



HERMES Conference 2001

Tübingen, 17 to 19 August 2001



MINUTES

Participants: 14 participants from 8 countries (BE, DE, FI, FR, HU, NL, SK, UK)

Beginning: Friday, 17th, evening (informal meeting)

End: Sunday, 19th, 4pm (followed by cultural programme)

The aim of the conference was to present the activities and the results of the working group and to plan the activities of year 2 of the project. Therefore two planning workshops took place during the week: a workshop on workpackage 1 of the HERMES project (“Key curriculum research on language levels and assessment”; 15 to 17 August) and a workshop on workpackage 3 (“Professional development ICT courses”; 17 August).

0. Opening

The Conference was opened on Saturday morning at 10.00 am by Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Schaich, Rector of Tübingen University, giving a short historic background on the university, which celebrates its 525th anniversary in 2002 and with its 20,000 students is one of Germany’s larger universities. He also put some emphasis on the recent creation of the University’s Language Centre, which would provide students with important skills for their future jobs.

1. Presentation of AFANet (Simon Heath)

Simon gave a short presentation of the aims and activities of AFANet, an EU-funded Thematic Network Project covering 11 workpackages in the area of agriculture and related sciences (see attachment: conference attachment 1). Workpackage 9 within AFANet is the HERMES working group “Development of resources to support the language training of students”. Detailed information on AFANet can be obtained on the website managed by the University of Aberdeen:

www.clues.abdn.ac.uk:8080/afanet/

Simon answered questions on the various project activities, their interlinkage and the state of these activities. The participants thus got a better overview on the project as a whole and on the role HERMES played in this context.

2. General report on HERMES (Johann Fischer)

Johann gave a short overview of the four workpackages within the HERMES activities. One of the original five workpackages (see attachment: conference attachment2.doc) had to be abandoned as the project did not get the funding foreseen in the initial application and as a similar project was co-ordinated in Belgium. He gave a short overview on the remaining four workpackages and the activities carried out in year 2 (see summary in attachment: conference attachment 3).

3. Report on workpackage 1: “Key curriculum research on language levels and assessment” (Johann Fischer, Judit Szabó, Ildikó Tóth)

Johann summarised the activities undertaken in the past, i.e. under the previous TNP AFANet.

- On the basis of the Council of Europe levels of competence and the German UNICert levels, Etain and Johann had developed an overall grid describing the levels of competence in the academic area. These levels have now been adopted by the UNICert accreditation and certification system, as they proved to be more convenient for language teaching at university level.
- In 1999/2000 a questionnaire on the levels of competence of the students at Universities and Colleges of Agriculture and Related Sciences (UCARS) was sent out, putting an emphasis on the entrance and exit levels of the students as well as on the number of teaching hours during the students' studies. It included questions on the content of the courses, students' needs, assessment procedures and the satisfaction of the language teachers. A summary of the results, already presented at the HERMES Conference in Vienna in 2001, was handed out to the participants for further information.

After a short presentation of the German UNICert certification system, he presented the activities of year 1 of the current project:

Based on the previous results a new questionnaire on language testing was prepared and sent out to all partner institutions. Many questionnaires had arrived only a short time before the beginning of the conference, which did not allow a detailed analysis. First results were distributed and discussed (see attachment: conference attachment 4).

Johann, Judit and Ildikó then presented the plans for year 2:

- Using the new levels of competence as a basis, detailed 'can do' statements should be developed and then sent out for calibration purposes. These 'can do' statements should concentrate on aspects of LAP (Language for Agricultural Purposes) as 'can do' statements for general language competence already exist (*Common European Framework of Reference*, Portfolio, DIALANG, Dutch levels, Hungarian levels etc.).
- Judit and Ildikó presented the concept of a workshop on language testing. It will be a workshop providing language teachers with theoretical background information and hands-on activities. This six days workshop would be held in Gödöllő if Judit and Ildikó got their rector's permission and some support from the university. For the course programme see attachment: conference attachment5.doc

Lisa Lena and Hermien found some elements that would link this workshop to the ICT workshops and thus offered to give a short introduction at the end of the Gödöllő testing workshop, thus inviting the participants to come to the ICT workshop.

4. Report on workpackage 2: Professional development courses for language teachers at UCARS (Etain Casey, Johanna Jakabovičová)

Etain gave a summary of the activities undertaken during the period of the previous TNP and during year 1. In fact, “Professional Development” was the key activity of the project, as it had the longest tradition in HERMES and brought together all other activities. The results of the other workpackages were always integrated into the professional development courses, as this proved to be the best way of dissemination.

Under the first TNP, two Professional Development Courses were run in Vienna, the first one for teachers of English, the second for teachers of English and teachers of German on parallel lines. In year 1 of the new TNP a Professional Development Course for teachers of English and German took place in Nitra, with financial support from the project. Two other courses were financed by other institutions and projects: a course for teachers of German at Russian UCARS in Moscow and a course for teachers of English and German at the Kazakh State University of Agriculture in Almaty.

The emphasis of the courses was on oral skills, task-based language teaching using project work, global simulations and case studies in language teaching, the use of video in the classroom, and the use of the Internet in the teaching and learning.

