

LEARNING FROM EACH OTHER: A HANDBOOK FOR LANGUAGE TEACHER ASSOCIATIONS

SECTION 1

INTRODUCTION

1. Empowering Language Professionals: the LACS Project (Language Associations and Collaborative Support)

The LACS Project was developed at the European Centre for Modern Languages in Graz with a view to supporting the work of language teacher associations in Europe and beyond whilst raising classroom teachers' and teacher trainers' awareness of the work carried out in ECML projects.

The central idea is that through collaboration, whether with other teachers, other associations, other organisations and institutions, or policy makers, there is increased access to support, whether the focus is on teaching, teacher training, curriculum development, research, administration, or political impact. Support comes from shared ideas and strategies, from access to additional sources of funding, and from enhanced contact with a broad spectrum of other teachers, learners, language teacher associations and other organisations (such as the ECML) around the world. It also comes from more effective dissemination of new language pedagogies, including teaching and learning methodologies as well as language policies and curricular models appropriate to the 21st century.

This project, then, offers a double layer of support. Through offering support to language teacher associations, or rather through facilitating support by encouraging collaboration, the project is able to enhance support for teachers themselves and, of course ultimately, for language learners. Such support extends also to representation of teachers at a policymaking level, through which teachers' voices can be heard and their ideas taken into consideration in order, hopefully, to make their working conditions more conducive to effective learning and teaching.

It is through such collaborations and support that the project contributes to the overall theme of the ECML programme, which is Empowering Language Professionals. Language Professionals in this project means not only those who work in schools and training institutions, but those who work to support the profession in language teacher associations. Through the ideas which have been contributed by other associations, these professionals can develop strategies to have their voice heard more loudly in language policy and curriculum development arenas, at local, regional, national and even international levels.

2. Who is involved?

LACS is coordinated by three major international federations of language teacher associations. FIPLV (the International Federation of Language Teacher Associations) was formed in Paris in 1930 and is the only international multilingual association of teachers of languages. FIPLV is a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) official partner of UNESCO (consultative status) as well as having NGO status with the Council of Europe. As a federation of language teacher associations, national and international, unilingual and multilingual, it is at the hub of a wide range of member and associated organisations and institutions and only exists to cooperate with them in order to support teachers and promote multilingualism. It is experienced in the skills and challenges of cooperation and aims at promoting new opportunities for cooperation whenever possible, for example through supporting and advising on the formation of new national and international associations. Through its ever-increasing number of constituent associations, it enables the sharing of expertise and experience which, by its very nature, adds value to the (often voluntary) efforts of those committed to the same aims.

In this project, FIPLV is collaborating with two of its members, who are themselves major federations of language teacher associations with hundreds of member associations around the world. FIPF (the International Federation of French Teachers) was established in 1969, and brings together over 80,000 teachers of French (as first, second and foreign language) through the 180+ associations in about 140 countries which are FIPF members. IDV (the International Association of German Teachers), similarly represents the interests of some 250,000 teachers of German through approximately 100 teacher associations in 85 countries.

Through their constituent members, these federations have unrivalled access to language professionals not only across Europe, but also globally. They are committed to promoting the teaching and learning of languages, to improving the quality of language teaching, to developing continuity and cohesion of inclusive and lifelong multilingual education, to supporting, both directly and indirectly, language teachers and other professionals involved in language teaching, and to encouraging the development of effective and supportive networks of teachers both within and across its member associations. They thus embrace all of the themes included in the ECML's second medium-term programme (linguistic and social diversity, communication in a multicultural society, professional development and innovative approaches to teaching and learning).

3. The Project Aims and Objectives

The primary aim of the LACS project was to add value to the work of individual language teacher associations through encouraging collaboration and sharing of expertise. In addition, it provided an opportunity to showcase ECML projects to all of the teachers and trainers at the chalkface who are members of these associations, providing them access to the innovative practices and resources which these projects had developed.

The specific project objectives were defined as follows:

1. To disseminate to a wide European audience (and beyond) innovative and effective developments and projects, initially focused around the work carried out under the auspices of ECML.
2. To map the ways in which a wide range of language teacher associations are organised (nationally, regionally and locally) in order to support their own networks of members through practical interventions (workshops, publications, newsletters, websites and web fora etc.) as well as through opportunities to influence policy towards the development of a vibrant, high quality and inclusive environment in which multilingualism can flourish.
3. To create spaces in which associations can interact, both face to face and virtually, in order to optimise the impact of their efforts.
4. To produce materials to support language teacher associations in the review and development of their own working structures and processes.

4. The Project Milestones

In order to achieve its aims and objectives, the Project consisted of a number of milestones:

- i. Two major surveys of language teacher associations were designed to map their structures and activities, as well as their priorities, the challenges they face, and their strategies for meeting these challenges. The first was sent out twice, in 2008 and 2009, in order to increase the number of responses, and the second was completed in 2011. (A breakdown of responses can be found in Ressource materials and case studies 1.1.) Altogether there were over 90 responses from a wide range of associations on all continents (apart from Antarctica). What was surprising was the number of commonalities across the associations, regardless of their geographical location.
- ii. A project workshop was organised in Graz in December 2009, attended by 29 delegates from different Council of Europe member states. This provided the opportunity to share experiences in greater depth and face-to-face, to explore how this might be continued, and to disseminate ECML projects. A report on the workshop, written by Rosa Antonakaki from Greece, can be found later in this chapter, in Case study 1.2.
- iii. Presentations and discussions were held at other meetings and conferences held at the ECML and elsewhere, including FIPLV meetings.
- iv. A number of e-newsletters were distributed, containing information on different associations, featured ECML projects as well as news from FIPLV and ECML.

- v. A blog has been designed which is intended to continue the project work beyond end of the programme. It will be managed by FIPLV and will expand to offer other forms of virtual communication and collaboration such as podcasts and webinars.

5. Introduction to this handbook for language teacher associations

Europe is faced with a number of paradoxes. Never has there been so much political support for the development of multi- and plurilingualism, and increasing numbers of children and adults are using or learning a repertoire of different languages in their everyday lives. The Council of Europe, through the Language Policy Unit and the ECML, offers developing frameworks and practical resources to encourage the valorisation of linguistic diversity, and the European Commission also supports the development of a much more inclusive context for languages and language users. Yet there are still challenges which language professionals must face, and these were recognised in the Final Report of the Commission of the European Communities' High Level Group on Multilingualism (European Communities, 2007): the need to raise awareness and enhance and sustain motivation in order to promote the learning of a wider range of languages (not just English); the need for stronger messages about the value of language learning to be communicated to the public through the media; the importance of languages for business; the need for increased diversity in translation and interpreting skills; the development of regional and minority languages and the opportunity to learn from bilingual communities; and the need for further research. All of these suggest that language professionals need to work together with a common vision, and to build networks which extend beyond their usual horizons.

This Handbook has been produced collaboratively as a means of sharing good ideas as well as analysing trends in different aspects of association work. The content of the Handbook comes from a number of sources: data collected in the two questionnaires; the LACS workshop, described elsewhere in this introduction; case studies of practice shared by associations around the world; reports written by representatives of associations; and numerous discussions which have taken place in FIPLV meetings and conferences.

The Handbook has been divided into 12 sections, which consider important aspects of association work as identified by those associations represented at the LACS workshop, as well as the priorities identified in the questionnaire returns. Each section analyses feedback from associations in order to identify key principles and orientations, and contains rich exemplification of association activity through direct use of quotation as well as the inclusion of case studies contributed by associations. The sections are:

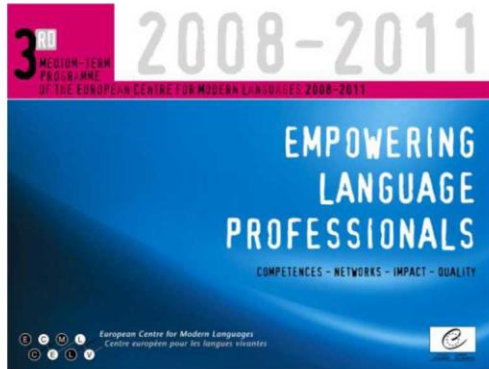
1. Introduction
2. Definition of a language teacher association
3. Rationale for membership of a language teacher association

4. Member recruitment and retention activities and resources
5. Dissemination through events
6. Association websites
7. Publications
8. Involvement in policy
9. Involvement in research
10. Fundraising activities
11. Useful collaborations
12. Evaluation

We hope that associations will find it useful to learn about other associations, and that this will provide food for thought in considering their own priorities. It is intended that this handbook will be regularly updated online, so if you have any additional ideas or contributions, please contact the FIPLV President (Dr Terry Lamb, T.Lamb@sheffield.ac.uk).

RESOURCE MATERIAL 1.1

(Powerpoint presentation)



EMPOWERING LANGUAGE PROFESSIONALS
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SPRACHLEHRENDE IN IHRER ROLLE STÄRKEN

ECML-CELV-EFSI
2008-2011

Language Associations and Collaborative Support

- FIPLV: Fédération Internationale des Professeurs de Langues Vivantes
- FIPF: Fédération Internationale des Professeurs de Français
- IDV: Internationaler Deutschlehrerverein

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Aim

- To add value to the work of the ECML and of individual language teacher associations through disseminating ECML projects as well as collaboratively exploring effective dissemination practices.

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Specific objectives

- To disseminate to a wide European audience (and beyond) innovative and effective developments and projects, initially focused around the work carried out under the auspices of ECML.
- To map the ways in which a wide range of language teacher associations are organised (nationally, regionally and locally) in order to support their own networks of members through practical interventions (workshops, publications, newsletters, websites and web fora etc.) as well as through opportunities to influence policy towards the development of a vibrant, high quality and inclusive environment in which multilingualism can flourish.
- To create spaces in which associations can interact, both face to face and virtually, in order to optimise the impact of their efforts. To produce materials to support language teacher associations in the review and development of their own working structures and processes.

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Process

- 2008 Expert team meeting (questionnaire design)
Questionnaire administration and initial analysis
Workshop for ECML's National Contact Points to discuss policy implementation and dissemination strategies
- 2009 Expert team meeting (workshop planning)
Workshop (to consist of 33 representatives of member states, actively involved in language teacher associations)
Dissemination of ECML projects at FIPLV events, including World Congress in Moscow
- 2010-11 Further meetings, development of Handbook of guidance for teacher associations dissemination and interaction with policy, use of website and other technologies for dissemination, more local dissemination events, evaluation tools

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Questionnaire to language teacher associations

- Sent by email by FIPLV, FIPF, IDV to respective members
- 35 returns by end of July (summer holidays)
- 7 multilingual associations
- 19 French teacher associations
- 9 German teacher associations

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Questionnaire to language teacher associations

Returns in 2008 from:

- Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Belgium, Bulgaria, Chile, Costa Rica, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Macedonia, Morocco, Poland, Russia, Slovakia, Switzerland, Togo, United Kingdom, USA, Venezuela, Zambia

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7

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2008-2011

Questionnaire to language teacher associations

19 further returns in 2009:

- Austria, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, Iceland, Finland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Norway, Poland, Russia (Baschkortostan), Russia (St Petersburg), Serbia, Slovenia, Sweden, Rumania, Switzerland

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8

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Questionnaire to language teacher associations

- Functions
- Strategies to support teacher development
- Strategies to influence policy
- Information on policymaking bodies on which the associations have been represented
- Barriers to influencing policy
- Sources of funding
- Projects
- Main challenges

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9

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1a. Functions fulfilled by language teacher associations

• Representing teachers' views on policy making bodies	31
• Providing in-service training by experts	30
• Disseminating information about new developments in policy	34
• Carrying out research	20
• Acting as a forum for teachers to disseminate good practice	32
• Enabling teachers to collaborate in development activities	32

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10

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1a. Policy influence as most important function...

Need for solid teacher voice

"the nature of policy making in Australia, being both centralised and decentralised makes it important for a solid voice to represent the trends and practices." (Australia, Multi)

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1a. Policy influence as most important function...

Changing nature of education

"Representing teachers' views on policy making bodies is very important in these years, as the school system is changing, and we feel the influence of e.g. other European countries." (Denmark, Multi)

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12

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1a. Policy influence as most important function...

Threat from English

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“Pour que l’enseignement du français, et surtout en français dans le cadre des projets internationaux, ne succombe pas évincé par l’anglais, il faut que les autorités linguistiques et éducatives développent et/ou soutiennent des programmes liés à la mise en pratique du multi- et plurilinguisme dans l’esprit de la politique linguistique européenne. Ceci permettrait de remplacer l’attitude „au lieu de...“, qui prédomine toujours lors du choix des langues d’enseignement et de recherche, par l’attitude „à côté de...“ qui est la plus efficace et prometteuse dans le contexte existant.” (Russia, French)

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13

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2008-2011

1a. Policy influence as most important function...

Threat from English

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“Die LehrerInnen erwarten, daß Ihre Arbeitsstellen gesichert werden, indem nicht nur Englisch, sondern auch andere Sprachen unterrichtet werden.“ (Poland, German)

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14

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1a. Policy influence as most important function...

Teacher support

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“Being a federation of foreign language teachers in Finland it is our task to safeguard and to try to improve the rights and well-being of our members, the Finnish foreign language teachers and at the same time to keep a high standard of language teaching in our country.” (Finland, Multi)

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15

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3a. Strategies used in order to attempt to influence policy

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• Letters to policymakers	31
• Membership of policymaking bodies	17
• Meetings with policymakers	28
• Surveys of members	23
• Letters to the press	18

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16

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3a. Strategies used in order to attempt to influence policy

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- “Aller faire des propositions concrètes de démarches méthodologiques adaptées à la réalité locale sans passer avant par les autorités éducatives. Se mettre au travail et résoudre le problème sur place en concordance avec ses partenaires.” (Chile, French)

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17

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3c. Main barriers to your association influencing policy (external)

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Not invited

- Geringe Häufigkeit der Einladungen zu diesen Entscheidungsgremien (Poland, G)
- Nous ne pouvons influer sur la gestion ou les décisions d’ordre financier (suppressions de postes ou de groupes d’allemand), nous pouvons conseiller mais ne sommes pas les décideurs de l’institution (France, G)
- such little input is requested. (Australia, M)

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18

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3c. Main barriers to your association influencing policy (external)

No history of involvement

- L'Association ne possède aucun pouvoir de décision et d'influence sur les politiques linguistiques (Macedonia, F)
- Les associations, même professionnelles, ne font pas partie à des organes de décision, ne sont pas partenaires obligatoires pour le Ministère. (Czech Republic, F) L'Association ne possède aucun pouvoir de décision et d'influence sur les politiques linguistiques (Macedonia, F)

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19

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3c. Main barriers to your association influencing policy (external)

No history of involvement

- Les mécanismes de la participation des associations comme la nôtre en tant qu'acteurs institutionnels pouvant influencer la prise des décisions à un haut niveau est en train de se développer en Russie dans l'esprit de la nouvelle loi sur les organisations et groupements non commerciaux datant du 2006. (Russia, St Petersburg, F)

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20

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3c. Main barriers to your association influencing policy (external)

Location of policymaking

- Decentralization of policy making to municipalities and even schools. (Finland, M)

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21

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3c. Main barriers to your association influencing policy (external)

Low status of language learning

- The lack of interest until recently by our legislators on the national, state and local levels to consider the study of languages important. Even now the security and defense interests are the major support centers for the increase in the study of languages (usually less commonly taught) presently taking place. (USA, G)
- La volonté des autorités de parler des Politiques Linguistiques. C'est un sujet trop cher. (Chile, F)

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22

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3c. Main barriers to your association influencing policy (external)

Constant changes of policy

- Changements permanents (Hungary, F)
- Decisions on policy tend to be made by politicians and subject to constant change! (UK, M)
- Les équipes des décideurs changent souvent et leur vision manque de continuité. (Bulgaria, F)

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23

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3c. Main barriers to your association influencing policy (external)

Threats from other languages

- ...Cependant, dans les provinces proches du Brésil, c'est le portugais qui a gagné l'espace donné autrefois au français. En général, notre principal problème est l'entêtement des autorités vers la mise en oeuvre de l'enseignement du FLE dans les écoles secondaires. Il est remarquable la forte influence de l'Anglais dans toutes les décisions qui sont prises dans le cadre ministériel. Malgré nos commandes insistantes, les politiques linguistiques sont seulement ouvertes à une seule langue étrangère en Argentine : l'Anglais. (Argentina, F)
- La plupart des inspecteurs de langues ne sont pas Francophones ou n'enseignent pas le Français (Zambia, F)

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24

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3c. Main barriers to your association influencing policy (internal)

Membership issues

- The number of members is not adequate to influence politicians and policymakers in general (Italy, M)
- La formation et la mobilisation (Togo, F)
- Le travail trop individualiste de certains professeurs (Belgium, F)

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25

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3c. Main barriers to your association influencing policy (internal)

Membership issues

- We accept any invitations to participate in meetings or e.g. developing new laws, but it takes a lot of time and effort, and very often you get very little - if any - results (Denmark, M)
- Die finanziellen und personellen Ressourcen sind beschränkt, da wir ehrenamtlich tätig sind und keine öffentliche Unterstützung bekommen. (Switzerland, G)

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26

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Sources of funding

• Member subscriptions	34
• Conferences	13
• Other in-service events	10
• Publications	8
• Projects	13
• Government funding	10
• Other	17

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27

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6. Main challenges for your association

- Falling or aging membership (16)
- Financial needs (8)
- Cooperation with other unilingual or multilingual associations (4)
- Challenges related to decline in language learning, either generally or specifically e.g. challenge of English (9)

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28

CASE STUDY 1.2

LOOKING AHEAD AND COLLECTING SOLUTIONS

LACS: Language Associations and Collaborative Support Workshop organized by the European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML) in Graz, Austria

Rosa Antonakaki

Panhellenic Association of State School Teachers of English (PEKADE), Greece

Preface

Language associations and their activities focus mainly on the enhancement of teacher development. The chance to participate in the Language Associations and Collaborative Support (LACS) workshop organized by the European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML) in Graz, Austria was a real eye opener in the advancement of educating and learning. The workshop's main aim was to support language teacher associations in the review and development of their own working structures and processes. This opportunity offered interesting insights and new perspectives for the growth of associations across Europe. In this paper, we will give an account of the workshop and present indicative innovations that could be considered for implementation in the Panhellenic Association of State School Teachers of English (PEKADE).

