

## **HERMES ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

### **Tübingen, 18 to 21 July 2003**

#### **Saturday 19.7. 2003, beginning at 9.30 a.m.**

The items on the agenda were not covered in the order that was planned, due to it being uncertain when Etain Casey would be arriving. Thus they were covered as minuted.

#### **1. Welcome**

Johann Fischer welcomed everyone and gave a short description of Tübingen and its university. Some materials on the city of Tübingen and the university are available for those who don't have the information. The university was founded 1477 and had its 525<sup>th</sup> anniversary last year, i.e. it is one of the oldest universities in Germany and also one of the largest ones (20 000 students).

Johann presented the agenda (see **annex 1**) and what we shall do over the next two days.

- We need to discuss what we have done over the last year and what we will do next year (some workshops have taken place and some not)
- Two workshops will take place in September, one in Gödöllő and one in Bologna
- AFANet has run for 7 years now (3 years + 1 dissemination year; + 3 years), we have applied for a dissemination year starting in October 2003
- We want to hand in a new proposal for a new TNP for 2004-2007; we will spend considerable time on these project proposals tomorrow; talk about ideas for a new project (continuing AFANet and a TNP, applying for a Minerva or a LINGUA project)

Johann presented AFANet in more detail and how Hermes fits into it. He then presented the four workpackages of Hermes and referred to the handout (**annex 2**):

WP1: The idea is that we will rewrite the levels and descriptions that have been given for general skills and adapt them to LSP and then calibrate them with our colleagues in the different partner universities.

WP 2: Here we emphasize the use of task-based teaching and case studies; we have run around 20 workshops during the last few years. Hopefully we can develop this to cover Spanish also.

WP 3: A very successful course was held in Vienna last year; now we are spending more time finalising the materials and developing them in German.

WP4: A questionnaire was sent out to language teachers and SARS and then the results were analysed. We also ran a course with a specialist and a language teacher, which was very enlightening.

The Newsletter was sent out in the spring and includes some information on the activities; another newsletter will go out around September.

The activities this year: it was tricky to organise the workshops for a number of reasons – you are dealing with people from 3-4 different countries with different academic years and

different commitments. Next year we will market the courses to individual institutions and then fill up the places with people from other institutions.

There have also been problems with Nancy as the coordinating institution for AFANET, in particular related to financial matters.

## **2. Report on workpackage 1: Assessment and certification**

Ildikó Tóth presented workpackage 1 activities

A workshop was held last September in English on receptive skills (reading and listening). This year the feedback was analysed and the follow-up workshop was devised and will be held in September concentrating on productive skills (writing and speaking). This has now been developed into a more interactive mode, including more discussions. She presented the structure of the workshop, which is included here as a handout (**annex 3**). She also asked for any suggestions concerning the programme.

## **4. Report on workpackage 3: Professional development ICT courses**

Hermien Miltenburg presented workpackage 3 activities and Lisa Lena Opas-Hänninen added some comments to this.

Hermien presented the course as it was held in Vienna last year (handout distributed at Conference). She then discussed the ways in which the material has been improved during the current year and what still remains to be done in terms of producing the material also in German.

*Lunch break*

## **3. Report on workpackage 2: Professional development courses for language teachers at UCARS**

Johann Fischer reported on workpackage 2.

He explained about case studies, in particular setting up a case study and a simulated conference. A considerable amount of material has been collected on global simulations, simulation products and case studies for LSP teaching. These are used as examples on the professional development courses. These have been developed for English and German and now the group has started to run these in French and Italian. Johann and the French teacher from Tübingen reported on the workshops.

## **8. Use of case studies in language teaching**

*The role of subject teachers in the Slovenian Problem-Based Learning*

Marija Lešnik reported on the role of subject teachers in the Slovenian Problem-based Learning. She explained how the course was set up and what the cooperation between the specialist and herself had been. (**annex 4**)

Ilkka Marjomaa commented that we should tie all the aspects that we have spoken about together and make sure that we highlight how they are connected in the next application.

### **Sunday 20 July beginning at 9.30 a.m.**

Because British Airways did not fly yesterday, Etain Casey's presentations have been cancelled. Johann Fischer will therefore summarise her presentations.

### **3. Report on workpackage 2**

Johann summarised Etain's report on activities within workpackage 2 to date (**annex 5**) and added information on activities for teachers of German, French and Italian:

Professional development course for teachers of English in Moscow, financed through a Tempus project at the University of Hohenheim.

A variety of materials on agricultural and other topics were used. The structure of the course was the normal: theoretical and practical parts, and case-studies were also used (the city farm material).

Global simulation scenarios – real need to put together these materials

Hohenheim: Professional development course for German and French. The French course was very successful, but the German was not so good, mainly due to the constellation of the participants – there were two main kinds of people, those who wanted to participate and those who just wanted to listen. A lesson is that it is important to see who is in the group and what they want/expect.

Nitra: German and English on the use of case-studies. A 2-day course, cheaper for the participants. What are case studies, how to make them; one day on paper-based case studies, one day on internet-based case studies; internet and cd-rom material.

Participants were more interested in the creation process, especially how to develop internet case-studies. Perhaps we might incorporate some skills related to the creation of websites into the professional development courses that specifically focus on internet-based case studies. Simon pointed out though that we must remember to highlight the need to design your site carefully.

Italian: in Tübingen. (Johann talked about it yesterday).

French and Italian (case studies) in Bologna in September.

### **5. Report on Workpackage 4**

Johann summarised Etain's draft document for discussion (**annex 6**).

A questionnaire on the cooperation between language teachers and subject area specialists.

Teachers: German and English, from Vienna, Wageningen, Gödöllő, Parma, Nitra, Posnan, Hohenheim, among others

Subject area specialists: Angers, Vienna, Wageningen, Hohenheim, Nitra, Gödöllő, Newcastle, Joensuu, among others

A detailed analysis of the results from Newcastle is forthcoming.

Model for a distance learning course in case studies using team teaching between language teacher and SAS (see annex 6: section 2); organised a distance learning course using WebCT. The students felt that they were not using English to the extent that they could have, because they were a completely German group and could discuss this amongst themselves; one suggestion was that perhaps this course could be set up so that students from different countries were to take the course at the same time and could communicate in English; students also seemed to focus more on the content side of the course and forgot that they were also on a language course.