This year was used to develop, pilot and revise training material for these courses. The material for the German courses has reached a highly satisfactory level, the material for English is under revision.

In year 2 it is planned to run a Professional Development Course for teachers of English and for teachers of French, to finalise the material for English and to develop material for French.

Johanna gave a presentation of the organisational aspects of such a workshop. She presented the problems she had to face in Nitra, gave practical hints for all those who planned to run a workshop in year 2 and outlined the positive feeling of a successful completion of such a workshop. She volunteered to help all those in their planning who needed her advice.

5. Report on workpackage 3: Professional Development ICT Courses (Hermien Miltenburg, Lisa Lena Opas Hänninen)

Hermien gave a presentation of the aims of this workpackage and the plans for year 1. A first ICT workshop was planned in May, but as there were not enough registrations, it was decided to postpone the course to mid-September. Hermien gave detailed information on the course concept, its aims and objectives, and the provisional plan (see attachment: conference attachment 6).

She also gave a demonstration session on the software she was going to use: an authoring programme for tests (“Questionmark Designer”). She explained what the user could do with this programme and gave examples for the use in language testing, referring to her experience at the Language Centre at Wageningen University.

Hermien and Lisa Lena then presented the concept of the joint workshop they planned to run in year 2: it would consist of two elements, the use of “Questionmark Designer” for language testing purposes (Hermien) and the use of an Internet based database for students and teachers (Lisa Lena). A detailed description of the course programme was presented in the attachments “conference attachment 7” and “conference attachment 8”).

6. Report on workpackage 4: Research on the most appropriate methods to develop a stronger interaction between language teachers and academic staff (Etain Casey)

Etain gave an outline of the aims and objectives of this workpackage, i.e. to discover the current co-operation between language teachers and scientists in the departments of agriculture, to find out different ways of co-operation and to describe methods of best practice. One concrete example was the project to use Internet based case studies for students of Agriculture, developed by Philip Cain in Newcastle and his colleagues, for language

teaching purposes. It was thus planned to run a Professional Development Course for teachers of English in co-operation with Philip.

In year 1 of the project a questionnaire was sent out to analyse the present situation. Most of the questionnaires had come back only few days before the conference started, leaving little time for analysis, but nevertheless Etain summarised her first results. In general, the feedback was very encouraging, both from a quantitative and a qualitative point of view: In fact, she did not expect to get so many questionnaires back in such a short time and was surprised by the feedback from departments of agriculture which were much more numerous than the questionnaires coming back from language teachers. In general, the scientists were very much in favour of a stronger interaction and saw a need for more language teaching, although the responses varied from very positive to very negative statements.

Unfortunately, a planned workshop, bringing together language teachers and scientists, and aiming at the development of possible scenarios of interaction and at the planning of pilot activities in year 2 could not take place due to the late start of the project.

See the report attached in “conference attachment 9” for details on the results and the plans for year 2 and 3.

The participants were very interested in this new aspect of the project. Hermien and Jean volunteered to help Etain in the analysis and further activities, Lucien also wanted to stay in contact as this aspect concerned his own activities.

7. Summary

The participants saw an interlinkage between the different aspects of the HERMES project and thus discussed a possible timetable for year 2 where each workshop was linked to the previous one. The provisional programme is described in “conference attachment10.doc”. Although the concept looked very clear, it was seen that some trainers were still needed, and that dates and locations had to be discussed.

Finally, Jean pointed out that the project should soon open up for other languages, especially French, as he got the impression that it emphasised very much the English and German language. A translation of the homepage (which was presented by René Krätschel and which was very positively received by the participants) into other languages (French, German) is needed.

Although the number of participants was low, which was not surprising for a conference taking place in the middle of the holiday season in Europe, the participants expressed their positive feelings about the project and its good start. They hoped that an early planning of year 2 would increase the number of registrations for workshops, professional development courses and the conference (which must be organised at an earlier time of the year).

The punting tour on the Neckar and the final glass of beer on the river bank after the conference were an excellent occasion to finish a conference which showed a lot of motivation and enthusiasm for the future of this project.

Johann Fischer, Tübingen
(HERMES co-ordinator)



AFANet – SOCRATES Thematic Network for Agriculture, Forestry, Aquaculture and the Environment

Aims of AFANet

AFANet, a EU SOCRATES Thematic Network, aims to develop a European dimension to education and co-operation in universities and colleges in Europe offering degree programmes in agriculture, forestry, aquaculture and the environment. This aim is being achieved by addressing the following key issues, both structural and discipline-based.

At the discipline level the Network is:

- analysing, with a European wide perspective, current issues in agriculture, forestry, aquaculture and the environment with the objective of influencing curriculum innovation in AFANet partner institutions,
- supporting the shared development of curricula with the objective of developing a European dimension to curricula in AFANet partner institutions,

At the structural level the Network is:

- strengthening the infrastructure for internationalisation of teaching and learning within the partner institutions through structural initiatives for the enhancement of the capacity of language training units and of international relations' offices, and will
- Identify and disseminate good practice in collaboration between institutions of higher education in the shared delivery of courses and degree programmes.