Venue, organizers

The Language Associations and Collaborative Support (LACS) project was organized and managed by the European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML). It is one of the projects in the ECML 2008-2011 programme (Empowering Language Professionals), and it creates opportunities for language teacher associations to benefit from greater collaboration with one another as well as engagement within the range of the ECML projects. The LACS project workshop was held in Graz, Austria for two days, in December 10-11, 2009. It offered us the opportunity to meet professional colleagues from other countries, share ideas and gain a European perspective on our work. Thirty-five educationalists from different countries across Europe attended it. The visiting group consisted of 34 representatives of states, (including some from outside Europe) actively involved in language teacher associations namely teachers, school managers, university professors and teacher trainers.

At this point, it is worth mentioning that the ECML was established in 1995 in Graz, Austria as a Council of Europe institution and it focuses on bridging the gap between language policy theory and classroom learning practice. This unique intergovernmental centre offers concrete approaches to issues and challenges facing Europe's multicultural societies. The hallmark of the ECML is the organisation of international language education projects. Coordinated by teams of experts, these

projects primarily target multipliers in language education such as teacher trainers, textbook authors and experts in the area of the development of curricula, educational standards, evaluation/assessment and plurilingual education. Since 2000 the Centre's projects have been organised within four-year programmes. The second medium-term programme (2004–2007) grouped 2 projects under the title Languages for social cohesion – language education in a multilingual and multicultural Europe. The 2008-2011 programme is entitled *Empowering Language Professionals: competences - networks - impact - quality*. Projects usually last three or four years, a typical operational sequence being: research and development, presentation of preliminary results at a workshop, piloting, drafting of final product or publication, dissemination.

The ECML seeks to make a positive difference to the language education profession by:

- promoting innovative approaches,
- advancing the quality of teaching and learning languages,
- supporting the implementation of language education policies,
- fostering dialogue between language education practitioners and decision makers.

The purpose of the LACS workshop

The LACS project's primary purpose was to explore the ways in which language teacher associations around the world are organized (nationally, regionally and locally) in order to support their networks of members through professional development activities such as practical interventions (workshops, publications, newsletters, websites and web fora etc) as well as through opportunities to influence policy towards the development of a vibrant, high quality and inclusive environment in which multilingualism can flourish. It aimed at facilitating greater collaboration between the associations and the ECML in order to better support language professionals across Europe through more effective dissemination of new language pedagogies, including teaching and learning methodologies as well as language policies and curricular models appropriate to the 21st century.

The specific objective of the workshop was to find ways in which associations can interact, both face to face and virtually, in order to optimize the impact of their efforts. Furthermore, its main aim was to disseminate to a wide European audience (and beyond) innovative and effective developments and projects, carried out under the auspices of ECML such as “Web journals in language education (Blogs)” and “the CLIL quality matrix” and to discuss how different products may be further spread locally, through existing or new mechanisms. It also involved a “Scavenger Hunt” which required further exploration of the ECML website portal, which is being updated. The workshop offered us a valuable opportunity to meet up and explore educational issues and to obtain collaborative support for introducing changes in modern language teaching in our own local and

regional context. The ECML event exceeded our expectations and it has motivated us to become more active in networking with other language teachers associations and to play a more influential role in reform processes in our professional environment. In addition, it has highlighted quality aspects of language education and it has contributed to developing our professional competence.

Main challenges for the associations were also discussed such as:

- Falling or aging membership
- Financial needs
- Cooperation with other unilingual or multilingual associations
- Challenges related to decline in language learning, either generally or specifically

Sources of funding for associations were discussed such as:

- Member subscription
- Conferences
- Other in-service events
- Publications
- Projects
- Government funding

The LACS project also came up with other ideas such as enhancing the ECML website and raising teachers' awareness of what is happening in language teacher associations around the world. The two-day visit to Graz ended with a guided city walking tour around the old town which is one of the best preserved city-centres in Central Europe.

Epilogue

The above mentioned workshop constitutes a sound basis for fostering and increasing links between PEKADE and other associations of language teachers in Europe. PEKADE along with other language associations fulfils similar functions which are:

- to provide in-service training by experts
- to carry out research
- to act as a forum for teachers
- to disseminate good practice
- to represent teachers' views on policy making bodies

Being an association of English language teaching in Greece, PEKADE's main task is to safeguard and improve the rights and well-being of our members as well as to keep a high standard of language learning and teaching in our country by promoting innovations in language education. PEKADE has always tried to concentrate on its main objective which is to open the way for in-depth discussions, debates, and classroom enlightenment with forward thinkers in English Language Teaching. Networking nationally and internationally and a sense of belonging to the European and global community of language teachers open the doors for PEKADE to many networks in Europe and overseas. Projects, such as LACS, enable us to meet colleagues, broaden our minds, and share experiences, expertise, and inquiries on professional matters.

The ECML's website

<http://www.ecml.at> (the central reference point for all individual projects, each of which has its own website)

<http://www.ecml.at/mtp2/mtp2e-overview.htm> (Results of the programme 2004-2007)

<http://www.ecml.at/doccentre> (Results of previous programmes)

Rosa Antonakaki among colleagues from other countries during the workshop

SECTION 2

DEFINITION OF A LANGUAGE TEACHER ASSOCIATION

1. Networking

A language teacher association is an association of like-minded professionals, usually a nonprofit organization. The members are the focus of all the association's work, because without them there is no association. It promotes professionalism, provides an opportunity to establish contacts and supports the exchange of experiences and cooperation among language teachers (networking), represents the members in public, and more.

„(Der Verband gilt) als Zusammenschluss von allen, die sich mit der Vermittlung und Erforschung der Sprachen – bei uns der deutschen Sprache – in irgendeiner Weise beschäftigen. Er dient dem Austausch untereinander und dem Dazulernen von neuem Wissen von Experten und im Team“. (**SDUNJ, Slowenischer Deutschlehrerverband, Slovenia**)

“The voice of language teachers in the country influencing language teaching (quality of teaching mother tongue and other languages) strategy, teacher development; presenting language education of the country in Europe and the world. Possibility for language teaching professionals to share best practices and innovative ideas”. (**LKPA, Lietuvos kalbų pedagogų asociacija, Lithuania**)

„Ein Zusammenschluss von Lehrern einer oder mehrerer moderner Fremdsprachen, der den Lehrer/innen bei ihrer bedeutenden Aufgabe hilft, indem er vor allem ein Netzwerk für sie darstellt, das dazu dient, Kontakte zu knüpfen, Erfahrungen auszutauschen, sich weiterzubilden“. (**IDV, Internationaler Deutschlehrerverband**)

“Une association des enseignants de langue regroupent des professionnels qui ont pour objectif la valorisation des compétences dans diverses langues étrangères en milieu éducatif et social et le perfectionnement scientifique et professionnel de ses membres”. (**Associação Portuguesa Dos Professores De Francês-APPF, Portugal**)

“Place to gather and exchange experiences, knowledge, materials, contacts etc. Platform for language political issues”. (**Federación de Asociaciones de Germanistas en España FAGE, Spain**)

2. Education, training and publications

The promotion of enhanced / increased training and education of the members is an important part of the association's work and serves to professionalize the profession. For this purpose, there are also events or information on innovations in practice and research. The association serves as a forum for teachers in order to spread examples of best practice. In several countries associations are either active in producing teaching materials and other specialized literature (e.g. SUKOL, Finland - National Language Test), or they review the material prior to publication. (In Iceland, this is the case when the authors apply for grants from government for further development of their materials / books / programmes).

„Unser Verband hat die Ziele, zur Professionalisierung des Berufs und zur Weiterentwicklung des Fachs beizutragen, indem wir Möglichkeiten zur Aus- und Weiterbildung anbieten. **(Arbeitskreis Deutsch als Fremdsprache in der Schweiz, Switzerland)**

“Une association des enseignants de langue regroupent des professionnels qui ont pour objectif la valorisation des compétences dans diverses langues étrangères en milieu éducatif et social et le perfectionnement scientifique et professionnel de ses members”. **(Associação Portuguesa Dos Professores De Francês-APPF Portugal)**

„Idealerweise sorgt der Verband für gemeinsame Fortbildungsmomente, wie Tagungen für alle Mitglieder und kleinere Treffen für die Verbandsvertreter“. **(IDV)**

“sensibiliser les enseignants sur les pratiques didactiques innovantes, créer la synergie entre tous les degrés d’enseignements”. **(APFT, Togo)**

“We have for decades regularly produced material (brochures, booklets, series of transparencies etc.) with the purpose of inspiring children and youth to start studying equally all various languages offered in Finnish schools. Additionally, in order to support multilingualism in Finland, we have also published three editions of a textbook in Swedish for Health Care Institutions, and a French text book series etc”. **(SUKOL, Finland)**

„Der Verband soll die Fortbildung seiner Mitglieder ermöglichen. Er soll die Konstruktion von sinnvollen Materialien für seine Mitglieder fördern, die in der online -Ausgabe der Zeitschrift für Mitglieder veröffentlicht werden“. **(APPA, Associação Portuguesa de Professores de Alemão - Portugal)**

3.

Advocacy

As an advisory body for education and school authorities at each school level, a language teacher association represents the interests of members in order to promote languages and the teaching and learning of languages. In many countries, the language teacher associations play an important role as contacts and professional advisers for public policy makers. Often, however, it depends on the minister of education, whether and to what extent the language teachers' associations are recognized as contacts.

“Representing teachers’ views on policy making bodies is very important in these years, as the school system is changing, and we feel the influence of e.g. other European countries...Disseminating information about new developments in policy”.

(Sproglærerforeningen Danmark, German section, Denmark)

„...die Sprachenpolitik (ist) ein Problemfeld, das gerade sehr akut ist, da es eine Schulreform gibt, die das Sprachenlernen stark einschränken wird, sofern der momentan bekannte Vorschlag implementiert wird“. **(SDUNJ, Slovenia)**

„Für uns hat es sich auch bewährt, grössere Tagungen zu organisieren und so auf uns aufmerksam zu machen“. **(American Association of Teachers of German, USA)**

“Notre ministère de l’éducation procède souvent à des réformes qui concerne l’enseignement des langues étrangères et il est important que notre opinion soit entendue”. **(Association des professeurs de français en Bulgarie, Bulgaria)**

“...representing teachers' views on policy making bodies...the nature of policy making in Australia, being both centralised and decentralised makes it important for a solid voice to represent the trends and practices”. **(Australian Federation of Modern Language Teachers Associations, Australia)**

“Being a federation of foreign language teachers in Finland it is our task to safeguard and to try to improve the rights and well-being of our members, the Finnish foreign language teachers, and at the same time to keep a high standard of language teaching in our country”. **(SUKOL, Finland)**

4. Cooperation: cultural institutions and other language teachers' associations

A language teachers’ association cooperates with partners of various kinds, such as other language teachers' associations in their own country, embassies and representative offices of foreign culture, e.g. culture sponsors/institutes such as the Goethe Institute, Alliance Française, British Council etc., to promote languages and to support language teachers. It is also about strengthening the cultural ties and understanding of multilingualism.

“Cooperation between teachers of English, German, French and Danish as a second language”. (**Sproglærerforeningen Danmark, Denmark**)

„Er soll mit anderen (nicht) offiziellen Institutionen zusammen arbeiten [Botschaften; Goethe Instituten; verschiedene Universitäten, Sprachschulen usw.] sowie mit anderen (Sprach)Verbänden“. (**APPA, Portugal**)

„Das Ziel des DLV ist die Förderung des Erlernens und Lehrens der deutschen Sprache, sowie die Erweiterung und Festigung der kulturellen Beziehungen der Republik Kasachstan mit den deutschsprachigen Ländern“. (**DLV, Kasachstan**)

5. Public relations

One of the main roles of a language teachers' association is to try to expand the understanding of the importance of languages at all levels in society and contribute to a better understanding in a multicultural society, by organizing public relations activities such as student competitions, speech days and public events during the European Day of Languages.

„Er soll Strategien definieren, um die Sprache zu verbreiten bzw. bekannt zu geben im portugiesischen Schulsystem“. (**APPA, Portugal**)

“Les Concours Nationaux et les Festivals de théâtre francophones jouissent d’une grande popularité auprès des jeunes, car ils permettent de créer les liens d’amitié, de monter des projets communs”. (**Association des Enseignants de Français/Russie, AEFR, Russia**)

“We have many programmes for high school students of German: national honour society, summer study in German, certificates for outstanding achievement, a national German examination”. (**American Association of Teachers of German, USA**)

„Information und Unterstützung der Lehrer, Werbung bei Eltern, Schülern usw für Wahl der deutschen Sprache“. (**ADEAF, France**)

“We have for decades regularly produced material (brochures, booklets, series of transparencies etc.) with the purpose of inspiring children and youth to start studying equally all various languages offered in Finnish schools”. (**SUKOL, Finland**)

6. International cooperation

National associations are often members of either mono- or multilingual international

organizations, such as IDV, or FIPF or FIPLV. Networking and cooperation in the broadest sense of the word are the main arguments for a membership. Other advantages include participation in international projects, conferences and seminars abroad. All this also serves to increase the professionalism of teachers, to develop joint strategies to promote languages and to strengthen collegiality. More intensive international collaboration is one of the main tasks for the future.

“(il faut) Développer la coopération à l’échelle nationale et internationale avec des associations et autres organismes dans le cadre du profil de nos activités associatives”.
(Association des professeurs de français, Saint-Pétersbourg, Russia)

“Die Kooperation zwischen Kollegen nicht nur innerhalb sondern auch außerhalb Italiens (ist) noch stärker zu fördern”. **(AIG, Italy)**

“Développer des partenariats avec d’autres associations au niveau européen.” **(Association Roumaine des Professeurs de Français”, Romania)**

“...participation in national and international projects”. **(LKPA, Lithuania)**

Other associations are in the process of discussing membership of such associations.

“Perhaps the association might take into consideration the possibility of joining FIPLV and seek to collaborate with other associations”. **(MATEFL, Malta)**

SECTION 3

RATIONALE FOR MEMBERSHIP OF A LANGUAGE TEACHER ASSOCIATION

Many teachers often find themselves working alone as language teachers, having to fend for themselves without frequent contact with other colleagues. Most of them are looking for a group of like-minded people with whom they can create opportunities for communication, networking and training, both domestically and abroad. Training, meetings, and projects of various kinds offer them excellent opportunities to enhance their expertise and the quality of their own activities, as well as developing a sense of belonging to a large network.

Below are listed some benefits of membership in a language teachers' association. These appear in random order and do not suggest any prioritisation. However, they will be useful for associations looking to review their recruitment materials and to argue the benefits of membership.

1. Networking

- Multiple opportunities for professional debate, mainly through association events, but increasingly using new technologies.
- Intensive exchange of ideas, technical support and problem solving through interaction with colleagues.
- Access to databases with lesson suggestions, even the possibility of including one's own proposals and ideas.

2. Advocacy

- Promotion of languages and language education through the association acting as an advisory body to the education authorities.
- Increased collaboration of language teachers from different language groups, to strengthen their cohesion and to support plurilingualism.
- Dissemination and discussion forums on changes in curriculum and school system.

3. Education, training and other events

- Conferences, seminars, courses, workshops, speech days, etc., offer diverse opportunities for professional development and personal collaboration with colleagues.
- Reduced registration fees for conferences and other events.
- Opportunity to influence the focus of training as language teachers' associations need to respond to their members.

- Additional acquisition of new knowledge from experts (national and international) and in a team.
- The opportunity to present their own research on events and to receive feedback from colleagues.
- Scholarships for study tours.

4. Information

- The latest information on the association's work can be found on the websites of the organizations, as well as in reports and articles in newsletters or journals.
- Dissemination of information about events and activities through reports on the website, newsletters, videos, Internet web pages, etc.
- Extensive programme of events and projects.
- Information on new research results and pedagogical innovations, with online surveys on specific topics, including their results.

