

The Wulkow Book

Language Learning and Teaching in Higher Education: Mapping the European Landscape

Introduction

This book is about language learning and teaching in higher education in Europe. It aims to provide the first comprehensive picture of the European landscape of language education in Europe. The book will show the many facets of language education, the multitude of structures, approaches, institutional solutions. It aims at providing orientation and guidelines for teachers, administrators and stakeholder in higher education, who wish to introduce new structures, programmes or who are simply interested in improving the quality of their institutions and programmes. This book combines theoretical aspects with very practical recommendations.

The contributors of this book are experienced practitioners from different European countries with different cultural and educational as well as language backgrounds. What unites them is the commitment to supporting and advancing multilingualism in European academia. Reporting first hand on case studies, they want to enrich the discussion on academic language policies and above all provide guideline for best practices.

This book will be an act of identity. There is a culture of language educators in European academia. As the fruit of the annual meetings of directors of language teaching institutions in higher education in Wulkow/Brandenburg, this book will help language educators as well as educational language teaching institutions to find their place and status within academia.

1. Mission statements, statutes and strategy

Language Centres at institutions in higher education in Europe have specific tasks within the single institution. They play a key role in fostering language teaching and multilingualism and are closely connected with many other organisational units. However, the role of language centres within the institutions is not always visible to all involved and the cooperation with the various units is not always clearly stated. Language Policy is often implicit. Successful implementation of a mission statement/statute may help to promote the visibility of the language centre within the institution and outside, to generate secure and long term financing and personnel planning, to define its role within the process of internationalisation and within national and international professional organisations and to describe an appropriate language centre culture.

This chapter therefore has the following objective:

Giving best practice examples of mission statements / statutes of language centres

So what could your article look like?

We propose the following questions as guidelines:

- Does your university already have a mission statement (with a clear vision) or is one currently being developed?
- Are the university's missions and the LC's missions compatible and supported by all stakeholders within the university?
- Is the university language policy clearly defined?
- What was the role of the LC in defining it?
- Are responsibilities within the language policy clearly defined?
- Have there been a needs analysis and a description of the planning process?
- If yes, how are the resources allocated (short-term, long-term)?
- Are the aims clearly defined?
- Does the mission statement / statute play a role in the process of Internationalisation of the university?
- Is support for mobility mentioned and / or defined?

If you feel that your experience in your university or your language centre is an example of best practice, we would welcome a contribution to this chapter. We are interested in narratives and case studies, which may be examples in one specific area, or of a more general nature. They may also address certain issues fully, while leaving other questions unanswered.

Initially, please send a brief description of the case (100 words max.) to

Tom Grainger Tom.Grainger@univ-amu.fr
 Ruth Tobias ruth.tobias@fu-berlin.de

2. Programmes and services

The first contact between a LC and prospective students/learners/clients usually happens because of the language programmes and services the LC offers. They are the core of LCs' activities. In addition to teaching general language or languages for specific/academic purposes a wide range of other programmes and services may be provided, i.e. testing and certification, teacher development, professional and staff development, language advising, tandem learning, intercultural learning, language travel, coaching and translation.

This chapter has three **objectives** that are reflected in each of the contributions:

- to provide an overview of the **range of programmes and services** offered (i.e. external and internal programmes, accredited vs. non-accredited courses, plus the examples given above)
- to explain which **principles and methodologies** are applied to a specific programme in order to deliver the best possible service (e.g. mode of delivery (BL, Face2Face, Distance Learning); curriculum and test design (e.g. pedagogical or research-based principles, needs analysis, stakeholders, CEFR); autonomous and self-directed learning;
- to demonstrate how the programmes are **monitored, evaluated and further developed**

So what could your article look like?

You may want to start by asking yourself the following questions:

- Your LC teaches a lesser-taught language using an innovative learning environment?
- You offer a tailor-made programme in a language for specific purposes?
- You cooperate with local companies or with the public sector to provide coaching in intercultural competencies?
- You implemented a new testing format in your external courses?
- You used student feedback to revise and update the UG curriculum in languages for beginners?
- You created a new syllabus applying a CLIL-approach for a particular Master programme?

