguistic varieties), and as education for acceptance linguistic and cultural differences. (97)

<§24> Regarding everyone's language competence as plural and evolving should make it possible to:

- bring together the constituent cultural groups of Europe around a peaceful philosophy of languages which should help to prevent conflict by providing the means of envisaging an acceptable linguistic equilibrium.

- help to create a feeling of common belonging to a political and cultural space in such a way as not to exclude languages and cultures other than those of Europe or those present in Europe. (72)

<§25> ordinary incivility is not only the result of differences between the social varieties used in ordinary exchanges, but also arises from the fact that rules of linguistic behaviour are no longer shared. Reintegration also means learning to communicate with everyone again. This educational task can be expressed technically in terms of plurilingualism. (73)

Let us compare...

- ME and the Guide

or rather (to be more modest) :

- The Guide and I

The Guide and I

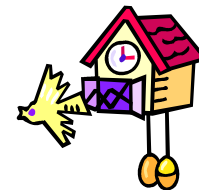
Keep in front of you the reading notes (Sheet 2). Remember that we had said you must not hesitate to compare what is said in the Guide with what you yourself had noted in Sheet 1.

Can you summarise in 10 to 20 lines what differences you notice between what the Guide indicates as desirable and what you yourself had noted down?*

Try eventually to understand (and to explain briefly) the reasons for these differences ... Including yet another look at the slide *What principles for language policies for Europe?*. Was this perhaps because you did not share the same principles?

Ask yourself frankly what you think of the suggestions put forward by the Guide ... If you are working in groups, discuss this!

* Using any support you wish. There is no sheet for this.



The Guide and my national documents and textbooks (optional activities)

Further considerations

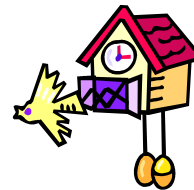
What can you say about your official documents (curricula, syllabi, instructions ...) ? Are they closer to your idea of what is desirable than to that expressed in the Guide ?

And your textbooks? (same question) What do they say explicitly about these issues? What do they say implicitly (when one looks at the content and activities they propose)?

To what extent could one explain the differences between official documents / textbooks on the one hand and the Guide on the other by saying that they are due to national (or regional) specificities? Or by saying that they are due to traditions in teaching? Any other reason ...?

To what extent are your own representations of what is desirable influenced by official national documents and textbooks? (Disturbing question ?)

Please, proceed to **Sheet 3...**



Let's set the wishfulness aside for a moment ...

Whatever the differences between what you consider to be desirable and what the Guide says, we now have to leave the realms of wishfulness (what is desirable) ... and come down to the realities (what the situation really is).

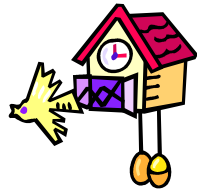
Reality...

- ... as you live it, and the gap between this reality and what is recommended by the Council of Europe
- Towards reducing the gap between wishfulness and reality?

Reality, gap with the wishes of the Council of Europe

The first thing to do is try to express in what ways the reality of teaching in your country corresponds – or doesn't – with what is recommended by the Council of Europe.

In order to do this, use **Sheet 4**



Reality, gap with the wishes of the Council of Europe – Can this gap be reduced ?

Reasons for this gap and ways to reduce it.

There must be a lot of reasons (time limits, syllabi, examinations, number of students per class, perceptions of actors ...) which account for this gap. We do not have the time to examine them here ...

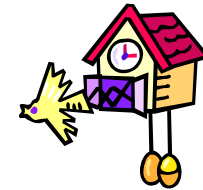
Rather than that, we will ask ourselves what measures can exist to reduce this gap.

We dare say that Pluralistic Approaches and FREPA can contribute to closing this gap.

Of course nobody is obliged to share this opinion!

Read the extracts from the introduction to FREPA which can be found in **Sheet 5.**

Talk about them and **write briefly what you think** (about 10 lines).



Thank very much for your work !

We hope, you enjoyed it.

You will find further developments concerning FREPA and Language policies in *FREPA - An introduction for users*, Chapter 1. (Also available on line)



dank u wel
gmadlobth
obrigado
спасибо
tanemirt
Ευχαριστώ
enkosi
kiitos

misaotra

有り難う
ありがとう