FOREIGN LANGUAGE SKILLS AS PART OF A BALANCED EDUCATIONAL LIFECOURSE AND A HOLISTIC, INTERSECTORAL DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

HIGHER EDUCATION, LIFELONG LEARNING AND THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

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Tyrannosaurus rex, the ‘killer language’

ENGLISH HAS BEEN CHARACTERIZED AS A TYRANNOSAURUS REX, THE ‘KILLER LANGUAGE’

(SKUTNABB – KANGAS 2000, PHILLIPSON 1992)
AN ALTERNATIVE SCENARIO: ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE (EFL) IS CREATING A COMMON STANDARD FOR COMMUNICATION THAT WILL PROMOTE GREATER UNDERSTANDING AND TRANSPARENCY AMONG PEOPLES IN THE REALMS OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, TRADE, AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE (WALKER 2009).
IN THIS CASE, ENGLISH HAS BEEN CHARACTERIZED AS A UNIFYING LINGUA FRANCA, ‘THE ANTIDOTE TO THE CURSE OF BABEL’

(WENDEL 2015)
In a globalized world in which language skills are essential there are significant challenges:

- How can language learning in school – in addition to its contribution to quality education – equip learners to acquire the language skills they will need in their working lives?

- How can companies best organize language training to meet the changing needs of the market place?

- How can we convince companies of the benefits, both for themselves and their employees, of a positive attitude towards plurilingualism and intercultural competences?

- What technological and human resources are available for traditional and non-traditional learning (e.g. volunteers working with migrants)?
English skills

The world's largest ranking of countries by English skills

https://vimeo.com/111098263
UNESCO GRALE III. LOOKING AHEAD TO 2030: HOW ALE CAN EQUIP PEOPLE, STAKEHOLDERS AND INTERSECTORAL AGENTS TO MEET THE ABOVE CHALLENGES

ALE:

• CONTINUOUSLY UPDATE THEIR KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS
• MAINTAINING ABILITY TO CONTRIBUTE AS HEALTHY AND PRODUCTIVE MEMBERS OF SOCIETY.
UNESCO Grale III Sustainable Development Goal 4 targets

Of the seven targets under Sustainable Development Goal 4, from my perspective the following two relate directly to ALE and foreign language competences:

• Target 4.4 calls on countries to provide more people with the skills they need to find **decent jobs**.

• Target 4.7 covers education for sustainable development, human rights, gender equality, peace and **global citizenship**.
Target 4.4

calls on countries to provide more people with the skills they need to find **decent jobs**.
Target 4.7 covers education for sustainable development, human rights, gender equality, peace and global citizenship.
6.2.2 ALE IS PART OF A BALANCED EDUCATIONAL LIFE COURSE

- Adults who have received basic education will need continuous learning in order to keep their skills up-to-date. Particularly foreign language competences are required.

6.2.3 ALE IS PART OF A HOLISTIC, INTERSECTORAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

- The Education 2030 framework for Action calls for whole-of-government approaches to education. This means that ALE would need to be made an integral component.
FOREIGN LANGUAGE COMPETENCES IN THE EU

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION:
- TO PROMOTE LANGUAGE LEARNING AND LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY ACROSS EUROPE SO AS TO IMPROVE BASIC LANGUAGE SKILLS.
- AMBITIOUS GOAL: ENABLING CITIZENS TO COMMUNICATE IN 2 LANGUAGES OTHER THAN THEIR MOTHER TONGUE. THIS "BARCELONA OBJECTIVE " WAS AGREED IN 2002.
Hungary’s English skills

Hungary is 18th of 72 countries (2016).

17th is Serbia, 19th is Argentina

http://www.ef.co.hu/epi/regions/europe/hungary/
THE 2008 COMMUNICATION
"MULTILINGUALISM - AN ASSET FOR EUROPE
AND A SHARED COMMITMENT:

- HELPING EU COUNTRIES DEVELOP NEW
  EDUCATIONAL TOOLS TO ENSURE THAT
  SCHOOL-LEAVERS HAVE BETTER LANGUAGE
  SKILLS;

- GATHERING DATA TO MONITOR PROGRESS
  IN LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING
  UAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING."
Among adults aged 25 to 64, the proportions of those stating that they knew at least one foreign language differed greatly among the Member States, with the highest shares recorded in Luxembourg (99%), Lithuania (97%), Latvia (95%), Denmark (94%), Slovenia and Sweden (both 92%), and the lowest in Hungary (37%), Bulgaria (39%) and Spain (51%).
Hungary and the United Kingdom have also developed campaigns aiming to boost the digital skills of the adult population. Interestingly, in both cases, the methodology includes a local capacity-building approach, i.e. training local people as mentors.
THE CAMPAIGN ENCOURAGES STUDENTS (ALE) TO DEVELOP THEIR BASIC ONLINE SKILLS. HUNGARY HAS ESTABLISHED A NETWORK OF 800 MENTORS WITHIN AN EU-FUNDED PROJECT. THEY ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR RECRUITING AND MOTIVATING PEOPLE TO REGISTER IN ICT AND FOREIGN LANGUAGE COURSES FINANCED FROM EU FUNDS. BETWEEN DECEMBER 2012 AND JANUARY 2014, AROUND 100 000 PEOPLE STARTED A COURSE SPONSORED BY THE PROJECT.
### EU action plans for language competences

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<th>&quot;Barcelona objective &quot; 2002</th>
<th>ET 2020</th>
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<td>- <strong>The European Council</strong> (March 2002) called for action &quot;to improve the mastery of basic skills, in particular by teaching at least two foreign languages from a very early age&quot;, and for an indicator of language competence, enabling citizens to communicate in 2 <strong>languages other than their mother tongue.</strong></td>
<td>- Building on the experience with the <strong>Common European Framework of References</strong> outside the EC domain, language teaching experts have been taking part in the ET2020 working group since September 2014 and will help <strong>develop frameworks for digital and entrepreneurial skills.</strong></td>
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## Summary 1 – Global and local

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<th>EU targets (glocal)</th>
<th>UNESCO Grale III (global)</th>
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<td>• Foreign language teaching in many EU countries remains inadequate.</td>
<td>• LLL in Language learning EFL plays a major role in Adult Education (ALE) to facilitate a balanced educational lifecourse while being part of a holistic, intersectoral sustainable development agenda (in compliance with UNESCO Grale III, 6.2.2 and 6.2.3).</td>
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<td>• <strong>improving the efficiency of language teaching in schools</strong>, let them be English, the ‘killer language’ or any official languages of the EU. How?</td>
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FOR MORE EFFICIENCY: IN NON-FORMAL EDUCATION FROM FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING (E.G. ENGLISH) SHIFT FOCUS TO CONTENT LANGUAGE LEARNING (CLL)
My access

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Thank you for your attention!