If your answer is “yes” or “well, not exactly, but we did something similar....” to any of the above questions, please send a brief description of your case study (max. 100 words) to

Daniela Forapani daniela.forapani@unipr.it
 Regina Mügge regina.muegge@sprachenzentrum.uni-halle.de
 Irmgard Wanner wanner@uni-leipzig.de

The examples given here should inspire you to identify **an example of best practice in your LC**. They may be adapted to your individual situation as needed.

Please keep in mind to refer to the objectives given above and to focus on one specific programme or service only.

3. Research

The quality of language learning and teaching in HE institutions depends on a systematic reflection on the conditions, the goals, the methods and results of the complex didactics of language education. Therefore, language centres in HE education in Europe should have either have a research component or should have the opportunity to cooperate closely with research units/institutions within the universities. There are many research communities focusing on the early learning of languages and on language learning in the secondary sector. In this chapter, we would like to that there also exist successful research communities for language learning and teaching in higher education. Research could take on many different forms. Most language teachers in HE evaluate their courses, the redefine their targets, they reflect on their own practices, they take part in conference and they publish articles about their experiences in the classroom. This means, they perform action research, though they may not use the term or do not see themselves as researchers in the sense of the definition of research communities in science. In addition to that, there is research which goes beyond the scope of teaching and learning practice. This research uses the context of institutional language learning to provide basic insights into the nature of language, learning and culture. In this chapter, we would like to show both types of research affiliated or closely connected to language teaching institutions in higher education in Europe.

This chapter has the following objectives:

- To provide an overview of the way research/action research is associated with or embedded structurally and/or thematically into the work of language centres in HE in Europe.
- To collect examples of good practice of very practical research undertakings.
- To inspire young researchers in the field of applied linguistics. They should discover language centers as laboratories for the creation of a multilingual Europe.

So what could your article look like?

Here are questions as guidelines for case studies:

- What roles does research play in the life of language centre you belong to? How did the centre manage to install a research component? Why did the university decide to install a research component? How does your centre finance research?
- Where and how has research had an important impact on the quality of the programme of the centre?
- How does the centre manage to involve teachers and other staff in research activities?
- What role does research play in the professional development of the centre staff?
- Does your centre conduct research that goes beyond the scope of applied action research? Does the staff of the centre consider itself part of a research community outside language teaching and learning?
- What networks does the centre use to communicate research results to the language learning and teaching community in HE and beyond?
- Do you think that your case study could have an impact on language learning and teaching in HE in general?

We are interested in narratives and case studies, which address one, some or all of the questions above, even if you think that research is not in the major focus of your institutions. The case studies could relate to large international, maybe European-funded projects as well as to small-scale activities by individual teachers, staff members of language centers or associated researchers.

As a first step, please send a brief description (max. 100 words) of the case study which you would like to propose to

Thomas Vogel vogel@europa-uni.de
 Bärbel Kühn bkuehn@uni-bremen.de

4. Structure, organisation and infrastructure

Language Centres in Higher Education only exist within, and as a part of other, bigger organisations. A determining factor in the nature of the relationship between the Language Centre and its parent institution is their respective structures, from both a legal or statutory and a physical point of view. Whilst it is true that we are rarely in a position to create these structures ab nihilo, it is also the case that we can sometimes influence structures so they become satisfactory to our purpose, or inherit them.

Likewise, the infrastructure of a Language Centre will influence its role within the parent institution and the wider environment, and also the way the Language Centre is managed. External or internal constraints may prevent our controlling available infrastructure, but again we may inherit or acquire infrastructure which is adapted or adaptable to our needs and aims.

This chapter aims to illustrate the structural differences that exist by examining different cases in the following categories:

A. Parent institution and organisational structure

What is the nature of the relationship between your LC and its parent institution, from a physical, legal / statutory, financial point of view?

