V. Tailoring language provision and requirements to the needs and capacities of adult migrants

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1. Introductory remarks

Migration has always been a challenge to European countries – the Council of Europe as an international body therefore started early on to develop a migration management strategy in order to assist countries in meeting this challenge. Among the basic principles of this strategy are the cooperation between the countries of origin and the receiving countries and the establishment of a climate favouring the integration of migrants into the host society. As stated in Resolution 1437 (2005), I.4 of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

The concept of integration aims at ensuring social cohesion through accommodation of diversity understood as a two-way process. Immigrants have to accept the laws and basic values of European societies and, on the other hand, host societies have to respect immigrants' dignity and distinct identity and to take them into account when elaborating domestic policies.

The notion of integration as a two-way process is important and is regarded as an essential element in ensuring sustainable results. Integration is different from assimilation because it concerns both parties: the immigrants and the receiving society. The effect of assimilation would be complete adaptation to the language, behaviour and values of the receiving society, with the consequential loss of the language(s) of origin, whereas in the process of integration both sides, migrants and the receiving country, are open to creating new common ground for living together, respecting the already formed identity. This gives migrants a chance to make use of resources they bring with them and to expand their identity, acquiring new concepts and a new language; at the same time the receiving country will see migrants as people enriching its linguistic and cultural dimensions. This is a process, which takes a long time and

which usually cannot be completed within the first years after arrival.[1] To support this process it is not enough for the receiving country to provide special integration programmes which have to be attended within a very short period following immigration. It is necessary to change and adapt all kinds of public services, housing, admission to the labour market and education programmes to the needs of immigrants, as is pointed out in the second edition of the "Handbook on Integration" (European Commission 2007)[2].

Integration aims at giving the immigrants an opportunity to take part in the political, social, economic and cultural life of their new country – so that at the end of such a process they can live under the same legal, social and financial conditions as natives of that country.

It is a generally accepted view that the ability to speak the language(s) of the receiving society usually plays an important part in the process of integration, because it is a precondition for participation. However, mastery of the language is not enough; it is a necessary, but not a sufficient condition.

2. The linguistic status of migrants

From the perspective of the receiving society there is a danger that migrants may be considered as "speechless", because they are not able to use the language(s) of that country. However migrants are just as able to communicate as other people, perhaps in different languages. Many migrants are able to use more than one language because they come from countries which are multilingual (such as African, Asian or the Balkan countries) or because in their process of migration they have had contacts with other languages. And because of their personal experiences of multilingualism many of them are much more aware of linguistic issues, of similarities or differences between languages and of the different communication contexts existing. But even if they are not plurilingual by origin, migrants start to get bilingual or plurilingual due to their language contacts with the society of the receiving country in the course of the migration process. How their plurilingualism develops in the context of integration depends on various factors, which are as follows: psychosocial situation, opportunities for language learning, quality of the language contact in respect of linguistic complexity and affective level, future options and so forth.

As far as second language acquisition research in migration contexts has taken place we can say that the language identity of migrants is very complex for several reasons: the language shift they experience due to their migration and their language biographies are influenced by the linguistic situation and language policy in the countries of origin. So we can say that language habits and language capital, the attitudes towards language and at least towards language learning of the receiving society is determined by very different factors which cannot be brought into a simple relation.

So for example in some (rare) cases where bilingual migrants have been part of minorities, they want to leave a certain language behind upon leaving their country of origin, because it is connected with violence and persecutions of an oppressing power[3]. In most cases however migrants see their first languages as an essential element of their personal identity, an essential link to their own personal, religious and cultural origin, to their parents and to other members of their families and as the only bond to an essential part of their lives they had to leave behind. It may be that their languages represent the only factor of stability in their otherwise insecure lives.

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[1] The history of emigration of Europeans to South and North America for example demonstrates that it takes more than two generations till this integration process can be regarded as (more or less) completed.
[2] http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/doc_centre/immigration/integration/doc/2007/handbook_2007_en.pdf
[3] See among others Robert Phillipson: Linguistic Imperialism. Oxford University Press, Oxford 1992.