One of the problems related to internet based courses (distance learning ones) is that in language departments where many teachers are part-time employed, it would in effect mean that they would be setting up sites more or less in their own time and such skills are not common among language teachers.

Perhaps these courses could also add a session in which the students are asked to reflect on the learning process in the hopes that this would also stimulate them to further development.

Etain prepared a list of criteria for assessing a presentation (see annex 6: section 2). One set of criteria for the written report and one set for the presentation.

A set of guidelines for web case study writers in English was also prepared.

Use of case studies in language studies

Johann gave a short introduction to two case studies (which were then also viewable on the computer at the coffee break), one in English and one in German.

English: "London's markets"

Students react to these in many ways, particularly on the basis of their competence, some don't read all materials, some do and others go beyond the material.

German: „Nitrofen zum Frühstück“

A standard letter for clearing copyright is being produced by Simon Heath for us to use as we use materials for case studies.

## **9. Quality in project proposals**

*Simon Heath: Application writing*

What makes a successful project application?

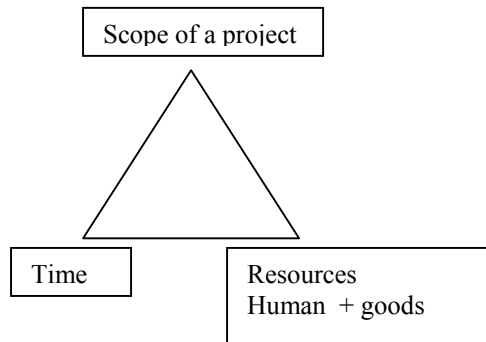
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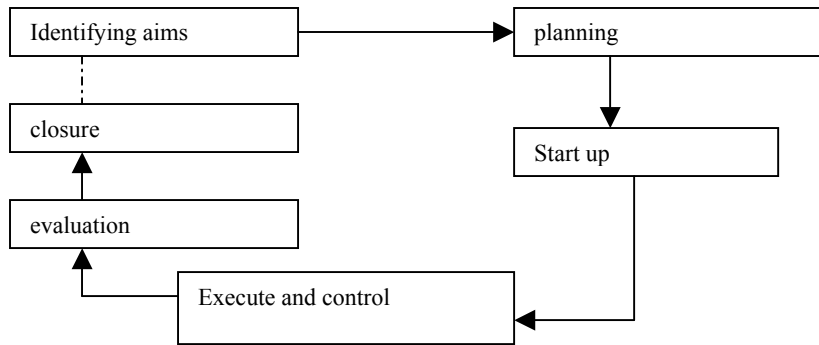
The Minerva application in particular.

What is a project?

- short term activity, with a start and finish
- require a number of partners involved, from different cultural backgrounds
- distance between us; email, meetings and socialization
- poorly funded, call upon resources of the institution and time of partners

scope of a project





## Project planning

### Content planning

- what are you going to produce
- quality indicators
- how are you going to evaluate it

### Planning the organisation of the project

- how are the activities going to be spread over the time
- what kinds of people do you need to carry it out

### Planning human interaction

- who is going to do what
- firm commitment in writing are needed
- what potential conflicts may arise, where are the weaknesses in the project, who are most likely to let you down

### Planning contacts within the environment of the project

- how do you relate to your bosses, your technical support, etc.

### Financial and administrative planning

- has to be done at the project application stage

### Minerva application

- make sure that you are conforming to the aims of the European Union
- promote an understanding on the potential to use open and distance learning
- promote access, improve educational resources
- does the project fit this?? Begin by reflecting on what it is that you want to do and then look at the objectives of the different programmes
- think of the people who will be evaluating your application; the language that you are writing in is not necessarily the language of the assessors; use bullet points, simple sentences, avoid acronyms
- remember the limitations of the assessors' time
- Begin by writing the summary (p. 3)
- Next, go to section 4 (p. 15-19)

- Objectives should have action verbs that can then later be tested, e.g. we will produce x, or we will train x; at the end you can then say, yes, we did produce x, we did train x
- Who are the partners?
- What is your workplan? No project adheres to these timetables exactly, but as long as the outcomes have been fulfilled, this is not a problem

The Commission unfortunately is slow in evaluating the projects.

*Ilkka Marjomaa: Evaluation criteria*

Ilkka: see **annex 7**

- not exactly foolproof
- enormous amount of applications, 15 +/- 5 minutes for each proposal
- keep the proposal simple, straightforward
- make sure you spice it with the formulations that they want to hear, keywords

Main points:

- what will you achieve together? More than separately
- what is the project built upon; based on the commonalities
- even though there is novelty, what makes it realistic and concrete
- subsequent work; expansion and deepening of cooperation, including leading into a new project

It was enlightening to hear the viewpoint of the assessors and the actual practical aspects of assessing the proposals.

*Lunch*

The afternoon was spent discussing various possibilities for continuing after the dissemination year. These included a TNP 3 and a Minerva project. The general feeling was that it would be best if we could continue both in a TNP and apply for a Minerva project, because these would compliment each other nicely.

Johann Fischer  
(HERMES Co-ordinator)

Lisa Lena Opas-Hänninen  
(Minutes)



## Annual Hermes Conference Tübingen, 18 to 21 July 2003



### AGENDA

Friday, **18 July**: 7.30 p.m – *informal meeting and dinner at Restaurant “Marquardtei”*  
(Herrenbergerstr. 34, Phone: 07071/43386)

Saturday, **19 July**: beginning at 9.30 a.m.:

1. Welcome
2. Report on **workpackage 1: Assessment and certification**  
(Ildikó Tóth)
3. Report on **workpackage 2: Professional development courses for language teachers at UCARS** (Etain Casey)

*Lunch: 1.00 p.m. – Restaurant “Unckel”*  
(Wilhelmstraße 17, Phone: 07071/254374)

4. Report on **workpackage 3: Professional Development ICT Courses**  
(Lisa Lena Opas Hänninen, Hermien Miltenburg)
5. Report on **workpackage 4: Research on the most appropriate methods to develop a stronger interaction between language teachers and academic staff** (Etain Casey)
6. **Dissemination** (all)
7. Dr. Marguerite Böttner: **“Language and more: arrivals”**

*Dinner: 8.00 p.m. – Restaurant “Zum Gutenberg”*  
(Lange Gasse 52, Phone: 07071/26563)

Sunday, **20 July**: beginning at 9.30 a.m.:

