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## Report

# Workshop on “Turkish as a Foreign Language in the Republic of Cyprus” University of Cyprus, Nicosia, November 19-20, 2004

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### **0. Introduction**

The Republic of Cyprus has two official languages, Greek and Turkish, but the division of the island after 1974 has led to a division of linguistic labour. Greek is now the dominant language of the Republic of Cyprus, while Turkish is the dominant language in northern Cyprus. After April 2003, however, restrictions on crossing the line that divides the island were lifted, leading to a re-vitalization of contacts between the Greek and the Turkish communities, and to a fast growing demand for Turkish as a Foreign Language (henceforth “TaFL”) in the Greek community. However, the development of teaching methodology, material, curriculum and teacher training for TaFL in the complex political setting of Cyprus are still in their very beginnings.

On November 19-20, 2004, an international workshop entitled “Turkish as a Foreign Language in the Republic of Cyprus” was held at the Department of Turkish Studies at the University of Cyprus. The aim of the workshop was to discuss and develop proposals which might contribute to the establishment of TaFL in the Republic of Cyprus in a way that addresses the specific situation in Cyprus while at the same time meeting the standards of foreign language teaching as developed by the Council of Europe.

In the following, we first briefly report on the language situation in Cyprus, focusing on the recent changes and their implications for the teaching of TaFL. Following that, we summarize the talks and discussions that took place at the workshop.

## 1. The Background

### 1.1. Overview

This and the following section are strongly based on Karyolemou (2003) and Goutsos & Karyolemou (2004).<sup>1</sup>

The Republic of Cyprus has two official languages, Greek and Turkish. At the same time, due to the colonial past of Cyprus and its close links with the UK,<sup>2</sup> English is widely spoken and present in public so that it may be said to have characteristics of a second language<sup>3</sup> (cf. Davy & Pavlou 2000, McEntee-Atalianis 2004).

There are three officially recognized religious minorities in Cyprus: the Maronites (cf. Roth 2004), the Armenians, and the Latins. Furthermore, due to the quick growth of the Republic's economy over the last fifteen years or so, there are a considerable number of migrants from various countries—Russians, Bulgarians, Filipinos, and Sri Lankans, to name just the biggest groups.<sup>4</sup>

The sociolinguistic situations of both Greek and Turkish represent strong cases of diglossia: Greek and Turkish Cypriots clearly perceive the standard and the Cypriot varieties of their native languages in diglossic terms. Cypriot Greek may be said to be valued somewhat higher in the Cypriot Greek community than the Turkish variety is valued in the Cypriot Turkish community; in the latter case this may be due to the close links with the Turkish mainland and the strong presence of mainland Turks in Northern Cyprus.<sup>5</sup>

Data from the October 2001 population census show that the total population of the Republic—not including the population in the Turkish North—was 689,565. At 89.7% (618,455), Greek Cypriots form the vast majority, 0.2% (1,341) are Armeni-

<sup>1</sup> See also Peeters (1997).

<sup>2</sup> Cyprus is a member of the Commonwealth of Nations, and over 300,000 Cypriot immigrants live in the UK.

<sup>3</sup> The difference between foreign and second language refers to the established use of these terms as a non-native language also widely or mainly used outside of the learning situation in the classroom (~ second language) vs. a non-native language almost exclusively acquired and used in the classroom (~ foreign language).

<sup>4</sup> To the latter groups of migrants in Cyprus we also have to add the mainland Greeks and the Pontians in the Republic of Cyprus, as well as the mainland Turks in the Turkish North.

<sup>5</sup> See Papapavlou (2004) and Pavlou (2004) and the literature given therein for Greek (standard vs. dialect), Demir (2002) for a description of Cypriot Turkish and Kızılyürek & Gautier-Kızılyürek (2004) for the (changing) role of Cypriot Turkish in the Cypriot Turkish community.

ans, 0.5% (3,658) Maronites, 0.04% (279) Latins, and as few as 0.05% (361) declared themselves to be Turkish Cypriots. The remainder either did not declare their ethnic/religious group or were holders of non-Cypriot passports.

The population in the Turkish north, where Turkish is the only official language, is estimated between 80,000 and 89,000, not including the roughly 100,000 Turkish settlers and the 35,000 Turkish soldiers.