See the AFANet Web site at <http://www.clues.abdn.ac.uk:8080/afanet/> for further information

AFANet is being funded for 2000/01, the first year of a new three year programme, see overleaf for titles of the forthcoming workpackages.

Example key outcomes from 2000:

- Wals A E J and Bawden R (2000). ***Integrating Sustainability into Agricultural Education: dealing with complexity, uncertainty and diverging worldviews.*** ICA, Gent, pp45.
- Owen L, FitzGerald R and Eleftheriou M (2000). ***White Paper: Education and Training in Aquaculture for the New Millenium.*** AQUATT, Dublin. pp 82
- Pelkonen P, Pitkänen A, Schmidt P, Oesten G, Piussi P and Rojas E (2000) ***Forestry in Changing Societies in Europe, Teachers' Manual.*** University of Joensuu, Finland. pp 44: ISBN Number 951-98298-0-6

- Mueller I (2000) ***International Relations Management at higher education institutions for Agricultural and related sciences – contributions at IROICA Workshops 2000***. pp 56 ICA, Gent.
- **EVAOnline**, <http://evaonline.euro.org>, an online Newsletter published quarterly

See the AFANet website for details of how to order these publications

The **AFANet Workpackages** to be developed over a three year programme starting in the year 2000/01 are listed below under the four themes listed at the start of this flyer. Each Workpackage is led by a Co-ordinator who can give you further information about the proposed activities. You can find their contact details on the AFANet web site where you can also register your interest in participating in the Workpackages.

In addition regular updates on the progress of these activities will appear in articles in EVAOnline (<http://evaonline.euro.org>)

Workpackage Code	Title of Workpackage
Theme 1: Analysis of current issues in agriculture, forestry, aquaculture and the environment with the objective of influencing curriculum innovation in AFANet partner institutions	
WP 1	Issues in Integrated Rural Development in curricula development
WP 2	Issues of Animal Bio-ethics in curricula development
WP 3	Issues of modern technology on the development of the Agricultural Engineering curricula
Theme 2: Support for the shared development of curricula with the objective of developing a European dimension to curricula in AFANet partner institutions	
WP 4	The design and development of a virtual European Forestry Faculty
WP 5	The development of curricula resources Animal Breeding and Genetics
WP 6	The development of learning resources to support understanding of the impact of European agricultural, environmental and rural policies on farm and associated agri-businesses
WP 7	The development of Diploma Supplements for Aquaculture Courses
Theme 3: Support for internationalisation in teaching and learning in the partner institutions through:	
WP 8	Support of internationalisation through the development of international relations offices with institutions of higher education
WP 9	Development of resources to support the language training of students
WP 10	ICT in support of the development of virtual teaching and learning
Theme 4: Identify and disseminate good practice in collaboration between institutions of higher education in the shared delivery of courses and degree programmes	
WP 11	Strategies and Structures for enhanced collaboration between AFANet higher education institutions

For more information and to register your interest in participating in AFANet Activities contact:

Dr Simon B Heath, AFANet Co-ordinator

CLUES, University of Aberdeen, Aberdeen, AB24 5UA, UK

Tel +44 1224 273755, Email clues@abdn.ac.uk

Or register on-line at <http://www.clues.abdn.ac.uk:8080/afanet>



HERMES original project proposal

- Aims and objectives -



WP 1: Key curriculum research on language levels and assessment

The group will look at existing levels of second language competence in UCARS and at student and staff aspirations. A comparison will be made between existing methods of measuring standards of attainment in the various language skills and how these can be compared with European wide language levels and assessment practice. The study will seek to identify AFANet students needs from the university community of language learners and draw attention to their vocational and professional priorities. This information can be disseminated and used to create an academic input to future criteria for language levels and assessment among all major assessment bodies in Europe. The information can also be used to develop course planning, syllabuses and materials for use in UCARS.

WP 2: Professional development courses for language teachers at UCARS

To create modules for professional development courses for teachers of English, German and French in UCARS to develop a multilingual course concept. These modules are to include effective language programme management for teachers and quality assurance procedures. The pilot courses will also provide a network and a forum for exchange of views among professionals across Europe working in language teaching.

WP 3: Professional development ICT course

To develop course modules which cater for the needs of ab initio teachers and train them to prepare activities suitable for UCARS students. To develop a course module which will enable teachers to access virtual resources and research databases for classroom use and provide a case study of good practice.

WP 4: Preparation of basic packages in less widely spoken languages

To develop learning packages in less-widely spoken languages which will be based on a combination of group instruction and distance learning. These packages will be available for International Relations Officers who work with and travel to the countries where these languages are spoken. The result of their increased proficiency will be better relationships between personnel and institutions, and a greater involvement of Eastern European countries in academic exchanges and activities.

WP 5: Research on the most appropriate methods to develop a stronger interaction between language teachers and academic staff

To find out the current involvement of subject teachers in UCARS with language work among students and in the delivery of their courses. To find ways of benefiting from the technical knowledge of subject teachers, and the language expertise of other staff, in preparing materials, adapting materials and evaluating materials and in preparing other information inputs both oral and electronic. To prepare a report on best practice in these areas and to encourage closer co-operation and projects between academics and institutions. This would have a direct impact on the attraction of student exchanges in areas of Europe where they are not always taken up or perceived as difficult.