For most people, the first language belongs to the kernel of their identity – it is the language in which they started to realise themselves as persons (personal identity), as members of a family and social group (social identity), and in which they developed values important for their lives (cultural/ religious identity). The more people have to leave behind, the more important their first language is. It is often the only stable element in their lives. This is one of the reasons why the right to use one's mother tongue is one of the fundamental human rights.[4]

From a psycholinguistic point of view it is also very important to emphasise that the mother tongue is also a very important basis for learning any other language successfully – for children as well as for adults. In acquiring the first language one develops important cognitive competences as well which can be used successfully when learning a second language. This means for children that if the acquisition of the L1 is interrupted too early, then the acquisition of a second language cannot build on a solid fundament. Jim Cummins (1984) summarizes these insights in this "developmental interdependence hypothesis" which argues that an interrupted development of L1 (especially if children do not learn to read and write their first language) is a negative indicator for the development of bilingualism. It is therefore not enough that an oral usage of L1 is maintained. Cummins (1979) differentiates between the basic interaction communication skills which migrants usually adopt very quickly also in a second language, and the cognitive academic language proficiency, i.e. more complex ways of communicating (including reading and writing), where a successful development in L2 depends to a large extent on a corresponding competence in L1.

Katharina Brizić (2007) shows through her research that there is an intergenerational transfer of linguistic capital at work: parents who lived in a stable L1 context (e.g. had an opportunity to learn their language properly at school) will create better linguistic conditions for their children in all languages than those parents who themselves could not develop their L1 properly (like, for example, speakers of Kurdish in Turkey).

There is an impact of the first language on second language acquisition for adult learners too. It is empirically verified that in their learning strategies adult language learners make more or less conscious use of comparing language structures and therefore the first and other languages spoken by learners need to be taken into consideration in the learning process of the second language. There are observations that learners who already speak several languages are highly aware of language usage and therefore are supposed to be "good language learners" (cf. Hufeisen/Fouser 2005)[5].

Discussing second language acquisition of adult language learners in the context of migration and integration there is some evidence that socio-psychological factors are as important as psycholinguistic developments. Research on adult migrant women in Canada (Norton 2000) shows that the status of migrants in the receiving society, especially the loss of power and social opportunities, has impact on their learning-process. Adult migrants face a fundamental change in their lives due to migration. They lose their familiar surroundings, networks and their social roles. This may represent an opportunity for some individuals, but in most cases it means a loss (in status, in income etc.). They face a lack of social acceptance, the experience of social decline, discrimination and racism in the new society.

The linguistic status of migrants may be described as that of people with a plurilingual and pluricultural identity, living under legal and social constraints, contradictions and very often also facing economic problems. It seems to be obvious that questions of language therefore

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[4] See Recommendation 1740 (2006) of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on "The place of mother tongue in school education" CM/AS(2008)Rec1740finalE / and the Reply adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 16 January 2008
[5] http://www.spz.tu-darmstadt.de/projekt_L3/

can neither be observed and analysed nor be treated in isolation, because all these dimensions and factors are interrelated.

3. Political responses to the situation

3.1 20th century: European consensus on integration policies

The consequences of the growing mobility, especially of the free movement of workers in Europe, have been discussed already for over 50 years in international organisations; at the same time educationalists and linguists have undertaken research and developed models as far as the implications for the educational system are concerned.

The Council of Europe has so far always been a driving force in the discussion of these issues and in developing integration policies. It claimed early on that migrant workers should be employed under the same social and financial conditions as native workers. In several Resolutions and Recommendations[6] the Council of Europe invites "member governments to make greater efforts to enable all migrant workers […] to learn the language of the reception country" [Resolution (68)18] and "to develop their mother tongues both as educational and cultural instruments and in order to maintain and improve their links with their culture of origin [Recommendation R (82) 18]. This latter Recommendation quotes (par. 10):

D. Language learning by migrants and their families

10. To promote the provision of adequate facilities for migrant workers and the members of their families:

10.1. To acquire sufficient knowledge of the language of the host community for them to play an active part in the working, political and social life of that community, and in particular to enable the children of migrants to acquire a proper education and to prepare them for the transition from full-time education to work;

10.2. To develop their mother tongues both as educational and cultural instruments and in order to maintain and improve their links with their culture of origin.

11. To promote the introduction and development of appropriate initial and further training programmes for teachers of languages to migrants, leading to recognised qualifications.

12. To participate in the development of language programmes involving co-operation between authorities or other bodies representing the host community, the migrant community and the country of origin, especially with regard to the production of teaching materials, teacher training and mother tongue development.