With the population in the North being almost totally of Turkish origin (some Maronites and Greek Cypriots remain), we can thus estimate the population of Greek speakers on the island as a whole at more than 71% and the population of Turkish speakers at roughly 22% (including Turkish settlers and soldiers).

## 1.2. Turkish in the Republic of Cyprus

Goutsos & Karyolemou (2004: 4-5) state:

“The dramatic geodemographic changes that followed the 1974 Turkish invasion have had significant consequences for language structure, both at an interlinguistic (interaction of Greek and Turkish standard and local varieties) and an intralinguistic level (variation between the local varieties and their standard varieties). They also effected the development of sociolinguistic patterns of behaviour with important repercussions on the status of the languages involved. For instance, Greek and Turkish are the two official languages, as stated in the 1960 Constitution. However, in practice the division of the island has been followed by a division of linguistic labour, with the result that Greek has been the dominant language in the administration and government of the Republic of Cyprus, while Turkish is exclusively used for similar purposes in the occupied part.”

A characteristic case is the University of Cyprus in Nicosia, founded in 1989, whose official languages are both Greek and Turkish, although practice has formulated a *de facto* exclusive use of Greek in administration and instruction (Karyolemou 2002, 2003), accompanied, in instruction, by English.

The official status of Turkish in the Republic of Cyprus, then, is in practice reduced to a more or less symbolic use: Laws are issued in the two official languages, state television and radio provide a few Turkish news programs, the banknotes of the Republic of Cyprus give their denominations in Greek and Turkish, the health-warnings on cigarette packets are given in the two languages, etc.

Before ethnic separation in Cyprus began in 1963, bilingualism (of the local dialects) was widespread among the minority group, i.e. the Turkish Cypriots, while much less so among the Greek Cypriots. Many of the older generation of Turkish Cypriots still know some Greek (Özerk 2001, Yağcıoğlu 2003).

To sum up, one might say that, on the individual level, Turkish is a foreign language for the vast majority of Greek Cypriots: Greek Cypriots who grew up in bi-communal villages before the 1960s may remember Cypriot Turkish dialect words or phrases, while to the younger Greek Cypriot generation, Turkish is probably more foreign than it is to any German living in a multi-ethnic part of Hamburg, Berlin or

the Ruhr area. At the same time, the interethnic conflicts or the ideologies of historical memory can be expected to have a negative impact on linguistic attitudes towards the other community's language.

### 1.3. Turkish as a Foreign Language in the Republic of Cyprus

The situation described above has seen some changes since the spring of 2003 due to a new policy of rapprochement between the island's two communities. In the course of the candidacy status of the Republic of Cyprus in the European Union, the two communities were pressed into negotiations which are intended, in the eyes of the UN and the European Union, eventually to lead to a common state, with the two parts as component federal states. The UN, with the personal engagement of its Secretary General, Kofi Annan, developed a "Basis for Agreement on a Comprehensive Settlement of the Cyprus Problem"—commonly known as the "Annan Plan". This plan, in its Revised Version of Dec. 10, 2002, foresaw that the State of Cyprus should have the official languages Greek and Turkish and that "[t]he official languages ... [should] be taught mandatorily to all secondary school students" (Draft Annex I, §8.4.). That is, within three years after the establishment of the common state, all Greek Cypriot secondary school students would obligatorily learn Turkish as a Foreign Language, and all Turkish Cypriot secondary school students would obligatorily learn Greek as a foreign language.

The Annan Plan was never put into practice—the referendum of April 24, 2004, in which the majority of Greek Cypriots voted against it (while the majority of Turkish Cypriots voted for it), put an end to it, at least for the time being. However, the policy of rapprochement, once initiated, still brought important changes. Three of these are of interest for our subject:

The first change is the most important of all: In April 2003, the authorities of the Turkish North opened up a number of gates at the "Green Line", i.e. the line dividing the two parts of the island. Turkish and Greek Cypriots are now allowed free movement between the two parts of the island. This includes the right for Turkish Cypriots to work in the South or to attend a college or university there.<sup>6</sup>

The second change occurred when in the summer of 2003, the Government of the Republic of Cyprus decided to introduce Turkish as one of the elective foreign languages in the *lykeia*, i.e. the last three years of secondary education, where students study in a course system partly according to their personal interests. Thus, since the beginning of the 2003-2004 school year, *lykeia* students have been able to choose one out of six foreign languages in addition to English (which starts in primary school), i.e. French, Italian, Spanish, German, Russian and Turkish. Students studying Turkish as a Foreign Language elective numbered around 500 in the 2004-2005 school year and nearly doubled in the present 2005-2006 school year. Thus, the demand for Turkish courses is growing.

