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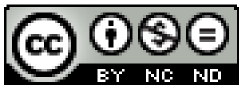
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I.
Contexts of Mobility and Ecology of Multilingualism

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Rethinking the Learning of Languages in the Context of Globalisation and Hyperlingualism

Anne Pauwels (London)

In this paper the major challenges to the learning of languages in the context of globalisation are explored: increased diversification of learners' linguistic profiles and learning experiences, new communication technologies and their impact on communicative practices as well as the increased commodification of language. The main focus is on how aware and prepared university language teachers are to deal with these developments.

In diesem Beitrag werden die bedeutendsten Herausforderungen für den Fremdsprachenunterricht untersucht, die auf Globalisierungsprozesse zurückzuführen sind: die verschärfte Differenzierung der sprachlichen Lernerprofile, neue Kommunikationstechnologien und deren Einfluss auf den Sprachgebrauch und auf Kommunikationsweisen sowie die erhöhte Kommodifizierung von Sprache. Der Hauptfokus des Beitrages liegt jedoch in der Erforschung der Frage, wie bewusst sich Universitätsdozentinnen und -dozenten dieser Herausforderungen sind und wie sie damit im Unterricht zurechtkommen.

1 Globalisation

In one of the first volumes dealing with language teaching and globalisation, the editors note that "globalisation is nothing if not a fashionable term – it pervades contemporary political rhetoric and is a keyword of both academic and popular discourse on economy, technology and culture" (Block/Cameron 2002: 1). A decade later the use of the term has intensified as well as become omnipresent in societies around the world. Its centrality in exploring, examining and understanding developments and events is taken as self-evident. Linguistic evidence of this centrality is found in the fact that the term is now thoroughly embedded in dictionaries of languages around the world. Although there are of course differing views, perspectives and opinions about globalisation, definitions of the term tend to include similar elements: globalisation is seen as a process (social, cultural, political, economic) that has an impact on everyday life. It overcomes geographical constraints potentially reducing other boundaries or differences (social, cultural, linguistic, economic). The factors that facilitate globalisation include vastly enhanced communication and transportation technologies that have allowed for a massive increase in short-term and long-term transnational mobility of people, as well as economic and trade systems that require access to resources world-wide and that are increasingly service-based.

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These factors of globalisation all have an impact on communication, specifically through the medium of language. Language is indeed a key element in the globalisation process: it shapes and is affected by the process.

2 Globalisation and language(s)

In the previous section I alerted to the important role that language plays in the globalisation process. Here we briefly touch upon three aspects: the centrality of language in the 'new' economy, the linguistic consequences of increased transnational mobility and of new communication technologies.

2.1 Language and the 'new' economy

The globalised 'new' economy is one that is heavily service-oriented, having moved away from a focus on manufacture and an exploitation of primary resources. Information (exchange), services around products and (symbolic) goods/artefacts are key to this economy. The provision of services as well as the assurance of quality are heavily reliant on appropriate and effective communicative and linguistic practices. This view foregrounds the 'skills' component of language and has led to an explosion in (self-help) manuals, guides and handbooks outlining what constitutes good and effective communication and how individuals and corporations can improve their skills to suit the new service economy. An increasing number of linguistic scholars have critically commented on this trend pointing out that communication training has now become *de rigueur* for almost every worker, even those whose jobs involve limited contact with clients, customers or colleagues (e. g. Cameron 1995, 2002; Duchêne/Heller 2012; Heller 2003). Another consequence of this focus on effective communication is the desire for a language that can operate at a global level, a global *lingua franca* that reduces the potential for confusion and miscommunication. Having access to this *lingua franca* provides the speaker with significant linguistic capital that will not only open up economic markets but also provide increased educational, employment and sociocultural opportunities. English has become that *lingua franca*, at least for the time being. In 2.4.1 we shall look at the impact this has had on the language learning scene.