The European Social Charter includes an element of the integration policies developed during the last decades:

Article 19 stresses the necessity „to promote and facilitate the teaching of the national language of the receiving state ..." (19.11) and „to promote and facilitate, as far as practicable, the teaching of the migrant worker's mother tongue to the children of the migrant worker" (19.12). This position is also articulated in the European Convention on the Legal Status of Migrant Workers.

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[6] See DGIV/EDU/LANG (2008) 4: "*Integration of Adult Migrants and Education*. Extracts from Council of Europe Conventions and Recommendations / Resolutions by the Committee of Ministers and Parliamentary Assembly". www.coe.int/lang

See also R (84) 7, R (84) 9 and R (98) 6, F for the support of bilingual education.

In the last century based on research as well as on political agreements there existed a kind of **European consensus as far as integration policy** was concerned which could be summarised as follows:

- Integration into the host country requires special provision to enable migrants and their families to learn the language of the host country;

- Integration into the host country implies an adjustment of the legal, social and economic conditions under which migrants live at the moment of arrival to the standards of the host country;

- Integration includes respect for the languages and cultures of origin of migrants and makes it necessary to develop educational offers to maintain these;

- Integration is an opportunity for the receiving society to use the presence of migrants and their families as an opportunity for a cultural opening and enhancement.

European countries have of course implemented such principles in extremely different ways. The teaching of the mother tongue, for example, was mainly offered in order to facilitate the return of migrants to their countries of origin, not primarily because of the human rights aspects.

3.2 Recent developments: assimilative tendencies

At the present time this consensus no longer exists. For several reasons integration policies in many European countries have been debated afresh during the last years – after a long period of inactivity it is now regarded as a matter of urgent action for two reasons: firstly the social problems cannot be neglected any longer – in the educational system, in relation to the labour-market or to concrete conflicts in certain areas where migrants form a high percentage of the population, there is an urgent need to react because otherwise social and ethnical conflicts arise. Secondly there has been an increase in extreme right-wing parties sometimes very openly using arguments hostile to foreigners; these have been partly successful in making people feel threatened by migrants, so that governments also have to react to those public dispositions.

In general it can be said that in some cases this has resulted in legislation which is more or less restrictive as far as immigration and access to citizenship is concerned. From a sociolinguistic perspective the development shows a certain tendency towards assimilation – in that it is mainly the claims of the receiving countries that seem to be important whereas the question of how far to respect the immigrants' personality, languages and interests is no longer seen to be of equal importance.

Language is regarded as a key issue in integration nowadays: knowledge of the language of the host society is seen as a kind of 'guarantee' for successful integration – other aspects (like support of the L1, plurilingualism of migrants, intercultural and especially social aspects) are more or less neglected. The idea follows a kind of "time on task" – hypothesis: The more time people spend in learning and using the L2 the better their competence will be. Although this concept is not supported by psycholinguistic research, and in some cases – when the use of the mother tongue is explicitly forbidden – even violates the human rights of the migrants, it is the guiding principle in many countries. In the process of developing benchmarks for integration, the idea of the L2 spoken in the family is seriously discussed as a positive criterion.

In many cases obligatory language courses combined with tests in the L2 are used as instruments to oblige migrants to learn the language of the receiving country. This contributes to the notion that migrants themselves may not be ready and willing to learn the language of the host country – which is not supported by experience: migrants are – given adequate

conditions – usually very eager to learn the language of the receiving society, if the courses are adapted to their needs. This includes consideration of the fact that the time when migrants want and need to learn the language differs. A woman, for example, taking care of the children at home, may feel no need to learn the language and may have no opportunity because she has to be present for her children – but this changes when children enter kindergarten or school – then usually courses like 'mother learns the language at the kindergarten/ school of her children' prove to be very effective; even more if they are combined with an introduction to the educational and/or health care institutions of the country.

Although experts agree that the best language provision is one targeting the concrete personal and professional communication area of migrants, based on a careful diagnosis and consultation process, many countries prescribe standardised courses with scarcely any differentiation.

4. The linguistic status of migrants and the effects of standardisation
4.1 Heterogeneity – uneven profiles

People's linguistic competences differ considerably, depending on the contexts in which they live and work, their learning experiences etc. Linguistic heterogeneity is much stronger among migrants – because they have extremely different linguistic biographies, depending on the status of their first language(s) in the country of origin, the other languages they have used during their migration and the language contacts in the host society (cf. chap. 2 and various case studies[7]). Cultural differences play an important part as well. How could a standardised language programme, designed to lead to a specific level of linguistic competence, be effective for all and meet their different language needs?