<sup>6</sup> Migration from the North to the South is also possible, though it remains restricted.

Also in summer 2003, courses in Turkish as a Foreign Language (TaFL) were established at the two institutions of further education in the Republic of Cyprus, the “Centres for Further Education” and the “State Institute for Further Education”. Unlike all the other courses at these institutions, the TaFL courses (as well as the Greek language courses for Turkish Cypriots) are free of charge. The numbers of participants are impressive. In 2003/04 some 1,300 people attended Turkish courses islandwide. They were distributed among 59 classes of learners in various towns. Turkish seems to be the foreign language with the fastest growing demand on the island.

Apart from the Turkish courses offered at institutions of further education, courses have been established at the University of Cyprus, in some of the colleges, and at the police and military academies; UNOPS (UN Operational Services) also run Turkish courses.

#### **1.4. Turkish as a first language in the Republic of Cyprus**

The year 1974 brought an ethnic division of the island that was almost total—but only almost so: Two mixed villages, Pyla and Potamia, remained near the line dividing the two parts of the island. Also small groups of Turkish Cypriots, as well as Turkish-speaking Roma, live in Limassol and Paphos, i.e. in the South. Some Greek Cypriots remain in the North, mostly in the peninsula of Karpasia. Schooling in Pyla is provided by the respective authorities—Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot pupils each have their own school. The Greek Cypriot authorities provide schooling for the Greeks in Karpasia.<sup>7</sup> The Turkish Cypriot and Roma pupils in Limassol and Paphos, around 45 in numbers attend Greek Cypriot state schools. There are some special programs provided for them in primary school.<sup>8</sup> Turkish-speaking co-teachers assist the Greek teachers in classes with mixed Turkish-Greek pupils. Pupils with Turkish as their first language, furthermore, have the right to receive some Turkish instruction, which is provided during those hours when the Greek Cypriot pupils have history and religion lessons. The Turkish teachers’ duties are aggravated by the fact that these children hardly speak any Standard Turkish, but rather the Turkish-Cypriot dialect.

#### **2. The Workshop “Turkish as a Foreign Language in the Republic of Cyprus”**

The above paragraphs should have made clear that there is a growing demand for TaFL in the Republic of Cyprus. However, the development of teaching methodology, material and curriculum in the complex political setting of Cyprus is still in its very beginnings, if not non-existent. Also, there is no special branch of teacher training for TaFL at the University of Cyprus, nor are there any proposals concerning

<sup>7</sup> The gymnasium in Rizokarpasa/Dipkarpas, providing lower secondary education, was reopened in September 2004.

<sup>8</sup> Primary education in the Republic of Cyprus lasts for six years.

how to deal with the specific schooling situation of children whose first language is Turkish.

The authors of the present report organized an international workshop entitled “Turkish as a Foreign Language in the Republic of Cyprus”. The workshop, held on November 19-20, 2004, brought together experts on foreign language teaching and on the teaching of Turkish from various European countries and from Northern Cyprus, teachers of TaFL from Cyprus, and faculty from the Department of Turkish Studies at the University of Cyprus.<sup>9</sup>

The primary aim of the workshop was to discuss and develop proposals which might contribute to the establishment of TaFL in the Republic of Cyprus, in a way that addresses the specific situation in Cyprus while at the same time meeting the standards of foreign language teaching as developed by the Council of Europe.

In the following, we present a summary of the talks and discussions at the workshop.