**8. Use of case studies in language teaching**

- Report on activities in year 2002/03 (Etain Casey)
- The role of subject teachers in the Slovenian Problem-Based Learning (Marija Lešnik)

**9. Quality in project proposals:**

- Application writing (Simon Heath)
- Evaluation criteria (Ilkka Marjomaa)
- New project proposals
  - New TNP application years 2004-2007 (Johann Fischer)
  - MINERVA application years 2004-2007 (Johann Fischer)

*Lunch: 13.00 p.m. – Restaurant “Ritter”  
(Am Stadtgraben 25, Phone: 07071/550751)*

*Afternoon: cultural programme*

- *Boat trip on the Neckar* or
- *Visit to the monastery of Bebenhausen*

*Dinner: to be fixed during conference*

Monday, **21 July**: Departure



## HERMES project

### - 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**

HERMES will create modules for professional development courses for teachers of English, German, French and Italian 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**

HERMES will develop course modules which cater for the needs of ab initio teachers and train them to prepare activities suitable for UCARS students. The group will 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: Research on the most appropriate methods to develop a stronger interaction between language teachers and academic staff**

HERMES will find out the current involvement of subject teachers in UCARS with language work among students and in the delivery of their courses. The group will 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. It will prepare a report on best practice in these areas and encourage closer co-operation and projects between academics and institutions. This will 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.

**Further information:** <http://www.uni-tuebingen.de/hermes/>  
**E-Mail:** [hermes@uni-tuebingen.de](mailto:hermes@uni-tuebingen.de)

## Report on the planning for Hermes Project, Year 2, Workpackage 1: Assessment and certification

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

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

18<sup>th</sup> of August: presenting draft course plan, debate and feedback.

19<sup>th</sup> 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. Fisher.

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:

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### “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

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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.

**Györéne Szabó Judit, Tóth Ildikó**

Chief Examiners of SZIE Examination Centre  
Gödöllő, Hungary

# In order to learn one must have a partner

## (the Talmud)

### Introduction

- *One of the main characteristics of the PBL process is that it integrates students' professional knowledge with the knowledge of English*
- *The language teacher alone cannot cope with the complexity of the problem*
- *The role of the subject area specialist (SAS) in it is therefore undisputed;*

### Key points

- *The seven steps of the PBL process*
- *Description of this year's PBL project*
- *The roles of the SAS matched against the steps in the PBL process*
- *Strengths and weaknesses of this collaborative teaching venture*

### Description of this year's PBL project

- *16 second-year students of the 4-year university level study programme 'GENERAL AGRICULTURE'*

■ *The existing level of English: B2 Vantage*

■ *Level aimed at: C1 Effective Operational proficiency*

### Effective Operational Proficiency - C1 level

■ *Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.*

◆(Global Scale - EU Common Framework)

### This year's PBL project - cont.

■ *Case designed in collaboration with Dr Anton Ivancic, Associate Professor of Quantitative Genetics (2nd year) and Plant Breeding (4th year)*

■ *Students divided into 4 teams to explore a real problem - BIODIVERSITY*

### The seven steps - PBL

■ *1st TEAM MEETING (Phase I: Questioning, Planning)*

- ◆Step 1: Making the problem clear
  - ◆Step 2: Frame/formulate questions and queries (Brainstorming; Why ...? How...? Which.....?)
  - ◆Step 3: Identify current knowledge
  - ◆Step 4: Structure the ideas and identify learning needs
  - ◆Step 5: Form groups, formulate learning aims, distribute assignments
- SAS = PRIMARY KNOWER OF THE CONTENT, PURVEYOR OF INFORMATION, CASE DESIGNER

## Step 6

### ■Independent learning and out-of-class research (Phase II: Gathering)

- ◆Students search for extra knowledge on the learning aims formulated in Step 5;
  - ✦Everyone's knowledge on the topic should deepen;
  - ✦It is the responsibility of everyone to obtain knowledge and new information on the topic

SAS = FACILITATOR, TUTOR, COACH, PROVIDER OF LITERATURE

## Step 7

### ■2nd TEAM MEETING (Phases III, IV: Sorting&Sifting, Synthesizing, Evaluating)

- ◆Everybody in the group describes *how* and *what* they found
- ◆Everybody participates in the phase of discussion, analyzing, inquiring and evaluating his or her knowledge
- ◆On the basis of collected, sorted and sifted data, students go back to Step 3 to check out if it is possible to provide at least tentative answers to original questions. It is now time to discuss action recommendations.
- ◆It is possible that the group may want to develop ideas further and formulate new problems within the topic to increase knowledge.

SAS's ROLE = NONE AT THE MEETING(S); LATER

PROOFREADING OF HANDED-IN DRAFT VERSIONS OF WRs

## Final Step - Assessment

■Students hand in the final versions of the group reports written acc. to the Problem/Solution structure pattern (SFRE);

■Students give a group presentation of 'the big picture' (illuminating, persuasive).

■SAS's ROLE = 'CO-ASSESSOR' OF WRs (CONTENT, ORGANISATION, VOCABULARY) AND ORAL PRES.

What has the SAS gained from collaboration?

- insight into his own teaching techniques /experience with the new approach ('whys and hows' of PBL)
- feedback on how students use knowledge acquired at his classes for solving problems
- insight into what students can do in English
- transition from teacher as information giver to teacher as coach
- found students' excitement about PBL to be rewarding and important
- increased trust in his students' abilities

What have I gained from collaboration?

■A better insight into the subject matter itself

- *Greater confidence and improved contacts with the other two parties involved*
- *A greater certainty that I am teaching the language the students will need in their real lives*
- *Increased importance of the foreign language within the curriculum and better appreciation of what I am doing*
- *Increased awareness that the success of the project depends on how firmly the triangle between the SAS, the LT and the project groups has been formed*

#### **Strengths of Collaboration**

- *planning the subject matter together with the students*
- *viewing learning as a concept in which the social and individual processes are combined (social interdependence is pervasive in our culture)*
- *encouraging a sense of ownership of the process, so students are committed to the outcomes;*
- *encouraging deep rather than surface learning*
- *integration of different areas of knowledge (through collaboration every teacher acquires general knowledge of the integrated topics)*

#### **Strengths cont.:**

- *creating a positive and secure working climate*
- *making students aware of what studying is and what learning is (otherwise they are like being on a conveyor belt - too busy rolling along and keeping on top of things to worry what is all about)*
- *helping students to become more autonomous learners*
- *developing a whole range of transferable skills and facilitating lifelong learning*