5. Participation in projects

- Competitions at national and international level (student- and/or teacher competitions).
- Research projects, for example the ELP curriculum, surveys of various kinds and presentation of the results of individual or joint projects.
- Chance to participate in international projects, e.g. the European Centre for Modern Languages in Graz, a Comenius Project of the European Union, etc.

6. Publication (often at reduced prices for members)

- Journals with practical tips for teaching, articles on innovations in language teaching and research, reports of training courses and conferences.
- Scientific research journals with articles on current aspects of foreign language teaching.
- Brief information sheets and newsletters.
- Didactic textbooks, linguistic research. Teaching and examination material.
- Online materials.

7. International cooperation

- Chance/possibility to attend meetings of international organizations.
- Extended networking opportunities with colleagues from other countries.
- Online forums with possibilities for direct participation by individual members.

- Participation in projects such as LACS (Language Associations and Collaborative Support), carried out by FIPLV, IDV and FIPF in cooperation with the ECML in Graz, etc., as well as other international projects such as APPEAL, REAL, AECLIL.

8. International Associations

Individual organizations are increasingly joining international associations as this brings additional benefits to their members. It also benefits the individual associations' organizers and managers as it enables them to learn from other associations, sharing problems and solutions as well as offering them additional opportunities to share with their members.

On the homepage of the International Federation of Language Teacher Associations (FIPLV), we find a clear rationale for the increasing need for such organizations, along with ten good reasons for joining. All the text from the homepage is published as Case study 3.1, as it lists the benefits of membership in a very clear and logical order.

CASE STUDY 3.1

RATIONALE: WHAT DO ASSOCIATIONS GAIN FROM MEMBERSHIP?

Fédération Internationale des Professeurs de Langues Vivantes (FIPLV)

An association of language teachers differs totally from any other professional association of teachers in that it is inconceivable without international links. In an age of increasing globalisation where communication is more and more influenced by rapid technological advances, it is important to be able to draw on the knowledge, experience, support and friendship of colleagues in other countries. As the language curriculum in some countries may have become, in the view of many, increasingly limited and instrumental, access to other ways of thinking and seeing the world becomes more, not less, essential. Apart from the importance of a sense of belonging to a network of colleagues “beyond their own backyard”, then teachers can turn to the experiences of their colleagues overseas, for example, to inform and extend their own practice and expertise, thereby contributing to each other’s professional development. The international dimension is, in short, a *sine qua non* of a languages association.

FIPLV is unique in that it is the only organisation bringing together teachers of different languages worldwide. The benefits of membership are many and varied, and some appear more valuable at times than others. They are perhaps felt most keenly when concrete activities bring individual members of associations together with a common purpose, such as *Linguapax V* in Melbourne in 1995, the Symposium on Language Teaching and Peace in Graz in 1998, the UNESCO Conference in Melbourne in 2001, the LACS (Language Associations and Collaborative Support) Project in 2008-2011 and FIPLV World Congresses every three years.

The following is a synthesis of the benefits of membership as seen by members of the FIPLV Executive. The numbering is purely for convenience and does not indicate any particular priority.

1. Participation

- membership of the only internationally recognised Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) representing languages educators, which brings together eight other international associations of language teachers
- membership of an international forum of language educators
- possibility of hosting and attending international conferences or events of other member associations
- scope to contribute at an international level
- membership of FIPLV Regions and involvement in their activities

- input and access to surveys on language teaching at the international level

2. Networking

- links with UNESCO through FIPLV official partner (consultative) status
- links with the Council of Europe and its Language Policy Division to support the development of new policy through NGO status
- links with major international unilingual associations through FIPLV (i.e., AEDA, FIPF, IDV, ILEI, LATEUM, MAPRYAL, Rete AIM, SIPLE)
- liaison with other international associations (e.g., AILA, ALTE, CercleS, EALTA, EAQUALS, ELC, etc)
- international collegiality enabling discussions with teachers from many parts of the world
- establishing international linkages to further personal growth
- identifying colleagues internationally who can assist you in your own teaching
- creating contacts for your students for postal, video, DVD, email, chat, blog, etc, exchange
- establishing networks through project participation (e.g., ECP in Europe, Linguapax Workshop in Graz, the LACS (Language Associations and Collaborative Support) Project and the Empowering Language Networks Project, both with the ECML, the EC-funded project Languages in Europe: Theory, Policy, Practice, etc.)

3. Projects

- involvement in UNESCO projects (e.g., Language Policy, Multilingualism, Tolerance, Linguapax, Language Rights, endangered languages, etc)
- participation in FIPLV Projects (e.g., Empowering Language Networks, LACS, Languages in Europe: Theory, Policy, Practice, Professional Development, the Teaching Profession, Multilingualism, etc)
- membership of ECP Projects (in Europe)

4. Advocacy

- access to international speakers to promote a cause (e.g., French Teacher Symposium in Israel)
- support for improved conditions (e.g., smaller class sizes in Portugal)
- support for and from international forums enhancing the intrinsic aims of language teaching (e.g., peace)
- support for and from international forums combating undesirable elements of humanity (e.g., racism, intolerance, ethnocentrism, monolingualism, discrimination, etc)

5. Learning

- problem-solving at the international level
- discovering new ways to promote the teaching and learning of your language(s)
- potential for personal growth through FIPLV publications and activities
- access to ongoing professional development internationally

6. Professional Development: Conferences, Workshops and other Activities

- access to triennial and international multilingual congresses addressing the needs of teachers
- access to international speakers at the cutting edge in the field of language teaching
- access to international workshops organised by FIPLV (e.g., Linguapax Workshops in Melbourne and in Graz, etc)

7. Publications

- receipt of FIPLV publications (e.g., FIPLV History, Linguapax V, project reports, etc)
- access to content of publications of other member associations through the FIPLV website
- possibility of contributing to FIPLV publications

8. Information

- details of FIPLV World Congresses and those of international unilingual associations
- details of other conferences which impinge upon language teaching
- access to state-of-the-art details of movements within the profession
- access to information contained in the FIPLV website (www.fiplv.org)
- email contact details of many associations and educators on an international level
- potential to distribute information received to international membership of national associations

9. Concessions

- reduced registration fees for individual members of member associations of FIPLV
- reduced membership fees for those experiencing financial hardship
- consideration in the context of solidarity and potential support from other members
- potential sponsorship for participation in FIPLV activities

10. Inspiration

- access to global horizons
- access to new ideas for implementation in personal environments

SECTION 4

MEMBER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION ACTIVITIES AND RESOURCES

Attracting members

What activities and resources do you use to attract members and to encourage them to remain in the association?

One of the key conditions for the existence of any organised group or association is that it is able to attract new members and retain their membership for as long as possible, and this applies equally to language teacher associations. The following list of concrete suggestions, compiled from international sources, is primarily intended to advise newly-founded associations on the most efficient ways to gain and retain new members – though it may also prove useful to organisations that are already well established. We received a large number of responses offering a wealth of relevant experiences, which can be separated into two categories: 1) advice on the different ways in which associations can be publicised, and 2) special initiatives and key thematic areas that associations can focus on in order to make membership worthwhile. These categories are set out below and illustrated with selected case studies.

1. Different ways of publicising associations

For most associations, the question of how best to attract and retain new members is central to their work. Associations owe their existence to their members, and need to be able to count on the assistance of a body of reliable, long-term supporters in order to meaningfully carry out their activities. Equally, membership fees are the main source of funding for the majority of associations, most of which are run on a voluntary basis. This stable income forms the basis of their activities, and is only occasionally partly supplemented by other revenue sources such as sponsorship, conference attendance fees, individual initiatives led by the association or subsidies from educational policy programmes and organisations. Over the last few years language teacher associations have also begun to experience a certain degree of competitive pressure when it comes to attracting new members – a growing trend as the total number of such associations is increasing.

For these reasons, it is increasingly important that associations are able to effectively present themselves to the world and communicate the advantages that come with membership. Associations exploit their full creative potential to this end, as well as making use of all the different communication channels available to them. The most important of these at present is undoubtedly the association website, where the association's self-presentation is usually prominently displayed and accessible to a wide audience at the touch of a button. However printed materials, brochures,

leaflets, folders and posters are all still relevant and are distributed at large conferences, information meetings and official functions.

“We advertise indirectly through our website, which we attempt to make as attractive as possible. We also have an information brochure about our association which we make available at any large conferences, as well as posters which we display at conferences and meetings.” **(IDV)**

“We have a website on which we post all information regarding professional opportunities, as well as information related to meetings. Also, we maintain a contact person in each school, and this person informs young teachers about the association. Moreover, there are monthly meetings to which non-members are also invited and they are free to join the association. Invitations to these monthly meetings are sent per fax or e-mail to the secretary’s office of each school in the county, who then informs the chairperson of the language department, who then in turn informs the members. Also, our e-mail addresses are in the database of the association’s secretary and we get e-mails sent to us regarding all things of interest.” **(RATE - Romanian Association of Teachers of English)**

“Our website, newsletter, our executive members promote when they are presenting or meeting with teachers in the field.” **(BC Association of Teachers of Modern Languages Canada)**

“We send folders to schools where we introduce ourselves. We also send e-mails to offices to schools and ask them to distribute the information on our home page and association to the language teachers.” **(Fransklaererfoeningen, Norway)**

“We send out our journal to a number of schools and to high school English teaching coordinators with information about our newest programmes. We also inform the English Department’s Alumni club and various other organizations that might spread the news about our programmes.” **(TEA Teachers of English in Austria, Austria)**

“By organising activities in the usual manner as well as by presenting the ARPF through posters, leaflets, on our website and on Facebook we have been able to make our organisation known throughout Romania” **(ARPF - Association Roumaine des Professeurs de Français, Romania)**

“Retaining members is done mostly through the sections, attractive pamphlets and presentations in Esperanto events aim to attract new members. Our message to the wider Esperanto community is the vital role of language teaching in creating the new generations of

Esperanto speakers.” (**International League of Esperantist Teachers, ILET / Internacia Ligo de Esperantistaj Instruistoj ILEI.**)

Face-to-face information events and personal communication are also still just as important for publicising associations and presenting their work.

“Members are recruited during the face to face communication, meetings, the European Language Day events, conferences, workshops, discussions etc. Information about recruitment of new members can be found on our website.” (**LKPA - Language Teachers’ Association of Lithuania**)

“New teachers are approached directly by colleagues who are already members, and are also invited to various meetings and training courses. Association members teach at universities as well as at primary and secondary schools.” (**Félag Þýzkukennara - Der isländische Deutschlehrerverband, Iceland**)

Many associations also encourage young and prospective language teachers to become members. These can expect to receive a number of benefits and support for their continuing professional development.

“The Committee approaches teachers who are interested in joining the Association. These are often young teachers.” (**Association des Professeurs de Français de Malta**)

Associations often charge varying membership rates in order to remove financial obstacles from the path of anyone interested in joining. In these cases, only professionally well-established members are required to pay the full rate, whereas trainee and early career language teachers as well as retired or emeritus members are eligible for a reduction.

“We offer less expensive memberships to beginning (up to 3 years) teachers and have a fund to help financially challenged teachers pay for their dues.” (**American Association of Teachers of German, USA**)

However there is plenty of direct and indirect evidence that members make a return on their membership fees in the end – whether through receiving free publications, discounted admission to association events or other benefits. It also appears that the two previously mentioned phenomena of personal contact with future association members and discounted admission to events both help to create a sense of solidarity within the professional association and can have a very positive effect.

“What works best is to approach people directly with arguments in favour of membership. Reduced admission charges for members at events also have a positive effect, as do competitions, but word of mouth remains the most effective form of publicity.”
(Slovenischer Deutschlehrerverband SDUNJ, Slovenia)

Sometimes the desire to be able to reach more potential members remains unfulfilled:

“It would be important to have a good data base of actual names of English teachers to send information to as usually it seems to get lost in the general SPAM that teachers receive via email or the information is not passed on to others within a department in a school.” **(TEA Teachers of English in Austria, Austria)**

2. Special initiatives and key thematic areas as factors making membership worthwhile

Language teacher associations offer a broad range of both long-term initiatives and one-off creative events in order to attract members and to make it worthwhile for them to remain in the association. The activities of an association include training of all kinds, which ranges from large national and international academic conferences and seminars to regional meetings, local courses and study groups. In all of these events the opportunity to make personal contacts plays an important role. For example, the International Conference of German Teachers assembles around three thousand German teachers from all over the world, providing a global forum for the exchange of knowledge. During the conference participants are divided into thematic groups and spend a week working in intensive collaboration, allowing them to get to know each other on a personal level.

“Our most effective publicity comes from the conferences that we initiate and co-organise – from the International Conference of German Teachers (IDT) to regional conferences, as well as in recent years the German Olympiad for schoolchildren, which is growing in importance.”
(IDV)

“Conferences are our biggest means of attracting members. Participants must join the organization in order to attend our conferences. We also produce resources aimed at assessment or administration and are now tying in organizational memberships in order to have widespread access to those resources.” **(Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers)**

“Our biggest membership drive usually happens with our conference, that only takes place once every two years. Probably if we were to have the conference every year we could recruit more members.” **(TEA Teachers of English in Austria, Austria)**

“Our association is the only training centre in Portugal offering specialist training courses for German teachers.” **(APPA Portugal)**

“Conferences and training courses allow us to come into contact with teachers of German as a second or foreign language” (**AKDAF - Arbeitskreis Deutsch als Fremdsprache in der Schweiz, Switzerland**)

“ELTA organises regional and national conferences and workshops to help teachers grow professionally. ELTA members are given the possibility to participate in workshops and conferences in other sister associations in the region. ELTA is following the strategy to be near the language teachers wherever they are to meet their needs and interests in teaching. As for recruitment ELTA Albania has set up ELTA branches in almost all the cities in Albania, which keep track of the latest teaching methods. We raise awareness for the benefits ELTA offers to the English language teachers through our web page, ELTA magazine and different publications concerning language teaching.” (**English Language Teachers Association in Albania**)

“Having language conferences both locally and on a larger scale. And in different parts of the country.” (**LMS-Sweden**)

“Our conference is now staged annually as it brings about a notable increase in membership applications, as well as an excellent opportunity to collect outstanding membership fees. We always try to develop an attractive programme with well-known guests from Portugal and beyond, and we also invite colleagues to share their experiences.” (**Associação Portuguesa Dos Professores De Francês-APPF Portugal**)

“Every month we offer seminars, workshops and exchange meetings. Our events are also publicised through the Goethe Institut’s Educational Cooperation Programme.” (**Türkiye Almanca Öğretmenleri Derneği / Türkischer Deutschlehrerverein, Turkey**)

“Each year in November we organise the National French Week which is intended to promote the French language throughout the USA. We also stage a National French Contest which sees 100,000 primary and secondary school pupils take tests in French at various levels. Our annual conference, which takes place in July (in 2011 in Montreal and in 2012 in Chicago), is attended by between 300 and 800 people with guests invited from several countries.” (**American Association of Teachers of French (AATF), USA**)

“We invite both elementary school teachers as well as secondary school teachers to our events, and try to make sure that they are held at times during which both bodies can attend. This summer our summer course, a one-week writing workshop, is held in cooperation with the University and carries University credit, and is thus open to University students as well. We hope that this mixing of the generations will encourage students to join our association

when they eventually become teachers.” (**The Association of Foreign Language Teachers of Iceland**)

“Our activities are designed with the aims of the association in mind, which are as follows: 1) to carry out research in the field of language pedagogy and to pilot innovative classroom practices; 2) to provide training to language teachers in line with the principles of linguistic pedagogy as well as the guidelines issuing from the work of the Council of Europe; 3) to disseminate research findings and best classroom practice; 4) to support plurilingual education by all means possible, from putting forward concrete proposals to contesting official guidelines. In view of these aims, we prioritise training opportunities on a local, regional and national level, which allow teachers to learn about the work of the association and offer members the chance to share their experiences with each other. Our website and our journal are also important resources for the work of the association.” (**LEND – Lingua e Nuova Didattica – Italy**)

“Our most popular events are: local and regional training and professional development courses and workshops, which mainly take place at weekends (8-16 hours); training courses for young teachers (1-2 weeks during the summer holidays); and annual national conferences (3 days) at which everyone has the opportunity to attend all the plenary presentations as well as 4-5 workshops.” (**DVR – Deutschlehrerverband Rumäniens, Romania**)

Most conferences are open to the wider public, but some are organised exclusively for association members. Where non-members are admitted the admission fee varies according to membership status.

“We organise conferences for our members as well as competitions for teachers and students.” (**Association lituanienne des professeurs de français, Lithuania**)

“Regular teacher training seminars are publicised in the local newspapers and teachers can only attend if they join the association or renew their membership. Some of these events are run by internationally renowned figures and thus they attract new members.” (**Malta Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language - MATEFL**)

Although members appear to find it valuable to participate in such events, in a few cases attendance is mandatory:

“In order to retain their jobs, all German teachers are required to attend training courses at the Goethe Institut in Almaty or in Germany and to take part in the German teacher conferences. Schoolchildren and students of German have greater opportunities to work or study in

German speaking countries, and this provides excellent publicity for the German language and for the DLV.” (**DLV, Kazakhstan**)

Association members are able to share their experiences and access professional development opportunities on the academic level through publications, which associations normally see as one of their most important activities. Conference proceedings are usually (though not always) published by the associations themselves, either on paper in traditional printed format or in online editions – with the latter becoming increasingly common.