### 2.1. Section 1 “Introduction to the topic”

In the first talk of this section, “Language policies and practices in the Republic of Cyprus: Turkish in a new sociolinguistic era”, the speaker, Marilena Karyolemou (University of Cyprus), put forward the view that in an investigation of the status of Turkish in the Republic of Cyprus, a distinction between *de jure*, *de facto* and subjective status should be made. From the viewpoint of the *de jure* status, Turkish has been an official language in the Republic of Cyprus since the foundation of the Republic in 1960. Before 1974, the use of Turkish in state institutions was widespread; for example, civil servants were required to know or to learn the language. The geopolitical changes in 1974 brought important changes in the use of Turkish as an official language, rendering it to written use in symbols of the state only. Concerning the *de facto* status, it is possible to say that until recently, among the island’s two main ethnic groups no organized learning of each other’s language has taken place. Before 1970, there was, however, an unplanned mutual learning of the other group’s dialect. Bilingualism on the island was, then, a bilingualism of the dialects. However, it is difficult to estimate the degree of this bilingualism in terms of both proficiency as well numbers of bilinguals. But even then, bilingualism more frequently took the form of ‘Turkish Cypriot dialect L1—Greek Cypriot dialect L2’ rather than the other way round. The fact that Turkish was the native language of only roughly 20 percent of the population, together with the tendency towards ethnic exclusivity within the groups made it possible that even before 1974, a Greek Cypriot could grow up in Cyprus without having any contact at all with Turkish Cypriots or with the Turkish language. For some social strata and in specific professional environments, intereth-

<sup>9</sup> Representatives from the Ministry of Education were invited but did not come. Also an expert from TÖMER, Turkey’s largest institute for the teaching of Turkish as a foreign language, was invited, but was not granted permission to come due to Turkey’s non-recognition of the Republic of Cyprus.

nic communication used to take place through English. Bilingualism was never institutionally encouraged in Cyprus, either prior to or after 1974, and remained a largely individual choice. With regard to the subjective status of Turkish in the Republic of Cyprus, it is important to bear in mind that the recent history of conflicts between the communities may have an impact on the attitude of possible learners towards the language. Research carried out by Sciriha (1996) shows the low status Greek Cypriots ascribe to Turkish in comparison with other languages.

The partial lifting of the restriction of movement after 2003 led to an increase in the frequency and type of contact between the members of the two communities, both at the official and at the personal level. This may change the subjective status of Turkish amongst the members of the Greek Cypriot community. It remains to be seen to what extent the revitalisation of contacts as well as the courses of Turkish as a Foreign Language established since then will affect the *de facto* status of Turkish in the Republic of Turkish.

The discussion of Karyolemou's paper paid particular attention to the role that common features of the Greek and Turkish Cypriot dialects could play as a starting point in the teaching of Turkish. A further question regarded the interrelationship between the different status types as developed by Karyolemou, surmising that educational policy could also have a negative impact on language attitudes towards Turkish if this policy gave Turkish a minor status at school and provided it with inadequate teaching material.

In the second introductory talk, "Some remarks on 'Turkish as a Foreign Language' in the Republic of Cyprus", the speaker, Martin Strohmeier (University of Cyprus), gave an overview of the present situation of TaFL in various branches of the educational system. The speaker first summarized language contacts between Turks and Greeks on the island in the 20th century, pointing out that while functional bilingualism was probably wide-spread, in particular among the Turks, an organized learning of each other's language has hardly taken place. The important changes since April 2003, however, have led to lively traffic between both sides of the island, resulting in a revitalisation of language contacts. Since then, the demand to learn Turkish in the Republic of Cyprus has increased enormously, leading to the establishment of hundreds of Turkish courses at schools, institutions of further education as well as private language schools. The speaker also provided some insights into statistics, motivations of learners, needs and problems of Turkish as a Foreign Language in the Republic of Cyprus, based mainly on interviews with teachers (data from the Ministry of Education was not available). Among the minor foreign languages taught in the Republic of Cyprus, Turkish appears to have the fastest growing demand, the numbers of learners outnumbering by now "traditional" foreign languages such as German and Spanish. Most of the time the interest in the language derives from professional or other contacts with or interest in the Turkish community. Teachers of Turkish are generally convinced that the demand for Turkish will continue. There is, however, an urgent need for high-quality teaching material, in-



cluding testing tools, as well as for the development of appropriate curricula both for schools as well as for adult courses.