#### **Weaknesses**

- *the SAS determined the content via the problem and thus determined the answers (too teacher-centred at the beginning of the process) ↪ the problem initially designed as the end-of-chapter problem, corresponding to Level 1 - Knowledge or Comprehension according to Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives; the SAS defined what was valid knowledge in advance and all other viewpoints were largely ruled out; (however, following the guidelines for carrying out their PBL process, students were later challenged to tackle the problem at Bloom's Level 3 - Analysis, Synthesis and Evaluation level - consequently, also copy-paste strategy was prevented).*

#### **Challenges for the future**

- *help Sts develop their evaluative skills by providing them with suitable assessment tools - find out which work and which do not.*
- *together with Sts negotiate and decide upon such an assessment scheme that will foster their collaboration rather than competition;*
- *apart from assessing a group as a whole, find out how to differentiate individual contributions;*
- *find out how to arrive to a fair final grade of students' linguistic competence;*

#### **Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives**

- *Cognitive level*
- *Evaluation*
- *Synthesis*
- *Analysis*

- *Application*
- *Comprehension*

### ■ *Knowlege*

#### ■ *Student Activity*

- *Making a judgement based on a pre-established set of criteria*
- *Producing sth new or original from component parts*
- *Breaking material down into its component parts to see interrelationships*
- *Using a concept or principle to solve a problem*
- *Explaining/interpreting the meaning of material*
- *Remebering facts, terms, concepts, definitions, principles*

#### **Cognitive levels**

- *Level 1 problem is a typical end-of-chapter problem, at B's Knowledge or Comprehension cognitive level. Generally confined to the topic(s) addressed in the chapter, and all the information needed to solve the problem is given.*
- *Level 2 problem adds a story-telling aspect to the end-of chapter problem. Some decision-making may be involved, placing the questioning at Bloom's Comprehesnion or Application level.*
- *Level 3 problem is a good PBL problem, at B's Analysis, Synthesis or Evaluation levels. Related to the real world, drawing the student into the problem. Not all the information needed is given in the problem, or chapter, or perhaps even in the textbook. Students will need to do some research, discover new material, make their own decisions based on the info learned. More than one acceptable answer.*
- **GOOD PROBLEMS CHALLENGE STUDENTS TO ACHIEVE HIGHER-LEVEL CRITICAL THINKING**

## 2. Report on workpackage 2: Professional Development Courses for language teachers at UCARS. 2002/2003

### **Courses held and piloting of new materials:**

Two courses were held in English during the project year: the first was part of a Tempus project arranged between University of Hohenheim and the Timiryazev Agricultural Academy in Moscow.

### **Aims of the course**

The purpose of this course was to encourage a group of teachers to use all the multi media materials at their disposal, which had been purchased by the project, and to develop new ideas for the teaching of agricultural students.

In addition to my Tempus task, my aim was to use the course as an opportunity to pilot some Hermes case-study materials and explore the teachers' reactions to global simulations .

### **The participants came from :**

Uzbekistan Samarkand Agricultural Institute; Stavropol; Omsk Institute of Veterinary Medicine; Armenian Agricultural Academy Teryan; Tashkent State Agrarian University; Department of Foreign Languages Timiryazev

### **Timetable :** (See attached timetable).

The timetable was adapted from our regular professional development programme to last for 5 days and to take into account that the teachers had travelled very long distances to reach Moscow and would be unlikely to be able to sustain 4/5 contact lessons with students in the afternoon. As a result, there were only three sessions with the students and these were led by the trainer. This turned out to be a good arrangement as every teacher on the course contracted flu and some were confined to bed for most of the week.

### **Materials:**

The teachers were introduced to a variety of materials on agricultural environmental topics:

**Videos** from Defra (Department for environment. food and rural affairs):

`Farm Waste Management plans'

`A growing concern'

### **Publications**

The Problem of erosion in the Uplands of Britain (leaflets)

`Learning English' News to Me ; BBC World Service

'The UK Countryside ' FCO

`Professional Presentations' CUP 1998

`English for Agriculture'

Although the materials were felt to be very useful, there is still a problem in encouraging teachers to try to obtain them. Russian or ex- USSR teachers are reluctant to pursue materials individually, especially from foreign government sources. They are worried about currency conversions and delivery and for this reason tend to rely heavily on publishers who will bring the texts right to their class. The BBC newsletter is a better source for them as it is free and is delivered all over the world and I sent their names and institutions to the supplier. Older teachers were also happier with a coursebook than with adapting materials and thus preferred  
xxxx

## **Methodology**

The participants introduced their institutions and systems ie government directives, books, methods of assessment, entry levels etc at some length , as there was a great deal of variety in their working situations. The group was not aiming at uniformity of approach but the most significant discussion was around that of **language learning profiles** and **literacy** with reference to the Council of Europe levels. The group discussed the inadvisability of training students exclusively in one language competence or another and producing students unsuited to international communication. They also discussed the different emphasis of training students to be translators/interpreters and vocational training. This topic, together with problem-based learning, and the practice of grammar translation, produced a lively discussion.

## **Students' presentations:**

The students were volunteers (?) from the English Language evening class groups which were held at the Language Centre of the university. They were of mixed Intermediate and Upper Intermediate levels and were studying accountancy, business, agriculture (plant technology). The topic they were given for their presentations was:

`The Academy has been invited to take part in an international exhibition called `Agriculture and the Environment 2003'. The focus of the Russian entry will be:

- current problems in agriculture and the environment in Russia
- current methods in agricultural sciences in Russia today

This topic presented the students with some difficulty at first, as they were more used to presenting the positive side of life in class. In the build-up tasks on xxx they were encouraged to listen to a discussion on environmental problems (BBC Learning English CD 2003) by international students. This gave them some confidence and ideas for their own presentation and discussion. They responded to the idea of proposing solutions to the problems which they had identified.

The demonstration classes with this small group were intended to show a different way of working with the students ie using them as a resource for technical information, and not seeking to input information directly or to prescribe what and how they must discuss, and what conclusions they must come to. In feedback with the teachers, this was identified as a desirable method and one which was not currently used in their classes for various constraints specific to their regions and culture.