2.2 Hypermobility and language

Globalisation is intricately linked to enhanced mobility largely facilitated through improved and expanded transportation systems. Transnational and transcontinental movements for education, business, employment and leisure (tourism) have increased in frequency and are affecting the lives of many more people than a few decades ago. Furthermore, improvements in transportation

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systems have allowed for much more frequent contact between people separated by vast distances: the cost of long-distance travel has come within reach of a larger sector of the population. For example, for migrants and refugees who had/were settled in areas far removed from their homeland, visits to and from the homeland are no longer a 'once-in-a-lifetime' occasion. Another facet of this extreme mobility, increasingly labelled 'hypermobility', is the creation of hyper-diverse metropolitan hubs and cities. Of course, cities around the world have long been sites of diversity bringing together people from all walks of life, from different countries, cultures, religions, ethnolinguistic and racial groups. Globalisation has intensified this diversity aspect of large cities, although it has also brought a 'homogenising' aspect to them. This is very well illustrated in the visual hallmarks of such cities. On one hand, their linguistic landscapes display a multitude of languages reflecting the ethnolinguistic diversity of inhabitants, yet there are also the visual icons of global, transnational fast food and coffee chains, shops, banking and trade, exuding sameness (e. g. Blommaert 2010; Gorter 2006). Linguistic practices in these sites similarly demonstrate the hallmarks of globalisation: besides a plethora of plurilingual modes practiced by large sections of the community, there is the widespread use of the 'unifying' or common linguistic code. With regard to the former, globalisation has led not only to augmented levels of multilingualism and language contact but also to more rapid and frequent changes in linguistic constellations. For example, the most recent UK Census (2011) revealed that Polish has displaced South Asian languages like Punjabi, Urdu, Bengali and Gujarati in London. These languages had dominated the London scene for quite a few decades. Globalisation and mobility have also stimulated the further establishment of diaspora communities. Many of these communities see language(s) as a key component of their identity and wish to pass the language(s) on to their offspring. These communities will also have needs to acquire the dominant language(s) of their new environment. Both these factors will have an impact on language learning in a global context.

2.3 Language and the new communication technologies

In a globalised world mobility is also enhanced through technological developments that overcome the real-space constraints of communication: the internet, sophisticated telephony and media systems have paved the way for 24/7 world-wide communication to be within reach of many people. These developments in communication technologies, especially those involving the internet, have had a dramatic impact on language and communication practices. It has given rise to new modes of communication such as various forms of videoconferencing, to new genres including email, blogs, short text messages (SMS), and 'tweets'. It is also leading to a marked shift in the preferred channels of communication, at least among younger generations. This generation is more

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likely to interact using technology-mediated means of communication, foregrounding quite dramatically 'written' or 'typed' modes of communication. We will see in 2.4.3 that these new communication technologies also affect the learning of other languages.

2.4 Globalisation and the learning of languages

The impact of globalisation is also strongly felt within the sphere of the learning of languages. A small but nevertheless remarkable consequence of globalisation and the factors contributing to it relates to the nomenclature of the field-foreign language learning. This term reflects the ideological stance that favours a 'one nation – one language' policy. Such a policy considers any language, other than the national or official language as foreign. In today's multicultural societies the linguistic landscapes are multilingual, which makes the term foreign language a misnomer. Yet it persists in both scholarly and popular contexts. In this paper, however, I will refer to the learning of 'foreign' languages (FLL) predominantly as 'language learning' (LL).

More substantial consequences of globalisation on LL occur at the level of policy and planning, as well as at the level of the actual learning (processes). Here I will focus briefly on one major impact on LL policies – the commodification of LL – leading to the global LL scene being dominated by a handful of languages. With regard to the impact on LL itself, I will briefly touch upon how learner profiles have changed or are changing, and how changes in modes of communication affect LL. My main focus, however, will be on the other key agent in the learning process – the teacher: I will examine to what extent language teachers are aware of these impacts and how they accommodate them in their teaching practices. The site for analysis of the latter is the university (tertiary education). The choice of this site is linked to the crucial role of universities in the lifelong learning process: they generate and advance (new) knowledge through research, and they integrate those advances in and disseminate them through their teaching. The recipients of this teaching process in turn disseminate these new knowledges through their own (teaching) practices.