In the subsequent discussion, participants stressed the importance of studying the language attitudes towards Turkish among Cypriot Greeks. Equal importance was ascribed to the need for a detailed investigation of the motivations for learning Turkish: What are the needs of learners, in particular those learning the language because it is in some way related to their profession? Furthermore, is it possible to foresee a future development of the needs to learn Turkish?

In the third introductory talk of the workshop, “Language teaching and learning in border regions. A European project: experiences and results”, the speaker, Albert Raasch (University of Saarbrücken, Germany), presented insights and experiences from a project “Neighbouring Languages in Border Regions”. The project was funded by the Council of Europe Language Center of Modern Languages in Graz in Austria, by the Goethe Institute in Munich, by the official Austrian institution called Kulturkontakt Austria, and by the Talenacademie Nederland in Maastricht. CICERO, the Center of Information and Counselling for Neighbouring Language Teaching and Learning in Border Regions, located in the Talenacademie in Maastricht, is an immediate outcome of this project.

Border regions, as Raasch pointed out, constitute special conditions for the teaching and learning of languages, presenting difficulties as well as opportunities. Linguistic neighbourhood can be regarded as the first source for developing linguistic competence: It is most useful, since it is most functional—provided there are contacts across the border and provided there are transport possibilities for people to cross the border to and from both sides. At the same time, in border regions, it becomes evident that language learning and language teaching are political action and may help to create social cohesion in the region.

Since border regions create specific language needs, e.g. specific professional contacts may exist over the border, it is often necessary to develop specific course syllabi and textbooks which address these needs.

Thus, in the planning of language teaching in border regions it is of vital importance to investigate the framework in which language learning takes place, i.e.

- the reasons for people to learn the language of the neighbour—individual needs, personal contacts, professional needs,
- the status and images of the languages in question,
- the supportive role of the media with regard to contacts across the border,
- the supportive role of parents with regard to the language learning of their children
- the potential for trans-border projects— trans-border school-hopping, trans-border kindergartens, trans-border co-operations between chambers of commerce.

In the ensuing discussion, the concept of “border” was the focus of attention. It was pointed out that in the particular case of Cyprus, on the one hand intercommunal re-

lations were developing on the personal level, while on the other hand the very *existence* of the “border” was still an issue. At the same time, in the multilingual cities of Europe, which host highly vital migrant community languages, “border” could translate over as “neighbourhood”.

## **2.2. Section 2 “TaFL in Secondary and Adult Education and the European Perspective”**

In the talk “Turkish as a Foreign Language in Dutch secondary schools”, the speaker, Kutlay Yağmur (University of Tilburg, the Netherlands) reported on the current practice concerning the teaching of Turkish in the Netherlands. While in primary schools in the Netherlands Turkish is predominantly offered as heritage language education aiming at immigrant children with Turkish as their first language, Turkish in secondary education is organized as modern foreign language teaching. The fact that Turkish is a community (migrant) language in the Netherlands poses particular challenges for the objectives, the curriculum development, the development of teaching material and TaFL teacher training. With regard to teaching material, for example, a change of focus took place during the 1990s, emphasizing intercultural aspects of language teaching instead of traditional monolingual perspectives. In addition, characteristics of Turkish language use in a second language environment have been taken into consideration.

The speaker further pointed to the importance of recent developments in European foreign language policy for the teaching of TaFL. Here, in particular the underlying principles documented in the Common European Framework of References might serve as a model for TaFL. In a similar way, the *Language Portfolio* has turned out to be a very innovative concept leading to creative sub-projects.

The discussion focused on the importance of developing teaching material for TaFL. Yağmur again underlined the necessity for teaching material that focuses on the local settings where Turkish is a community language. Another important characteristic of TaFL is the heterogeneity of the students’ proficiency level in the TaFL class. Students often have some previous knowledge of Turkish due to contact they have had with members of the Turkish community.

