



Modularising Multilingual and Multicultural Academic Communication Competence for BA and MA level

Work package 2:

SYNTHESIS REPORT ON OUTCOMES OF THE INTERVIEWS WITH KEY STAKEHOLDERS

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www.magicc.eu



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1 INTRODUCTION

During the months of October and November 2012, MAGICC consultation interviews were conducted in the 9 partner institutions of the MAGICC project in 7 different European countries (CH, DE, FI, NL, PL, PT, UK) with three different stakeholder groups: faculties, students and employers. Their objective was to explore, in terms of quality assurance, the social relevance of the learning outcomes proposed by the project concerning multilingual and multicultural academic communication competence, to communicate the objectives and expected outcomes of the MAGICC project to a wider circle of possible future users, and to explore possible ways of implementing the future MAGICC results in specific faculties in the partner institutions. This report concerns the results of the stakeholder consultation in terms of the relevance of the learning outcomes.

2 CONSULTATION INTERVIEWS WITH KEY STAKEHOLDERS

2.1 Organisation and dimension

2.1.1 Consultation questionnaires

The consultation took place in the form of guided interviews on the basis of pre-established questionnaires in order to facilitate analysis and allow comparability. The interviews were mainly conducted in October and November 2012.

The MAGICC consultation questionnaires were designed by Anne Räsänen and Teija Natri on the basis of the *Synthesis report on data collected in Work package 1* (see: <http://www.magicc.eu>, under data collection). This report describes the state of the art in the area of multilingual and multicultural academic communication competence as a result of systematic desk research on existing practices and initiatives in the partner institutions, on national and European projects in the area, on the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR) and complementary studies and tools for the CEFR of the Council of Europe.

Three different questionnaires for three different stakeholder groups were designed in English: for faculties, students and employers. Besides a series of general questions specific to the stakeholder groups, these three different questionnaires contain the same sets of learning outcomes in the following domains to allow comparisons:

- Academic communication competences: receptive and productive skills
- Employability skills
- Multilingual/Multicultural strategies and competence
- Lifelong learning skills/learner autonomy
- Work-related language and communication skills

In order to allow the interviews to be carried out in the local language, the three sets of questionnaires were translated into the local languages (DE, FI, FR, NL, PL, PT) of the partner universities (see: <http://www.magicc.eu>, under Conceptual framework).

The different stakeholder groups were invited to rate these sets of competences in relation to their importance for academic studies, employability and for workplaces and also to rate in which languages these competences are required. Thus the questionnaires adopt an innovative truly multilingual and multicultural approach including the local language(s) of instruction and other languages. The stakeholders also rated during which university cycle (BA and/or MA) these competences should be developed.

The questionnaires for faculty representatives contained specific questions about the possibility of implementation of the MAGICC modules in the faculty, as a basis for the elaboration of an implementation strategy in these faculties.

2.1.2 Key objectives

The objective of the consultation interviews with the key stakeholders was twofold:

Firstly to identify if the proposed learning outcomes for multilingual and multicultural academic communication competences are considered relevant for different stakeholder groups and correspond to the needs of faculty, students and employers in today's internationalised, multilingual and multicultural contexts, including academic study, professional career development, and work places. A second objective in this domain was to find out if there were specific multilingual profiles to be achieved at the end of a specific cycle (different in different national settings). The results of the relevance of the outcomes constitute part one of the present report. These results will also inform the conceptual framework, which will be the basis of further developments of the project.

Secondly, the guided interviews were a structured way to enter into contact with these different stakeholder groups for the dissemination of the project's objectives and outcomes from an early stage of the MAGICC-project.

2.1.3 Participating stakeholders and range

The project partners were to carry out guided interviews with at least one faculty representative in each partner university and with at least one representative of a student organisation of the same faculty, as well as with at least one employer representative, if possible employing students from the same faculty. Interviews with faculties and students were conducted in all partner universities. As for the employers, in 7 of the 9 partner universities responses were available. In two cases, the employers did not have any availability in the foreseen timeframe. Several partner universities conducted more interviews than required because the questionnaire represents a structured and legitimate means to enter into contact with the stakeholders and explore the question of languages in partner institutions, and in particular the need of an appropriate multilingual and multicultural profile for any student in an internationalised context. All the questionnaires have been analysed. The participants in the consultation are as follows:

Partner	Categories	Faculty / Company
P1 - CH	Students	Business and Economics, UNIL
P2 - FI	Students	School of Business and Economics, Jyv
P3 - UK	Students	Business and Law, OU
P3 - UK	Students	Arts/FELS, OU
P4 - NL	Students	Faculty of Arts, RUG
P4 - NL	Students	Faculty of Arts, RUG
P5 - PT	Students	Gestão Hotelaria e Turismo, UAIG
P6 - PL	Students	Mechanical Engineering & Management, PUT
P8 - CH	Students	Arts-Contemporary history, unifr
P8 - CH	Students	Social and political sciences, unifr
P8 - CH	Students	Social and political sciences, unifr
P8 - CH	Students	Arts, unifr
P8 - CH	Students	Arts, unifr
P10 - DE	Students	Social sciences, uni-bremen
P11 - DE	Students	Arts, Romance studies, FUB
P1 - CH	Faculties	Arts, Spanish department, UNIL
P1 - CH	Faculties	Business and Economics, UNIL
P1 - CH	Faculties	Information sciences, EPFL
P2 - FI	Faculties	Business and economics, Jyv
P3 - UK	Faculties	Education and Language Studies, OU
P3 - UK	Faculties	Education and Language Studies, OU
P3 - UK	Faculties	Business school, OU
P3 - UK	Faculties	Business and Law, OU
P4 - NL	Faculties	Economics (FEB), RUG
P4 - NL	Faculties	Student Service Centre (transversal), RUG
P4 - NL	Faculties	Medical Faculty, RUG
P4 - NL	Faculties	Arts, RUG
P4 - NL	Faculties	Faculty of Economics (FEB), RUG
P5 - PT	Faculties	Gestao - Hotelaria e Turismo, UAIG
P6 - PL	Faculties	Engineering Management, PUT
P8 - CH	Faculties	Arts, unifr
P8 - CH	Faculties	Arts and Humanities, unifr
P8 - CH	Faculties	Arts and Humanities, unifr
P8 - CH	Faculties	Arts and Humanities, unifr