“The Italian Association of Germanists’ online magazine *BAIG* is the primary medium for the publication of conference proceedings.” (**AIG – Associazione Italiana di Germanistica, Italy**)

Many associations regularly publish a journal or newsletter. These are usually free for their members, or can only be received once membership fees have been paid.

“1-2 times per year we publish the specialist magazine *DaFiU – Deutsch als Fremdsprache in der Ukraine* (German as a Foreign Language in Ukraine).” (**UDGV - Ukrainischer Deutschlehrer- und Germanistenverband, Ukraine**)

“In order to receive our journal, published twice a year, members need to pay their membership fee.” (**The Association of Foreign Language Teachers of Iceland**)

As a further incentive for membership, associations also offer their members a regular and reliable information service.

“We send regular newsletters to all Italian university teachers informing them of the latest news from the Italian Education Ministry regarding university level Germanic studies, linguistics and the teaching of German as a foreign language. We also sometimes provide analysis.” (**AIG, Italy**)

“We keep in regular personal contact with our members via a fortnightly information bulletin and email updates. Sometimes this information is forwarded on to non-members within schools, who may then become interested in joining the association themselves.” (**Associação Portuguesa Dos Professores De Francês-APPF, Portugal**)

“We have an online network, which we maintain through a monthly newsflash that keeps members informed of our current activities, and by updating our association website. There is also a bulletin on paper published by the LMS, for which I write a column on French.” (**AEFS association des enseignants de français en Suède, Sweden**)

“The new website “Vizafle” has been available to French teachers in Romania since March 2011. This project was developed by the ARPF in partnership with the French embassy and the National Education Ministry.” (**ARPF - Association Roumaine des Professeurs de Français, Romania**)

“We have an extensive database of 16,000 names. We are in contact with members on a monthly, sometimes weekly basis using “blasts” to inform them of important events, opportunities etc. Most teachers/professors have daily access to email in their offices and at home.” (**American Association of Teachers of German, USA**)

Competitions with special prizes are also a good way of attracting members, and many associations make use of them accordingly:

“We stage various competitions designed to promote innovation, with attractive prizes generously provided by our partners in order to encourage participation.” (**SUNG - Verband der Deutschlehrer und Germanisten der Slowakei, Slovakia**)

“Our association publishes all kinds of brochures to promote the French language. In addition, the AATF has launched a promotional campaign under the slogan “The World Speaks French” with the assistance of the French embassy in Washington. This includes a website (<http://www.theworldspeaksfrench.org>) and a wide range of documents.” (**American Association of Teachers of French (AATF), USA**)

“We have an annual competition with prizes of holidays and educational residencies awarded both to the winning students and to their teachers. This creates an incentive for colleagues to take part.” (**Associação Portuguesa Dos Professores De Francês-APPF Portugal**)

“We attend reading competitions in our schools in the capacity of objective jury members, and we also help teachers to develop their own German projects and German teacher days.” (**Türkiye Almanca Öğretmenleri Derneği / Türkischer Deutschlehrerverein, Turkey**)

The work of an association can also harness its members’ individual creativity to introduce interesting cultural issues and activities, which are then ideally implemented under consideration of intercultural perspectives:

“German songs with guitar accompaniment; a painting evening (theme: Turkish-German relations); a photo-safari exhibition (Traces of German in Beyoglu and Spring in Istanbul); a painting evening for creative and socially engaged German teachers; an Easter arts and crafts

evening; a Turkish-German cookbook...etc.” (**Türkiye Almanca Öğretmenleri Derneği / Türkischer Deutschlehrerverein, Turkey**)

“We believe it is very important to develop new methods for promoting the German language. For this reason the Association created a short film called “Wir lernen Deutsch!” (“We are learning German!”) which we also recommend to schools, colleges and universities as a means of promoting German.” (**Ukrainischer Deutschlehrer- und Germanistenverband, Ukraine**)

“Since 2000 two national projects have been carried out: Living Together in Peace (a regional studies project that ran from 2000-2006) and Literature in my Backpack (2005-2010). We are currently preparing and implementing a project on Teaching German with Theatre. At the 20th Conference of the DVR at the end of October 2011 there will be a workshop on the use of theatre in teaching. At the same time a group of 20 schoolchildren will take part in the conference, where they will plan a production of Kleist’s *The Broken Jug* and then perform this at the plenum.” (**DLV – Deutschlehrerverband Rumäniens, Romania**)

Finally, it is important to consider membership benefits that do not accrue from the work of the association itself, but which members can take advantage of outside the association – such as discounts on books, films, magazines (whether professional or otherwise) and theatre tickets, among others.

“Members receive discounts in certain theatres and bookshops and when purchasing magazines and films etc.” (**TEA Teachers of English in Austria, Austria**)

In summary, it is clear that one of the most useful tools for attracting new members is a well-designed website, complete with a dedicated presentation of the association as well as useful information on events, meaningful networking opportunities and relevant training. New members are particularly drawn to the opportunity to share their opinions and experiences with others at association events, whether these are large international conferences or smaller, more thematically specialised meetings. Association publications play an important role, whether these are teachers’ magazines, conference proceedings or news bulletins on the work of the association. These materials are freely accessible to members, who can also choose to contribute actively to their production and publish their own work in them. Other opportunities for attracting members include language courses, field trips, competitions, meetings focussing on specific cultural, social or political aspects of the country being studied, and more general events allowing members to share their experiences with each other.

CASE STUDY 4.1***HANDS ON - HÄNDE HOCH! A TEA PROJECT*****SEMINAR FOR ENGLISH TEACHING ASSISTANTS**

TEA – Teachers of English in Austria
Verband der Englischlehrenden in Österreich
<http://www.tea4teachers.org/joomla/>

Dr. Candy Fresacher, TEA-President

With a few coincidences, a lot of networking and the great enthusiasm of many Teaching Assistants, TEA – Teachers of English in Austria – managed to start a new programme that we hope will bring new and innovative methods of solving some of our membership problems.

Before our international conference in 2010, TEA asked Teaching Assistants in Austria under the Fulbright Commission’s programme, if they would like to act as helpers during our 3-day event. In return, the TAs could participate in some of the workshops and seminars that were on offer. The students really enjoyed the opportunities given to them. This led to the thought that perhaps many of the teaching assistants would appreciate additional workshops to help them to be better at assisting the English teachers they were working with. An idea was born.

Anne Storey and Silvia Jindra, two TEA board members, then went about looking for sponsorship. They discussed the matter with Dr. Lonnie Johnson of the Fulbright Commission in Austria and got his approval and a number of names, telephone numbers and email addresses to help in contacting the right people at the Ministry for Education. Funding is important and funding usually only occurs if the proposal is a good one and falls into a niche that is not covered by others. Both these criteria were filled with our proposal. Suddenly the Ministry was not only in favor of the idea, but felt it needed to be implemented immediately.

Within a short four month period TEA organized a two-day event entitled “Hands On” to offer the Teaching Assistants throughout Austria additional hours of assistance with their task of helping English teachers. There was a limit of 70 places for the workshops and they were filled almost immediately. TAs came from across Austria to participate in the programme that included such topics as: Classroom dynamics, Tough topics, Make ‘em talk!, Instant lessons, or Tips and Tools.

There were additional afternoon and evening programmes as well. Here are two quotes from participants:

Thank you for a wonderful weekend. I enjoyed the seminar and learned a lot. It was a great opportunity to meet the TAs from the western part of the country and reconvene with the TAs I met in Graz. Miriam Keller (Oberwart, Burgenland)

For any seminar the idea is that it brings together people with a common interest. "Hands On!" did this very well, and obviously targeted specific concerns expressed by TAs. TEA's efforts to obtain suggestions and elicit feedback certainly paid off. This means that any future seminars will be even better than the first. As for TEA itself, it functions as a really effective network not only for the work of TAs, but also for their social life. Curtis Maughan (Vienna)

TEA is having trouble reaching young English teachers in Austria. We feel that with this initiative, we are not only offering a service to the TAs, but also to their supervising English teachers. In addition, by having these new, young, native-speaking English TAs in our TEA community, we are able to offer our Austrian TEA members the possibility to network with native speakers both in informal gatherings, or at more formal workshops where new ideas for classroom work can be exchanged. We are sure everyone has benefited from this new idea and our next Hands On event with sponsorship of both the Ministry and the PH (Educational College) is again in the planning stages.

CASE STUDY 4.2

RAISING THE PROFILE OF GERMAN: THE DAY OF THE GERMAN LANGUAGE IN UKRAINE



UKRAINIAN ASSOCIATION OF GERMAN TEACHERS AND GERMANISTS (UDGV)

Ivan Franko National University of Lviv

President: Prof. Dr. Alla Paslawska

<http://franko.lviv.ua/udgv/>

German as a foreign language in Ukraine is going through challenging times, since here, as elsewhere, German is losing ground to English. Some consolation can be taken from the fact that Ukraine has the fourth highest number of learners of German in the world, but we should not forget that this number is decreasing while other languages are expanding their influence. This is why over the last three years the Ukrainian Association of German Teachers and Germanists (UDGV) has introduced a number of measures to raise the profile of German and to recruit new members to the association.

On October 1 2009 the Association staged a “**Day of the German Language in Ukraine**” under the motto “Is it worth learning or even studying German in the age of globalisation?!”

To raise the profile of the German language a **Calendar Competition** entitled “Why I’m Learning German” was run. Pupils and students from all over Ukraine submitted over 400 posters and collages depicting their ideas about the importance of German, which confirmed once again that the German language and the teaching of German have maintained their strong position in spite of all criticism. The number of learners of German who took part in the competition exceeded all our hopes, nor had we anticipated such a huge amount of imagination and enthusiasm for the German language. The competition demonstrated that there is still a lot of interest in learning German in Ukraine, and it would be a good idea to show the entries to head teachers who argue against teaching German in favour of other languages.

The UDGV also printed **publicity leaflets for German**, in which general arguments were presented as to why being able to speak German is still a valuable skill. The leaflets were

distributed to interested parties in various Ukrainian cities as part of the Day of the German Language, and we hope that through this initiative we were able to reach new audiences and awaken their interest in German.

On the Day of the German Language there was also a **panel discussion** entitled “**German in Ukraine: the current situation and future perspectives**”. Colleagues from Germany, Austria and Ukraine were invited, along with partners from the Goethe Institut Kiev, the Austrian-Ukrainian Cooperation Office, the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), the German Central Office for International Schools, and the German and Austrian embassies. We believe it is important to bring together the various players who influence the development of the German language in Ukraine: experts who are confronted every day with problems in German language teaching and know how to solve them; authors of German textbooks and learning materials; and many others who contribute to the overall picture of the German language in Ukraine.

The panel discussion addressed issues such as problems of quality assurance; finding appropriate ways to prepare for independent external assessments in German; and the need for new textbooks and learning materials as well as new approaches to German language teaching. It was also emphasised that it is essential to develop teaching methods based on the Common European Framework of Reference that would pay equal attention to the development of all learning strategies and allow learners’ achievements to be objectively evaluated.

The Day of the German Language in Ukraine was a national event, with Lviv as the main venue - though additional support came from Donetsk, Kharkiv and Kiev. Relevant material was also sent to all the regional groups of the UDGV (covering every region of the Ukraine including Crimea), allowing local UDGV coordinators to run similar events on their own doorsteps.

In Lviv, the programme for the Day of the German Language included a wide range of interesting events, and students and learners from both Lviv itself and the surrounding area took part. Throughout the day people were able to learn about opportunities for studying German in Ukraine at **information stands** in the foyer of the university. Students from the German department **raised awareness of the German language with colourful leaflets, stationery, t-shirts and balloons**. A **book fair** was organised where a variety of textbooks and dictionaries were available, both in and about German. Afterwards, visitors were treated to a **performance** of “Four Comic Scenes”. During the coffee breaks delicious **culinary specialities from German speaking countries** were on offer, specially prepared by students of the University of Lviv’s Department of German Philology, Intercultural Communication and Translation for those taking part in the Day of the German Language. To close, there were screenings of German and Austrian films.

CASE STUDY 4.3



4º ENCONTRO NACIONAL APPA/ APEG



**“CHANGING APPROACHES TO THE TEACHING OF GERMAN AS A FOREIGN
LANGUAGE”
PEDAGOGICAL CONCEPTS AND FORMS OF LEARNING IN THE NEW
MILLENNIUM**

Faculdade de Letras da Universidade do Porto, March 25-26 2011

The Portuguese German teachers’ association has offered a number of training and professional development courses for several years now. These are hosted by the association’s own training centre (Formappa), which delivers government-accredited courses to Portuguese schools with the aim of giving teachers of German as a foreign language the opportunity to keep their skills and knowledge up to date.

The association also organises biannual congresses, each of which runs under a particular motto. In March this year this was “Changing Approaches to the Teaching of German as a Foreign Language: Pedagogical Concepts and Forms of Learning in the New Millennium”. A range of guest speakers were invited from Portugal and beyond to give workshops and lectures.

As a concrete example we will now describe the criteria used by participants to evaluate the congress activities.

Before the congress the registered participants were informed that their participation in activities at the congress would allow them to gain points that would contribute to their professional advancement. Participants were also legally required to fulfil the following conditions:

- To participate in at least two thirds of the activities on offer
- To produce a written personal evaluation of the significance of the congress, and of the influence of the activities they attended on their own teaching practice
- To write a short piece containing concrete examples or suggestions of activities or methodologies to be used in their own teaching, based on what they learned in a specific session at the congress

The submitted pieces were carefully examined by a pedagogical commission at the association and evaluated for their creativity and relevant content.

SECTION 5

DISSEMINATION THROUGH EVENTS

SECTION 6

ASSOCIATION WEBSITES

First, it is clear from the completed questionnaires that almost all language associations regard websites as an integral part of their work. Associations also use other ways of engaging in online activity, for example, sending out newsletters or opening a group page on Facebook. In the analysis of the first questionnaire in 2009, it had already become very clear that having a web presence is of major importance to the associations because websites fulfill different functions. In this chapter, expectations surrounding the functions of websites as well as possible difficulties will be examined.

1. Expectations of websites

The expectations and demands that language associations have of their websites are varied. According to the results gathered from the questionnaire in 2011:

- The website of a language teacher association must be highly informative. There should be information about the ongoing activities of the association and of related activities (such as conferences, publications, events in embassies and language centres). The website need to have comprehensive links to these to enable readers to access further information.
- Many associations send newsletters to a broader public to make their information widely available. The group of recipients can include ministries and political decision makers.
- In order for the association's website to remain interesting for members and others it is extremely important to update the information on a regular basis. This is the main way of showing current developments in the language teacher association, but also in the education system and language policy of the country concerned, and of commenting on these developments.
- It is crucial to build the website with a comprehensible and clear structure, so that people with a basic knowledge of new technologies can navigate it.
- Many associations stress that their website is especially interesting for their members because they offer both a public area which is accessible to everybody and an area exclusively for members. In this member area, the associations offer information that is of additional value to their members. This can include resources for teaching, such as concrete teaching plans, interesting news, pedagogical information, different exercises for teachers and students, or even podcasts.
- With regard to multimedia, the inclusion of pictures, as well as audio and video recordings, breaks up the websites that can sometimes be very text-based. This makes them more interesting to both members and the public. It has to be mentioned, though, that for an association to produce its own podcasts or videos is very labour-intensive.

- Many associations use their websites to disseminate the latest news through publishing their association magazine and other publications online. As had already been mentioned in 2009, associations can save money on printing costs in this way. This can be of additional value to the paying members who get access to the publications online.
- The IDV (International German Teacher Association) mentions that many readers of its website welcome job offers there. Of course, these job offers have to be controlled by an editor in order to be appropriate to the website. Nevertheless, uploading job offers regularly on the website or in the newsletters is a clear sign of the association's ongoing activity, which brings it closer to its members and other people interested in its work.
- The word "interactive" is especially important for language teacher associations. Associations which have already managed to develop an interactive website stress the positive results, while those without an interactive website would like to build one in the near future. Interactive in this context means different things, such as offering members the possibility of forum discussions or uploading content themselves. The important point seems to be that not only the webmaster can publish content on the website, but others too. Nevertheless, the webmaster has to monitor all the information that is uploaded onto the website and which can be accessed by the public, as it is the association that takes on the responsibility for all content, regardless of its origin. In forum discussions, there is more focus on free and spontaneous discussions, but it is nevertheless advisable to have a person such as a moderator or webmaster to keep an eye on the activities.
- With regard to interactive content, it can be added that some associations have started to be active on Facebook. Facebook gives associations the opportunity to structure their interactive content and contacts, but the site has to be maintained actively by a member of the association, as regular status updates and the latest ongoing news are simply essential in a social community like Facebook. In some cases, associations are also using Twitter to disseminate short pieces of information and to highlight new items on the website, and this can feed into Facebook too.

