

LACS Expert Meeting, 19-20 April 2011

Notes from the meeting

Tuesday 19 April

1. Review and update on Aims 2010-11

Discussed and refreshed. Much has been done, including data for the publication. However, we must now focus on the project outcomes.

Thanks to be passed to Tatjana!

Action (Tatjana?)

- Copy MARILLE item from first newsletter to Resources – ECML Projects (where Conbat is).
- Add list of rest of ECML Projects with weblinks here.

2. Annual Plan 2011-2012

Agreed.

3. Conference participation, Graz September 2011

It was agreed that Daniel Xerri should be invited, and he is available.

Action

- Terry to complete form and inform Daniel

Action (Terry and Marianne)

- Produce Powerpoint presentation which can be used by Marianne in Winterthur and Terry in Graz. This should include:
 - what is the LACS project?
 - results of the first survey (distributed twice)
 - additional information from the March 2011 survey to respond to other aspects of LTA work can be integrated into the above, e.g. what is a language teacher association? how they support teachers? how they influence policy? problems faced?
 - what have we learnt about the concepts of dissemination and impact evaluation? (including references to relevant literature)
 - information about the online publication
 - information about sustainability (blog etc)

4. Blog

The idea of the blog was accepted as a more dynamic and interactive way of disseminating than the newsletter. It would facilitate easier flow of information from teachers across the world, and across languages, and would encourage sharing of ideas. It also allows ECML projects to be fed through to teachers, and teachers to discuss their experience of them.

Action

- TL to speak to TA
- ECML to send ideas for design (graphics)

Action (Tatjana with Terry)

- can we have three kinds of blog? 1. informal, spontaneous, general, multilingual; 2. formal, organised, focused on specific topics of interest; 3. language specific. Can there be different spaces for these (like rooms)?

- discussions should cover aspects of language teaching and learning (e.g. developing speaking skills in the classroom) AND issues for language teacher associations (e.g. how to get finances and sponsorship).
- we can easily access keen people to lead discussions on specific topics from our membership.
- we need to monitor postings for information on events and transfer to a calendar.
- our associations will need to push this blog and ensure that members are aware of it and its benefits.
- ECML should also be included as they can add information about their projects.
- What is the advantage of wordpress compared with, for example, moodle?
- eventually we would like to gradually introduce webinars; perhaps the ECML conference could provide one topic for this?

5. Folder

The format was agreed and we worked on the content, including logo.

Action

- Produce draft of flier (TL) and circulate for comment (including to Suzanne by next week) (front page to have logos)
- Translations needed (MH/JZ) by 6th June
- Thought also needs to be given to the banner – will need shortening to contain three languages (combine introductory sentence and what the publication consists of.) (ECML to do)

Action

- send any potential photos for the folder to Michael by Friday 6th May
- send IDV/FIPF logos to Michael by 6th May in the highest resolution possible
- find photo for front cover (MH to circulate any ideas before 6th May)
- JZ/MH send TL five lines about FIPF and IDV; TL writes same about FIPLV (by 29th April)
- complete text for folder: LACS pages and sentences on associations and ECML
- complete text for flier (as above but including associations on same page)

6. Publication

We must individually take responsibility for different sections. The general approach from section 4 onwards is to have a text containing general principles of effective practice, plus case studies and other examples.

Action

- complete sections as follows:
 1. Introduction to the LACS project, including its place within the overall programme and concept of empowering professionals (TL)
 2. Definition of language teacher associations (SJ)
 3. Rationale for membership of a language teacher associations, including a one page 'handout' containing '10 good reasons for joining your language teacher association' (SJ)
 4. Recruitment and retention activities and resources (including links to publicity documents, leaflets, posters etc) (MH)
 5. Dissemination through events (principles and case studies) (SJ/JZ)
 6. Website development (principles and case studies) (TL)
 7. Publications (principles and case studies) (MH)
 8. Involvement in policy (principles and case studies) (TL)

9. Involvement in research (principles and case studies) (TL)
10. Fundraising (principles and case studies) (JZ)
11. Useful collaborations (principles and case studies) (JZ)
12. Evaluation:
 - i. of events (including examples of evaluation questionnaires etc) (SJ)
 - ii. of impact (TL)

- we discussed the following approach:
 1. pass on to each other our own ideas for each section, including recommendations for additional case studies, documents etc
 2. look through the latest questionnaires (see google docs)
 3. look through the questionnaires from the first survey (see google docs for excel file)
 4. look through the notes from the workshop, (including the grid containing ideas for the 'how to ' manual), which participants filled in
 5. contact people who offered to write case studies (see notes, 4 above) – approximately 500 words? (see below* for who does what)
 6. contact people who have written something in the surveys which we may want to write more about
 7. circulate our drafts to each other to include additional ideas
 8. all must be available in three languages
- we need to send out a reminder to fill in the questionnaire and make sure that our own associations have done it too
- everything needs to be completed by 6th June and sent to ECML
- it will appear as a PDF so we need to prepare this in three languages; case studies and handouts need to appear as bookmarks; links to other websites, e.g. for documents from other associations, will be a weblink
- timeline for completion:
 1. send details of formatting to team (TL)
 2. circulate questionnaire again (see below** for suggested text to accompany forwarded email)
 3. look through all available data (see above) to decide which people we might invite to write case studies
 4. write to request case studies by 29th April (about 5 or 6 per topic)
 5. request case studies to be returned by 9th May
 6. first COMPLETE draft of everything to be circulated: 16th May
 7. drafts with comments to be returned to authors: 23rd May
 8. completion of all texts ready for translation: 29th May
 9. completion of all principles sections in three languages; proofreading of case studies written in our own languages: 5th June
 10. TL send to ECML: 6th June

* sheets were distributed during the meeting

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Dear colleagues,

Many thanks to those of you who have completed the LACS questionnaire. If you haven't yet done so, it isn't too late. We are now in the last phases of producing our online publication to support the organisation of language teacher associations and would like to include as many of your ideas as possible in this.

We would be very pleased if you could send us your responses within the next couple of weeks, preferably by the 9th May. We will then be putting the finishing touches to the publication before we organise the translation into all three languages (French, German, English).

We will be in touch with some of you in addition to this as we are still collecting case studies and examples of specific practices to illuminate the handbook.

It is worth pointing out that this questionnaire is different from the one you completed two years ago, so if you returned one then, we would still appreciate your ideas this time.

All the very best

Terry

7. Dissemination activity

Presentations at IDV (Winterthur), FIPF (Prague), FIPLV (Helsinki) were discussed, as well as ECML conference and publications.

Blog has also been discussed.

8. Future steps and sustainability

The blog has been discussed as a way of sustaining the LACS collaboration. Potential platforms were discussed, and its identity. It should be available for all members of the three associations and for ECML.

ECML Impact Survey completed.

Action

- report of the meeting
- when completed, inform people that they can continue to contribute to the case studies and ideas as they will appear on the website