P8 - CH	Faculties	Arts, unifr
P10 - DE	Faculties	Social sciences, uni-bremen
P11- DE	Faculties	Philosophy and human sciences, FUB
P1 - CH	Employers	Honeywell
P2 - FI	Employers	Keskisuomalainene (regional journal)
P4 - NL	Employers	De Haaien
P4 - NL	Employers	Randstad Holding
P5 - PT	Employers	Ana - Aeroportos de Portugal
P6 - PL	Employers	PAS Polska Sp. Z o.o., Poland
P6 - PL	Employers	Raben Group, Poland
P8 - CH	Employers	Kanton Fribourg
P8 - CH	Employers	Historical museum Bern
P8 - CH	Employers	Université de Fribourg
P8 - CH	Employers	Musée d'art et d'histoire Fribourg
P8 - CH	Employers	Musée Paul Klee, Bern
P10 - DE	Employers	Handelskammer Bremen, division of education and training

A range of faculties are covered for both students and faculties (Business and Economics, Law, Arts, Social Sciences, Mechanical Engineering, Education, Information technologies, Tourism, Medicine). As for the employers, a wide variety of job sectors is also represented (several answers are possible):

Marketing, business services and public relations	5
Tourism, hotels and restaurants	
Banking and finance	2
Wholesale and retail trade	
Manufacturing, construction and transport	3
Technical planning, production and maintenance	3
Information and communications technologies	3
Education and training	5
Public administration	5
Health care and social work	
Management and supervision	3
Research and development	6
Customer service	3
Acting as language expert (e.g. translating, interpreting, technical documentation, etc.)	3
Other (please specify): aeronautics, graphic design, journalism, creative industry, labour market services, transport and logistics	6

The number of consultations conducted in the different partner countries is not statistically representative, but it shows tendencies. It establishes if the selected core competences for multilingual and multicultural academic communication are pertinent and appropriate at a trans-faculty and a transnational level.

2.2 Key Results of consultation interviews

The data has been analysed in separate Excel files for each stakeholder group. Graphs have been created for the learning outcomes, to give a visual overview of their importance and the cycle where these competences should be developed. As the questionnaire served as a basis for an interview, not all questions have been answered completely. This report will concentrate on examining the number of languages and the relevance of

the descriptors for the three stakeholder groups and will leave aside the more specific questions for specific stakeholder groups which are of minor importance for the MAGICC conceptual framework.

2.2.1 Number of languages

The results for students representatives (14 answers) show that good communication skills in 2 to 4 languages are considered important or quite important for successful academic study and employability in an internationalised context (3 students: 2 languages, 4 students: 3 languages, 7 students: 4 languages) . Besides the first language of students, not surprisingly, English is mentioned by almost all students, as a necessary part of the multilingual repertoire (except 2). This shows the specific role of English, as a transnational common language in the internationalised higher education context. As for the other languages, communication skills in additional national languages (e. g. German, French or Italian in Switzerland, Swedish and Finnish in Finland) and in a variety of other languages follow, related either to the geographical situation (e.g. Spanish, French and German for Portugal) or the personal aspirations of the students (any language but nevertheless mostly European languages) are considered important.

For the faculties representatives (22 answers) the results are similar to those of the students for students' performance and success during academic studies in an internationalised context (8 faculty representatives: 2 languages, 6 faculty representatives: 3 languages, 7 faculty representatives: 4 languages) But one faculty representative considers that language and communication skills are necessary in only one language, in this case French, which is the local language of instruction.

The results for the employers representatives (13 answers) are similar to those of the students and faculties. Good language and communication skills in two to four languages are considered necessary for the work performance needed in the different fields of operation. (2 employer representatives: 2 languages, 2 employer representatives: 3 languages, 9 employer representatives: 4 languages). Only one employer doesn't mention English.

There is no scope in the data for a more detailed analysis. For example, to determine if there is a difference between large monolingual countries, multilingual countries, countries with less taught languages and the UK, or if there are differences between "hard" and "soft" sciences and disciplines, even though there is a tendency in the available data that "soft" sciences generally consider communication competences important in more languages.

2.2.2 Relevance of multilingual and multicultural academic communication competences in general and differences for Bachelor and Master cycle

Generally speaking, all learning outcomes presented in the different questionnaires are considered relevant by the three different stakeholder groups at a high percentage. There is no learning outcome that is considered not important at all by any of the interviewed people. There is an important convergence in the perceptions of the three stakeholder groups, in terms of importance as well as in terms of the cycle where these competences should be developed.