In European countries language provision and requirements for migrants vary (from about 100 course hours to more than 600), and correspondingly the levels which have to be achieved differ, from A1 or A2 to B1; and these levels have to be reached in all language competences: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. From a scientific point of view there is no absolute number of hours which can guarantee the attainment of a certain level of competence, especially in all language competences: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Independent of the underlying theories researchers agree that language learning is an extremely individual process depending on a rather large number of differing factors (see chap. 2).

In some countries, like Ireland[8], the courses offered for migrants are differentiated for different groups of people such as slow learners with no or little formal education background, learners with an average number of years spent in school and those who have a long learning experience.

In a sociolinguistic perspective the starting point should be the different circumstances, family situations and learning experiences of migrants on the one hand and **the real needs and capacities of migrants to participate in the life of society** on the other, rather than one level of proficiency. Depending on family and professional situations etc. the communicative

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[7] See in particular: *Responding to the language needs of adult refugees in Ireland* (David Little); ***Language Learning in the Context of Migration and Integration – Challenges and Options for Adult Learners*** Verena Plutzar & Monika RITTER; ***Education: Tailor-made or one-size-fits-all? A project commissioned by the Nederlandse Taalunie*** (ITTA/Elwine Halewijn; CTO/Annelies Houben, Heidi De Niel) - Case studies prepared for the Seminar on linguistic integration of adult migrants (June 2008): www.coe.int/lang
See also the evaluation of the language courses in Germany:
http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Source/Germany_ExecutiveSummary_Evaluatio_integration_courses.pdf
[8] See Case Study by D. Little: *Responding to the language needs …*

'worlds' in which people live, are different. Therefore a much more differentiated course system with small groups, teaching combined with the work place, situated in the learners' neighbourhood etc. would be much more effective.

How could the notion of language requirements in terms of designated levels be suitable for residence or citizenship?

In every society people use their languages in extremely different ways (amount, variations and registers, opportunities etc.) and have different language needs and possibilities in their personal as well as in their professional lives and communication contexts. Democratic rights in European societies therefore are not dependent on the possession of a certain linguistic level.

The "Common European Framework of Reference for Languages" (CEFR)[9] stresses the fact that linguistic competence, especially a plurilingual competence, is "generally uneven in one or more ways" (CEFR 2001, 133).

The European Language Portfolio (ELP)[10] is a valuable instrument for documenting this heterogeneity because it enables the demonstration of different competences related to needs and concrete situations. The experience of countries which have developed this approach should be used, in order to avoid the undesirability of general levels (and tests) – it is not a matter of equality to set the same standards for people who are unequal in all aspects of their linguistic and cultural abilities and competences, but this may result in new forms of discrimination.

4.2 Heterogeneity – different learning/teaching contexts

Language programmes designed to encourage adult migrants' second language acquisition must therefore meet the language needs of migrants and take into account their mental and psycho-social situation. It is obvious that learning a second language in a migration context differs considerably from any kind of traditional foreign language learning.

Three points are highlighted here in order to show what this means for teaching and the designation of levels:

- Firstly, language acquisition for migrants takes place not only via teaching but also simultaneously outside the classroom, to a different extent according to family, milieu and job situation. This is one reason why the language learning needs of migrants differ considerably between individuals. Depending on different language contacts and requirements outside the classroom, some need to practice speaking or listening, some need to practice reading. Here the issue of dialects also has to be discussed – the linguistic contacts of many migrants are not with people using the standard variation of a language but rather with dialect speakers. And it may be essential for surviving, for social contacts and for professional success that one is able at least to understand the dialect(s) spoken outside the classroom.