HERMES activities Year 1 and outlook Year 2



WP 1: Key curriculum research on language levels and assessment

Activities of previous years:

- survey on language levels at UCARS (emphasis on entrance and exit levels as well as on progress made during studies)

Activities of current year:

- questionnaire on language testing at UCARS
- planning of workshops on testing and language levels
- planning of development of guidelines for language testing

plans for year 2:

- Workshops on testing:

I. Theory and practice of language testing

A. Theory

1. test types
2. task types
3. validity, reliability, objectivity
4. characteristics: face validity

B. specificity of skill specific testing vs. integrative tests

C. Practice:

1. analyse tests
2. develop own tests

II. Testing systems in Europe and developments in language testing:

A. international testing centres and organisations (ALTE group; Cambridge diplomas, Goethe diplomas, Alliance française diplomas, etc.; LSP diplomas; DIALANG); university entrance language exams (IELTS, TOEFL; DSH; DALF)

B. Language Portfolio project

- further activities planned in year 2:

- develop guidelines for testing
- develop and calibrate “can do” statements (in co-operation with partners in Jyväskylä and Sofija and with UNICert committee)

WP 2: Professional development courses for language teachers at UCARS

HERMES activities over past years:

<i>date</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>duration</i>	<i>Number of participants</i>	<i>Engl.</i>	<i>Germ.</i>	<i>French</i>	<i>Span.</i>	<i>Ital.</i>	<i>Budget</i>
Feb. 1999	Vienna	1 week	12	✓					AFANet
Oct. 2000	Vienna	1 week	9	✓	✓				AFANet
Jan./Feb. 2001	Moscow	2 weeks	25		✓				DAAD
March 2001	Almaty	1 week	15	✓	✓				TEMPUS TACIS
May 2001	Nitra	4 days	11	✓	✓				AFANet

Activities in year 1 of new project:

- develop new training modules
- finalise modules
- translate modules
- calibrate modules
- prepare Internet site with training modules

RESULTS:

Training material:

- available in German and English
- the following modules are ready:
 - general professional development course
 - extensive modules on use of video, global simulations and case studies
 - some modules on use of Internet websites for teaching purposes (German)

Feedback of participants:

positive feedback, positive influence on motivation (revalorisation of own work), exchange of ideas, contacts, no longer isolation; follow-up questionnaires show that teachers change their teaching habit after seminar;

Problems encountered:

- organisation (appropriate time of the year, teaching constraints, duration of workshop),
- financial problems of language teachers interested in the course (low payment),
- co-ordination problems as different organisations involved in organising

Needs:

- overall professional development workshops **and** specific workshops ⇒ develop specific workshop of shorter duration (Thursday to Saturday) on: global simulations, case studies in language teaching, assessment, material development, use of Internet
- link up with other workpackages

Plans for year 2:

- develop training material for other languages (French, possibly Italian or Spanish)

- general professional development course for English and French
- professional development course on case studies (English and German), possibly combining paper&pencil case study and Internet case study

WP 3: ICT

Previous years:

- David Rees's website with horticulture quizzes,
- useful links (vocabularies, glossaries, agriculture sites, institutional sites, etc.);
- workshop Angers ("develop your own website", organised by David Rees)

activities of current year:

- planning and preparation of workshop in Wageningen (emphasis on: use of ICT for language testing purposes)
- identifying other possible contents and looking for trainers
- planning of workshop on use of Internet to set up own resource centre for classes

WP 4: Research on the most appropriate methods to develop a stronger interaction between language teachers and academic staff

new activity (not included in previous project)

activities of year 1:

- questionnaire on interaction between language teachers and departments of agriculture and related sciences

Further activities in year 1:

HERMES website:

- setting up of new website at the Language Centre of Tübingen University, integrating elements of previous website in Hohenheim
- setting up of database for professional development courses on Internet for trainers
- setting up of mailing list

development of **database** of addresses of partners

planning for production of a **course reader** for English and German

dissemination:

- co-operation with TNP Languages: participation at ELC Conference in Berlin, June 2001
- participation at ALTE conference on testing in Barcelona, July 2001
- setting up of website

Evaluation of the questionnaire on language testing at UCARS

What skills/elements are you testing?

Answers vary from reading comprehension to grammar and translation, no clear trend towards a certain element can be seen. Most of the universities test a very wide range of skills.

Which task types do you use?

Also here, no focus on a certain method can be observed, task types depend very much on the university and the level of the class. Nearly every university uses all task types, depending on the specific course.

For which purposes do you use language tests?

11 out of 13 institutions use language tests as end course tests, only two universities did not indicate this purpose. 8 out of 13 make use of entrance tests, 7 out of 13 of placement tests and 6 out of 13 of achievement tests. Only 4 out of 13 declared that they used language tests for a certification system.

Where do you take your material from?

Most popular here, are popular magazines / newspapers and the internet (both with 10 out of 13). Also text books (7 out of 13) and professional magazines (5 out of 13), such as the New Scientist, are used quite often.