2.4.1 English as the desired linguistic capital

The centrality of language and communication in the new economy has highlighted the commodification of language: language undoubtedly has market value. As the new economy is played out in a global market place, the language or languages that give(s) access to this global arena are perceived as highly desired linguistic capital. Currently, English clearly dominates this market place

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but languages like Chinese, Spanish, and Arabic are becoming major players and languages like French, Russian and German still play some role in trans-global or at least trans-regional communication. Nevertheless, English is regarded as *the* global language, at least for the time being. The status of English as global *lingua franca* has had major effects on the LL scene: English has become the language most widely studied as second, third or 'foreign' language. The number of such learners is now estimated to be over 1 billion (Graddol 2006). English occupies the status of first 'foreign' language in many countries around the world. This has led to a significant expansion of the learning of English and thus in LL *per se*. In some communities in which LL was not an established part of the curriculum, the decision to introduce English as a second or foreign language has indeed led to massive increases in learners. Prime examples are Japan and China, with the latter rolling out a policy of universal provision of English across the entire schooling system (Hu 2005). In communities that have an established tradition in LL (e. g. many parts of Europe), the desire to learn English has led to shifts in the hierarchy of languages on offer: often English moves up the priority ladder displacing former dominant foreign or second languages. This is for example the case in some Nordic countries where English has clearly displaced German as well as French. The 2005 *Eurobarometer* language survey mentioned that in 19 out of 29 countries English is the most widely spoken (learnt) language besides the mother tongue: this is especially the case in Sweden (89%), Malta (88%) and the Netherlands (87%). The 2012 survey confirmed this, with only minor changes in the top countries: Netherlands (90%), Malta (89%) and Sweden (86%). For Europe (EU countries), the ascendancy of English may also have affected the number of people who can communicate in two other languages: in 2005 this was 28% and by 2012 it had dropped to 25%. It seems that the dominance of English and its status as global *lingua franca* may reduce the need to acquire skills in another language.

In communities where English is the dominant and/or official language, the status of English as the main global language is a powerful factor in the continuing struggles to increase LL. Despite strong rhetoric backed up by evidence that 'English is not enough' (e. g. Graddol 1997, 2006), Anglophone societies tend to trail in LL rankings. For example, both the United Kingdom and Ireland find themselves at the lower end of LL in *Eurobarometer* surveys: in 2012 Ireland was ranked last with 66% not able to speak an additional language and the United Kingdom second last with 62%. Whilst these countries may have seen an expansion in the languages offered for study including some 'heritage' languages, this has not yet led to a sizeable increase in language learners.

Furthermore, the commodification of language and the view that the acquisition of another language is primarily directed at increasing one's linguistic capital continue to affect both attitudes and policies towards the

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learning of languages in education. Languages that do not rate high in terms of market value, among them many languages of ethnolinguistic minorities, immigrants and marginalised groups, may well be 'valued' in state discourses but their learning is not seen as a state responsibility and is thus often relegated to the language group or community in question. This stance has influenced the attitudes of many heritage speakers themselves internalising views that their languages do not have a place in state-based LL.

Finally, the dominant status of English in the LL scene has been supported by a massive English language learning industry that constantly produces materials, designs new curricula and modes of delivery for their products. It is also backed up by a wealth of scholarly research that explores socio-political as well as linguistic and pedagogical aspects of English language learning. Developments in the learning of other languages often draw upon findings from research on English language learning and teaching, thus strengthening further the influential role of English in LL theory and practice.

2.4.2 New profiles of language learners at university

The effects of globalisation and increased trans-global mobility are also strongly felt in the educational sector, especially at tertiary/university level. Within Europe, schemes such as ERASMUS actively promote student and staff mobility and expose students to different linguistic and cultural contexts. Beyond Europe, student mobility is also extensive but possibly lacks the exchange element that characterises intra-European mobility. The direction of mobility is from eastern and southern world regions to western and northern ones, especially if the latter offer education through the medium of English. The majority of universities in these regions have significant international student populations transforming their campuses into multilingual and multicultural hubs. Another contributing factor to the multilingual and multicultural nature of student populations is the increasing participation of immigrants and ethnolinguistic minorities in higher education (Pauwels 2007). It is therefore not surprising that the linguistic profile of university language learners, and university students *per se*, is much more diverse than it was even a few decades ago. Today's language students are likely to come from very diverse linguistic backgrounds, have varying degrees of linguistic competencies both in the target language as well as in other languages. This will also be the case for their pre-university language learning experiences and exposures, motivation and attitudes towards language learning as well as reasons for language study.