- Secondly, language learning takes place under much more (social, economical, legal) pressure than in regular classrooms. The type and amount of pressure differs for individuals and groups of migrants however, depending on their legal status, the time they have already lived in the entry country etc. Migrants are usually well aware that they need to master the language of the receiving country in order to survive, to stay and be successful there. Therefore they often have very concrete linguistic needs: if a member of a family is in hospital or someone gets a job there, a different communicative scenario exists compared to cases where the schooling of children, problems concerning the status of residence etc. are

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[9] Council of Europe. *The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. Learning, Teaching, Assessment.* CUP 2001. Online www.coe.int/lang
[10] www.coe.int/portfolio

important. For this reason language tuition that does not assist learners in communicating successfully in work, bureaucracy, institutions, health issues, educational contexts, social/cultural orientation will not be sufficient and effective. Here again the different situations of learners have to be taken into account when offering language tuition. Furthermore, experiences and evaluation of language integration programmes show the need for psycho-social support for migrants by social workers during their attendance at language courses. If there is none, teachers are confronted with questions and problems resulting from the difficult living conditions of migrants which teachers are not usually trained to deal with.

- The third element with consequences for the organisation of teaching is the multilingual nature of the classrooms. Traditionally, foreign language teaching sees its pupils as a linguistically homogeneous group where it is possible to teach a new language against a common linguistic background, whereas with migrants the linguistic basis (one or more languages, not always learned properly, sometimes without literacy), the linguistic context (use of different languages in families and outside the classroom) and the motivation or pressure to learn the language differ to a large extent from foreign language learning contexts. It is only recently that this plurilingualism of migrants has been examined in research and didactics. Because of their migration biography, many migrant families have two or even three family languages, maybe because one of their family languages was officially banned, or because people from different language areas have become members of a family. And the mixture of languages (and of cultural attitudes as well) varies from class to class. In most cases language awareness, the abilities to code-switch and the readiness to mix languages are even more developed. Therefore language tutoring has to reflect learners' language biographies and language abilities in order to build up their language learning skills and not to treat them as inexperienced learners. So far, most teachers (often monolingual themselves) have received no training in making use of this plurilingualism and in teaching one language and at the same time making use of others.

Although bilingual schools and classes and the integration of content and language learning (CLIL) are seen as very innovative and effective means of language learning and teaching, little research and training has been devoted to applying these principles to migrant language programmes.

4.3 The issue of testing

Passing a test indicates how well a person can manage the specific testing culture and demonstrate the specific linguistic skills tested – it says nothing about the person's integration process.

Of course, in many situations tests are useful for learners themselves to see how far they have come and still have to go, or as an explicit statement of a quality skill, which might be useful in the labour market. On the other hand, from a psycholinguistic point of view language tests have significant disadvantages: the stress caused by being tested and knowing that one has a limited chance of showing what one is capable of affects people's language performance in a negative way (functional reduction). There is evidence that in informal situations migrants behave much more competently than in formal testing situations – this is even more the case if one's future life (residence or citizenship) depends on the results of a test. These disadvantages are accepted under specific circumstances: in formal education contexts like school, university, further education and so forth, because the positive effects (certification of competences) are stronger than the negative consequences (a bad mark). But is it acceptable to use testing (language or historical or geographical knowledge) for decisions about residence or citizenship? Here the negative consequences (sanctions) are much heavier than

just a mark in school. Are these matters, where a linguistic qualification matters? And who can define the content of such tests suitable for these complex matters[11]?

Testing usually stimulates assimilation: the better one is able to automatically reproduce the responses to test stimuli the better the test results are. Neither migrants' knowledge nor their plurilingualism can be appreciated in a test,. And the test takers themselves have no say about the content of the tests or about the types of decisions that are being made based on their results. As the positive effects of language testing seem to be beyond question, the negative effects have also to be taken into consideration:

-    On the policy level they create contradictions with the aims expressed in official curricula by narrowing language knowledge. They cost a lot of money and do not often achieve what they pretend.

-    On the institutional level, end-of-course tests influence the whole process in so far as every class activity is judged by its use for the test ("teaching to the test"). The consequence is that language courses may end up as test preparation courses. In addition tests involve teachers in role-conflicts. Language teachers need to create an atmosphere of confidence and openness, so that learning can take place. If language testing is compulsory in an integration context, they as testers judge their learners in ways which decide on inclusion or exclusion. If a language test decides whether a migrant can stay or has to leave the country or through citizenship gains democratic rights in that society, the ethical dimension is overwhelming.

-    As far as curricula are concerned, tests focus on elements, which are easy to test – individual and intercultural elements of language learning and teaching therefore are reduced or even disappear.