Radio / TV and commercial methods (Professional Presentation, M.Goodale; Vince, M. Advanced Language Practice; Gude, Duckworth, Proficiency Masterclass; both 2 out of 13) as well as papers and leaflets and self-elaborated material (both 1 out of 13) are very seldom applied.

Do you make your own tests?

Every institution declared to make its own tests, though one of them indicated to do not always so.

Do you take your tests from public sources?

All of the universities also take their texts from public sources, such as books, brochures, magazines such as Guardian, National Geographic, newspapers and online-newspapers and the internet. One did not give details.

Where do you take your listening exercise from?

Listening exercise is taken from newsbulletins, the BBC, interviews, textbooks, multimedia software, course book cassettes TV, video an occasionally from commercial methods.

Where do you take written texts from?

Written texts are taken from internet, books, papers, leaflets, handouts, magazines, short stories, newspapers, own imagination, specialized periodicals, magazines and the like.

How do you actually make your tests?

Apparently the question has been understood in different ways: 3 out of 13 universities indicated to make their test on a computer; 4 others declared they would use different sources, whose choice is based on the similarity to material studied, revise the material dealt with in class and try to structure the exam that it accurately reflects the subjects.

3 institutions described different steps of making an exam.

- 1. finding a suitable test
- 2. adjusting testing exercises (questions etc.)
- 3. piloting
- 4. changing
- 5. second piloting
- 1. Needs analysis
- 2. defining the task and question types
- 3. defining the skills and elements to be tested
- 4. finding the material on which the test is based
- 5. developing and designing the test itself
- trying to balance 4 levels of reading: word, sentence, paragraph, text, with much insistence on keywords, link words and echo words at paragraph level. Insisting on plan making rather than summarising because the exercise does not seem to be very much in use at the professional level.

Do you cooperate with colleagues in making the tests?

7 out of 13 teachers cooperate with their colleagues, of whom one indicated to do so only sometimes. 4 are the only language teacher at their institution and thus would apparently support cooperation. 2 Universities indicated that they did not cooperate.

Do you use different tests from group to group?

11 out of 13 language teachers use different tests in each group, one of them not always. 2 universities do not do so, or only from level to level respectively.

Do you use computer testing in your institution?

8 of the 13 institutions do not use computer testing, 5 of them do.

Do you use tests from national organisations (like Goethe-Institut, University of Cambridge local examination Syndicate LCCI, Alliance française, CCIP)? Do you use only these tests or as a complement to your own tests?

For the preparation of the students 5 out of 13 use tests from national organisations, 8 don't.

As a testing centre 2 out of 13 use tests from national organisation , the rest of them doesn't.

All of those who use these tests use them as a complement to their own tests.

Do you use the language portfolio developed by the European Council?

Only 1 out of 13 university uses the language portfolio, all others don't.

Do you have special language tests (entrance tests, placement tests) for foreign students who want to study in your country?

7 out of 13 institutions declared to have such tests, one of them uses the DHS test.

4 do not have such tests, 2 did not give details.

Are you happy with the testing procedures at your institution?

4 out of 13 universities are at least in part happy with the testing procedures at their institution, the same number as of those who are not or not really happy. 3 times no details were given and 2 language teachers indicated that they invented their own procedure or that it is at the beginning.

What would you like to be done? What are the needs? Which ones? Where do you see problems?

Most institutions would like to see proper language programmes and facilities, standardized tests, more tests from international organizations, a fixed common standard, placement tests and better entrance tests, "some kind of unity", equal tests for the whole of Europe prepared by a group of experts and officially accepted, more cooperation with their colleagues and finally more motivated students.

Problems are seen in the lack of money, language teaching on the cheap, problems in training for the teachers, scheduling of exams, again lack of time and money for language teachers, so that they can't allow themselves to invest too much time, as making own tests is often time consuming. Language teachers do not have time for developing tests suited to their specific needs as part of their full-time duties. Another problem is that tests are maybe inaccurate in testing language ability, as not all skills are tested, as well as the increasing heterogeneity in one of the participant's countries, which probably goes along with a tendency towards less proficiency.

What do you think about professional development activities for testing and assessment?

10 out of 13 university teachers consider it as a real need, a good or very good idea, profitable for the judgement and useful or very useful. One person wrote, that she / he is not enthusiastic about them but realistic too and thus favours them.

2 did not give details of the case.

Why do you test?

Answering this question all university teachers gave more or less the same answers. Tests are used for organisation and control of placement, entrance and achievement, to get a feed-back and to be able to issue certificates and, as it is the main study incentive for students, it is also used for motivation.

Do you have any comments on testing in your institution / in your own experience / in general?

4 out of 13 language teachers made further comments.

Continuous assessment is necessary for reasons of feedback, though no necessity for marks is given. Final oral and written exams are essential at appropriate levels for language training, as well as coordination.

Another teacher indicated that she/he does all by himself/herself and thus doesn't know whether this is good. Better would be equal tests for the whole of Europe, which are officially accepted. Another problem is that not all students reach advanced levels.