## **Points for discussion**

Global simulations inspired interest and a follow-up letter from Stavropol. asking for further information/materials. Both simulations and case-studies were received positively although the case-study of City Farms was thought to be irrelevant in content as most Russian youngsters (and Armenian and Siberian) are not as urbanised as their European counterparts and thus have easy access to the countryside.

There is a real need to put together a variety of global simulation scenario for teachers to choose from and develop. This may defeat the object of the simulation growing out of normal classwork but the fact of the matter is that not all teachers are very imaginative or creative in this way and would really appreciate a little help in this very innovative methodology.

In the same way, teachers are favourably disposed to the process and the results but they need a range of case-study topics to try out which fit their culture, and at different language levels and this is a valuable area for our future Hermes work.

Etain Casey  
London July 2003

*DRAFT DOCUMENT FOR DISCUSSION*

**'A handbook of best practice for Language Teachers (LTS) and Subject Area Specialists (SAS) working on courses for students at Universities of Agriculture and Related Sciences (UCARS).'**

**Contents**

**Section 1.**

Background to the project  
The benefits of co operation:  
Survey results from Language Teachers  
Survey results from Subject Specialists and students.  
Conclusion

**Section 2.**

Illustration of LTS and SAS co operation in piloting Web based case- studies:  
A model for distance learning course using team teaching  
Development of assessment criteria guidelines for oral skills.  
Development of guidelines for writers of case-study material  
Conclusion

**Section 3.**

How language teachers work:  
The historical background to language centres at universities;  
Council of Europe Language levels and mobility issues;  
Language support work in universities.  
Conclusion

**Section 4.**

How language materials are prepared:  
How adults learn best;  
Which subject specific problems or scenarios are best exploited for language training;  
How language teachers build in specific vocabulary;  
How students practice skills: listening, writing, speaking..  
Conclusion

**Section 5**

International exchange programmes and independent international students: preparation for study at UCARS.  
Conclusion

**Section 1**

**Background**

During 1998/ 1999:the Hermes group conducted a survey on the situation of language teaching at UCARS. The group was aware that students at UCARS were not usually keen linguists and that they were faced with the challenge of internationalisation in their field of study which made the demands for linguistic competence much more urgent.

This survey produced interesting information on current practice in methodology and assessment from the teacher respondents, and interesting comments from the students respondents (Casey, Fischer Cercles Antwerp September 2000).

What was also evident, however, was the frustration expressed by some teacher respondents about what they perceived as a lack of recognition of the seriousness and difficulty of the work they were doing from their university or college employers, and a lack of status which they felt when they considered their relationships with teaching colleagues in their institution. There were also great differences in the way that teachers made their classes relevant to the students' fields of study from institution to institution.

It was in order to examine this situation and to propose initiatives that the HERMES:group developed a Workpackage as part of our submission to the AFANet proposal for 2001/02:

**'Working to improve communication between subject specialists and language teachers at UCARS and to identify common projects' (Workpackage 4)**

The working group:were from Kings College London, the University of Tuebingen, the University of Wageningen, the University of Agricultural sciences Vienna

The aim of the group was to:

- discover instances of good practice in co operation between SAS and LTS
- identify factors which prevented co operation and ways of overcoming them;
- provide opportunities for SAS to make use of LTS' expertise in communication to devise teaching material;
- to give LTS a greater insight into the intended outcomes and content of SAS teaching to be able to develop relevant activities.

Two questionnaires were distributed to universities and colleges which were members of AFANet.

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.

## Questionnaire on language co operation at UCARS (SAS version)

Subject area specialists (SAS): please fill in this section:

Your name:

Your institution:

What subject do you teach?.....

What language do you lecture in?.....

Do you have speakers of other languages in your classes?.....

Yes/No (please circle)

Do you lecture in a language not your mother tongue? Yes/No

Do you want to be able to do so? Yes/No

Why? Why not? Please comment.....

.....

Could you lecture in another language? Yes/No

If yes which one.....

Do you have any contact with language teachers in your institutions? Please tick where necessary:

1. general contact at meetings, socials etc

2. professional contact in:

a) preparing projects

b) preparing materials

c) sharing courses

d) giving advice on course materials

e) sharing information about students

f) in some other way (please specify).....

Do you think co operation between language teachers and subject area specialists is important? Yes/No

Why? Why not?

Do you think it is important for your students to learn languages?

Why? Why not? please comment

Thank you for your time!

**Questionnaire on language cooperation at UCARS (LTS version)**

Language Teachers please fill in here:

Your name:

Your institution:

Which language(s) do you teach?

Do you have any contact with subject area specialists in your institutions in any of these ways? Please tick where necessary.

1. general contact at meetings, socials etc
2. professional contact in:
  - a) preparing projects
  - b) preparing materials
  - c) sharing courses
  - d) giving advice on course materials
  - e) sharing information about students
  - f) in some other way (please specify).....

Would you like more co operation and advice from subject specialists? Yes/No (please circle)  
Why? Why not?

How do you think they could help you? Please comment:

- a) suggesting reading passages
- b) looking over language syllabuses
- c) planning realistic work situations
- d) suggesting authentic academic scenarios
- e) giving advice on web information
- f) including you in meetings
- g) some other ways.....

Do you think co operation between language teachers and subject area specialists is important? Yes/No

Why? Why not?

Please comment overleaf

Thank you for your time!

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Language</b>
University of Agricultural Sciences Vienna	Teacher of German
Svent Istvan Godollo Hungary	Teacher of German
Godollo Hungary	Teacher of English
Brno Slovakia	Teacher of English
Brno	Teacher of English
Brno	Teacher of English
University of Wageningen	Teacher of English
University of Parma, Italy	Teacher of German
University of Hohenheim	Teacher of German
NITRA,Slovakia	Teacher of English
NITRA Slovakia	Teacher of German
Poznan Poland	Teacher of English
IASI Romania	Teacher of German and Russian

### **Subject Area Specialists (SAS)**

<b><u>Institution</u></b>	<b><u>Subject</u></b>	<b><u>Language of instruction</u></b>
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
<b><u>Institution</u></b>	<b><u>Subject area</u></b>	<b><u>Language of instruction</u></b>
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	RomanianFrance (1)
University of Newcastle		
(13)	Agricultural sciences	English

### **The benefits of co operation between LTS and SAS: Preliminary Findings**

The responses to the first round of 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:

Over half the SAS surveyed had little or no contact with their language centres or language teachers. Those that had contact admitted that it was largely social, at university functions or meetings. Those who consulted language staff professionally did so most frequently for translation of their academic papers or correspondence.. Nearly all SAS emphasised the value of learning English as the language of science .and international communication.