If the negative effects of tests are to be avoided, some principles for more inclusive language testing should be followed (Shohamy 2004):

-    Include the knowledge of diverse groups in test design (democratic principle of inclusion)

-    Conduct and administer testing in collaboration and in cooperation with those tested

-    Monitor the uses of tests as instruments of power, challenge their assumptions, and examine their consequences

-    Assume responsibility for tests and their uses

-    Use alternatives of multiple assessment procedures, e.g. portfolios, self-assessment, projects, observation and tests.

-    If the language testing follows democratic principles, the right to question the uses of tests and the test results should be established.

Positive aspects of tests are that they can encourage the learning process of an individual learner if the test is part of the language learning process in such that it gives feedback to the progress. Therefore it has to be designed in a way that fits the learning process of an individual or to a class (internal achievement tests). Standardised formats are less effective than informal and internal tests. In order to avoid negative effects tests have to be complemented by other assessment tools like portfolio, self-assessment, observation and project work (cf. Milestone ELP and Language and Qualification Portfolio for Migrants and Refugees[12]).

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[11] See also below 4.4 „Languages, social cohesion and citizenship"

[12] All Milestone ELPs can be downloaded from the Milestone web site www.eu-milestone.de. The Language and Qualification Portfolio for Migrants and Refugees can be downloaded in 9 Languages (Arabic,

From a socio-pedagocical point of view achievement tests which give feedback to learners and teachers might be much more valuable (and cheaper) than proficiency tests which necessarily tend to be linear and neither adapted to individualised courses nor to individual plurilingual learners. Many experts – including the authors of this text – are convinced, that the use of tests in the context of integration might be counter-productive. The question of whether standardised tests are appropriate or not and which role language tests might have in the process of integration need further discussion und reflexion (see also the remarks as far as considerations of use and consequences are concerned, in study *Language tests for social cohesion and citizenship – an outline for policy makers*[13] (esp. pp 3 n.).

4.4 Languages, social cohesion and citizenship

"Active democratic citizenship" and social cohesion are neither a matter of a certain linguistic competence nor of a certain knowledge of history, laws etc., but they are dependent on a complex mixture of knowledge, attitudes, habits and competences beyond language. But first of all, citizenship is not a performance of an individual but a concept based on the notion of "belonging" and therefore the community has to provide political rights. The "hard core" of citizenship was described within a Project "Education for Democratic Citizenship" implemented by the Council of Europe in the following way: "[Citizenship] is always a matter of belonging to a community, which entrains politics and rights, notably political rights. In this sense, the citizen is always a co-citizen, somebody who lives with others." (CDCC 2000, 16ff) This community can be defined at two levels: the local level and the State level. And at least "This belonging always refers to a level of political organisation, a level of authority, and to rights." (ibid.,17). Citizenship is connected with equal rights and dignity:

> "Citizen and citizenship exist in democratic spaces, i.e. spaces where persons have **equal rights and dignity**, where the law is made by the people for the people. Legal and political equality, together with the **principle of non-discrimination**, combine with the pursuit of the maximum extension of **freedoms**. **The citizen is a person who has rights and duties in a democratic society.** [...] Thus, the core competences associated with democratic citizenship are those called for by the construction of a **free and autonomous person, aware of his rights and duties** in a society where the power to establish the law, i.e. the rules of community life which define the framework in which the freedom of each is exercised, and where the appointment and control of the people who exercise this power are under the supervision of all the citizens." (CDCC 2000, 17)

Under the given socio-political situation of migrants in Europe, becoming a citizen - and in connection with this, getting equal rights and dignity - is a question of time. It takes years until foreigners are allowed to apply for citizenship. Within these years migrants have to adapt to a situation where their rights may be limited and their dignity may not always be respected. They have limited access to the labour market, housing market and education system and in addition have to face racism and discrimination there. The problems and conflicts very often exist independently of whether or not the immigrants have sufficient competence in the L2. Often it is rather their family, the mother tongue, which provide a network for surviving.

This situation is very challenging for the individual, especially when there is no support by the receiving country. In this situation a careful consultation system and a portfolio approach could support people, because it could help to act in dignity and autonomy, when they know what the framework of their possibilities is and when they regain self-esteem within their new environment. It is essential that information as far as rights and duties are concerned is given

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Bosnian/Serb(Croatian, English, Frensch, German, Kurdish, Persian, Russian and Turkish) from the Integrationhaus web site, www.ingerationshaus.at/portflio.