2. Difficulties and opportunities

As stated above, the topicality of the information on the website is essential to its success. Therefore, one person in the association has to take on the responsibility for the website. The biggest problem is often that all the members in the association do voluntary and unpaid work and that the maintenance of a website is very time-consuming. Sometimes, the technical requirements of maintaining the website (depending on the system used) can be too complex for the members. In this case, the website maintenance is often outsourced to an external specialist, but this means additional costs for the association. If a member of the association takes over this position, continuity can be endangered whenever this person does not have enough time for the job (or moves away, finds a different job etc.).

Some associations mentioned the difficulty of producing multilingual websites. This means on the one hand a lot of time and effort; but, on the other hand information can be exchanged across different languages. In the end, it can safely be stated that the structure and the topicality of a website is always determined by its budget and the work time available. Still, all associations point to the growing importance of networking via the new media and add that through these media young (and potentially new) members can be reached. Some are more ambitious still and are exploring opportunities to make working internationally across borders substantially more accessible, for example, through regular video conferences, webinars or teacher training online. In summary, all the language teacher associations work hard in order to highlight their work in the online-media and to raise their online voice and profile.

3. Some tips for language teacher association websites

The section concludes with a case study offered by the Slovenian German Teacher Association (SDUNJ) (see Case study 6.1).

The American Association of Teachers of German has also gathered tips on their website about what their own regional associations should bear in mind when they start their own websites (see <http://www.aatg.org/membership/local-chapters/reports-a-websites/13-local-chapter-web-site-hosting-info.html>). Naturally, its special focus lies on German in the USA, but many of these ideas can be transferred and used for building an effective and up to date website:

- Offering links to all the other important language associations, embassies, universities etc.
- Making sure that all the information regarding membership is clearly visible and offering a user-friendly application form for membership
- Having a clear imprint and showing the contact information clearly
- Making an effort to update information regarding your association regularly (for example, uploading the minutes of meetings).
- Describing the structure of your association clearly.
- Having a URL that is easy to remember.
- Offering a possibility for your members to upload their own material

4. Websites

Finally in this section about websites, all the websites of the associations which filled in the questionnaire in 2011 are named. We would like to thank them very much for their contributions, and welcome ongoing contributions to this publication.

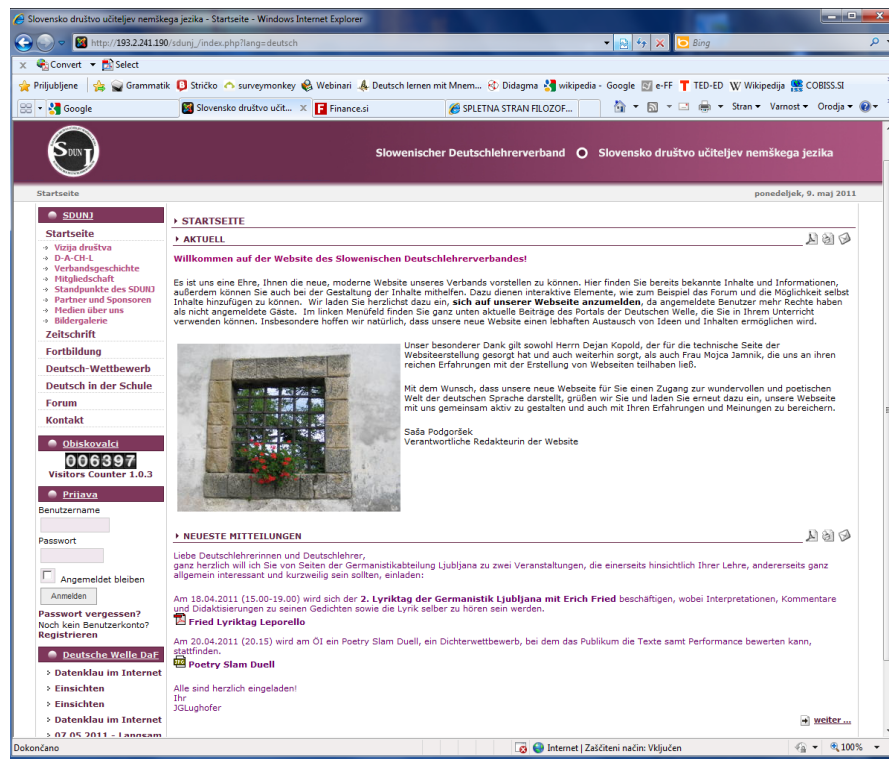
- APPA – Associação Portuguesa de Professores de Alemão, Portugal: www.appa.pt
- American Association of Teachers of German, USA: www.aatg.org
- Arbeitskreis Deutsch als Fremdsprache/Zweitsprache, Switzerland: www.akdaf.ch
- Fransklaererforeningen, Norway: www.fransklaerer.no
- Federación de Asociaciones de Germanistas en España FAGE, Spain: www.fage.es
- Associazione Italiana di Germanistica, Italy: <http://aig.humnet.unipi.it>
- Malta Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (MATEFL), Malta: www.matefl.org
- British Columbia Association of Teachers of Modern Languages, Canada: www.bcatml.org
- Society for the Promotion of the Teaching of English as a Second Language in Quebec (SPEAQ), Canada: www.speaq.qc.ca
- Language Teachers' Association of Lithuania, Lithuania: www.lkpa.uki.vu.lt
- Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers, Canada: www.caslt.org
- TEA Teachers of English in Austria, Austria: www.tea4teachers.org
- Romanian Association of Teachers of English (RATE), Rumania: www.rate.org.ro
- English Language Teachers Association of Albania, Albania: <http://eltaal.org>
- Lärarna i moderna språk (LMS), Sweden: www.lms-riks.se
- Associação Portuguesa dos Professores de Francês (APPF), Portugal: www.appf.pt
- Félag Þýzkukennara (Der isländische Lehrerverband), Iceland: www.ki.is
- Association des enseignants de français en Suède (AEFS), Sweden: www.fransklarerforeningen.com
- Türkiye Almanca Öğretmenleri Derneği (Turkish Association for German teachers): www.taod.org.tr
- American Association of Teachers of French (AATF), USA: www.frenchteachers.org
- Félag frönskukennara á Íslandi (L'Association des professeurs de français en Islande), Iceland: www.franska.is
- Association des Professeurs de Français de Malte (APFM), Malta: www.apfmalte.com/
- Lingua e Nuova Didattica (LEND), Italia: www.lend.it
- Slowenischer Deutschlehrerverband (SDUNJ), Slovenia: www.sdunj.si

CASE STUDY 6.1

CASE STUDY FROM SLOVENIA – THE WEBSITE OF THE SLOVENIAN GERMAN TEACHER ASSOCIATION (SDUNJ)

Written by Saša Podgoršek, 9th May 2011
(Translated by: Tatjana Atanasoska)

The Slovenian German Teacher Association (SDUNJ) developed a new and interactive website in 2010, www.sdunj.si. The base was the old, static website, and a group of members led by Mrs. Saša Podgoršek developed our site further. The new website is interactive and allows for active participation of all members (registration for the site is necessary).



First page of the SDUNJ: www.sdunj.si

The website consists of three parts: on the right hand side is the the main content of the website, on the left there is the menu bar, and above is a smaller menu bar, giving the user the chance to choose a language. There are eight major sections on the main menu.

1. Home
2. Magazine
3. Teacher training

4. German contest
5. German in schools
6. Forum
7. Contact
8. RSS Deutsche Welle DaF

The website has been available in two languages since 2011 (Slovenian and German).

The **structure of the website** is as follows:

- Home
 - Visions of SDUNJ
 - D-A-CH-L
 - The history of the association
 - Membership info
 - SDUNJ's positions on different topics
 - Partners and sponsors
 - Media coverage of the SDUNJ
 - Picture gallery
- Magazine
 - Description of the magazine
 - Invitation to contribute
 - List of contents
 - Archive (earlier issues)
- Teacher training
 - Meetings
 - Seminars
 - IDT (Internationale Deutschlehrertagung)
- German contest
 - Competition regulations and instructions
 - Results
 - Archive
 - FAQ
- German in schools
 - Competition regulations and instructions
 - Projects of the association
 - School projects
 - Internet connections
- Forum

- Contact
- RSS Deutsche Welle DaF

The website contains all of the association's activities. The organisers of these activities write and publish their texts and information on the website themselves, which was not possible with the old, static website. This decentralised approach makes it possible to react fast, which is especially important for the German contest (publishing the results, FAQ, etc.).

The website was presented 5 November 2010 at the German teacher conference in Slovenia. Since then, we have registered 6000 website visitors. At this moment (May 2011), 56 members have been registered on the website. Visitors to the website do not only come from Slovenia, but from 31 different countries. Most of them are from Germany, Russia, Ukraine, Sweden, Austria and Croatia. The most and second-most visited site is Competition Regulations and Instructions (3897 hits) and Archive (1423 hits) in the section on the German contest.

The layout is based on a template by Joomla!, and it was designed to be especially clear. The visual identity of the website corresponds to the visual identity of the association.

The new website of the SDUNJ is now half a year old. Initial feedback has been very positive, but we still want to carry out an analysis of the website usage to be able to further improve it. Version 2 will be presented at the Slovenian German teacher conference in autumn 2011.

SECTION 7

PUBLICATIONS

1. The nature of association publications

Publications play an important role in the work of associations, and, for some members, the most important role. Thanks to new technologies, publishing activity has become increasingly easier to handle and consequently it has expanded considerably. The overwhelming majority of language teacher associations (indeed all of those which responded to our questionnaire) have developed their own websites which are used to gather and disseminate information and communications to members, usually in parallel with email and, occasionally, Facebook messages. Websites are able to provide an increasingly rich information source, which can, and should be, constantly updated. An analysis of the websites of those associations who responded to our questionnaire reveals two main types of information:

- a) Many associations place relevant scientific publications on their websites. These are largely individual articles written by members, or conference proceedings. The topics dealt with in these publications correspond to the aims of the association and the interests of the members, and are broad ranging, including articles on literature, linguistics and pedagogy, which report on the latest research and practice. These publications can appear as freestanding articles or as book series or journals published by the association. In fact, more and more associations are setting up their own journal, increasingly with an ISBN or ISSN number. Some of them, especially those connected to higher education, have set up editorial boards which regulate the quality of the journal and guarantee its status at an international level. These scientific publications usually also house conference reports, news about cultural events as well as book reviews and discussions.
- b) The publishing arm of the associations does not, however, only produce scientific publications. As significant for the associations is the publishing of news and information relating to their wide ranging day to day activity. Here then we have the second meaning of the word 'publication', namely 'making public', the provision of a vital information service for association members. This has also been made easier, faster and more effective through modern technologies. Printed newsletters have been replaced by electronic mailings and printed publicity documents, such as flyers, by the association website. Both of these tools enable members to be informed immediately about the various association activities, current issues and events.

As well as the association website, then, email plays an important role. Many associations stress that the members of their executive bodies are reachable at all times by email:

“Direct communication between members (Google group) and direct contact to the executive via their email addresses are possible at all times”. (**Deutschlehrerverband Rumäniens - Romanian Association of German Teachers, Romania**)

Others place the email addresses not only of the executive but also of their members in a prominent place on the website. Electronic mailings draw the attention of members to the association’s various activities, important dates and scientific publications. Since members cannot be expected to constantly visit the website, electronic mailings are important in highlighting new additions to the website.

Most associations therefore use email as a form of communication to ensure that messages reach their members. It is becoming increasingly rare for such messages to be sent by post. Brochures and flyers are only distributed in special circumstances, such as at conferences, or when an important book has been published or to celebrate occasions when members receive prestigious prizes. Sometimes, however, it is still necessary to send mailings by post for more everyday matters; one case study sent in by an association pointed out that some members tend only to pay their membership fees when the request arrives by post accompanied by a payment slip:

“The increase of social media and the increase of a younger generation of teachers and dependence on electronic media is something that we are trying to stay apace with. However, our older members do not necessarily use these media so we need to have a number of different ways to reach our members. We have discovered that sending emails as reminders to renewal of membership does not work well and that we need to send out letters with payment slips attached.” (**TEA - Teachers of English in Austria, Austria**)

However, not all associations entirely welcome the shift from printed to electronic publications. Many consider the printed versions to be more valuable and easier to use than electronic versions (including CDs and DVDs), and regret the fact that they lack the necessary funds to produce printed versions:

“The fact that publishing reviews costs a lot and there are no funds included for that... Other than that, there are some people who know how to make magazines (myself included), and we can manage without specialized help, on a voluntary basis, which saves a lot of money. But the issue of printing is still a problem. We give our members an e-magazine after an event, but it is not the same thing as having a printed copy in your hands or a CD with the magazine. Of course everyone prefers the former.” (**RATE - Romanian Association of Teachers of English – Romania**)

The vast majority of associations nevertheless stress the advantages of being able to reach a wider audience for less cost through the use of electronic publications and information services:

“Movement to wider use of the web to access information. Six years ago, we started to allow membership with either a printed magazine or with download of its electronic version. This opens the way to membership from countries with lower levels of disposable income.”
(International League of Esperantist Teachers, ILET / Internacia Ligo de Esperantistaj Instruistoj ILEI. ILEI is officially registered in Den Haag, the Netherlands)

“Possibility of being published in overseas publications.” **(Association des professeurs de francais du Sud de la Russie – French Teachers’ Association of Southern Russia, Russian Federation)**

“We include the conference proceedings which help those non ELTA members who can’t come to such kind of events.” **(English Language Teachers Association in Albania)**

“Our newsletter is online and we charge \$8 for printed copies annually. Our pedagogical journal *Die Unterrichtspraxis* will be only online beginning in 2012. Our material center is moving slowly to CDs and DVDs rather than paper copies.” **(American Association of Teachers of German, USA)**

“Cost of printing the journal is a big issue.” **(The Association of Foreign Language Teachers in Iceland)**

“We have no money for publications and so we use the website and mailing lists. Foreign language associations share a common journal which is also available on-line.” **(Félag Þýzkukennara/Der isländische Deutschlehrerverband – The German Teachers’ Association of Iceland)**

One association makes the interesting point that today’s readers are overloaded with information and do not want printed versions any more:

“No more paper wanted! Our newsletter and all communications have gone entirely electronic. Readership is not great - members are too inundated to bother opening all mail correspondence they receive.” **(BC Association of Teachers of Modern Languages Canada)**

The position of emails and websites as the most important current form of communication is increasingly being supplemented by an association presence on Facebook, which is being used more and more in today's society.

2. Main content of publications and other communications

Associations' information services are able to provide information on a wide range of topics. Apart from important dates and events, the websites tend to include the aims of the association as well as its history, minutes of meetings, links to other associations and to interesting events in relation to languages. In many cases, association activities are reported online immediately after the event, such as in Case study 7.1.

Association activities and specialist publications are closely related. This is particularly the case when the proceedings of an association conference appear in one of its own publications. An example of this is the publication of the proceedings of the last IDT/International German Teachers' Conference (Jena 2009), which were published online in four volumes of the IDV Magazine (http://www.idvnetz.org/publikationen/idv_magazin.htm).

Topics included in specialist association publications can be grouped into two many areas: **New directions in research and priorities for teaching** and **Influence of policy on education**, as seen below:

a) References to research and teaching approaches

“At IDT conferences topics cover a wide range of issues relating to the overall theme of ‘the provision of German as a foreign, second and first language’. Of course these include new directions in research and priorities for teaching, such as in recent years a focus on text in linguistics, corpus linguistics, the issue of meaning and characteristics of German as a scientific language, etc.” (Internationaler Deutschlehrerverband (**IDV**) - **International Association of Teachers of German**)

“Current topics in the field of German as a Foreign/Second Language and interculturality.” (**Arbeitskreis Deutsch als Fremdsprache in der Schweiz, www.akdaf.ch** – **Swiss Association for German as a Foreign Language, Switzerland**)

“New approaches to facilitating the learning of German as a Foreign Language, and all other topics of interest to German teachers.” (**Slowenischer Deutschlehrerverband – SDUNJ** – **Slovenian Association of German Teachers, Slovenia**)

“Implementation of the Common European Framework of Reference & Language Portfolio (which has been adopted in principle as curriculum development reference tools) is our key influence. Provincial/territorial curricula are in the process of being revised, and our association could play a key role in disseminating info and assisting implementation.” (**Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers, Canada**)

There is also some recognition of the need to move towards similar standards of initial teacher training and continuing professional development across Europe:

“The reduction in the number of French classes nationally, the need to employ new technologies in class, and raising the standard of teacher training to the European level.” (**Association Roumaine des Professeurs de Français – Romania**)

“Our members are particularly interested in documents relating to teaching methods and cultural content. They need grants to enable them to go on summer courses in French speaking countries in order to refresh or enhance their competence in French, whatever their need may be. They also need resources and arguments to convince administrators of the importance of French.” (**American Association of Teachers of French – AATF, USA**)

b) References to the influence of policy on education

“Characteristics of the language policy pursued by the Italian Ministry of Education ; innovations in teaching and learning languages.” (**LEND – Lingua e Nuova Didattica – ITALY**)

“Reactions to political decisions or laxism.” (**SPEAQ, Canada - Society for the Promotion of the Teaching of English as a Second Language in Quebec**)

“Last year we had the conference entitled ‘The changing nature of education in Central Asian countries’. I gave the plenary talk at the conference. Or I publish on the Kazakhstan languages strategy in the journal ‘German in Kazakhstan’. (**DLV Kasachstan – Germans Teachers’ Association of Kazakhstan**)

The main topics here are the political decisions, or rather the frequent lack of engagement on the part of politicians in promoting languages, as well as political changes, which mean that education is also impacted on a political level and not only on a scientific research level.