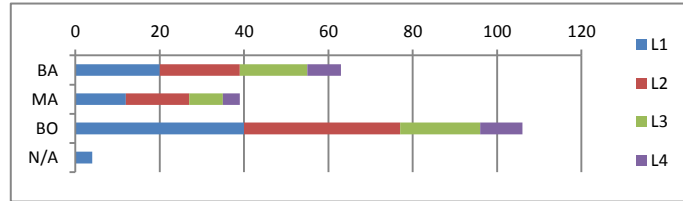
2.2.2.1 Academic communication competences: receptive skills

In the majority the three stakeholder groups consider that the listed receptive skills are relevant and important in different languages and should preferably be developed in both cycles. But they are considered more specifically important for the BA level.

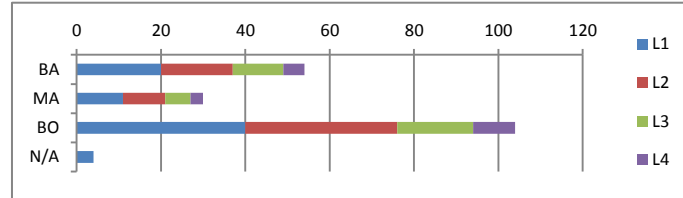
In order to elaborate the graphs, as numerous different factors had to be taken into account (languages, importance, cycle) in the same graph, we applied a multiplication factor to the number of answers according to the importance (very important : x 4, quite important x3, not very important x2, not important x1). This explains why certain elements go beyond 100 : it is the proportions which are important.

Example: results of FACULTY representatives: Languages (L1=local language of instruction, L2, L3, L4= other languages), Importance, Cycle (BA=Bachelor, MA=Master, BO=Both cycles, N/A=not applicable)

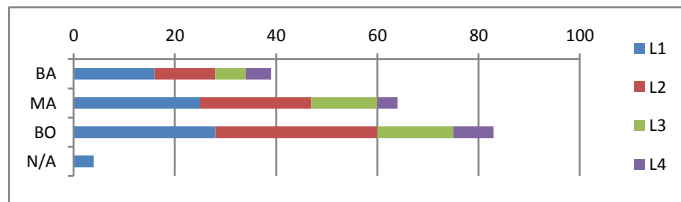
Can use appropriate reading and listening strategies to distinguish salient points and to take notes for further use



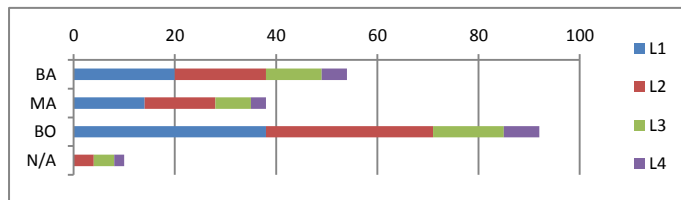
Is able to distinguish between various kinds of academic texts (e.g. reports, surveys, position papers) and identify their discourse structures and typical concepts and terminology



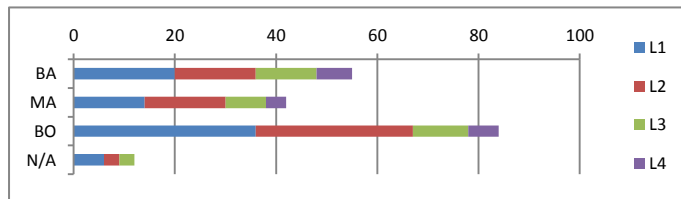
Can read fairly long, demanding discipline-specific texts with confidence and adequate speed and summarise even complex subjects orally and in written form



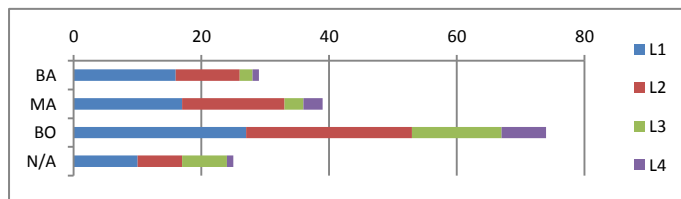
Is able to manage and evaluate information from written and Internet sources and utilize it for study/professional purposes



Can follow discipline-specific linguistically complex lectures, presentations and seminars and take notes for further use



Can distinguish and identify a speaker's argumentation styles for further use.

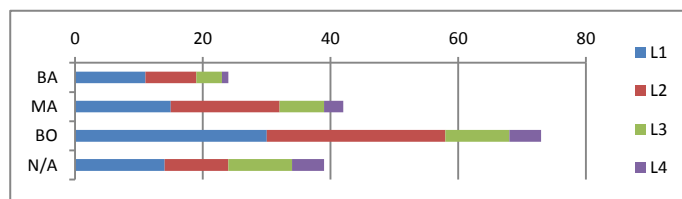


2.2.2.2 Academic communication competences: productive skills

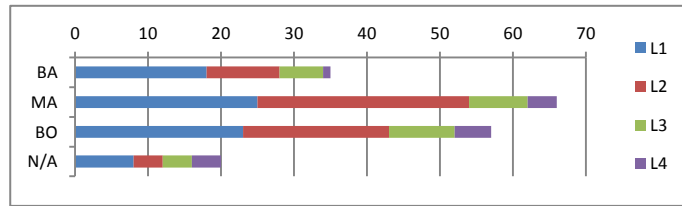
The three stakeholder groups consider that the listed productive skills are important in different languages and should be preferably developed in both cycles. But they are considered more specifically important for the MA level than the receptive skills.