Whilst factors such as motivation, attitudes and reasons for university language study have been examined extensively in applied and second language acquisition research (e. g. Dörnyei 2001, 2003; Gardner 1985; Gardner/Lambert

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1972), the impact of heightened diversity in the linguistic profiles and language experiences of current learners has not yet received the same attention, although more recent work on plurilingual learners by scholars such as Fenoulhet/Ros i Solé (2012), Kramsch (2006) and Zarate (2010) is starting to make a change. Particularly under-explored remains the question of how these changed learner profiles affect language teaching practices.

2.4.3 Communication technologies and LL

The impact of rapid advances in communication technologies on language practices and modes of communication is a major topic of research within many branches of linguistics. Among the more prominent areas are machine translation, the use of ICT (Information and Communication Technology) in language learning and the development of new genres or communicative practices such as blogging, web chats, SMS. In many respects, the language learning field was a trailblazer as language professionals saw the potential of various forms of ICT to enhance the language learning process (e. g. CALL, online language learning, video conferencing). Even if the university language teaching environment may not have moved at the same pace as other language learning environments in adopting ICT, there is nevertheless growing evidence of its use in the teaching of languages (e. g. Felix 2001; Levy 2009; Salaberry 2001). In relation to the impact of communication technologies on the shaping of communicative practices, university language curricula show far less evidence of adoption or adaptation. With the exception of language courses specifically geared towards reading in another language (often for research purposes), most university language curricula include a communicative focus. Hence advances in communicative technologies will impact on both modes of language learning as well as on the learning of communicative practices. Although technology-mediated communication between people has not yet replaced face-to-face communication in ‘real time and space’, there is strong evidence that our modes of communication have not only diversified but also shifted away from more traditional forms of interaction. Of course there are significant differences among language users in terms of accessibility to, as well as uptake of, these modes of communication. For adolescents and young adults, the future and primary ‘clients’ of university courses, there is mounting evidence that they not only engage to a high degree in technology-mediated interaction but also often prefer this mode of communication for both learning and social purposes. Many of these new modes of communication demand advanced keyboarding skills foregrounding the writing mode. In the context of second and foreign language learning this is a very interesting development as more recent language learning methodologies and approaches (e. g. audio-visual, communicative language teaching) have foregrounded speaking skills. Whilst

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university language classes have not ignored the skills of reading and writing, the teaching and practicing of these skills have not received the same attention as they did during the era of the grammar-translation method. Furthermore, secondary school LL curricula whose orientation is predominantly communicative focus primarily on oral skills development. Consequently, language students often bring less knowledge of reading and writing to the university language classroom. On the other hand, their use of social media – in their dominant language(s) – centres on written use of language through SMS, blogs, twitter, and other forms of online communication. A cursory inspection of university language syllabi revealed considerable variation among languages with regard to the incorporation of new modes of communication and communicative practices: syllabi of German, French, Italian and other main European languages were more likely to choose the text type “email” through which to demonstrate informal writing than those of Polish, Russian, Arabic or Japanese. When it comes to the syllabi of many less widely taught languages, there is little if any evidence of the inclusion of new genres or modes of communication. This observation is symptomatic of a widening gap between research and practice in this area, affecting in particular the learning of languages seen as less central to the global marketplace.

2.5 Globalisation and the teaching of languages

The previous sections have outlined how globalisation and its concomitant factors can or will have an impact on the learning of languages. In this section, I will explore the preparedness of university language teachers to deal with the changes in student profiles and communicative practices resulting from globalisation. My focus on university language teachers is directly related to their key role in transforming language teaching and learning. As mentioned before, the university is a prime site for generating as well as transmitting new knowledge and ideas. University language teachers are either themselves involved in research or are close to researchers investigating the new challenges. They could therefore be expected to be at the forefront in applying new insights to the teaching of languages. In 2008, I started a research project in Australia exploring the extent to which university language teachers were aware of the challenges of globalisation to the learning of languages and to what extent they accommodated these in their teaching. When moving to the United Kingdom in 2010, I continued the research. In the following sections I provide an overview of the findings from interviews and interactions with sixty-two university language teachers. A more detailed report is in preparation (Pauwels forthcoming).

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2.5.1 Language teacher profiles

Sixty-two university language teachers were interviewed in Australia (42) and the United Kingdom (20). Both countries are characterised by a high degree of linguistic diversity with regard to their population. Yet English dominates public life. Their higher education systems share many common features. Furthermore, the availability of languages, of LL as well as the position of languages in universities, also displays considerable similarities.