In his talk “Tests of Turkish in Dutch schools for secondary education”, the speaker, Tom Duindam (Test Institute CITO, Arnhem, the Netherlands) reported on the development of test material for TaFL in secondary education. Unlike the situation in many European countries, in the Netherlands a so called “test culture” is clearly visible: in all school types and in all phases of the Dutch educational system, test administration is common practice. An important part of these tests are central examinations, the development of which is undertaken by the Dutch Test Institution CITO. Turkish has the status of a modern foreign language in Dutch secondary schools. Accordingly, the CITO institution also develops the tests for Turkish, which concentrate in particular on reading proficiency. The levels of proficiency these tests are aiming at are developed on the basis of empirical investigations in the respective

schools, and norms are set according to the investigations. Plans for the future include the definition of levels according to the Common European Framework, and the further development of a computer-adaptive testing tool TURCAT. The TURCAT program allows the ongoing assessment of a pupil's progress in the development of reading skills.

In the subsequent discussion, particular attention was given to the supportive role high-quality testing can play. On the one hand, the "test culture" in Cypriot schools is not as dominant as it is in the Netherlands. On the other hand, the availability and usage of modern testing material for TaFL could contribute to raising the status of Turkish lessons in secondary schools also in Cyprus. Appropriate tests can have a channeling function in the management and assessment of the quality and standard of the teaching.

In the next talk, "TaFL in the UK: A teacher training perspective", the speaker, Tozun Issa (London Metropolitan University, UK), reported on the current practice of Turkish language teaching in the UK, where Turkish is taught as a modern foreign language in secondary schools and colleges. There are highly innovative teacher training programmes preparing students to teach Turkish and other modern languages in primary and secondary schools as well as colleges and community schools. In these programmes, a child-centered approach is prevalent, i.e. an approach which uses learners' experiences as a starting point in learning.

With regard to the teaching of TaFL in the Republic of Cyprus, the speaker pointed to the importance of creating a classroom environment in which language varieties as well as other culturally relevant experiences are utilized to teach standard Turkish forms. This could mean that common aspects of the Turkish and Greek Cypriot dialects and cultures form a starting point for teaching and have an impact on planning, content and structure of lessons, as well as on the development of material. In the ensuing discussion, in particular the question of a dialect orientation in language teaching was raised. While all participants agreed that the Greek and the Turkish Cypriot dialects indeed shared common properties, mainly words, and that these could form a basis for the teaching of Turkish on the island, a debate unfolded regarding the status that should be attributed to the dialect in the classroom.

### **2.3. Section 3 "Perspectives on Cyprus"**

In his talk "The Reflection of the Cypriot Turkish Dialect on the Education of Students", the speaker, Ahmet Pehlivan (Near East University, Lefkoşa/Nicosia), concentrated on differences between the Turkish standard language and the Cypriot Turkish dialect, and the particular problems Cypriot Turkish schoolchildren have when acquiring standard Turkish literacy patterns. The speaker first gave some general information about the Cypriot Turkish dialect, classifying it as reflecting properties of Anatolian Turkish dialects, while at the same time having specific lexical characteristics stemming from close contacts with Greek and, to a lesser extent, also with English on the island. In the course of the partition of the island, however, a

stronger orientation towards the Turkish standard has taken place. Following this general introduction, the speaker presented the results of an empirical investigation of dialect interference in the writings of Turkish Cypriot school children. These included detailed phonological, morphological, syntactical and lexical observations. It became clear that in teaching Turkish literacy to Cypriot Turkish children, particular attention has to be paid to the differences between the standard and the dialect in order to avoid these types of interference. In the third part of the talk, the speaker presented the results of a questionnaire-based survey conducted with teachers which showed that most teachers were not aware of the particular problems posed by the dialect-standard differences.

In the discussion, the importance of this kind of research for the Republic of Cyprus was emphasized, since in certain places (e.g. Limassol) Cypriot Turkish school children attend primary schools where they are instructed in their primary language, apart from attending Greek lessons. The children are hardly exposed to the Turkish standard and face particular problems when learning to write the standard.