Example: results of FACULTY representatives: Languages (L1=local language of instruction, L2, L3, L4= other languages), Importance, Cycle (BA=Bachelor, MA=Master, BO=Both cycles, N/A=not applicable)

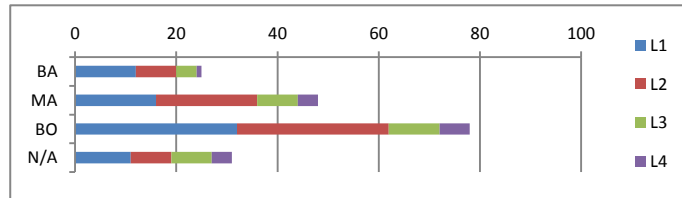
Can take part in a wide variety of spoken interactions, using appropriate discourse strategies, non-verbal communication/ pausing/stress/intonation



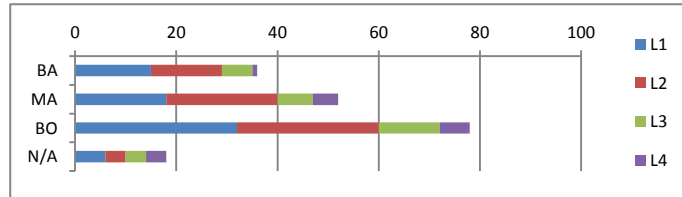
Can communicate competently and efficiently in an academic context/ demonstrating a good command of both general and specialised vocabulary



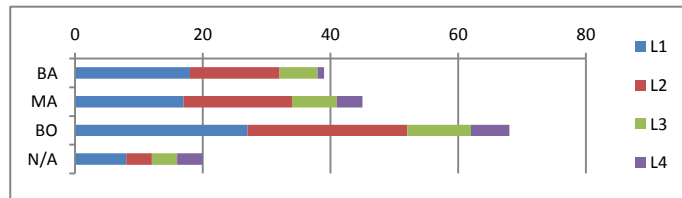
Can work purposefully in groups, negotiating and building on the contribution of others/interacting for joint presentations and reporting



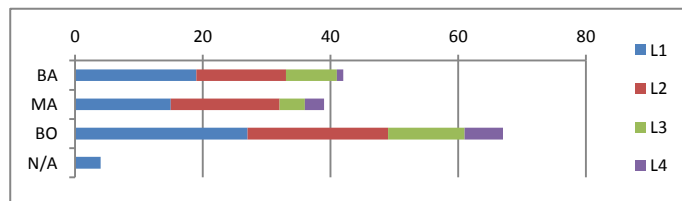
Can prepare & give clear/well-structured/audience-relevant spoken presentations on particular topics/fields using appropriate styles and techniques



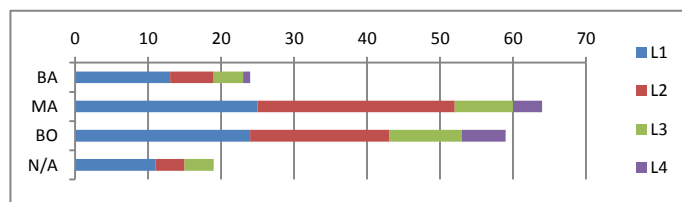
Can follow the discipline-specific and intercultural conventions in his/her formal writing



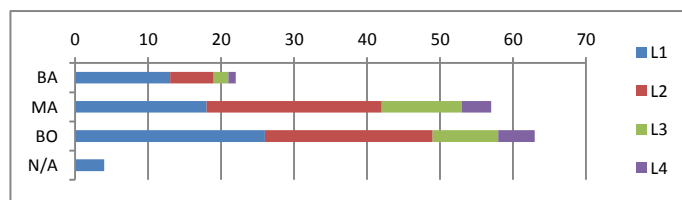
Can organise, synthesize and evaluate research information for various formats of academic communication, including non-specialist audiences



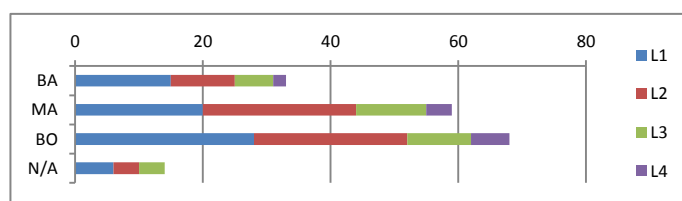
Can manage various kinds of oral and written communication situations related to projects, including meetings, client encounters, presentations, project plans, reports, minutes, etc.



Can understand and adapt to the special communication requirements of an interdisciplinary study or work context



Can adapt to the requirements of multilingual communication in multicultural study or work contexts

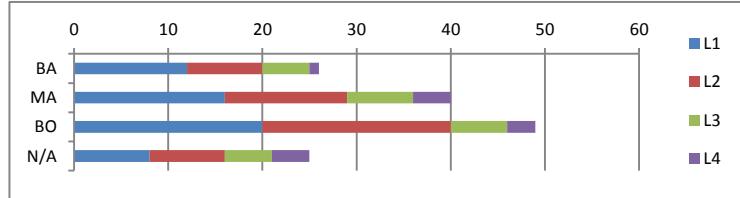


2.2.2.3 Employability skills

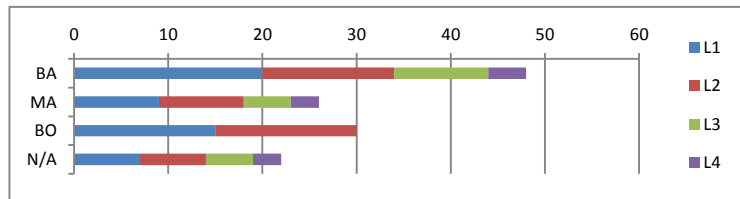
For employability skills also, the three stakeholder groups think that these are important competences that should be developed in both cycles.