Among them they taught 16 different languages including major European and Asian languages (French, German, Spanish, Italian as well as Chinese, Japanese and Arabic) and a range of less widely taught languages from these regions[1].

Their disciplinary and professional profile was very much in line with that of fellow language teachers in Australia and the United Kingdom: they included academics (23), language teaching fellows and assistants (27) and postgraduate students (12). Only 8 of these teachers had undertaken university-level studies focussing on language pedagogy, language acquisition or applied linguistics. The majority of the teachers (48) were trained in literary and cultural studies and had had no real exposure to knowledge about language pedagogy. A further 8 language teachers had no training whatsoever: being native speakers of the language, they had been hired without the need to demonstrate language teaching credentials. The latter group were more likely to be involved in the less widely taught languages where the supply of qualified teaching staff is scarce. With the exception of the postgraduate students, the teachers had usually more than ten years' teaching experience with about a third having 25 years' experience in language teaching at university.

In terms of their linguistic profile, 22 teachers had gained proficiency in the target language primarily through formal study and 40 teachers through various forms of home use, either in a diasporic setting (17) or in the 'homeland' (23). The latter group is normally labelled 'native speakers' and those who used the language in a diasporic setting 'heritage language speakers'. The majority of these teachers (47) had some proficiency in an additional language (i. e. other than the language of instruction, English, and the target language): they had gained proficiency in that additional language either through formal study (26) or through some form of home or community use (21).

Although this group of teachers is not statistically representative of language teachers in these settings, their professional and linguistic profile is (e. g.

[1] In order to maintain confidentiality of the teachers it is not possible to provide profiles of teachers by language. In most cases there were only one or two interviewees representing less widely taught languages.

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Klapper 2001; Nicholas et al.1993). Therefore the views expressed by this group are not likely to be atypical of their colleagues in these countries.

2.5.2 Teachers' awareness of the impact of globalisation on LL

Through interviews I explored the themes of language learners and new communication technologies and asked the following questions that acted as conversation starters:

- Can you tell me something about the linguistic profile of your language students?
- How does the presence of plurilingual students affect the teaching and learning process? This refers to students who are 'native' speakers, community/heritage language speakers as well as students who have proficiency in other languages.
- To what extent do the new communication technologies impact or affect your teaching of the target?

Knowledge of the linguistic profile (1)
Language classes are relatively small so that there is ample opportunity for language teachers to get to know their students quite well. Furthermore, students are often asked to provide information about their linguistic profile so that they can be placed in the appropriate level or class. Despite this closer contact with students, it seemed that few teachers knew much about the linguistic profile of their students and usually 'guessed' the latter's profile. In fact, many teachers (22) indicated that they did not really know and that they did not consider it was relevant to their teaching, except if the student was a 'native speaker'. About half of the teachers (33) guessed that their students were predominantly monolingual. Only a minority thought that their students had some pre-university language experience (other than school-based) such as living in another country or through home exposure. Teachers of less widely taught languages seemed slightly better informed than the others. The main impression I gained from their answers is one of both lack of knowledge about and a disinterest in the linguistic profiles of students, except where the student displayed signs of native speaker knowledge or of being a heritage language speaker. These two categories received a mention and were followed up with comments and remarks linked to the second question.

Presence of plurilingual learners in the class (2)
Their comments about the presence of plurilingual students and their impact on the teaching were also often bland and unrevealing. Those who had shown little

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knowledge or interest in their students' linguistic profile showed a similar indifference to the second question, irrespective of the type of plurilingualism involved. Their comments ranged from 'there's no real effect, some are good and others not', 'it does not seem to matter', 'not sure, I have not really taken any notice' and 'Actually I don't think it makes a difference, I have never heard a student make a comment about it'. Thirty-five teachers provided some comments that can be broadly categorised as follows:

- Such students usually have a negative effect on the class (23);
- Such students have greater metalinguistic awareness about language, which helps them (8);
- Such students seem to have better learning strategies (4).