The particular curricular constraints on maintaining the learning of a second and third foreign language (after English as a compulsory language) are nowadays considered to be a major problem in many countries. German and French are examples of languages which are particularly affected:

“Current trends in language policy in Slovakia – English as a compulsory language and, from September 2011, it will even be the first foreign language.” (**SUNG – Verband der Deutschlehrer und Germanisten der Slowakei – German Teachers’ Association of Slovakia, Slovakia**)

Ideas for topics to be included in publications often come from the Executive Committee and its initiatives. Many associations therefore consider it important to change the individual members of such committees on a regular basis, as new members bring new ideas.

“We have members of the board responsible for publications and information published. Members of the board are changed each 3 years, new professionals introduce new ideas.” (**Lietuvos kalbų pedagogų asociacija – LKPA – Lithuanian Association of Language Teachers**)

Reference is also made to career opportunities afforded by the learning of a foreign language:

“The trend of using French as a language of high level education, of careers and interesting professional activities.” (**Association de professeurs de français d’Astrakhan – French Teachers’ Association of Astrakhan, Russia**)

Finally, it is worth mentioning that the possibility of participating actively in association conferences and publishing their own work in association books or journals is a great attraction to many members:

“All members have the opportunity to publish in the journal ‘Deutsch Aktuell’, which has an ISSN number.” (**Deutschlehrerverband Rumäniens – German Teachers’ Association of Rumania**)

A further example of this has been provided in Case study 7.2.

CASE STUDY 7.1

IDV- INTERNATIONAL GERMANS TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

Marco Aurelio Schaumloeffel, IDV-Editor

<http://www.idvnetz.org/default.htm>



The International German Teachers' Conference (IDT) 2009 in Jena/Weimar had successfully drawn to a conclusion, but there was still much work to be done following the largest IDT in the history of IDV. This conference had provided so many new initiatives, contacts and ideas for all who took part, that it was absolutely essential to find a publication format which would allow the widest distribution and access for anyone interested. In order to make this possible, and at the same time to ensure that the 'long-term effects' of the conference would not be lost, IDV asked conference participants to submit all of their contributions (to any of the nine conference strands) to the association's online journal. The nine conference strands of the IDT in Jena were divided into an impressive 44 sections, which made it impossible to publish all contributions in one issue of the IDV Magazine. Instead, four successive issues of the journal were devoted to the conference papers, and published between December 2009 and March 2011. The task of selecting the contributions and editing work was carried out by each of the strand leaders.

The result of this was that, for the first time in the follow-up to an IDT, IDV managed to publish not only the main talks, but also provided the opportunity to a wide international public to disseminate their experiences of research and practice, which had been presented as part of this major international conference, in the IDV Magazine. We considered this approach to publishing to be our particular contribution to the conference, and an attempt to respond to the frequent comments of participants that 'we unfortunately cannot hear everything'.

**„Kommt ein Einarmiger
in ein Second-Hand-Geschäft“**

- Syntax (Verberstellung), Spezifisch Textsorte „Witz“
- Morphologie
ein: 1) Zahlwort (1,2,...), 2) unbest. Artikel Nom sgl. m./n
1) Arm, Substantiv, mask. (Pl.: -e) 2) arm, Adj. -i, -reich
-Ig grammatisches Suffix, Substantiv → Adjektiv
-er Agensmarkierung (Person), mask
- Semantik
Bedeutung „EIN-ARM-ig“ ~ „SECOND-HAND“
Internationalismen („Second“ ~ Zahlwort; „Hand“ ~ Arm)

Vertextungen, implizite Semantik (Wortfelder und „Weltwissen“) und damit einhergehende Wortschatzarbeit, Stereotypen („Kellner“, „Ostfrieze“ oder „Angler“ im kommenden Beispiel) und ganz bewusst auch Tabubereiche (u.a. „Blondinen“) stimulierten aktive Diskussionen innerhalb des Seminars und Reflektionen über viele nicht realisierte Bereiche der deutschen Sprache und Kultur.

Voraussetzung für die Betrachtung einzelner Texte ist selbstverständlich eine ausgearbeitete Vorentlastung in Bezug auf Wortschatz/Homonymien, Konnotationen, Handlungsmuster und Kulturspezifika (so müssen die Rezipienten beispielsweise über die Existenz und Bedeutung der Frauenzeitschrift „Für Sie“ wissen, bevor Sie folgenden Text verstehen, geschwiege denn

IDV-Magazin – Nr. 81 – Dezember 2009 – Seite 37/708

analysieren können: „Wie heißt die große deutsche Frauenzeitschrift für Blondinen? – „Für Ihr“.“)



Stereotypische Vertextung: Analyse
Einleitung:
Personenstereotypen:
Angler (redet nicht gerne)
Spaziergänger (gesprächig)
„Trigger“:
Personalpronomen „SIE“
Ambiguität:
1) 3. Pers. pl.
2) Höflichkeitsanrede
Punch-Line: Re-Interpretation durch „Ich“

Retrospektiv stellt sich eine Analyse der kurzen, weit verbreiteten und hochkomplexen Textsorte „Witz“ als ein hervorragendes Medium zur weiteren Vermittlung verschiedenster DaF-relevanter Aspekte dar: fokussiert ausgehend von grammatischen Bereichen der Sprache über allgemeinsprachliche Beobachtungen, soziokulturelle Aspekte über geschichtliches und landeskundliches Wissen bis hin zu sprachpolitischen Überlegungen.

IDV-Magazin – Nr. 81 – Dezember 2009 – Seite 38/708

Sample pages of the special issues of the IDV-Magazine containing contributions to the IDT Conference, 2009

CASE STUDY 7.2

TDLV PUBLICATIONS

Türkiye Almanca Öğretmenleri Derneği/Turkish Association of German Teachers

President: Petek GÖKÇE

www.taod.org.tr

<http://facebook.com/TAOD.TDLV>



In addition to the regular publication of the members' journal *Almanca Dil Dergisi*, a major task of the Turkish Association of German Teachers is to organise courses, seminars and conferences on issues relating to the German language. Every month we offer seminars, workshops and opportunities to exchange ideas. Our events are also advertised by our partner organisation, the Goethe Institut. Our journal 'Almanca Dil Dergisi' is published annually and, as with many of our activities, financed by the Goethe Institut.

Our members enjoy participating in our events, which are regularly enounced on both our website and the Goethe Institut's website (<http://www.goethe.de/ins/tr/ist/ver/deindex.htm>). Activities and topics, often with an intercultural focus, included in our most recent events were: film in the classroom; German songs accompanied by the guitar; painting evening (with the theme of Turkish-German relations) for creative and socially engaged German teachers; an exhibition (Photo Safari – Traces of Germany in Beyoglu and Spring in Istanbul); a handicrafts event at Christmas and Easter; recipes for use in teaching German as a Foreign Language, leading to a Turkish-German cookery book.

Following each event, photos are put onto Facebook (<http://facebook.com/TAOD.TDLV>). This serves the dual purpose of survey (evaluation) and publicity for the next events. Our surveys are usually organised and analysed by active members.

Whenever our members send us a report of one of their successful projects, we publish it in our journal and also on our Facebook pages.

SECTION 8

INVOLVEMENT IN POLICY

One of the most important roles identified by many language teacher associations is that of representing their members' views to policy makers with a view to influencing decisions about different aspects of language learning and teaching.

In this section, we will see examples from associations of the ways in which they view their role in policy development, including why it is important and where it might take place. The section also identifies barriers to influencing policy and strategies which associations employ in order to overcome these.

1. Influencing policy as a priority

Many associations have identified the representation of teachers' views on policy-making bodies as their most important function. These include: the Australian Federation of Modern Language Teachers Associations; LMS Sweden; Verband der Deutschlehrer und Germanisten, Slowakei.

The reasons for this vary according to the language and the context. Common to all, however, are that policy is changing, sometimes constantly, and that the associations have a sense of responsibility to impact on that and to uphold standards:

“Representing teachers' views on policy making bodies' is very important nowadays, as the school system is changing, and we feel the influence of e.g. other European countries. It is both a good and a bad influence, and we have to work democratically and try to use our influence in order to avoid a deterioration of the language teaching....Our main challenge currently is our association's joint effort regarding designing/updating the policy for the teaching of foreign languages in our country.” (**Sproglærerforeningen Danmark, Denmark's association of teachers of foreign languages, Denmark**)

“La représentation de l'opinion de nos membres auprès des autorités éducatives [est la fonction la plus importante, parce que] notre ministère de l'éducation procède souvent à des réformes qui concernent l'enseignement des langues étrangères, et il est important que notre opinion soit entendue. (**Association des professeurs de et en français en Bulgarie, Bulgaria**)

“Being a federation of foreign language teachers in Finland it is our task to safeguard and to try to improve the rights and well-being of our members, the Finnish foreign language

teachers and at the same time to keep a high standard of language teaching in our country.”
(SUKOL, Finland)

In some cases, there is a sense that the language taught by members needs to be protected, particularly in face of the pressures from governments to promote English and English alone. On one level, this has a potential impact on teachers' jobs:

“Die LehrerInnen erwarten, dass Ihre Arbeitsstellen gesichert werden, indem nicht nur Englisch, sondern auch andere Sprachen unterrichtet werden.” **(Polnischer Deutschlehrerverband/ Polskie Stowarzyszenie Nauczycieli Języka Niemieckiego, Poland)**

“Pour que l’enseignement du français, et surtout en français dans le cadre des projets internationaux, ne succombe pas évincé par l’anglais, il faut que les autorités linguistiques et éducatives développent et/ou soutiennent des programmes liés à la mise en pratique du multi- et plurilinguisme dans l’esprit de la politique linguistique européenne. Ceci permettrait de remplacer l’attitude „au lieu de...“, qui prédomine toujours lors du choix des langues d’enseignement et de recherche, par l’attitude „à côté de...“ qui est la plus efficace et prometteuse dans le contexte existant.” **(Organisation régionale caritative « Association des professeurs de français », Saint-Pétersbourg Russia)**

“Das Bildungsministerium behandelt republik- sowie landesweit das Unterrichtsfach Englisch als Fremdsprache vorrangig. Deutsch wird demgegenüber nur stiefmütterlich behandelt - das hat seine Folgen: Die Zahl der Bewerber hat in den letzten Jahren nachgegeben.” **(Deutschlehrer-Verband Republik Baschkortostan, Russia)**

2. Where do the associations engage with policymakers?

Associations identify a number of different bodies where they represent their members' interests:

- Government departments, such as Ministries of Education, Tourism etc, and Parliamentary bodies (e.g. Association Costaricienne des Professeurs de Français – ACOPROF; ADEAF; ANILS; Association lituanienne des professeurs de français; Association Venezuelienne des Professeurs de Français (AVENPROF); BC Association of Teachers of Modern Languages, Canada; LMS Sweden; STIL; Verband der Deutschlehrenden Litauens)
- Examination authorities (e.g. APPA – Associação Portuguesa de Professores de Alemão; Estnischer Deutschlehrerverband)

- Local authorities, e.g. participation à la Table ronde consacrée aux problèmes de l'enseignement des langues étrangères dans les écoles secondaires organisée par la Douma de la ville de Moscou (Association des Enseignants de Français/Russie (AEFR))
- Other official bodies, e.g. grant awarding bodies, inspectorates

Sometimes these are formal partnerships, which have been agreed and signed:

“L'ARPF a un partenariat avec le Ministère de l'Education Nationale signé au mois de février 2011 et participe à la mise en oeuvre de la nouvelle loi de l'éducation qui nous est favorable.” (**Association Roumaine des Professeurs de Français – Romania**)

“The fact that we have representatives at a national level, that there are periodic meetings between these representatives and government representatives. I am not sure how effective this is, but at least we make our concerns heard. Also, there are times when we write and sign letters addressed to our local governors. I wish, however, that more people took a stand when it comes to their own interests.” (**RATE - Romanian Association of Teachers of English, Romania**)

“Kommunikation mit den politischen Entscheidungsträgern mit dem Ziel, die Position der deutschen Sprache in den curricularen Diskussionen und in der Unterrichtspraxis zu stärken:

- Fachkommission zur Entwicklung des nationalen Curriculums (seit 2008)
- Fachkommission zur Entwicklung des "Pädagogischen Standards" (Mindestvoraussetzungen, die schulische Einrichtungen erfüllen müssen) (2007)
- Arbeitsgruppen zur Entwicklung von Prüfungen zur externen Evaluation auf der nationalen Ebene, einschließlich des Zentralabiturs (seit 2007)”

(**KDV - Kroatischer Deutschlehrerverband, Croatia**)

“L'engagement de LEND dans l'élaboration de propositions innovantes pour l'enseignement des langues a été reconnu par le ministère italien qui lui a octroyé, depuis 2002 le titre de « Institution de formation officiellement reconnue », ce qui permet de signer des conventions avec les établissements scolaires pour collaborer à la formation des enseignants de langues. Grâce à ce statut, LEND a pu collaborer et collabore encore à des projets ministériels de formation sur le territoire national comme le projet « Lingua 2000 » dans les années 90 et le projet « Poseidon » pour la formation à distance actuellement en cours.” (**LEND - Lingua e Nuova Didattica, Italy**)

They may also be represented on national steering groups, established by the Government with specific tasks to address. For example, in 2001-2002 the Association for Language Learning (ALL) was represented on the National Languages Steering Group by its President; chaired by a

Government Minister, the task was to develop a National Languages Strategy. Similarly, ALL was represented on the Development of a new Government-sponsored languages qualification for 14-19 year olds from 2008-2010. A similar situation is described as follows:

“Groupe de Réflexion pour le Français: depuis 2003, le SCAC a mis en place un Projet National de Formation Continue qui est géré par des Groupes de Réflexion dans 8 régions. Ces groupes sont constitués par des représentants des institutions de formation de formateurs, des écoles de langues vivantes, des alliances françaises locales et des associations locales membres de la FAPF. Chaque année, le SCAC demande aux groupes la présentation des projets de formation continue, qui peuvent être assurés par des spécialistes nationaux ou français.” **(FAPF - Fédération argentine de professeurs de français, Argentina)**

Associations can also play a strong role in the development of more specific aspects of the curriculum, such as assessment. SUKOL, in Finland, for example, sits on the Matriculation Examination board's committee on developing the national language exams, as well as the Ministry of Education's committee on introducing oral courses to upper secondary education.

3. Barriers to influencing policy

Associations identify internal and external barriers to influencing policy. **Examples of internal barriers** include the following:

- The problem of attracting members identified by many associations is explicitly identified also as a problem when trying to find people to represent the association, or when trying to convince policymakers that they represent language teachers' views.
- The fact that active members are volunteers employed by other organisations limits their availability and time; it is, for example, more difficult to find representatives who are school teachers than those working in universities.
- Economic barriers, i.e. lack of funding, reduce the number of paid officers, or prevents the association having an office.
- A sense that participation in consultative meetings takes a great deal of effort but does not have a significant impact sometimes leads to associations prioritising other forms of teacher support.
- Professional development and promotion is in some contexts gained more easily when teachers devote themselves to their own development, rather than taking a collegial approach.
- Fragmentation of the languages lobby is increased by the existence of separate language associations which may compete rather than collaborate.

External barriers include the following:

- Associations are not invited to join such decision-making bodies at all. This may be because there is no historical tradition of consultation in the country, or lack of recognition of the associations.
- Decisions are made in advance, and there is a sense that meetings are organised as a token gesture to consultation.
- Associations are not consulted on the major issues, such as finances; they can only influence more peripheral aspects of policy.
- There are frequent changes of people and policies, and it is impossible to keep up with them all.
- Lack of transparency about where policy is really made makes it difficult for associations with limited resources to participate in a focused way.
- Languages are not considered important enough to devote time and resources to by policymakers. This is particularly the case in some English-speaking countries.
- There are conflicts of interest between decision-makers and associations, and associations may not have experience in effective lobbying. This can lead to a confrontational approach to influencing policy which can in turn lead to lack of impact on or exclusion from decisions.
- Devolution of language policy to a local, regional or provincial level, or even to individual schools, makes it harder for a national association to have an influence.
- If only one or a small number of languages are being promoted by the government, it is difficult for other language associations to gain access; this will also have an impact on the languages which language inspectors favour.