Example: results of STUDENT representatives: Languages (L1=local language of instruction, L2, L3, L4= other languages), Importance, Cycle (BA=Bachelor, MA=Master, BO=Both cycles, N/A=not applicable)

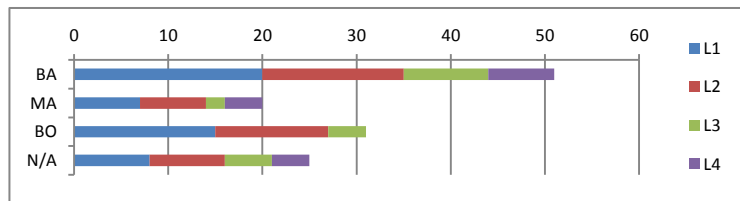
Can express solid expertise in his/her field



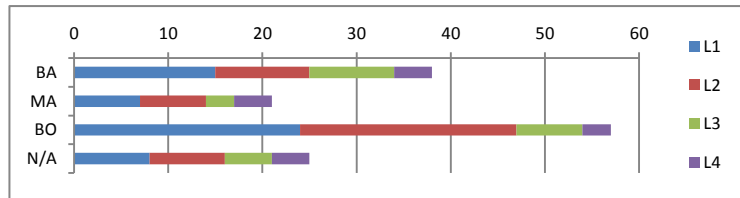
Can communicate with confidence for harmonious professional relations and interaction needed in the execution of tasks



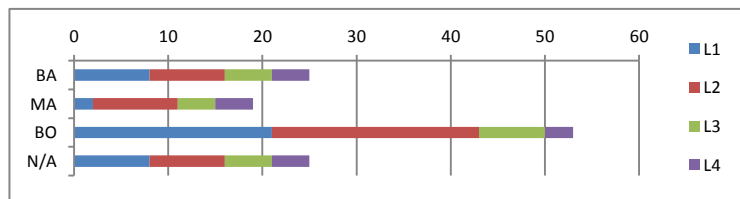
Has well-developed media and information literacy and good ICT skills for execution of tasks



Has flexible presentation, problem-solving and team working skills



Has developed multilingual and multicultural competence for networking and collaborating internationally in face-to-face and virtual contexts

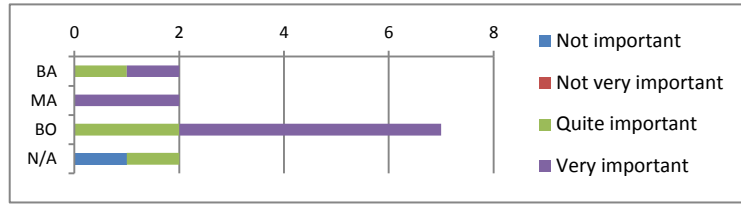


2.2.2.4 Multilingual/Multicultural strategies and competence

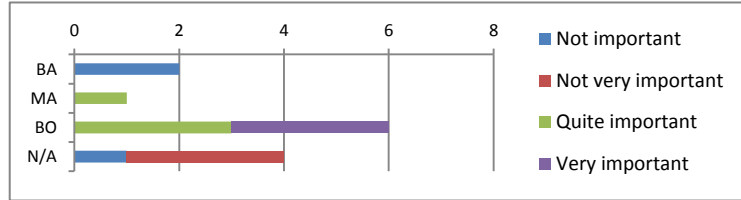
These competences are for the most part considered very important or quite important and should be developed preferably during both cycles. There is a slightly higher percentage of people who consider some the competences in this categories less important than those of the other categories. This might be because they refer to new concepts and are usually not part of language teaching and learning.

Example: results of STUDENT representatives: (Importance, Cycle: BA=Bachelor, MA=Master, BO=Both cycles, N/A=not applicable)

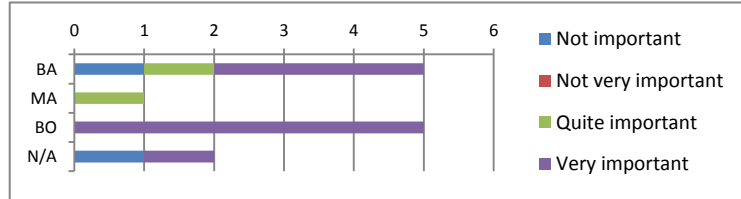
Is able to switch smoothly from one language to another and adapt to different communication styles in different languages



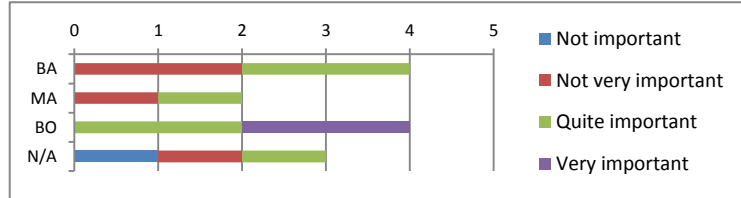
Is able to draw upon his/her knowledge of different languages for comprehension of written or oral sources of an unknown language



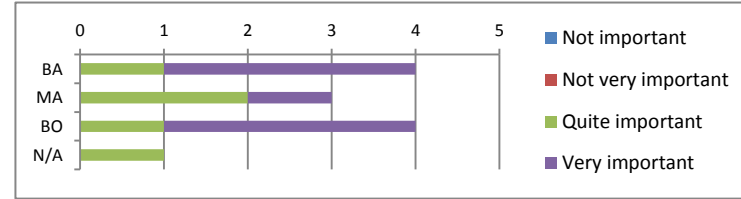
Can summarize orally or in written form in his/her own language or some other language within his/her repertoire information presented in different languages