Are you currently satisfied with this structure?

Has this relationship changed in the past, and did this change take place with or without your input / influence or agreement?

What effect(s) has the change had?

B. Infrastructure

What physical space does your LC occupy within your parent institution?

Is the available space adequate for LC purposes, appropriate and appropriately situated?

What equipment is available to be used for LC purposes?

Does the LC share resources/equipment with other departments, and how is the sharing process organised?

How does the LC manage maintenance of its infrastructure (buildings, equipment, networks)?

C. Structure influencing management

To what extent does the existing structure allow you to manage your LC as you wish?

Do external / institutional structural constraints enhance or restrict your managerial freedom?

Are you structurally part of the management team of your parent institution, or is this a possible evolution?

We are interested in receiving accounts of your experience in any of the above areas, or indeed in any aspect of structure and infrastructure in Language Centres. If you would like to share your experience by contributing to the chapter, please send a brief description of your case study (in approximately 100 words per case) to:

Andrea Koblizkova andrea.koblizkova@upce.cz
 Jacqueline May may@hdm-stuttgart.de
 Tom Grainger tom.grainger@univ-amu.fr

You will receive further instructions from the Editorial Committee as to the length and structure of your contribution and the deadline for handing it in.

5. Management

Satisfactory and coherent management is a recognised necessity for Language Centres in Higher Education.

Human resource management, whether this concerns teaching or support staff, must be prioritised as only a challenged, recognised and rewarded staff can offer leading edge learning environments. Human resource management reflects the explicit and/or implicit social culture of an organisation and gives an insight into management philosophy and style. This is an important vector of internal and external communication and leads to a shared view of the language centre's mission and scope.

Management, together with their staff, is responsible for **quality assurance and quality development** through designing, implementing and exploiting appropriate guidelines and procedures. These are enhanced by external quality assessment structures and procedures.

Management is also usually responsible for **funding and budget** which should reflect wider institutional policies and management.

Last but not least, good management always involves adequate internal and external **communication and marketing** for stakeholders.

This chapter has **three** main **objectives**:

- to provide an overview of the **guidelines and procedures** offered in each facet of management mentioned above (i.e. recruitment procedures or staff development activities; quality handbook and quality assurance procedures; principles and procedures of budgeting and financial control; communication philosophy and communication formats like face to face communication, interviews, newsletters, etc)
- to explain which **principles and philosophies** are applied to specific management activities and how they are linked to mission statements and/or strategic goals of the institution as a whole (e.g. staff development as part of the institution's culture and conforming to human resources regulations)
- to demonstrate how management activities are **carried out, evaluated and further developed**

If you would like to contribute to this chapter you may want to start by asking yourself the following questions:

- How is Human Resource and Quality Management organised and who is involved?
- What are the principles underlying it and how have they been developed?
- Who is involved in budgeting and financial control?

- Is there an overall communication strategy and if so – how is it being implemented?

The answers to these questions could inspire you to identify **an example of best practices in your LC** that you would like to present in this chapter. You can describe your approach to one or several of the four facets of management mentioned above. The questions may also be adapted to your individual situation as needed, but should focus on the objectives given above.

If you would like to share your experience by contributing to the chapter, please send a brief description of your case study (max. 100 words per facet) to

Sigrid Behrent Sigrid.behrent@upb.de

Brendan Keenan brendan.keenan@entpe.fr

Sabina Schaffner sabina.schaffner@sprachen.uzh.ch

You will receive further instructions from the Editorial Committee as to the length and structure of your chapter and the deadline for handing in articles.

Please send general comments and suggestions to the editorial committee:

Tom Grainger
Brendan Keenan
Sabina Schaffner
Thomas Vogel

Template for Abstracts (in English)

Author(s):

Collaborators: Who in your institution assisted you in writing the case study?

Institution:

Contact: Email of contributor

Chapter: Name of the chapter

Sub-chapter: Name of the sub-chapter

Title of case study:

Key words:

Abstract (150 words):