



AQUA-TNET

Annual Event 2007

WP6: Languages and Linguistic diversity

Meeting minutes

WP6 Core group members:

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Programme:

- Overview of WP6 and where we currently stand on our objectives.
- A review of the progress of PESCALEX on the website and the introduction of new languages into the database
- An examination of the results of the questionnaire
- It was decided to restructure the EUROPASS report in the light of the results of the questionnaire
- A re-examination of the curriculum review

A decision to restructure its content with the aim of both reaching a wider teacher audience and to make it a more informative read. In doing this we have decided to place a large content of the original work into a number of appendices which will also be available on the website. Also it was agreed to include some of the results of the questionnaire in the review.

- Work began on this review Thursday afternoon and Friday morning.
- Plans to communicate on the new versions of the review over the next few weeks were decided upon.

In the light of the comments of the validation group it was felt that this was the best way to proceed.

Deliverables / outputs:

1. **A database of all core data collected (done)**
 - Study programmes and institutional strategies for language training

- Insertion of specific language policy section in data collection questions, including use of new learning technologies by partners and priorities for development
 - Identification of suitable course/s for development of autonomous language modules
 - Scientific & Language teachers Network
2. **Survey of undergraduate courses in network in aquaculture, fisheries and aquatic resources management (final stages)**
 3. **Draft Study on courses that have a European dimension: broad-based, wide-ranging courses such as marine biodiversity as well as more narrowly focused language approaches (final stages)**
 4. **Survey of knowledge and use of new EUROPASS (which includes Dip. Supp., Language Portfolio, Mobilpass) (in preparation)**
 5. **Dissemination of info on latest EU developments (EUROPASS, Language Portfolio, Levels in Qualifications Frameworks)**
 6. **Progress Report (courses, language policy, EUROPASS, Qualifications Framework levels)**
 7. **WP6 Core group meeting (Year 1)**
 - examination of ORION modules in light of Progress Report for adequacy of scientific content, basic language structures, terminology (done)
 - Meeting report on linguistic modules needs (coverage of scientific content; coverage of basic language structures; coverage of terminology)
 - Identification of gaps in current language modules in terms of needs expressed and CLIL method
 - autonomous language learning format: flexibility, accessibility
 - identification of course/s suitable for development of language support module (done)
 8. **Planning of Web Portal – inclusion of language modules**
 - Discussions with WP5 on key tools and resources for a network portal which includes language modules (done)
 9. **Report on appropriateness of Common European Framework for Languages (CEF) and module language provisions**
 10. **Contribution to Virtual Workshop (Presentations and outcomes from meeting available on network portal)**
 - Selection of suitable course/s for language learning development → [Pescalex selected](#); [Aquatic Pathology](#)
 - How to fill the identified gaps in language modules (CLIL methodology, audio component? Self-assessments?)
 - Examination and analysis of CEF as suitable assessment instrument for online flexible access modules
 - Collect latest info on EUROPASS
 - Choose new language for module adaptations
 - Implement Virtual Workshop procedures
 11. **Database of innovative language learning resources**
 - Freely available online autonomous language modules for aquaculture and fisheries (available from network portal with opportunity for user testing and evaluation)
 - Design of web space for an online innovative language learning modules, with assessment instrument (self-assessments database operating via share and re-use technology)
 - Demonstration of language modules at Year 2 workshop

12. **Virtual language learning modules in a new language and suitable for wide range course content coverage available online**
13. **Virtual Workshop (Language learning Presentations and outcomes from meeting available on network portal)**
 - Feedback from student users
 - Testing of potential of using online language learning resources in training
 - Positioning of assessable online modules in Qualifications Frameworks (CEF, Language Portfolio, EUROPASS)
14. **Language Learning modules available in project web portal**
15. **Report on Use of the Internet for Delivery of Multi-lingual Language Learning: accessibility, flexibility, potential for inclusion in Qualification Frameworks**

Online questionnaire results:

WP6 had 43 respondents (of 83 possible participants = 52% sample size) from different countries representing a range of educational institutes. The countries which responded were Belgium, Holland, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Poland, Ireland, United Kingdom, Spain, France, Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Turkey

Summary of questionnaire results and conclusions

A questionnaire concerning language policy and usage in European academic courses covering the marines sciences, directed towards both undergraduate and postgraduate courses, was first drafted, by the WP leader before being modified after consultation with AQUATNET partners at the Core group meeting in Gent June 2006, and put online by AQUATT on the network's secure website.