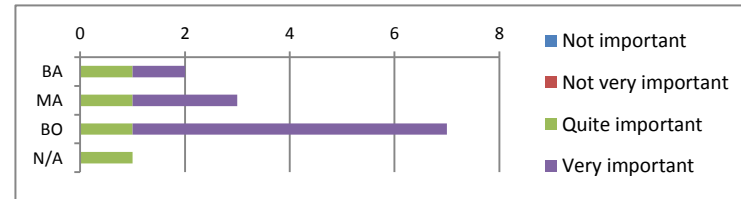
Can act as an intermediary and interpreter for people who do not understand what is being communicated



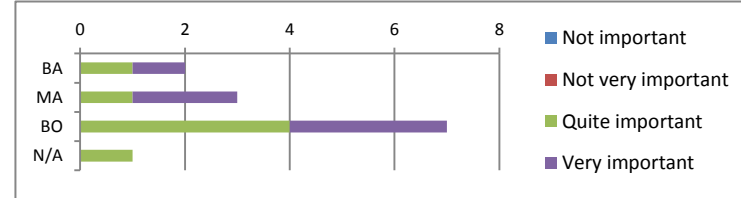
Is able to interpret information in its cultural context and to demonstrate understanding and awareness of culture and its influence on communication



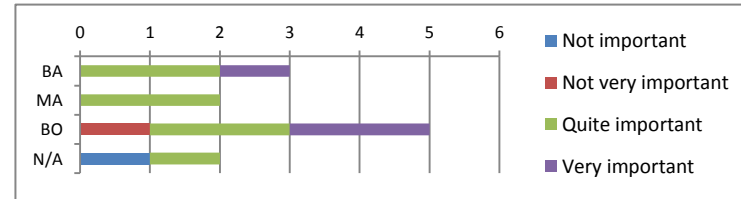
Is aware of his/her own culture-embedded values, norms, and customs of other cultural norms and communication styles that may lead to misunderstanding or conflict



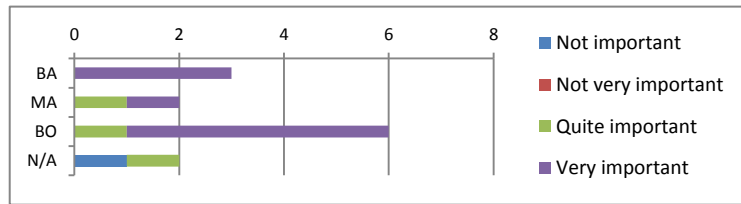
Is aware that different cultural conceptions come into play even if a common language is used in a multilingual and multicultural group



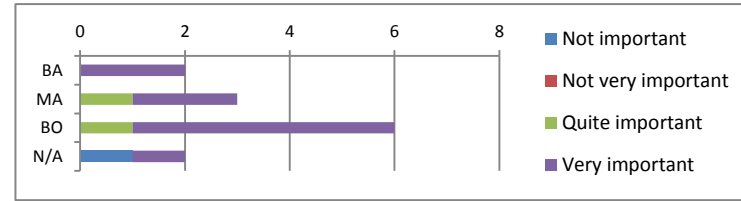
Is able to analyse his/her own communication, emotional and cognitive reactions, and behavior from a cultural perspective



Can accept the co-existence of several languages in a communicative situation and use his/her own repertoire for participation and communicative effectiveness



Is able to use and diversify his/her own multilingual, multicultural and intercultural repertoire in knowledge building and extension of expertise

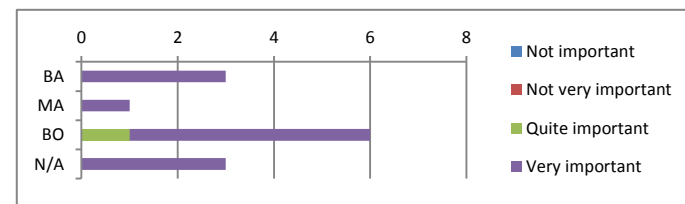


2.2.2.5 Lifelong learning skills/learner autonomy

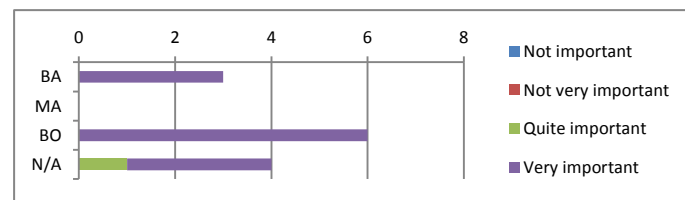
These skills are considered by the three stakeholder groups as very important and preferably to be developed in both cycles or in the BA cycle. It may be surprising to see the importance of some N/A lines : a number of stakeholders considered this competence very important but not necessarily to be developed during university cycles. Therefore, it appears as "very important" in the N/A line.