Since most teachers assumed that their students had a predominantly monolingual profile, their answers have to be understood as quite speculative. Yet they may reveal underlying attitudes towards plurilingual students. Overall, these comments attest to attitudes that are predominantly negative. These students are seen as upsetting class dynamics, as having a level of arrogance with regard to learning a target language, or as taking language classes because it is an easy option. For example, a British interviewee notes "they think they know how to learn and don't pay attention to details", and a teacher from an Australian university mentions "I don't have positive experiences with such learners, especially if their knowledge has come about through home use or informal learning – they have picked up bad habits which are hard to undo". Only a small number of comments presented positive effects of a student's plurilingual profile or prior language experiences. Comments included "I speak perhaps more from my own experience but there is definitely a link, you draw upon the experiences of your other languages to work out, say, the word order", "Of course it makes a difference, you really acquire a range of strategies of how to learn languages" and "these students know how to learn a language, I feel that they are far less anxious and seem to be more relaxed in their approach". There was no real evidence of a correlation between the teachers' professional and linguistic profile and their views on this issue, except in the case of the positive comments: they came almost exclusively from those language teachers who had had exposure or training in language pedagogy or second language acquisition.

Impact of new communication technologies (3)

This question generated more varied and expansive responses, although most of them focussed on the use of ICT in the delivery of teaching rather than on their impact on shaping new communicative practices. Thirty-eight teachers mentioned that they actively encourage the use of various ICT practices to their students and 20 said that they make use of them in their teaching. Comments

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included "I tell my students to join chat rooms that will put them in touch with native speakers" (German teacher), "I have compiled a list of sites for my students" (French), "In fact my students, at least the really motivated ones, already know how to use these and they tell others in the class" (Italian), "I think it's very good for more advanced users, I find the sites and then tell my students" (Indonesian). Of course not everyone is enthusiastic about or uses ICT, with some complaining that there is little for their language: "I don't think there is much for [*African language*] but if there was I am not sure I would use it" (African language), "What I have seen is not suitable for learners, it's corrupted language, badly written and I don't want students to develop bad habits" (Middle Eastern language), "If someone else does it, I would be happy to use it but don't really have the time or skill to do it myself" (South Asian language).

These quotes demonstrate that the teachers' awareness of ICT is primarily linked to its use as a teaching/learning tool in the classroom. Those who integrated ICT in their teaching mentioned various technologies and programs including for character writing (Japanese and Chinese), on line grammar and vocabulary tests, second life, video and audio files and satellite TV. Not surprisingly, teachers of the 'bigger' languages (mostly European) were greater users, largely because so many more resources were readily available. In the case of less widely taught languages, the teachers expressed their disappointment at the limited resources.

Particularly noteworthy in response to the third question is the almost complete absence of references to the impact of ICT on communicative practices and genres. Only five interviewees (all teaching European languages) touched upon this aspect briefly. Their comments concerned the text type 'email' and two mentioned telling their students about some conventions in the use of SMS in French. After more specific prompting on my part, interviewees admitted that they were not really sure about this or that they had not given it much thought.

This small-scale study reveals a teaching body that seems to be rather ill-prepared to tackle the challenges of globalisation to LL. This seems to result from a combination of limited understanding and little interest in the matter. This in turn may well be the result of the disparate nature of language teaching personnel. In this sample, which is not unrepresentative of teaching personnel in universities, at least in Australia and Great Britain, the majority of teachers (48) were trained in literary and cultural studies and saw language teaching as peripheral to their main tasks. The more senior or established academics in this group often commented, sometimes apologetically, that they were neither qualified nor interested in language pedagogical matters and they ended up teaching some language classes because of personnel shortages or because they

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were native speakers of the language. The lack of interest by such academics in language pedagogy is further fuelled by the low status assigned to language teaching in the university setting (i. e. *vis-à-vis* the teaching of literary, cultural or linguistic aspects associated with the language). For those teaching less widely taught languages there are a number of additional issues that may limit their engagement with these matters: many of them are part-time teachers sometimes employed on minimal fractions (.1 or .2) with limited if any career advancing prospects. This fact combined with a dearth of appropriate teaching resources for their languages provides little incentive to them to go the 'extra mile' in adapting their teaching to meet the challenges of globalisation. The comments and reactions from the teachers in this study point towards the widespread use of the 'apprentice' model of teaching, i. e. teachers model their teaching almost exclusively on how they were taught. Klapper (2001: 19) noted that this was quite widespread in British higher education, where there is limited formal training in language teaching and where support for language teachers is also limited: "teachers, […] are likely to revert uncritically, as a sort of *default*, to classroom approaches they themselves experienced as learners". In this context it is therefore not surprising that there is limited awareness and uptake of research findings linked to changes in LL. The likelihood of university language teaching being research-informed is low and seems restricted to those teachers whose disciplinary orientation is LL, language pedagogy or applied linguistics.