It was also recommended, that the testing system should be reconsidered and be made more objective and sophisticated in order to keep up with the latest achievements of modern educational technologies.



Report on the planning for Hermes Project, Year 2

Workpackage 1: Assessment and certification



From 17th- to the 19th August, the following activities have been carried out with regards to forward planning for Workpackage 1, for the year 2002:

17th of August: pre-conference meeting, drafting a plan for a teacher-training course on methodology of ESP testing

18th of August: presenting draft course plan, debate and feedback.

19th of August: Agreeing on the suggested changes to be carried out on the draft course plan, timing and relationship of the ICT and the testing methodology course; and allocating future tasks to participants. Our tasks are the following:

- modifying the course plan, breaking it into two parts
- preparing a course handbook with detailed contents and references
- agreeing with Gödöllő University leadership about the venue of the course
- preliminary budgeting
- discussing level descriptors which will be sent by other project members

Reporting on the outcomes of the planning phase in Tübingen, we produced the first version of the teacher training course on ESP methodology, which we left with Dr. Fischer.

Out of the planned activities, we have started organisational work on the course. We have conducted preliminary budgeting and we are in the process of approaching of the university leadership for gaining their agreement and support to be able to use the university (SZIE) in Gödöllő as the venue. We have started to make enquiries concerning accommodation. In this respect we run into difficulties as there does not seem to be accommodation of the required level (namely, single rooms) in Gödöllő, which is a small town. Therefore, we have to make further enquiries, perhaps in Budapest.

We have prepared the modified course plan (first course, in April 2002) which is as follows:

-
- **“LANGUAGE LEVELS AND ASSESSMENT”**
 -
 - **DAY 1**
 - Arrivals, pre-course dinner
 - **DAY 2**
 - **Introductions**
 - Discussion and finalisation of the **language competence level descriptors**

- **Own testing situation** compared to the established levels and language requirements of the given universities or colleges
- **Ranking of language skills** (link to needs analysis survey conducted by HERMES in year 1)
- **Ranking of language use settings** (academic vs. work-related)
- Main emphasis on **certification** (proficiency testing)
- Input on the main **testing principles** (LSP focus!)
- Input on the general **dos and don'ts**

- **DAY 3**

Testing READING

- Discussion point: through mother tongue or target language?
- Input on the role of specifications
- Brainstorming task types of testing main language skills
- Item analysis (link to ICT course!)
- Item writing
- Mutual solving and analysis of the new test
- Feedback, suggestions for improvements

- **DAY 4**

Testing LISTENING

- Input on the difference between reading and listening tasks
- Warning of the method effect
- Discussion point: through audio or video
- Item writing
- Mutual solving of tasks
- Item analysis
- Suggestions for improvements
- Feedback, evaluation of the course
- Farewell dinner

- **DAY 5**

- Budapest / Gödöllő sightseeing (**optional**)

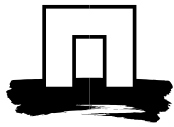
- **DAY 6**

Departures

Preparing the detailed handbook is to follow by December, alongside with the short plan and the detailed handbook of the second, follow-up ESP testing methodology course.

In the meantime we are ready to look at and analyse any language level descriptors that will be sent to us.

Györéné Szabó Judit, Tóth Ildikó
Chief Examiners of SZIE Examination Centre
Gödöllő, Hungary



- **PROGRAMME ICT WORKSHOP**

Language: English

Number of participants: minimum 6, maximum 16.

Introduction

The ICT workshop is meant for language teachers with ample teaching experience but little or no knowledge of ICT applications for teaching purposes. The workshop aims to familiarise the participants with the use of ICT in language education at various levels. Not only will the attention be paid to practical issues such as the use of e-mail in language training, working with correction-symbols, the use of computer technology in testing and assessment of students, the workshop also focusses on theoretical issues like increasing internationalisation and intercultural communication.

During the workshop, which is scheduled to take place from Friday September 14th 2001 through Sunday September 16th 2001, the participants will be given ample opportunity to gain practical experience with the use of ICT in language training.

In addition to the actual training, a social programme has been added through which participants can get to know one another and benefit from shared knowledge and experience.

schedule:

Friday 14th September

12.00-13.00 hrs *Lunch*

13.00-14.00 hrs Introduction and word of welcome

14.00-15.00 hrs Powerpoint in Language Training

15.00-15.15 hrs *Coffeebreak*

15.15-17.15 hrs Email in Language Training

Saturday 15th September

09.00-09.15 hrs Opening

09.15-10.45 hrs Internationalisation and Intercultural Communication

10.45-11.15 hrs *Coffee break*

11.15-12.00 hrs Examples of ICT Tests

12.00-13.30 hrs *Lunch*

13.30-15.00 hrs Practical use of Question Mark in designing tests

15.00-onward *Optional: a visit to the Wageningen University botanical gardens*

Sunday 16th September

09.00-09.15 hrs Opening

09.15-12.00 hrs A choice of modules:

CD-Roms in Language Training

CD-Roms in Technical Language Training

The use of Internetsearch for Agricultural Texts

12.00-13.30 hrs *Lunch*

13.30-17.00 hrs *Visit to the Airborne Museum*

17.00-onward *Barbecueparty*

Monday 17th September: *Optional activities: visit to National Park de Hoge Veluwe and Kroller
Muller Museum of Modern Art*

Programme

Friday September 14th

The programme starts with a delicious lunch at the Language Centre, giving participants a chance to recuperate from the trip and get to know each other. Following the lunch there the is a word of welcome and the participants and coaches will spend some time introducing themselves to the group by means of a language-game.