Example: results of EMPLOYER representatives: (Importance, Cycle: BA=Bachelor, MA=Master, BO=Both cycles, N/A=not applicable)

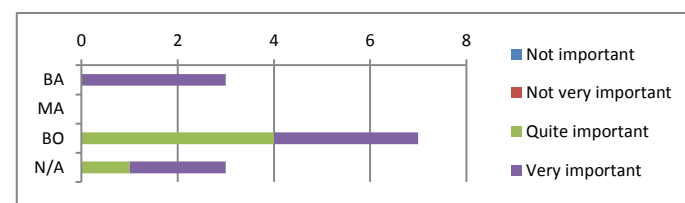
Understands the importance of continuously developing one's own professional expertise and know-how



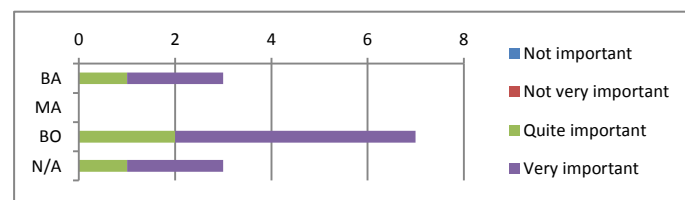
Can identify personal learning needs, set objectives, design a suitable plan of study or further training, find appropriate learning activities, assess whether objectives have been achieved, detect new needs



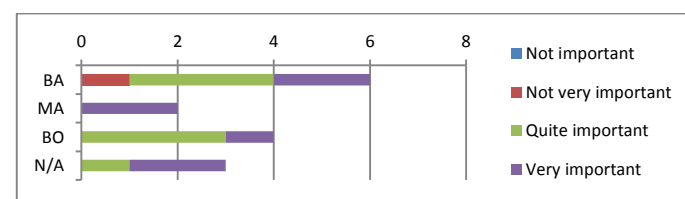
Is able to apply appropriate metacognitive skills and strategies needed for self-directed learning on a life-long basis



Is able to do self-assessments and give and receive peer feedback



Is able to make use of multilingual and multicultural sources and experiences in developing one's expertise continuously



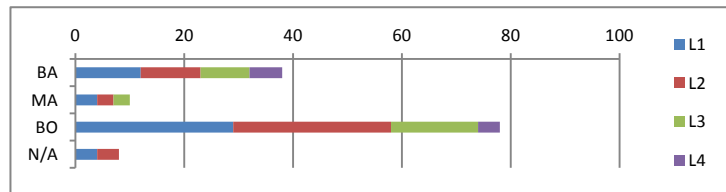
2.2.2.6 Work-related language and communication skills

Employer representatives judge these competences important in both cycles, but also mainly for BA, apart from writing skills, which are seen as more important for MA.

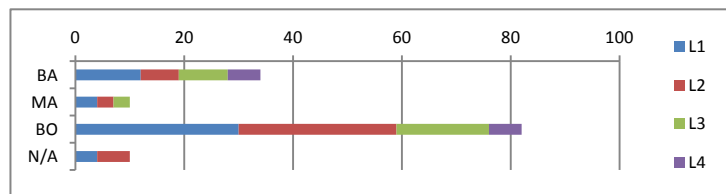
In contrary to the employer representatives, the faculty representatives perceive these competences to be more important for the MA cycle than the BA cycle. Student representatives also have the tendency, but less pronounced than the faculty members, to judge these competences more important for the MA level than the BA level.

Example: results of EMPLOYER representatives: Languages (L1=local language of instruction, L2, L3, L4= other languages), Importance, Cycle (BA=Bachelor, MA=Master, BO=Both cycles, N/A=not applicable)

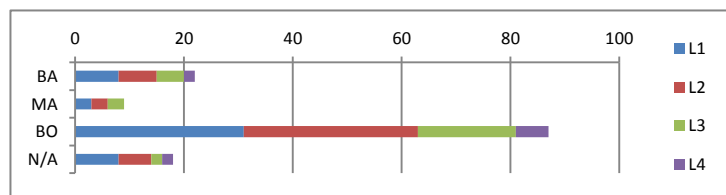
1. Understanding and interacting in (informal) social situations at work



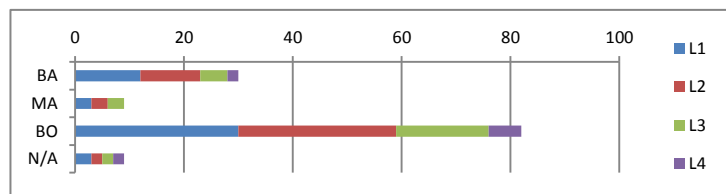
2. Understanding and interacting in job-related communication situations (e.g. hosting a visitor, telephoning, travel, talking about your job, etc.)



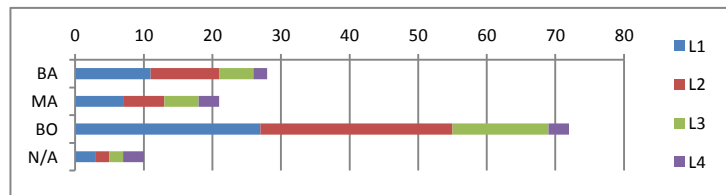
3. Following discussions and presentations in professional contexts



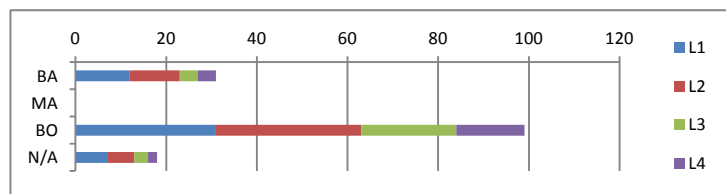
4. Giving a structured presentation on a topic within your field of work.