This state of affairs, if representative of university language teaching globally, is not only disappointing but may well have further adverse effects on the uptake of LL as well as on the perceived value of such learning by 'employers' in preparing graduates for a globalised world.

3 Next Steps?

Globalisation presents both challenges and opportunities to the field of language learning. It has an impact on the constellations of languages that are learned or are on offer to be learned. Subsequently, languages that are seen to represent desirable linguistic capital in the context of globalisation are preferred and foregrounded leading to (sometimes) considerable shifts in the language learning scene of a country or a community. Despite the heightened multilingualism, even hyperlingualism resulting from the mobility factor linked to globalisation, many of the languages that make up this multilingual landscape are not gaining ground in the learning scene. Yet there is evidence of increasing demands for competencies in some of these languages linked to security, social welfare and trade. Research into factors and elements that affect the linguistic and communicative practices in the context of globalisation is well-advanced, judging by the phenomenal output in research dealing with multilingualism and language learning. This chapter provided a summary insight into some of the

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research themes and explorations linked to language and globalisation: heightened linguistic diversity leading to extensive multilingualism, even hyperlingualism; the commodification of languages putting a market value on language and seeing it as capital, and the impact of communication technologies on language and communicative practices. The results of research into these themes, however, do not seem to filter through to practice. This seems to be linked to the disconnect between language researchers and those teaching the language as mentioned in 2.5.2. The latter group includes only a small proportion of people with direct links to relevant research or relevant formal training. Although this disconnect is also observed in some other fields (e. g. medicine, music), it is particularly prominent in languages, often due to financial woes affecting language departments (at least in Anglophone countries). This is a state of affairs that is likely to continue for many years to come.

Overcoming this disconnect so that research findings can inform teaching requires actions at the level of policy and practice. At a macro-policy level it is pleasing to see that in Europe, the European Commission in collaboration with the Council of Europe, have taken steps to address the issue of language training for teachers (Kelly et al. 2002): this report provides a programme for language teacher training in Europe recommending a benchmark for training, an accreditation framework and a support network. The main emphasis, however, is on the secondary and primary sector with limited input from, or recommendations for, the tertiary sector. Even if this report had been more focused on universities, it is still a voluntary code that universities in Europe would need to be willing to accept. To date there is limited evidence that European universities are willing to impose or implement this framework. At national level (e. g. the United Kingdom, Australia) there are some initiatives for providing training for university teachers: this training is generic rather than discipline-specific and is voluntary rather than compulsory, especially for established academics. Whilst super-regional and national frameworks for language teacher training may prove to be an incentive for universities, the decision to implement such training ultimately lies with the university itself to implement such training. Here is an important role for Heads of Language Departments to convince their colleagues as well as the senior leadership of the university to adopt such training. Professional language organisations also play a crucial role in this process by acting as facilitators for the spreading of good practice in relation to this matter. The national bodies and agencies for quality assurance in higher education and agencies are also central in this process: certification of quality of an institution could be subject to evidence of relevant staff having undertaken such training. Although I believe that ‘cracking’ the policy level within higher education is key to the successful implementation of training, actions at the level of the classroom are also needed to make staff and students aware of the changed environment. Here again, the role of senior staff

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willing to champion alternative approaches and facilitating their colleagues to access the vast resources available through applied linguistics and language education research is critical. In the British context, small inroads have been made in this direction through the establishment of consortia around language-based area studies (covering some Asian/Eastern European and Middle Eastern languages). In these consortia, universities work together to enhance language learning experiences for their students. As a result, more language teaching staff come together across institutions sharing practices in ICT and teaching approaches. Undoubtedly, such initiatives are also found in other higher education systems around the world and are more easily shared through the online world. Finally, it is most likely that language students themselves will demand changes: they have become more vocal and more articulate in expressing their views on teaching at university, including language teaching. If they find that their language learning experiences, communicative practices and needs are not reflected in language teaching at universities, or do not help them with the demands of a globalised work place, they will actively seek change or abandon language learning at universities.

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