[13] See Part III: *Language tests for social cohesion and citizenship – an outline for policy makers* - ALTE Authoring Group (Association of Language Testers in Europe)

also in the mother tongue so that migrants have the chance to develop a strategy for adapting to the new situation.

In the "Basic concepts and core competencies for education for democratic citizenship" the following competences are seen as core competences:

Cognitive competences

- _competences of a legal and political nature_, i.e. knowledge concerning the rules of collective life and the democratic society, at all levels of political life; [...]

- _knowledge of the present world_, knowledge which implies [...] a historical dimension and a cultural dimension [...]

- _competences of a procedural nature_, [...] we would stress two capacities of particular relevance for democratic citizenship: the ability to argue, which is related to debate and the ability to reflect; [...]

- _knowledge of the principles and values of human rights and democratic citizenship._[...]

Ethical competences and value choices.

Individuals construct themselves and their relationships with other in accordance with certain values. This ever-present ethical dimension encompasses affective and emotional aspects. [...] Citizenship cannot be reduced to a catalogue of rights and duties, but entails a membership of a group or groups, bringing identities into play in a very profound way. It consequently requires an ethical shift that includes a personal and collective emotional dimension. Numerous as they may be, the values involved, for which construction work and reflection are necessary, are centred on freedom, equality and solidarity. They imply the recognition and respect of oneself and of others, the ability to listen, reflection on the place of violence in society and how to control it the resolution of conflicts. They demand the positive acceptance of differences and diversity, they require placing confidence in the other. [...]

Capacities for action, sometimes known as social competences [...]

- _the capacity to live with others_, to cooperate, to construct and implement joint projects, to take on responsibilities. This capacity contributes to interculturalism, particularly the need for people to learn several languages. Languages are regarded here not just as tools for communicating with other individuals but above all as openings to other modes of thought and ways of understanding, to other cultures. [...]

- _the capacity to resolve conflicts in accordance with the principles of democratic law_, in particular the two fundamental principles of calling upon a third person not involved in the conflict, and of open debate to hear the parties in dispute and try to arrive at the truth, [...]

- _the capacity to take part in public debate_, to argue and choose in a real-life situation. [...]

(CDCC 2000, 21ff)[14]

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[14] The list of these competencies could be questioned: "Several authors express reserves as to the possibility and above all the value of drawing up a list. They stress the formal and highly unrealistic nature of such an effort." (CDCC 2000, 21) And in fact it seems that the number of citizens who could say that they posses these competences is quite small. So we have to consider if it is realistic to insist on these competences, if migrants wish to obtain citizenship in order to have equal rights and opportunities.

If one makes use of this concept for migrants, it becomes clear that the development of the following competences is to be supported:

– Knowledge of the legal and political framework of the host society, as far as the person itself is concerned to act autonomously and without breaking the laws and in addition as far it is necessary to understand the environment and context the person is acting in.

– Knowledge of the historical and cultural dimension of the present socio-political situation of the host society as far as it helps to understand sociological, cultural and political differences which concern the daily life of migrants, i.e. the history of the women's liberation movement. Its important to point out, that the democratic society is still under construction and not to be seen as perfect at all.

– The competence to get and handle this information by being able to question them, debate them and reflect them in relation to former experiences and future developments.

– Knowledge of the principles and values of human rights and democratic citizenship, to understand the political and legal framework based on that, i.e. the lack of death penalty or the social state and beside that to be able to estimate the present local realisation migrants meet within the political and socio-cultural framework. In addition these values could give a positive identification despite maybe the different experiences of discrimination.

– The values of freedom, equality and solidarity as key values of the democratic societies in Europe should be known and if they are not shared they should be respected, because they are the ground of the legal and political framework.

– Social competencies for dealing everyday life in the way of taking responsibilities for oneself and the others, i.e. the ability to cooperate, a sense of responsibility, the ability to communicate, the ability to manage conflicts in a way of balancing interests and orientation on solutions.

It is obvious that there is a huge discrepancy between these issues and the levels migrants can achieve in the new language within 600 or even 900 hours of teaching/learning the language of the receiving country. If there is a consensus that integration, democratic citizenship and social cohesion make it necessary that migrants **from the very beginning get access** to these kinds of concepts, knowledge and competences, it cannot be done in the L2 alone.