The main trend of the responses was that the SAS wanted their students:

- 'to fully understand the information we are giving in the subject area'
- 'to be aware of international developments'
- 'to be able to communicate orally and in writing'.
- 'to reach accepted competency levels'
- 'to prepare for work in an international context'

Both language teachers and subject area specialists saw opportunities for co-operation in materials development We were aware that our survey must be interpreted from a number of viewpoints. It would reach institutions where :

- the students were on exchange and needed survival skills in the language of the host institution
- the students were resident and needed proficiency in other EC languages

The UK presented a different situation because the majority of students would fall into the first category of undertaking intensive English Language tuition.

From our preliminary findings we knew that English was the most popular language for students, followed by German and French. This confirmed our findings of 1999 (Cercles Antwerp 2000) where respondents had emphasised that English was the international language of science and therefor most in demand at UCARS.

We sent out a second set of questionnaires in early 2002 to the University of Newcastle, UK and the University of Joensuu in Finland .to get a more detailed idea of attitudes in universities where English was the medium of instruction.

## The second questionnaire:

### HERMES Workpackage 4 SAS Results of questionnaires from Newcastle University

Number of respondents	11 (Dept of agriculture)
Contact with language centre?	7 = yes, general, 4=no
Is co operation important?	10=yes,1=no
Should students learn languages?	10=yes,1=no

#### Do you think co operation between SAS and LTS is important?

- desirability of multilingual scientist
- particularly for o/seas students at PG level to help them improve their language using examples from their area of specialism
- in building materials for cross European application
- some scientific data could be in languages not taught so we need language teachers to help. By teaching in another language we can have access to other student groups
- ability to speak another language is an asset when it comes to applying for other jobs
- The English nation has been lazy at learning the language and culture of other people
- where the need is relevant eg regarding students
- helping o/seas students improve their English
- because it improves the communication of staff and students
- to ensure the material provided in language classes is relevant and appropriate and that I am aware of the language problems that o/seas students have.
- prepare students for academic exchange
- few of our students express any interest in working in a non-English speaking country

#### Do you think it is important for UCARS students to learn languages?

- general, overall rounded education, opens opportunities - leisure and career indicates a higher level of academic achievement.
- to experience training in other countries
- agriculture has become a more international subject Many farms are buying land abroad. to have a grounding in a language is a good starting point and at least you can have a language in common, even if it is neither persons native language!
- it may be important if they wish to broaden their opportunities in the future
- an invaluable skill from a professional and cultural point of view. Many agricultural courses have no provision of language modules
- to assist us in developing some language skills when we attend conferences outside the UK
- As a foreigner, I have a job here because I speak another language!
- more balanced Erasmus exchange programmes ie more UK students able to go abroad.
- Not especially: English is very much the International language for scientific meetings, business and internet.
- greater international exchange in science and technology.

## Results of questionnaires from University of Joensuu

Number of respondents	7, Dept of forestry
Contact with language centre?	2=general, 1=prof,4=gen+prof
Is co operation important?	7 = yes
Should students learn languages	7=yes

### **Do you think co operation between SAS and LTS is important?**

- It is essential that LTS understand something of the subject area, for first degree students this is perhaps not so important
- only in so far as developing the curriculum
- more skills are needed in scientific writing and fact (sic)language
- to ask LTS for their opinions and advice on grammatical issues, appropriate vocabulary etc
- improves the quality of reports

### **Do you think it is important for UCARS students to learn languages?**

- international co operation
- international scientific publications
- an increasing number of our students will choose an international career
- EU
- students scientific and practical work are more international
- to benefit career and appreciate other cultures
- many textbooks and articles are in English. English is essential in working in science.

### Preliminary Findings

Our responses from these universities revealed a great deal of enthusiasm for improving the students' abilities in English and in other languages and a desire to co operate with language centres. In conversation with both LTS and SAS we found that Language Teachers broadly aimed at achieving the following:

To prepare students to:

- communicate orally and in writing
- reach accepted competency levels
- work in an international context

Subject specialists were concerned that students

- fully understand the information in the subject area.
- are aware of international developments

### **Conclusion**

We deduced that a concrete example of SAS and LTS would be the best way to develop synergy between the two groups and so we began work with the University of Newcastle, UK which was engaged in a MINERVA project to produce teaching material which would be used by students across Europe. The case-studies were prepared on agricultural topics by SAS in a number of Universities .. Students could access the case-studies by WebCT software and correspond with each other on solving problems. The HERMES group of Language Teachers could usefully perform the following functions:

- we could correct the copy of SAS writing in English to ensure that the information was clear, concise and unambiguous
- we could comment on the clarity of instructions from the point of view of students working in a foreign language and on cultural considerations
- we could translate glossaries of agricultural terms
- we could pilot case-studies in our institutions with a SAS and provide feedback
- we could disseminate our findings among larger groups of LTS and SAS working in UCARS

## **Section Two**

### **A model for a distance learning course in case studies using team teaching (LTS and SAS)**

#### **WP 4 SAS**

##### Piloting

In November 2002 we set up a pilot version with students from the Language Centre at Tuebingen University. The subject specialist was Philip Cain, Department of Agricultural Sciences at the University of Newcastle, and Etain Casey, English Language Centre at Kings College London was the language teacher

##### Aims and objectives

The aim of this model course is to provide students of Agriculture and Related Sciences with an LSP course that corresponds to their needs ie. that takes into account the content of their studies and the linguistic needs of their future academic and professional activities. The course also aims at the development of structures for distance learning and improvement of the students language skills.

This course is intended to demonstrate how language teachers and subject specialists can work together on the design, delivery and evaluation of teaching materials and the assessment of students.

##### Content

The course is based on a case-study which is available on the internet. Students are asked to prepare a proposal for leasing a farm in the UK., to present a written report and a group presentation.

##### Organisation

In a preparatory meeting the students are introduced to the website and tasks and organised into groups. They then work independently on the case study, using email to contact each other, the subject specialist and the language teacher.

In a meeting with the language teacher students work on their interim results and their oral presentations. The language teacher provides feedback and guidance on report writing and presentation skills.

In a third meeting the students present their results to the subject specialist and the language teacher who will discuss the products. The session is filmed and analysed afterwards with the language teacher.