A variation of this questionnaire was put to student participants at the AQUATT student Workshop in Galway in November 2006, with the purpose of discovering student knowledge and usage of online language courses and a print version of this is also found in Section B.

Raw data from the online questionnaire were collected and initially analysed by AQUATT before being considered in detail by WP partners at the Barcelona Workshop in March 2007. These first raw results of the questionnaires had been circulated to participants prior to the workshop. The online questionnaire had 27 responses, though one of these could be seen to be not relevant as this respondent had not answered any of the questions. This had not been taken into account in the first analysis of the data, and this meant that all the statistics were not accurate. In addition, it was also clear that the data presentation and analysis did not take into account in a comprehensible way, all the acceptable but negative responses to those questions that had been signalled as inapplicable. It was decided, after a close look at the figures, that it was literally impossible to come to any clear conclusions because of the format of the data presentation and that the best thing to do was to print out 20 copies of the questionnaire in Word format, and to ask 20 participants from different educational organisations to complete them on the spot. Once this had been done, it was possible to return to the raw online data and try to make valid conclusions.

1. Do you have international exchanges?

100% of respondents (i.e., more than 50% of the network) stated that their institution did have international exchanges. This is particularly interesting in the light of the responses concerning the institutions' language provision for those very international exchanges.

2. What language is used for course delivery at the host university?

30% of respondents stated that only English was used for course delivery in their institution, and since the survey was anonymous, it was not possible at this stage to identify which non-native-English universities preferred to use English rather than the native language for course delivery. 21% of respondents' courses used English as well as the native language for course delivery: Czech, Slovak, Danish, Spanish, Norwegian, Polish, German, and Icelandic. However, a large number of institutions (37%) used only the native language for course

delivery and these native languages were Danish, Spanish, Norwegian, Polish, Turkish, Czech, German, French, Dutch, Swedish and Slovak.

This could lead us to conclude that 12% of respondents were native English speakers.

Comments from respondents: *Most courses are given in the native language, but where there are English-speaking students, the courses are given in English to meet their needs.*

3. Does your institution require a language qualification as pre-mobility requirement?

39% of respondents stated that a language qualification was not a pre-mobility requirement. This figure in itself need not be disquieting, as a language qualification is not usually held to be necessary in a scientific degree course.

Of the 61% of institutions which did require a language qualification, only 9% required a formal certificate. 5% required a knowledge of Spanish, 3% required knowledge of basic Polish, 3% required knowledge of basic French. The remaining 41% required a knowledge of English at varying levels of fluency.

Comments: *Students must be proficient in English; must have sufficient command of English; must have IELTS score of at least 6.5; must have TOEFL or IELTS.*

4. Are language courses/modules provided in the host university for exchange students?

60.5% respondents replied positively, 21% said that was no language provision, and the remainder (18.5%) did not know.

5. If language courses/modules are provided, how is the language course/module delivered?

The format of this question appeared to confuse some of the respondents, and this was further compounded by the fact that they did not seem to be familiar with language teaching methods.

tutor led classroom delivery:	43% of YES respondents
self instructional course:	15.5% of YES respondents
self instructional course online:	7.5% of YES respondents
self instructional course language laboratory:	7.5% of YES respondents
tutor-led language laboratory:	4% of YES respondents

Comments: *We have separate facilities for science and arts students. Language courses are provided in the arts faculty buildings. Language laboratories are also regarded as belonging to faculties other than science faculties.*

6. Do you participate in transnational joint courses?

Since quite a few respondents are known to participate in one of the few transnational joint courses that exist in the aquatic sciences, the answers to this question are necessarily skewed. On the other hand, their answers reveal a deficiency of language provision that is almost certainly the pattern throughout Europe. 44% of respondents participate in transnational joint courses compared to 56% who do not.

7. If you participate in transnational joint courses, what language(s) are used for course delivery at the host university?

65% of YES respondents used English only (these include native language speakers), while 46% of YES respondents combined English with the national language, and 36% of YES respondents made use of the national language only,

8. If you participate in transnational joint courses, what language(s) are used for course delivery at the receiving university?