Hermien Miltenburg will then demonstrate the use of Powerpoint in language training though the powerpoint presentation "The Netherlands in a Nutshell".

After a brief coffee break the latter part of the afternoon will be devoted to the topic of Email. The use of Email will be demonstrated through the Happy Mail programme used within Wageningen University.

Skills such as adding attachments to an Email message and the use of using trackchanges to mark corrections in a text, will be demonstrated and explainend. In addition, International examples will be given of the use of correction-symbols. In addition, the participants will actively practice in using the Happy Mail email programme, thus putting theory into practice immediately.

The experiences of teaching staff and students with the use of Email within language courses will also be further explained.

Saturday September 15th

The day starts with a short introductory word, followed by a lecture on the topic of "internationalisation and intercultural communication". The frame of reference for this lecture is the vision of Wageningen University and Researchcentre regarding these issues.

Next, the importance of level-assesment in language education will be discussed on the basis of the experiences gained in this field within higher agricultural education in general and Wageningen University in particular. The findings will be presented through a powerpoint presentation as well as overhead.

Using the Question Mark software programme, several different types of testing methods will be shown. Following this, the participants will spend some time gaining first-hand experience by actually doing a test themselves.

After a short recess for lunch the participants will work with the Question Mark designer software, designing questions of their own, with the help of the coaches.

Sunday, September 16th

The Sunday morning offers a variety of activities from which the participants can choose:

The use of CD roms in language training, the use of CD roms in technical language training, performing websearches for texts on the topic of agriculture.

After lunch a visit will be paid to the airborne museum in Oosterbeek, which hosts a permanent exhibition on the subject of the Second World War. After this there will be ample opportunity for socializing during a grand barbecue party.

Optional activities: visit to National Park “de Hoge Veluwe” and Kroller Muller Museum of modern art. The evenings can be spent discovering Wageningen nightlife



HERMES Professional development ICT course



Texts, corpora and language testing software: Tools for the language teacher

Hermien Miltenburg (Wageningen University) and
Lisa Lena Opas-Hänninen (Joensuu University)

1. Introduction
Presentation of the course and its aims
2. Summary of corpora and concordancing
 - What is a corpus?
 - What can you do with them?
 - Why would you want to use corpora?
3. An example of a corpus and its use
 - Corpus on the language of bioenergy, presentation
 - Using the corpus: the use of the definite article (level 2-3), the use of singular versus plural forms of words (levels 2-5), word formation (level 5); problem: identify the scientific words in the text and describe how they are used
4. HANDS ON: Learning how to access texts and prepare them for incorporation into a corpus
 - Sources of texts
 - Internet: how and where to get your texts; specialist sites, newspapers
 - Downloading the text
 - Stripping the HTML code: the NoteTab Light program – how and where to get it; making your text plain
5. HANDS-ON: Creating your own corpus
 - What is a concordance program?
 - What programs are available and what do they cost?
 - How and where to get the TACT program
 - Preprocessing your text(s)
 - Make a corpus using TACT
6. Summary of use of ICT for testing and handout
 - What is ICT testing?
 - What programs are available and what do they cost?
7. An example of a test
 - The program Question Mark Designer
 - Presentation of language tests on several levels

8. HANDS-ON: Learning how to build three types of questions
 - Multiple choice
 - Fill in the blanks
 - Multiple response

9. HANDS-ON: Creating your own language tests
 - Use the material from the corpus you just created

10. Discussion, evaluation and the future
 - Discussion on ICT tools
 - Evaluation of this course and suggestions for further training
 - Working together in the future



HERMES Professional development ICT course



- **Texts, corpora and language testing software: Tools for the language teacher**

	DAY 1	DAY 2
9.00-10.30	Introduction	Summary of use of ICT for testing and handout Example of a test
10.30-11.00	<i>COFFEE</i>	<i>COFFEE</i>
11.00-12.30	Summary of corpora and concordancing Example of a corpus and its use	HANDS-ON: Learning how to build three types of questions
12.30-13.30	<i>LUNCH</i>	<i>LUNCH</i>
13.30-15.00	HANDS ON: Learning how to access texts and prepare them for incorporation into a corpus	HANDS-ON: Creating your own language tests
15.00-15.30	<i>COFFEE</i>	<i>COFFEE</i>
15.30-17.00	HANDS-ON: Creating your own corpus	Discussion, evaluation and the future



Report on the progress of activities designed to create a stronger interaction between subject area specialists (SAS) and language teachers (LTS) at UCARS



Working group: Etain Casey, King's College London; Hermien Miltenburg, University of Wageningen; Elke Gigl, Universität für Bodenkultur

Activity

Distribution of a questionnaire designed to measure the current level of interaction between SAS and LTS, and the attitudes of both groups towards developing areas of common ground and co operation.