The use of the L1/ family language or other languages migrants already speak may in some cases be even more effective, because a lot of contacts, arguments, and adjustments to the new society take place within the family, in the neighbourhood – it is therefore important whenever possible to offer access to the democratic culture of the receiving country in the languages of the migrants as well and only gradually switch to the dominant language. Otherwise becoming familiar with the civil values and social functioning of the receiving society has to be postponed till the end of the language learning process instead of making language learning and becoming a member of the new society an integrated process. Measures to support the further learning of the mother tongue[15] and bilingual educational models, which aim to equip people with real bi- or plurilingual proficiency and, in particular, biliteracy, are especially suitable for migrants in this situation to supply them very quickly with the necessary knowledge and competences for living in a new society and getting to know its structures and cultural dimensions and and for starting a language learning process in the L2 which will speed up with intensified social contacts and civil rights.

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[15] See Recommendation 1740 (2006) of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on "The place of mother tongue in school education" CM/AS(2008)Rec1740finalE / and the Reply adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 16 January 2008

Active democratic citizenship cannot be described in testable levels; this is true for language tests as well as for test the "knowledge of society" which measure the learning of facts and figures but cannot measure involvment, attitudes and intercultural understanding.. Active citizenship needs participation from the very beginning, starting at the same time or even before language learning begins, because this is the only way it can be acquired – it would be counterproductive not to allow migrants to participate in the society until they have mastered a test, which then would be restricted to inanimate knowledge learnt by heart.

5. Conclusion

There is no doubt that languages are a very important prerequisite in the process of integration – from a linguistic point of view it is important not to mix this up with the process of integration itself. Language programmes for migrants can be very helpful if the complexities of their linguistic identities and different life situations are taken into account and therefore the programmes offer a wide range of learning opportunities and give enough time. Learning a second language is most effective if it builds upon the existing (linguistic) identity of migrants – that is, to treat them as bi- or plurilingual people for which learning a new language does not threaten the status and usage of their first language(s). Integration programmes focusing only on the language of the receiving country and furthermore aiming at one specific level in that language for all will miss their goal because they do not take into account the specifics of language acquisition in the course of migration, which are defined by many social and cultural factors, and individual plurilingualism. To promote the learning of the language of the receiving country by migrants it is necessary to build on their linguistic background especially in the time of and after their arrival, when social orientation takes place. It is important to include the situation of the family, the local and professional contexts.

The consequences as far as language support is concerned are:

- languages courses based on needs analyses and with differentiated curricula which take into account the migrants' regional, professional and family situation,

- bilingual courses or support for the further development of the mother tongue,

- a concept of plurilingualism didactics[16],

- special training for teachers to enable them to teach in classrooms which are by no means 'foreign language classrooms' but afford insights into the social, intercultural and psychological dimensions of teaching/learning in a migration context.

The role of language testing for integration purposes has to be challenged and carefully evaluated to prevent negative effects: for the learners (anxiety leading to linguistic reduction rather than development), for the language courses (teaching to the test), for the teachers (and their role conflicts), for the curricula and for the policy.

It would be useful to put much more energy in developing alternatives to tests such as specific portfolios which give migrants the possibility to present their strengths instead of pointing at their weaknesses. Encouragement and motivation are key issues for successful integration – language courses might be helpful in establishing this if they do not put migrants under pressure and combine tests with negative sanctions.

And at least it is to be stated clearly: access to fundamental civic rights is a vantage point for language learning and not a bonus at the end. The more migrants feel part of the receiving country and its society the more they are ready to acquire the necessary (linguistic and other) competencies to be(come) successful members. Relevant linguistic contacts speed up the

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[16] see: The Plurilingualism Project, ed. By B. Hufeisen/ G. Neuner, ECML/ CoE 2004

learning process whereas exclusion and negative sanctions support retreat rather than inclusion.

This of course means that migrants have to contribute their part in the intercultural dialogue (which indeed also needs a common language to be successful) – however the receiving society must also deal with its tasks in the two-way-process of integration:

> Thus, the crucial and at the same time most promising point of departure for a new language policy in Europe will be to promote a linguistic self-concept different from today's: not a 'monolingual', but a 'plurilingual habitus' among European individuals and institutions (cf. Declaration of Oegstgeest, 2001). In the end this means, not only to observe and recognize that a linguistic multiple public sphere exists already, but also to accept and promote its legitimacy.
> (Gogolin 2002, 17).

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