4. Strategies for influencing policy

Despite such barriers, many associations find ways of influencing policy. In some cases, where there is no tradition of consulting associations, this involves finding a range of ways of making themselves known to policymakers. Examples include the following:

- **Organising high profile events:**
 - “Versuchen, persönlich in Kontakt zu kommen. Für uns hat es sich auch bewährt, grössere Tagungen zu organisieren und so auf uns aufmerksam zu machen.”
(**Arbeitskreis Deutsch als Fremdsprache in der Schweiz**)

- “We need to show the government that we offer a service to our teachers that can’t be found elsewhere. When we do that we can convince them to contribute funds to various activities. Our latest had to do with having a conference for teaching assistants coming from America, Britain and Australia who are here for one or two years to assist English language teachers. As they are sometimes little equipped to actually “teach” their own language this was a good project that was appreciated by the TAs themselves, the government and the other sponsoring organizations.” (**TEA Teachers of English in Austria, Austria**)
- **Organising other forms of professional development courses and projects:**
 - “Nous bénéficions actuellement d'une bonne image auprès des autorités éducatives en raison de l'engagement de membres actuels de la direction et de la qualité du travail mené dans des projets éducatifs (notamment les programmes d'enseignement du français et le partenariat dans le développement des Sections Européennes)”. (**Associação Portuguesa dos Professores de Francês – APPF, Portugal**)
 - “Nous participons aux différents projets, proposés par le ministère.” (**Association lituanienne des professeurs de français, Lithuania**)
- **Cultivating personal contacts in national and local Government and other official bodies, e.g.**
 - “Bei Veranstaltungen laden wir Policymakers mit Vorträgen oder bei Podiumsdiskussionen ein.” (**Deutschlehrerverband Rumäniens Romania**)
 - “Avoir des liens avec le Ministère de l’Education à Malte et l’Ambassade de France à Malte montre que nous voulons travailler dans la même direction. Le site web permet de montrer la réussite de l’association.” (**Association des Professeurs de Français de Malte (APFM), Malta**)
- **Lobbying/campaigning, especially when based on research expertise, careful analysis of the relevant documents, and consultation with the association’s members:**
 - “We have lobbied with success for languages having an increased value when going to universities.” (**LMS-Sweden**)
 - “Contribution au développement du multi- et plurilinguisme à l’échelle de nos établissement en utilisant comme argument des rapports analytiques basés aussi bien sur

les résultats des pratiques locales que sur les documents européens en matière des politiques linguistiques. Les mécanismes de la participation des associations comme la nôtre en tant qu'acteurs institutionnels pouvant influencer la prise des décisions à un haut niveau est en train de se développer en Russie dans l'esprit de la nouvelle loi sur les organisations et groupements non commerciaux datant du 2006." (**Organisation régionale caritative 'Association des professeurs de français', Saint-Pétersburg, Russia**)

- "Aller faire des propositions concrètes de démarches méthodologiques adaptées à la réalité locale sans passer avant par les autorités éducatives. Se mettre au travail et résoudre le problème sur place en concordance avec ses partenaires." (**APF Chile**)
- "We have gathered statistics to show the policymakers that the number of children and youth studying other languages than English has been declining drastically during the past ten years. We also organized a three-year-long national campaign called KISU - Multilingual Finland 2005-2007 in order to promote the teaching and learning of languages. The target groups of the campaign were as much policymakers as citizens." (**SUKOL, Finland**)

In other cases, associations are consulted but have to find alternative ways of influencing policy as they do not have sufficient people to cope with the amount of consultation. Written representation, e.g. letters to government ministers, contacting local politicians, letters to the press, official press releases, is one way in which associations can still make their voices heard under such circumstances, though these are recognised as important lobbying strategies at all times.

Collaboration with other associations and organizations is another way of making economies of scale with regard to attending consultation meetings. However, it is also recognized that such collaboration is a way of strengthening their influence. Partners might include universities, schools, embassies, cultural institutes, and the media. For associations which represent one particular language, it is crucial that they work alongside other associations in order to demonstrate a united front wherever this is possible. These can involve collaborations with other associations representing the same language, e.g. "Comité de Liaison en Argentine, composé par les 3 associations nationales pour le Français: SAPFESU – DICIFRAN – FAPF". Partnerships can also involve teachers of different languages. For example, ZAFT (Zambian Association of French Teachers) stated that they influence policy through collaborating with teachers of English and local languages in LATAZ (Language Teachers' Association of Zambia). Similarly, in Iceland, it is recognised that:

"Die einzelnen Verbände müssen zusammenarbeiten, denn als geschlossene Einheit sind wir stärker und können einander helfen. Momentan ist es wichtig, dass die sog. 3. Fremdsprache

(Deutsch, Spanisch, Französisch) zusammen arbeiten, da im Kultusministerium an einem neuen Curriculum gearbeitet wird.” (**Félag Þýzkukennara/Icelandic Association of German Teachers, Iceland**)

“Als effektiv hat sich die Kooperation von verschiedenen SprachlehrerInnenverbänden in der Slowakei erwiesen, zum Beispiel die gemeinsame Vorgehensweise in den Stellungnahmen zum Pflichtenglisch-Gesetz. Effektiv ist auch die Zusammenarbeit mit diversen Institutionen der deutschsprachigen Länder in der Slowakei, auch Botschaften, und mit dem Netzwerk der Sprachmittler. Wichtig ist auch die Zusammenarbeit mit methodischen Zentren.” (**Spoločnosť učiteľov nemeckého jazyka a germanistov Slovenska (SUNG)/ Verband der Deutschlehrer und Germanisten der Slowakei, Slovakia**)

In some cases these individual associations have even become one languages association, as happened in the 1980s in the UK when ALL was formed through the merger of a range of individual language associations. There is an increasing interest in forming multilingual associations such as ALL (UK), Australian Federation of Modern Language Teacher Associations (Australia), LALT (Latvia), LMS Sweden (Sweden), STIL (Iceland), SUKOL (Finland), and LATAZ (Zambia).

There is also evidence of associations collaborating internationally. ANILS (Italy) cites its membership of FIPLV as a support to policy influence, for example. (See also the case study from LKPA, the Association of Language Teachers of Lithuania, in Case study 8.1.)

Others work with a wider range of teacher organisations, such as subject associations and trade unions, or with other language-related organisations (see the case study from the American Association of Teachers of German, in Case study 8.2).

CASE STUDY 8.1**LKPA (LIETUVOS KALBŲ PEDAGOGŲ ASOCIACIJA)****ASSOCIATION OF LANGUAGE TEACHERS OF LITHUANIA****ACTING LOCALLY AND GLOBALLY****Eglė Šleinotienė****President of the Association of Language Teachers of Lithuania**

The European Union, the Council of Europe, and the European Commission support multilingualism as an integral part of the present and future development of Europe. The Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania grants the Lithuanian language the status of the state language; good conditions are created for all citizens to foster and develop their national languages and learn other languages as well. Language teachers are the main participants and promoters of the above mentioned EU and national strategy. The role of professionals and teacher associations is increasing. Language promotion at the European level and in Lithuania is an important element of several policy agendas at the local or national levels. Languages are linked to important policy issues such as intercultural dialogue, socio-economic development, employment, and integration. National and regional officials in Lithuania consider language competence to be an important factor for employment and intercultural understanding.

As the President of LKPA, elected by languages professionals representing universities, colleges, language schools and associations, I understand that successful promotion of the association is not just dependent on raising awareness amongst direct targets such as teachers, teacher trainers, educational institutions or other experts in the language field. Targeting policy makers helps to increase the visibility of the organisation and maximise its impact, because they can provide new opportunities for funding, networking, ideas for expansion of the association's activities, and sustainability of the results.

We try to work on national and international levels. On the national level, LKPA aims to attract officials and government authorities (Members of the SEIMAS, or Parliament), ministries, other national, regional and local authorities and associations, international organizations, such as the Goethe Institute, the British Council, and the French Cultural Centre etc. A good understanding of the functioning of local and national government structures helps a lot. We manage to attract their attention and sometimes support for our initiatives, especially before elections, when everybody is eager to promise. Politicians and civil servants participate in conferences, organized by the LKPA members. Last year the Forum of Teachers' Associations was initiated by the Ministry of Education and Science. It adopted school curriculum and syllabi during the meeting organized December 17, 2010. Representatives of 22 associations signed the resolution. On behalf of LKPA the document was signed by the President.

We think that language teachers' associations should think European as well. EU institutions and other European organisations, such as the European Commission, the Parliament or the Committee of the Regions, The Council of Europe, UNESCO, and ECML support teacher associations. They can offer networking within Europe and great opportunities for associations to participate in international projects. LKPA has been a member of FIPLV (www.fiplv.org) since 2008 and it is currently a founding member of the REAL consortium (www.real-association.eu). LKPA also participates actively in the ELTACS (www.eltacs.eu) project.

When contacting policy makers we are brief and focused, highlighting the LKPA's potential contribution to the objectives of the country. We represent the needs of language teachers, language teaching institutions and associations, and we emphasize it. We make proposals and/or recommendations regarding language teaching curriculum design and teaching resource preparation to the Government and organizations which offer language teaching services. It is a pity that the voice of language teachers is not always listened to properly when initiating and approving strategies and policies in the country.

Eglė Šleintienė

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CASE STUDY 8.2

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF GERMAN

ADVOCACY ACTIVITIES

The **Joint National Committee for Languages (JNCL)** is an umbrella organization currently comprised of over sixty associations concerned with languages and international studies. JNCL exists to provide a forum for associations to discuss, plan and address **language policies** that affect international education.

Its sister organization, **the National Council for Languages and International Studies (NCLIS)** with a similar but not identical membership, is **the advocacy or lobbying organization that attempts to create and influence these policies and their funding**. The division of focuses between the two is necessary because of U.S tax code that requires any lobbying group to register under a different tax law.

JNCL-NCLIS Mission Statement

The member organizations are united in their belief that all Americans must have the opportunity to learn and use English and at least one other language. Their mission is to promote policies that respect and develop the language abilities of Americans.

JNCL-NCLIS Goals include:

- To unify the language profession;
- To promote policies that respect and develop the language abilities of Americans;
- To increase language awareness by the American public; and
- To promote national policies that address the nation and its citizens' needs and capabilities

Members include (not all are listed):

National Language Specific Associations

- Alliance of Associations of Teachers of Japanese
- American Association of Applied Linguistics
- American Association of Teachers of Arabic
- American Association of Teachers of French
- American Association of Teachers of German
- American Association of Teachers of Italian

American Association of Slavic and East European Languages
 American Association of Spanish and Portuguese
 American Sign Language Teachers Association
 Chinese Language Teachers Association
 National Committee for Latin and Greek
 National Council of Organizations of Less Commonly Taught Languages
 Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages

National Generic Associations

American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages
 American Translators Association
 Modern Language Association
 National Association of Bilingual Education
 Council of Directors of Language Resource Centers
 National Network for Early Language Learning
 National Council of State Supervisors of Languages
 National Association of District Supervisors of Foreign Languages
 Computer Assisted Language Instruction Consortium

State Associations from California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Illinois, Kansas, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, New Jersey, New York State, Nebraska, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Wisconsin

As the fact that these two lists are not the same suggests, each of the organisations has its specific focus, though JNCL-NCLIS each contributes to achievement of the individual associations in its own way. We believe that it is more effective to work together rather than working alone when issues of language policy are at stake.

Fees depend on how much financial contribution each organisation can afford towards the running of an office in Washington DC, where a full-time lobbying group and a small team are employed. All members come together in Washington once a year for a three-day meeting of delegates, and spend the first day visiting representatives and senators in their offices. The Board meets once a year in order to plan further meetings and to discuss political issues. The JNCL website www.languagepolicy.org contains information on current themes and our members regularly receive emails which encourage them to become actively involved in particular issues.

AATG became actively involved in 1976, when JNCL was established. As a founder member, we are also a member of the Board. I personally am President and have been Treasurer twice.

CASE STUDY 8.3



SUNG Spoločnosť učiteľov nemeckého jazyka a germanistov Slovenska

Slovakian Association of German Teachers and Germanists

President: PhDr. Nadežda Zemaníková, PhD.

<http://www.sung.sk/>

On the Slovakian School Ministry's planned legislation to introduce English as a compulsory foreign language, and the Association's initiatives – which have not yet achieved a happy ending

On September 2 2010, during the 10th Conference of the Slovakian Association of German Teachers and Germanists in Prešov, the Association's new executive committee was elected. The new committee members hardly had any time to consider the challenges they would face before they were confronted with an extremely important problem: as a representative body for the profession, they were called upon by German teachers in Slovakia to intervene in the public debate taking place over the Slovakian School Ministry's planned legislation to introduce English as a compulsory foreign language.

The executive committee decided to write to the government concerning this issue. A detailed response to the proposed legislative changes was produced by the Association and sent to the education minister, the prime minister, the leader of the parliament and the parliamentary education committee. In this letter we attempted to express our concerns, to support our objections with relevant arguments and to draw attention to the foreseeable negative effects of the planned changes.

In our letter we argued very strongly in favour of plurilingualism, and as a result we were able to gain the support of other language teacher associations (Russian, French and Spanish), though we were sadly unable to secure the collaboration of the English teachers' association. The embassies of the three German speaking countries (Germany, Austria and Switzerland) also wrote to the Slovakian government in support of our statement. This came about in part as a result of the careful coordination of our actions with activities carried out by the network of German language promoters in Slovakia ("Netzwerk Deutsch"). However we had hoped for more assistance from academic Germanist circles given that the Association is no outsider to these, and that the issue at stake affects every level of the educational system.

From the beginning we were confident that we would make ourselves heard in the ministry, and in fact in November 2010 the president of the Association held talks with relevant figures: the general director of the department for regional schools in the education ministry, and the leader of the parliament. In these talks

we pushed for at least a compromise solution, whereby the free choice of a first foreign language according to the requirements of parents, schools or regional administrations etc would be retained; and whereby the position of the second foreign language on the curriculum would be strengthened. During these meetings the representatives of the language teacher associations were invited to contribute to the development of the new national curriculum and to participate in relevant working groups in the ministry, should the opportunity arise for them to influence the content of the curriculum.

It is worth mentioning here that the new wording of the school legislation merely contains the specification that “competence in English and at least one additional foreign language” is now one of the main goals of the educational system in Slovakia, as opposed to the original requirement for “competence in at least two foreign languages”. The legislation does not state at what stage language teaching should be introduced in schools, nor does it specify the order in which foreign languages are to be taught. These will be specified by the curriculum instead.

Although the Slovakian president has not approved the new legislation, it successfully passed through parliament on the second attempt and the changes will come into force on September 1 2011.

We were reluctant to admit defeat even though most politicians declined to take part in discussions on the topic of compulsory English. In the curriculum working group we found that representatives from many associations shared our concerns. Nonetheless in May 2011 it was decided that the curriculum would also reflect English’s status as Slovakia’s first foreign language on a national basis.

Unfortunately we also encountered strong opposition from the media. For months on end the Slovakian media presented the problem in an overly simplified and inaccurate way, without any discussion of the wide-ranging consequences of the legislation – for instance the enormous difference between the statuses of the first and second foreign languages in the lower secondary school curriculum, where the development of second language competence to B1 or B2 level has been effectively dropped.

What now? In times like these - when in order to avoid German being pushed to one side in Slovakian language education it is necessary to repeatedly point out what we think of as obvious facts such as Slovakia’s geographical proximity to German speaking countries, its long national tradition of learning and teaching German and its extensive cultural, academic and economic interaction with the German speaking world – in times like these we rely on mutual support more than ever. We need the solidarity and reinforcement provided by a strong professional association. If we are unable to join forces and to overcome our intellectual differences (in particular the supposed differences between relevant branches of science, research and classroom practice), then we can hardly presume to tackle our current problems. If that happens, our struggles will collapse into resignation.

SECTION 9

INVOLVEMENT IN RESEARCH

Some associations have become increasingly involved in research activities. These go beyond their role in disseminating research to teachers, if their training activities move beyond the practical to the more research-oriented. They increasingly include funded research projects which the associations apply for and manage themselves. Of course, for many associations, this is seen to be beyond their capacity, given the challenges of finding active members. On the other hand, however, some associations are looking to funded research projects as a way of bringing in income and of involving their members in research activity either through offering them opportunities to get actively involved or through consulting them on issues which emerge during the research process.

The first case study (Case study 9.1), which has been contributed by CASLT (The Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers), offers an overview of the many ways in which this association engages in research, and this is complemented by the second case study contributed by The Romanian Association of Teacher of English (Case study 9.2).

These next sections will provide an overview of different types of research activity, with examples from other associations. It also highlights the role of collaboration which enables associations to have greater and more effective involvement in research.

1. Funded research projects

Associations are well placed to attract funding to carry out research and development projects. Through the associations, funding bodies are able to claim to be supporting the teaching profession as a whole, and are also more confident that the developments will gain approval and have an impact. Furthermore, language associations are able to draw on a wide range of expertise, as they tend to have members from all sectors of education, from primary schools to universities and, in some cases, from other language-related sectors such as publishing and translating. In addition, many associations have developed extensive contacts with other types of organisation, such as businesses, embassies and the media.