Methodology

In June of 2001 we sent out a questionnaire to the institutions on our HERMES mailing list with the exception of UK institutions. These we plan to investigate in year 2. On this occasion, we also mailed directly to Language Centre Administrators and language teachers and asked them to distribute the forms to those colleagues who they knew would be most interested in our survey and most likely to respond, both SAS and LTS. We did this as we were aware that in many institutions the relationship between SAS and their colleagues is a sensitive one and for this reason we were concerned to proceed diplomatically. However, we were most keen to receive replies from the SAS as we had already received quite a lot of information on the situation of LTS from previous questionnaires and personal contacts. The questionnaire itself contained a number of open-ended questions which we hoped the SAS and LTS would take advantage of to express attitudes to teaching and learning languages at UCARS.

Results

Responses were received from the following personnel:

<u>Institution</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Language of instruction</u>
ESA Angers	Oenology	English/French
BOKU Vienna	Glycobiology	German
BOKU Vienna	Conservation Bio.	German
BOKU Vienna	Genetics	German
BOKU Vienna	Molecular Bio.	German
BOKU Vienna	Molecular Bio.	German
BOKU Vienna	Applied Virology	English/German
BOKU Vienna	Agronomy	German
BOKU Vienna	Organic farming	German&English
BOKU Vienna	Biotechnology	German
BOKU Vienna	Agric. Marketing	German/English
BOKU Vienna	Forest products mktg	German
Wageningen	Process Engineering	Dutch/English
Wageningen	unknown	Dutch /English
Wageningen	Food technology	Dutch
Wageningen	Food Engineering	Dutch
Wageningen	Soil&Water Conserv.	English
Wageningen	Nutrition/epidemiology	Dutch/English
Wageningen	Dairy technology	English
Wageningen	Biology animal prod.	Dutch
Wageningen	Aquatic Ecology	Dutch/English
Wageningen	Microbiology	Dutch/English
Hohenheim DE	Farming/rural systems	English
Hohenheim DE	Animal prod. tropical	German/English
Nitra Slovakia	Mechanised production	Slovak
Godollo	Process Control	English
IASI Romania	Plant physiology	Romanian
IASI Romania	Fruit production	Romanian
BOKU Vienna	Teacher of German	
Godollo Hungary	Teacher of German	
Godollo Hungary	Teacher of English	
Brno	Teacher of English	
Brno	Teacher of English	
Brno	Teacher of English	
Wageningen	Teacher of English	
Parma	Teacher of German	
Hohenheim	Teacher of German	
NITRA	Teacher of English	
NITRA	Teacher of German	
Poznan	Teacher of English	
IASI Romania	Teacher of German and Russian	

Preliminary Findings

The responses to the questionnaires produced a wide range of opinions on the relationship between language centres and SAS, the role of internationalism in universities and the merits and demerits of using English as a medium of instruction. The working group will analyse:

- instances of good practice in co operation between SAS and LTS
- factors which prevent co operation
- opportunities for SAS to make use of LTS expertise in communication to devise teaching material and for their own communicative ability in the target language of instruction

Plans for year 2

- to hold a conference to which SAS and LTS will be invited from UCARS in order to discuss best practice for stronger interaction. Advice from our contact LTS and administrators advises us that this would best be done as an adjunct to a larger AFANet event where interested SAS would already be present.
- to distribute a follow-up questionnaire to our respondents based on the results of the meeting
- to distribute a questionnaire to UK UCARS institutions
- to hold a workshop with the SAS currently working on the Minerva Case Studies project (Philip Cain, University of Newcastle) at which the LTS will work on the specific linguistic and cultural issues in these case studies if they were used with non native English speakers in a language class ie vocabulary; geographical and economic terminology; form of instructions for students; instructions; outcome e.g. documents, presentations; assessment criteria.

Outcomes

The topic of this study is of great interest not only to university teachers and students in Europe but to university financial and strategic planners. We hope to produce a series of papers analysing our discussions and results and to publish them.

We will produce adaptations of the MINERVA case studies specially prepared for use by LTS with advice from SAS.

Dissemination

We will use the AFANet network ie websites, newsletters and conferences to disseminate the results of our survey and conference reports.

We will also aim to publish in university journals and the education press throughout Europe.

Etain Casey, King's College London



HERMES Activities Year 2: provisional programme



Activity	WP	Languages	responsible	location	Date
Professional Development Course for teachers of English and French (general)	2	English, French	Etain, Johann, N.N.	Tübingen	end February
Professional Development Course: “Case studies and Internet case studies in Language teaching” (English and German)	2, 3 and 4	English, German			
Professional Development ICT course: “Texts, corpora and language testing software: tools for the language teacher”	3 (and 2)	all (comm.: English)	Hermien, Lisa Lena		

Workshop on key curriculum research on language levels and assessment	1	(all) English, German	Judit, Ildikó	Gödöllő	
Production of reader German		German		-	
Production of reader English		English		-	
Workshop SARS	4	all (comm.: English)			
Annual conference	all		Johann	Tübingen	end June