The students will be graded both by the subject specialist and the language teacher, on their oral presentation and their written report

Following the workshop we circulated a questionnaire to the SAS as below

## Hermes

<b>WP 4</b>	<b><i>Research on the most appropriate methods to develop a stronger interaction between language teachers and academic staff</i></b>
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SAS Questionnaire : January 2003 re: Workshop December 2002

Please write freely in response to the following questions:

1. In delivering your case-study information what allowances, if any, did you make for the presence of international students in:

a) the preparation of your teaching material

b) the delivery of your classroom information

c) the assessment of the oral work

the written work

### 2 In Tuebingen

Did you notice any barriers to understanding which were related to:

a) language (give example)

b) culture (give example)

c) other (give example)

3. Before the seminar, what did you anticipate the LT would do?

4. Was this what actually happened?

5. What value was the involvement of the LT in the completion of the case-study work?

6 Can you identify any other areas where cooperation between SAS and LTS might be useful?

7 Did you learn anything new about the international group of students and their approach to the work? What?

8. Any other observations about the experience.

---

**Evaluation of the SAS questionnaire:**

The response indicated that more care was needed in spelling and colloquialisms when using instructions which had originally been designed for the native speaking students. The lecturer was also at greater pains to speak more clearly with the Tuebingen group. He discovered that the students required very rapid feedback as they worked through the case-study and after their presentations. He found the written responses of a high standard and the overall effort and intensity of the students very favourable. He identified three useful functions for the LT:

- interpreting project requirements
- reviewing draft 1 of the written work
- preparing system and project instructions

**Evaluation of the student questionnaires:**

????????????????????

**Evaluation of the LTS experience and models for best practice:**

The presence of the SAS and the LT for the feedback session produced a very high quality response as students were able to get information on their content knowledge and their linguistic skills at the same time. Neither teacher had to comment in detail on the other's area of expertise. The ranking result of performance was also significant in that the linguistic assessment alone would have produced a different result:

Subject Specialist's assessment	Language teacher's assessment
1. Group A	1. Group C
2. Group C	2. Group A
3. Group B	3 Group B

**Development of criteria for assessment of oral skills:**

**Language Teacher**

The following criteria were used to assess the students' presentation work and to provide feedback. These criteria were given to students before they began their presentations:

**Minerva Web-Case Study workshop  
Tuebingen December 2002**

**HERMES Criteria for assessment**

.....

Written report:

Accuracy	10 marks
Usage	10
Sentence structure	10
Business terminology	10
Range of vocabulary	10
Formality	10
Register	10
Conciseness	10
Clarity	10
Effectiveness	10
Total :	100

Presentation:

Selection of material	10
Transfer of information	10
Delivery	10
Teamwork	10
Persuasiveness	10
Accuracy	10
Pronunciation and intonation	10
Fluency	10
Visual aids (if any)	10
Total:	90

The written projects had already been corrected as far as possible before they were submitted to the SAS.

He assessed the projects based on their coherence and appropriacy of information to the task. However, he was working from experience of assessing such work, without providing any written criteria, and on the basis of UK assessment criteria at undergraduate level i.e First class, Upper Second, Lower Second, Third.

This is a common procedure in UK universities but needs adaption for an international student group

## **Development of guide lines for writers of case -studies**

The following advice was produced as a direct result of working with SAS at UCARS and exposure to the editing procedure of the WebCT case-studies

### Guidelines for case-study writers in English

#### KEEP IT SIMPLE

- Be sure to turn on the spellcheck on your computer. If you use American English, use it throughout the text.
- Tell the students clearly what you want them to do. Use simple instruction words such as 'read', 'calculate', 'analyse', 'produce', discuss. Use active verbs rather than passive constructions.

#### KEEP IT CLEAR

- Number the tasks or produce a checklist for students to follow. Make the sequence of activities clear even if you know that different groups are working on them. Use terms such as 'Step One, Step Two..Final Step'.
- Use bullet points for your instructions and write in complete sentences not notes or phrases.
- Apart from when you need specific economic or scientific terminology, you should use everyday conversational English for descriptions and instructions. Avoid wordy introductions to the subject. Get to the point and don't complicate things.

#### KEEP IT CONCISE

- Keep background information as short as possible, perhaps to one or two screens. It is tiring and sometimes confusing to read too much script from the computer.
- Use the grammar check at the end of each paragraph. It will normally suggest that you keep your sentences short. This is good advice and if you can cut the length of sentences this will make easier reading for the students and keep your message clear.
- Make a series of sentences rather than putting all the information into clauses. Begin with the subject of the sentence and keep time information at the end.
- Proof read for minor errors but also read your work out loud to yourself. Does it sound right? Is it what you would tell the students?

#### GOOD PHRASING

- make the relative importance of your instructions clear:  
'you must write x.....' is obviously an essential activity.

'you should write x ..... ' is also essential but is often used as a reminder eg ' you should cover all the points in the report'.

'you can do x.....' is optional eg 'you can include information from these sources (if you want).

Do not use 'could' or 'perhaps' or 'it might be a good idea' when you are giving an essential instruction.

- try to avoid translating all terms into nouns. It will make the text less active and less easy for students to work out what they must do.

### GOOD PUNCTUATION

- Simple punctuation will make your meaning clear. If your sentences are not too long then there will be no need for a lot of punctuation.

### CULTURE

- for native speakers of English, jokes, funny names and cultural references are essential.
  - for most other cultures they are not.
  - for this reason it is best to avoid jokes when giving instructions or examples.
- .....

### Conclusion

Although assessment methods in subject matter differ in UCARS it would be useful for SAS and LTS to provide clear evidence of criteria to see how far they agree in their emphasis. To this end, we are collecting examples of types of task and types of assessment from project partners.

### Section Three:

#### Historical background to language centres at UCARS

Most language centres were created fairly recently in comparison to the age of most UCARS. For this reason, they rarely have optimum space and their staff are preponderately part-time and female with fewer of the benefits enjoyed by lecturers in other departments. Language centres are seen as support services rather than centres of academic research and excellence. Their importance has grown with the demands, encouraged by the European Union, for proficiency in a number of foreign languages

Some Language Centres have compensated for these disadvantages by engaging in projects, joining professional language teaching groups and encouraging staff to undertake further qualifications and self-development. However, the information about language learning and teaching so produced is circulated within the world of foreign language teaching. Debates on methodology and efficiency are carried on inside specific language learning circles and colleagues working in the sciences have no reason or easy means to come across these discussions unless they take up a language themselves. In short, language teachers are not very good at projecting a dynamic and modern image of their work in comparison to say IT professionals and find themselves disadvantaged in bargaining for funding.