9. Does your institution require a language qualification as pre-mobility requirement?

18.5% of respondents stated that there was no such requirement, while 23% of the sample did stipulate the need for an actual language certificate, with 18.5% stipulating that this should be a recognised certificate in English language.

10. Are language courses/modules provided in the host university for joint course students?

79% of respondent institutions did provide such courses, whereas 21% did not provide language tuition for their joint course students.

11. If language courses/modules are provided, how is the language course/module delivered?

tutor led classroom delivery:	21% of YES respondents
self instructional course:	10.5% of YES respondents
self instructional course online:	10.5%% of YES respondents
self instructional course language laboratory:	10.5% of YES respondents
tutor-led language laboratory:	10.5% of YES respondents

12. Do you have international work placements?

56% of respondents responded positively, as against 37% of respondent institutions which did not organise international work placements.

13. If you have international work placements, does your institution require a language qualification as pre-mobility requirement?

37% of YES respondents did not specify a language qualification as a pre-mobility requirement. Most YES respondents (71%), however, specified a knowledge of English, rather than a qualification, with 8.5% specifying French, 4% Dutch and a further 4% Spanish.

14. Are language courses/modules provided in the host university for work placement students?

66% of YES respondents provide language courses for work placement students, as compared to 36% of YES respondents who do not provide language courses. This may indicate that institutions are aware of the explicit linguistic needs of students in the actual workplace.

15. If language courses/modules are provided, how is the language course/module delivered?

However, this latter assumption is probably no more than that, given the ignorance shown as to the actual teaching methods employed for such language provision.

tutor led classroom delivery:	4.5% of YES respondents
self instructional course:	2% of YES respondents
self instructional course online:	2%% of YES respondents %
self instructional course language laboratory:	2% of YES respondents %
tutor-led language laboratory:	2% of YES respondents.

16. Is your institution aware of the new EUROPASS?

60% of respondents stated that their institutions had no knowledge of the new 5 part EUROPASS, while a minority (40%) claimed knowledge of this major new European initiative.

17. If your institution is aware of the new EUROPASS, which part does it use?

EUROPASS Diploma Supplement:	57% of YES respondents
EUROPASS Certificate Supplement:	43% of YES respondents
EUROPASS CV:	28.5% of YES respondents
EUROPASS Language Passport:	14% of YES respondents
EUROPASS mobility:	42% of YES respondents

The low level of awareness is further highlighted by the low level of usage. The Diploma Supplement, which was not formerly part of EUROPASS, but which has been extensively promoted in higher education as an integral part of the Bologna Process, has the highest usage rate, but still only by 57% of YES respondents. However, the relatively high rate of awareness of the EUROPASS Certificate supplement, which is targeted purely at vocational education, makes it very likely that some respondents have not idea what the Certificate supplement really is and have confused it with the Diploma Supplement. In that case, we have 100% of our YES respondents who do use something that they know is called a Supplement of some sort. The very low level of awareness of the European Language Passport is further indication, if anything further is needed, that languages for mobility are very low down in the pecking order .

18. Do you have an international office?

88% of respondents do have such an office, with only 12% claiming not to have one.

19. Does your institution give financial help for mobility?

A high 72.5% of institutions do provide financial help for international mobility, although in many cases this help is linked with the ERASMUS programme.

25% of respondent institutions do not provide any help; 2.5% did not answer this question.

20. In your opinion, in which areas is there the greatest need for specific language provision?

Undergraduate level 30% of respondents

Postgraduate level 30% of respondents

Work placement level 10% of respondents

No answer 30% of respondents

Those respondents with exchange students or engaged in joint courses are evenly divided and see their own students' level of need clearly. But many respondents show by their non-response, that they have not thought at all seriously about this question.

21. In your opinion, at which levels is there the greatest need for specific language provision?

Basic level 18% of respondents

General level 49% of respondents

Specialised sectoral level (ie aquaculture) 33% of respondents.

The question was not very well phrased in its use of language teaching concepts. It is clear that respondents did not really understand the difference between General (for all purposes) and Specialised sectoral level (Language for specific purposes). However, a case can be made for noting that 51% of the sample opted for both basic and specific level, which is what the PESCALEX language modules aim to provide.

Conclusions

These will be written after the Annual Event in Crete and the discussions with the Work Package 6 group and the Validation Group.