In the talk "TaFL as an academic discipline", Christoph Schroeder (University of Cyprus) aimed at developing proposals for a "Turkish as a Foreign Language" study programme in the department of Turkish Studies at the University of Cyprus. The speaker first pointed out some significant differences between the discipline of TaFL and foreign language studies such as French, English, and German. With regard to the latter, the local need for the academic discipline is primarily created by global communication practices and the need to participate in them. The need for TaFL, however, is usually created by the specific local settings where Turkish figures as some kind of community language (migrant language, neighbour language, border language, minority language). This has important consequences for any TaFL study programme as the programme also focusses on the local settings. For a "TaFL" study programme in the Department of Turkish Studies at the University of Cyprus, this means that courses should not only concentrate on aspects of foreign language teaching methodology and second language acquisition, but must put equal emphasis on Greek-Turkish language contacts, on the structure of the Cypriot Turkish dialect, and on issues of language politics and planning, language awareness, and intercultural communication.

In the discussion, problems facing the implementation of the suggestions into the study programme of the Department of Turkish Studies were discussed. Unlike the Departments of English and French, Turkish Studies also includes historical and sociological topics. Therefore, it would be necessary to decide whether TaFL should constitute a new direction, or whether it should be implemented as part of a language-literature direction. The question of language proficiency posed a particular problem. Clearly, a teacher of Turkish would be expected to have a higher level of language proficiency than a graduate of another language specialisation. This, then, would call for a restructuring of the department's programme.

Last but not least, two teachers of Turkish as a Foreign Language reported on the teaching of TaFL both in secondary schools and in adult institutes of further educa-

tion. They agreed that Turkish will continue to attract students in the future and probably prove more popular than other foreign language courses in the long run. Curiosity about the language of the "unknown neighbour", an interest in being able to communicate with their peers in the North as well as some vague ideas about better job opportunities seem to motivate many students to choose Turkish in secondary school. Another reason for the interest in Turkish may come from the fierce competition among teachers of foreign language electives, who talk students into "their" language in order to keep their jobs—teachers of TaFL are not permanently employed, but hired only if there is a demand for their language.

One of the motivations of students in adult education for learning Turkish is the wish to communicate with people from the Turkish community. Some students, who work as lawyers, policemen, teachers or journalists, also learn the language because they consider it useful in their profession. For civil servants (esp. policemen), prospects for promotion improve with additional qualifications. Elderly learners often are or were inhabitants of what used to be bicommunal villages before 1974.

Teachers generally teach Turkish at different levels and in different institutions, e.g. at high schools and centers of adult education. As they start their courses more or less unprepared, teachers feel that they have to jump in at the deep end. Cooperation, exchange of materials and experiences, which would make the job easier, is heavily dependent on coincidences and personal contacts. Teachers also expressed their opinion that a curriculum, an introduction to the methodology of language teaching and improved teaching and assessment materials were badly needed. Furthermore, they felt that it would be useful to make their students aware of common dialect patterns, since most learners were very interested in this.

#### **2.4. Closing discussion**

The closing discussion concentrated on the close interrelation between regional and European aspects of TaFL. Clearly, TaFL in Cyprus is part of TaFL in Europe, and TaFL in Europe has an important and specific place in European language politics. The specific features of Turkish in Europe derive from its different statuses in the European countries: Turkish is a vital migrant language in all Western European countries. At the same time it is an indigenous and an official language in Cyprus, next to Greek. And finally, it is the official and majority language of Turkey, an important future member of the European Union.

The workshop, then, could be regarded as the initiation of a joint venture aiming at a development of TaFL in Europe within the framework of the Council of Europe's initiatives and guidelines of foreign language teaching. A concrete step for this joint venture could be the establishment of a Europe-wide project under the auspices of an institution of the European Council. This project would intend to develop appropriate teaching and testing materials as well as teacher training programs for TaFL in Europe.

While, on the one hand, the development of TaFL in Cyprus could benefit from experiences made elsewhere in Europe, on the other hand, the Cypriot particularities bring with them specific challenges and potentials. Thus, possibilities of trans-border exchanges, of tandem-learning, and of the integration of common aspects of the dialects into the teaching of Turkish could be explored. Accepting the challenge of the local particularities in combination with a European orientation would not only further the development of TaFL on the island. It would also mean that TaFL in Cyprus would accept a role in the development of friendly relations between the Greek and the Turkish communities, and in the development of intercultural competences. It is vital, however, that the educational institutions of the Republic of Cyprus recognize the important role TaFL is able to play in the development of good relations between the two communities in Cyprus.

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