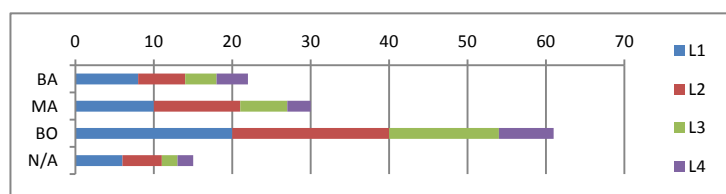
5. Responding to follow-up questions from an expert or non-expert audience



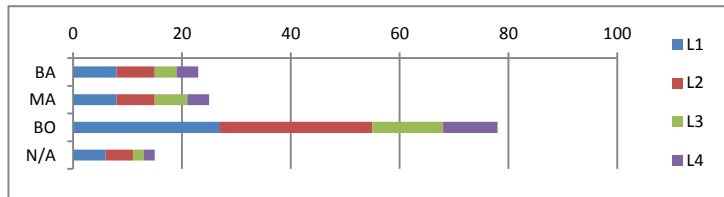
6. Team-working e.g. in problem-solving and project contexts in the workplace



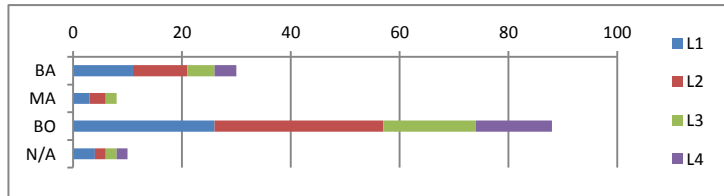
7. Participating in, and leading, meetings/negotiations



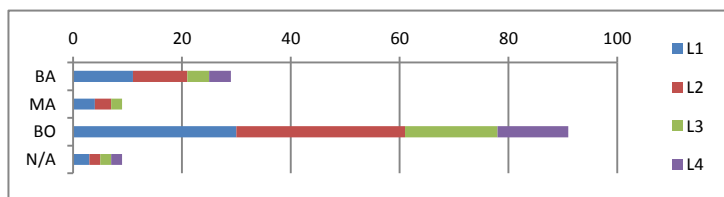
8. Networking and collaborating in virtual environments



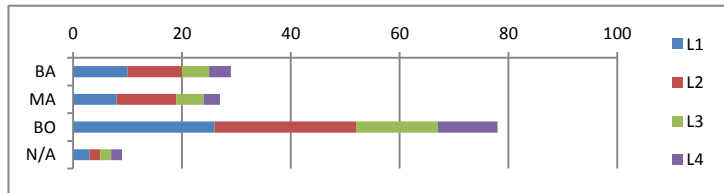
9. Reading and writing e-mails and short factual texts (e.g. memos, short reports, www-pages, etc.) related to your field or work



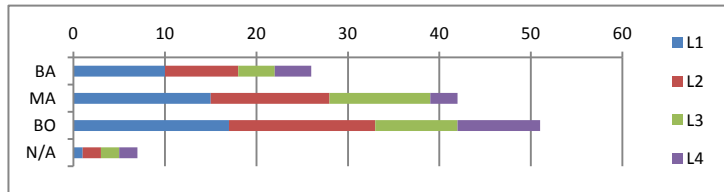
10. Reading specialised articles and reports related to your field of work and summarising or reporting on them



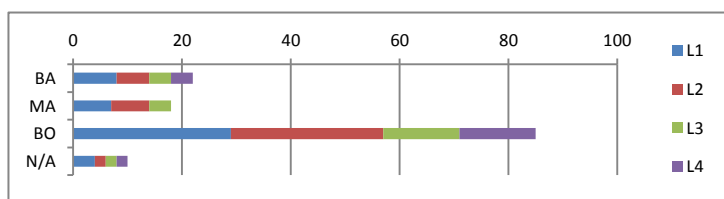
11. Communicating to manage international relations and customer contacts



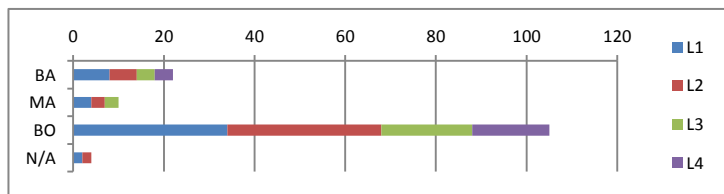
12. Writing project proposals or technical documentation



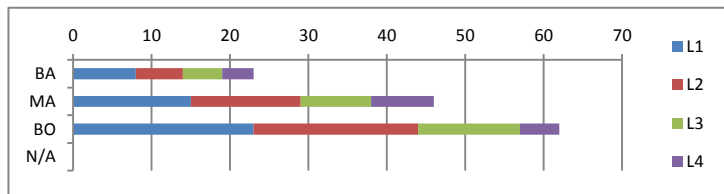
13. Writing a report which synthesises and evaluates information and arguments from a number of sources



14. Understanding and interacting in important multicultural contexts (i.e. with an awareness of intercultural differences in communication)



15. Writing for and presenting to a scientific/professional audience in your field.



3 CONCLUSION

The competences, skills and strategies rated by students, faculty and employer representatives during the consultation process are considered by the majority of the interviewed stakeholders in the 7 countries (and 9 partner institutions) to be relevant for both Bachelor and Master level. At a transnational level, they can be considered as core competences that serve students to:

1. access, evaluate and manage multilingual and multicultural information and knowledge sources
2. conceptualise and communicate information, knowledge and expertise in a multilingual and multicultural context
3. manage learning from a lifelong perspective.

Depending on the discipline area, the programme requirements and specific academic cultures, the importance of point 2 is greater for the Master level, but should be prepared at BA-level from the perspective of employability as well as in preparation for the Master studies.

4 REFERENCE

Räsänen, A, Natri, T. (2012) *MAGICC Synthesis report on data collected in Work package 1*, http://www.unil.ch/magicc/page87972_en.html