## **How language teachers work.**

Previous surveys conducted by Hermes revealed that Language Teachers are often dissatisfied with their status within their institution and with what they consider is a lack of respect for the seriousness and importance of their work. It appeared to the group that one of the reasons for this lack of self esteem was a failure on the part of Language Teachers to explain how they worked and what they did to their colleagues at UCARS. Although every language teacher had attended university and knew roughly how lecturers worked, not all lecturers had ever attended a language class and were unaware of what language teaching involved. To counter this, the group decided to video the interaction of LTS with students and SAS with students to provide an illustration which we could disseminate through our web-site, in conferences and meetings.

We propose that every language centre in UCARS undertakes the same task, choosing their items from the list below, and compiling a short video which represents a real account of classroom practice.

It is important to distinguish this activity from marketing, promotional or other university sponsored filming: the purpose of the film is not to advertise the university or to show classes and teachers in optimum conditions. Neither are they primarily intended to demonstrate student proficiency. In fact, the most useful video would show the teacher working with low level learners in order to demonstrate the difficulty of the task. The videos are intended to record the teaching process, not the surroundings. We identified the following as being of most interest to other colleagues:

- language teachers giving feedback to students one-to-one on any material eg written work, presentations etc
- language teachers explaining a grammar point - to an individual or a whole class.
- language teachers working with small discussion groups.
- language teachers using a video or other visual aid

The equipment required: a video camera and tripod, is available in all universities and filming short sequences in a class requires very little technical expertise. What is important is to decide on what is intended by the film. The following are some suggestions:

- how language teachers stimulate discussion
- what linguistic errors they consider important
- how their teaching relates to the university work students will do
- how they explain vocabulary
- how they promote communication in groups rather than dominating the 'talking time'

## **Section Four:**

### **How adults learn best**

Experience in adopting a task or problem based approach to medical and scientific training has generated the following which can be applied to language learning and shared with LTS .

### **Creating teaching materials: problems and scenarios**

In any joint production of teaching materials with SAS it is important for language teachers to make it clear how they set up a task for language learning as this differs from SAS tasks which are largely designed for learning information or demonstrating the application of that knowledge.. In our work to produce web-based case studies for language learning ,which developed from our work on the MINERVA WebCT project, we devised the following guidelines:

- the students must have a realistic role in the task, either as themselves or as something achievable ie not as a King or a President
- the task must involve a linguistic practice outcome eg a written document or discussion
- the task must have an 'information gap' to encourage interaction in the class rather than solitary work
- the cultural bias of certain tasks and scenarios must be explained clearly and discussed at the outset

### **Building in specific vocabulary**

Research on LAP has produced two schools of thought on learning vocabulary: one group insist that students already know the technical terms but not grammar; another insist that students know how to communicate in the general language but do not recognise or understand subject specific terms.

The SAS we contacted had no opinion on the situation but were very keen that students used the technical language as early as possible in order to understand them when they used it. Technical glossaries embracing all terms are difficult to find for most subjects and impossible to teach but smaller task based collections are easier for the language teacher to compile. We propose that SAS can be extremely useful in examining such smaller glossaries and providing advice.

### **Current materials for developing skills in listening, writing and speaking**

Once again, a short video sequence of students practising a task can illustrate current best practice in language teaching and also give SAS a better understanding of how language levels are classified ie intermediate and higher intermediate which in turn will give them greater awareness and expertise in selecting exchange students and identifying language problems in their students

### **Conclusion**

- The responsibility for presenting a positive image of language teachers rests with the teachers themselves
- use of simple video techniques can project this image and raise awareness among the wider university community of the importance of the language teachers work and modern methodology.
- filming joint initiatives of LTS and SAS can inform other teachers and groups of best practice.

## **Section 5**

### **Preparation for international study:**

**This section draws together best practice in language teaching mentioned so far  
Comments please.....**

relevance of language content to syllabus  
authenticity of tasks  
cultural transfer  
understanding of assessment  
social language skills

**Etain Casey, July 2003**

Annual Hermes Conference  
Tübingen, 18-21 July 2003

## Quality in Project Proposals: Evaluation Criteria

*Ilkka Marjomaa*

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### Structure of Presentation:

1. Evaluation Procedure
2. Personal Experience & Impressions
3. Upshot for the Task at Hand

#### 1. Evaluation Procedure

- eight (8) experts, from Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal and Finland
- applications from a wide variety of fields & many cross-disciplinary ones, so experts also highly heterogeneous (area, age, position, experience in EU projects, personality...)
- the number of proposals large, still processed in three (3) days
- evaluation criteria set and printed on an evaluation form
- proposals allotted from 0 to 40
- some verbal justification per criterion desirable – **at least** as an overall outcome of each assessment
- two (2) assessors evaluated each proposal
- verbal “duels” in wide disagreements
- EU officials presided, allotting work and giving advice
- Officials reserved decision-making power for themselves (?)

#### 2. Personal Experience & Impressions

- criteria open to interpretation
- work-rate fast
- superficiality resultant danger
- officials highly attentive, goading work
- some experts had national bias
- applications heterogeneous: real challenge for fair and uniform evaluation

### 3. Upshot for the Task at Hand

- a **proposal is a message**
- how various **readers who count** understand the message, = its reception, its impact
- strive for a **balance** between *brevity* and *detail*, plus careful formulations to be associated with EU *policies* and framework/programme –specific *objectives*
  
- **my criteria:**
  - (1) Is this generally worth the while? (e.g., would this work be done by the applicants anyway, “routinely” and separately?)
  - (2) How viable is the underpinning idea?
  - (3a) How realistic is the plan?
  - (3b) How ambitious is the plan?
  - (4) Is there enough novelty, especially of the type, which is demonstrably achievable only through collaboration?
  - (5) Is there a distinct likelihood that the benefits can be disseminated outside the circle of the partners?

#### Final Main Points:

1. What the partners will achieve **together**
2. **Foundation** or cornerstones of project
3. For innovative project or novel departure: “still **realistic** and **concrete**”
4. **Continuation**