However, even associations actively involved in research continue to look for ways of enhancing this aspect of their work. According to the German Teachers' Association of Slovakia, for example:

“SUNG ist ein Deutschlehrer- und Germanistenverband, im Unterschied zu den meisten Ländern Europas sind in seiner Mitgliedschaft Unterrichtspraxis und Forschung eng verbunden. Der konstruktive Austausch zwischen diesen verschiedenen Zielgruppen könnte

jedoch verbessert werden und intensiver gestaltet werden. Auch Formen der Weiterbildung von Deutschlehrenden könnten effektiver werden.” (**Spoločnosť učiteľov nemeckého jazyka a germanistov Slovenska (SUNG); Verband der Deutschlehrer und Germanisten der Slowakei, Slovakia**)

In its case study, CASLT describes a number of funded research projects in which it is engaged. These involve the development of a resource which adapts the Common European Framework of Reference and the European Languages Portfolio for the Canadian context, the development of an assessment toolkit, the production of research digests which illuminate different aspects of school leadership and administration in relation to second language teaching and learning, the production of a teaching portfolio, the provision of teacher research grants, and the production of accessible guides to research for teachers.

Other projects described by associations include:

- The development of student standards; development of K-12 culture materials database; chapter projects; K-8 programme development; articulation projects; cultural knowledge projects; professional development projects here and in Germany; leadership training projects; teaching of diversity (**American Association of Teachers of German, USA**)
- Involvement in the evaluation of the project EWOW (English for the world of work) (**English Language Teachers Association in Albania**)
- Création et développement des formations du français optionnel/spécialisé (du tourisme, des affaires, des mines etc) (**Association des professeurs mongols de la langue française (APMLF), Mongolia**)
- Projet ‘Culture d’enseignement, culture d’apprentissage’ (FIPF-AUF), Fonds d’innovation pédagogique (MAEE, France) (**Association des professeurs de et en français en Bulgarie, Bulgaria**)
- Involvement with the Professional Standards Project for Language Teachers in Australia; AFMLTA also worked with the Asia Education Foundation on the National Promotions Project. (**Australian Federation of Modern Language Teachers Associations**)
- Partner with three universities in Government-funded research into the development of a World Languages Strategy, which would enable schools to offer a wider range of languages in primary and secondary schools. ALL’s role was to support the research through organizing group meetings and critical reading of drafts, as well as the organization of the consultation process once the Strategy was developed. (**Association for Language Learning, UK**)
- FIPLV, together with FIPF and IDV, is leading on the LACS project based at the ECML in Graz, Austria, the results of which will support language teacher associations around the world through sharing of ideas. (**FIPLV, FIPF, IDV**)

LEND (Lingua e Nuova Didattica) in Italy, is in a strong position to involve itself in research due to the strengths of its members:

“Le travail et les expériences des groupes locaux, donnent à LEND la possibilité d’établir quelles sont les priorités pour la/les recherche/s et/ou les projets à lancer ou auxquels participer au niveau national et international. LEND est actuellement engagé dans trois projets européens:

1. REAL: création d'un réseau européen d'associations de professeurs de toutes les langues
2. APPEAL: pour la production de matériaux pour l'apprentissage des langues (français, italien, allemand, français, espagnol, arabe) de la part de tous ceux qui travaillent dans des projets européens
3. AECLIL: évaluation des compétences à l’intérieur de modules CLIL / EMILE”.

The following contribution was made by Shpresa Delija from Albania. In it, she describes two projects in which the English Language Teachers’ Association of Albania was involved, partly on a voluntary basis out of commitment to ensuring that teachers’ voices are included in curriculum development, and partly financed. However, reduced funding is leading ELTA to look elsewhere as a means of remaining active, such as to the European Union or ECML.

“ELTA Albania is in close relations with the British Council, though its funds have been cut considerably recently and most of the work we do is done voluntarily by the majority of ELTA members. But this kind of work will not last long [as] most of them are retiring in 5-8 years and the young teachers tend to work only if they are paid. I can give one example of this volunteer work. In 2008 I was asked by MoES (Ministry of Education and Science) to work on the ELP design for university students and there was also another group of teachers from the high schools to work on their ELP. The representative of MoES said that they were going to sponsor this group of teachers, whereas for us they asked us to do it voluntarily, otherwise the group from the university should be excluded from this project. So I chose some dedicated professors and we did it almost voluntarily, and now we have an accredited ELP (2009).

As for the EWOW (English for the world of work) project, ELTA was appointed by the BC to deal with the evaluation of this project. We organized questionnaires to 2 vocational schools (Economics and Tourism); we had interviews with the English teachers in the piloted schools. Then we attended some demo lessons done by these schools and after analyzing all the gathered data we evaluated the work done by the teachers, head teachers and the businesses. In the final report we gave our recommendations to this project as well.”
(English Language Teachers’ Association of Albania)

2. Opinion polls and surveys

Associations frequently carry out surveys of their members. These can be for different purposes: as well as evaluating events (e.g. BC Association of Teachers of Modern Languages, Canada; English Language Teachers Association of Albania), associations also refer to their use in order to identify member needs in order to inform the development of the association and to gather information and opinions on a particular language-related issue (e.g. CASLT, Canada). Such surveys are now most frequently done on-line, either through an email request for comments to be sent to the association, through longer research or consultation questionnaires using tools such as survey monkey, or through short weekly opinion polls on a specific issue through the website. Although some associations report difficulties in getting members to respond, it is also recognised that such activity is important and that on-line surveys are still more successful than trying to arrange face-to-face meetings, especially when consulting on association development.

- **Input into association development**

- “We conduct surveys often to determine the needs and opinions of our members on a variety of issues. We want to assure ourselves that we are doing whatever we can to support our members. Communication always needs to be improved and despite many "blasts", we often learn that members still do not know all that we do for them!” (**American Association of Teachers of German, USA**)
- “We send out questionnaires quite often but have a very low response rate. We do get feedback during various activities but they are specifically related to the activity but we could try to find out more about what they want and need during the next upcoming conference. There is always a session on just this question during our conferences, but last time only two people came.” (**TEA: Teachers of English in Austria, Austria**)
- “We mainly discuss issues that need to be discussed during our monthly meetings. Also, like I stated, there are polls posted on the website, so I presume that people have no need to complain that their views are not taken into account if they do not bother to express them. I believe that things are transparent enough as they are.” (**RATE: Romanian Association of Teachers of English, Romania**)
- « Notre association utilise les techniques d'enquête pour mieux comprendre les besoins et des vœux de nos membres. Nous discutons que nous devons changer pour améliorer nos activités. » (**Association lituanienne des professeurs de français, Lithuania**)

- “Souvent pendant les stages pédagogiques nous posons des questions aux professeurs pour essayer de mieux comprendre ce qu’ils souhaitent obtenir de l’association. Parfois ils indiquent des sujets pour les stages futurs qu’ils retiennent utiles pour leurs classes.” (**Association des Professeurs de Français de Malte (APFM), Malta**)

1. Surveys on language issues

- “Die einzelnen Mitgliedsländer haben sehr unterschiedliche Forschungs – und auch Lehrvoraussetzungen. Ein Perspektivenvergleich kann am besten bei Tagungen erfolgen. Wir sind derzeit zudem in der Anfangsplanung für eine große gemeinsame Publikation über die Situation von DaF in den einzelnen Mitgliedsländern (sie soll in unserem Online Magazin erscheinen).” (**IDV**)
- “On-line discussions and surveys on government proposals in order to inform the association’s official response. This has been used, for example, in 2001, when the government was planning to make languages optional beyond the age of 14, and more recently in 2011, in response to the government consultation on the new curriculum. The 2001 survey led to an annual Language Trends survey, which take snapshots of language learning activity in a range of sectors/educational phases. In 2002, it looked at levels of disapplication from language learning for learners aged 14-16, and in following years, the survey was expanded to include other areas such as adult education, community languages and vocational language learning in further education. The survey is conducted in partnership with CILT, the National Centre of Languages, and ISMLA (the Independent Schools Modern Languages Association).” (**ALL, UK**)

3. Support for teacher research

In some instances, associations are enabling their members to carry out research themselves. Although this is usually not considered to be as central to their activity as other forms of professional development, there is clearly a recognition that this contributes enormously to teacher and classroom development and has a high level of impact. Some associations are still considering strategies for developing this as part of their services to teachers.

“We encourage and financially support members to create innovative topics for professional development sessions at local, state, regional and national meetings. Chapter officers write innovative grants in order to fund their projects.”

(**American Association of Teachers of German, USA**)

“Action research bursaries that we offer annually to teachers wishing to engage in classroom research.” (**CASLT, Canada**)

“Unserer Lehrerverein erkennt die Wichtigkeit von Forschungsmöglichkeiten für alle portugiesischen Deutschlehrer an! Aus Zeitgründen – da wir alle an Schulen tätig sind und den Verband lediglich „nebenbei“ führen, haben wir uns noch nicht dazu entschlossen. Für unseren Verein steht das Angebot für deutschsprachliche spezifische Aus- und Fortbildung im Vordergrund; dabei kommt es oft zu intensiverer Forschung.” (**APPA – Associação Portuguesa de Professores de Alemão, Portugal**)

“Damit wir überhaupt an Forschungsmöglichkeiten auf Verbandsebene denken können, müssen wir unser Aufbaustudium “Deutsch als Fremdsprache” zustande bringen. Im Moment sind Forschungsergebnisse eher auf individueller Basis zu finden. Aber wir, als Verband, arbeiten ganz intensiv, um dies zu ändern... Wir wollen einen Forschungspreis beginnen. Bis jetzt war unser Vorgehen so, dass wir versuchen die Lehrer, die Interesse an Forschung haben, zu Kongressen und/oder Seminare zu schicken, sowie wir versuchen, ihre Beiträge in Magazinen zu veröffentlichen. Hierbei ist das Magazin für Lateinamerikanische DaF-Lehrer (DaF Brücke) das wichtigste Medium.” (**AVENPA (Asociacion Venezolana de Profesores de Alemán, Venezuela)**)

4. Disseminating research through publications and events

Associations generally have a major commitment to disseminating research and policy developments to their members. This can be done face-to-face at professional development workshops and conferences and other events, or by means of publications, including increasing use of technology. It is recognized that research plays a vital role in developing language learning and teaching, and strengthens the position of language teachers. The links between theory, practice and research are all too often not made, and associations can play an important role in supporting teachers and helping them to benefit from and develop them.

“Wir sind eher "Anwenderinnen" und weniger in der Forschung tätig. Greifen aber wissenschaftliche Themen in unserer Publikation auf oder laden Referenten zu grösseren Veranstaltungen ein.” (**Arbeitskreis Deutsch als Fremdsprache in der Schweiz**)

“Die unterschiedlichen Forschungstendenzen werden vor allem bei Tagungen präsentiert und diskutiert. Außerdem können unsere Mitglieder die Produkte ihrer Forschungsergebnisse durch unseren Verband (Mailing-Liste) bekannt machen.” (**Associazione Italiana di Germanistica – AIG, Italy**)

“We organize annual meetings of the members, where all members are invited to participate; also round table discussions to plan the activities for the next year. The members of the LKPA board organize events and other activities to fulfill the needs of the founder

institutions and professionals working there. A seminar on innovation in education was held during the annual meeting in 2011. The question of creativity was discussed during the annual international conferences in Kaunas "Multilingualism and Creativity: Theory and Practice of Language Education " organised by LKPA, Vytautas Magnus University and Kaunas Technological University organised May 21-22 , 2010 in Kaunas, Lithuania.

Information about the conference is placed on:

<http://www.lkpa.uki.vu.lt/index.php?cid=344&more=1&lang=en>. The conference papers selected by the scientific committee are published in a refereed journal "Studies about Languages". The other papers are available in a non-refereed collection in the CD attached to the book. Articles placed on CD you can download on <http://www.vikc.lt/lkpa/>."

(Lietuvos kalbų pedagogų asociacija – LKPA, Lithuania)

“Encourager les recherches sur les études françaises (Dans ce cadre nous avons commencé à publier le journal annuel « Les études françaises »); Organiser un colloque régional sur l’enseignement du français et les études françaises (Dans ce cadre nous devons décider le problème de financement).”

(Association des professeurs mongols de la langue française -APMLF, Mongolia)

“(Our most important function?) Acting as a forum for teachers to disseminate good practice as well as carrying out research. There is a little contact between the researchers and University professors who work out on new methods, techniques in teaching foreign languages and teachers from primary and secondary schools who should apply those methods and raise the level of quality but also quantity. There is a weak connection between theory and practice.” **(Slovenská asociácia učiteľov francúzštiny, Association slovaque des professeurs de français, Slovak Association of Teachers of French, Slovakia)**

“Auf unseren Konferenzen können Mitglieder ihre Arbeiten, Forschungen usw. vorstellen, aber auch Probleme aufzeigen und diskutieren. Dazu soll in den kommenden Wochen auch ein Forum auf unserer Webseite geöffnet und promoviert werden.” **(Slowenischer Deutschlehrerverband (SDUNJ), Slovenia)**

5. Research collaborations

Two main barriers to involvement in research activity are identified by associations. One barrier, exemplified by the following quotation, is the lack of resources, especially human resources:

“Nous divulguons les travaux des collègues qui nous contactent et essayons d'être à l'écoute de leurs intérêts à travers le courrier électronique mais il ne nous est pas possible d'impliquer l'association dans des activités de recherche en raison du manque de

disponibilité et de ressources humaines. □ (**Associação portuguesa dos professores de francês – APPF, Portugal**)

The other barrier is competition with other organizations for limited research funds, such as in the following example:

„Leider gilt hier, wenn es um den Bereich DaF/DaZ geht, nur das Goethe Institut als erste und einzige Instanz.“ (**Türkiye Almanca Öğretmenleri Derneği / Türkischer Deutschlehrerverein, Turkey**)

Nevertheless, the Turkish association has found a way forward with this problem to some degree, through working with other organisations and active members who work in other sectors:

„Involviert sind wir als Vorstand, wenn auch nur begrenzt, mit anderen Bereichen der Forschung dank der Universitäten und deren Lehrkräfte sowie Verlage für Deutsch-Lehrwerke.“ (**Türkiye Almanca Öğretmenleri Derneği / Türkischer Deutschlehrerverein, Turkey**)

The following shows how a language specific association contributes to research activity through collaboration with multilingual associations:

« Nous organisons parfois des enquêtes pour mieux connaître les besoins de nos membres et améliorer nos services. Nous ne soutenons pas d'activité de recherche particulière mais certaines de nos commissions sont impliquées dans ce domaine comme la Commission sur la compétence culturelle qui a établi un modèle dévaluation de la compétence culturelle sur quatre niveaux. Notre association collabore aux efforts des grandes associations de langues aux états-Unis comme l'American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) dont les publications et initiatives déterminent l'évolution de la recherche en didactique des langues étrangères dans notre pays. » (**American Association of Teachers of French, USA**)

Further examples of working in partnership with a range of organisations are to be found in Case study 9.1 (CASLT). Clearly, collaboration with others is a way of addressing the shortage of human resources to carry out the research and the problem of competition for limited funds. Clearly defined roles, such as in the World Languages Project described above, in which ALL is an active partner, is a way of ensuring that the research benefits from the partners' strengths and that it is not beyond the capacity of the association.

CASE STUDY 9.1

RESEARCH PRIORITIES FOR THE CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF SECOND LANGUAGE TEACHERS

Dr. Wendy Carr

The Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers (CASLT) promotes the advancement of second language learning and teaching throughout Canada by creating opportunities for professional development, by encouraging research, and by facilitating the sharing of information and the exchange of ideas among second language educators.

One of CASLT's five strategic areas of focus is to conduct/produce and disseminate research projects, reports, articles, weblinks, podcasts and other resources related to second language teaching and learning. CASLT's mission is to inform members and stakeholders about priority topics related to current issues and trends in second language education and to support policy makers in decisions related to development and delivery of language programmes and services, including teacher professional development. Some of CASLT's research projects have been groundbreaking, from the *National Core French Study* (1990) to *Teaching FSL in Canada: Teachers' Perspectives* (2006) to recent and ongoing research related to the integration of the Common European Framework of Reference and Portfolio.

Most research projects are funded through grants (involving detailed applications in a competitive process) from various governmental agencies, such as the Department of Canadian Heritage (www.pch.gc.ca), Ministries of Education (<http://www.cmec.ca>) the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca), and others. Some projects, especially those involving professional learning opportunities and conferences, are conducted in conjunction with some of our institutional partners, such as:

- [Canadian Association of Applied Linguistics, Montreal, Québec](#)
- [Canadian Modern Language Review, University of Toronto Press Journals Division](#)
- [Canadian Teachers' Federation, Ottawa, Ontario](#)
- [Institute for Innovation in Second Language Education, Edmonton, Alberta](#)
- [Centre for Educational Research on Languages and Literacies, the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto](#)
- [Official Languages and Bilingualism Institute, University of Ottawa, Ontario](#)
- [Second Language Research Institute of Canada, University of New Brunswick](#)

CASLT is very proud of not only its various projects and products but also its outreach to second language educators across the country. This is accomplished through the dissemination of reports,

articles, podcasts, webcasts, e-bulletins (many of which are found on our website, www.caslt.org) and a quarterly publication called *Réflexions*. We also hold national conferences, such as our bi-annual Languages Without Borders Conference, local professional development events called CASLT Chez Vous, and an annual networking event that brings together provincial and territorial stakeholders to focus on current language education issues and review our strategic directions. Each is held in varying locations across the country.

Some of CASLT's Recent and Ongoing Research Projects

A Common Framework of Reference and a Portfolio for Languages in Canada Information Kit (2nd ed.)

This information kit, incorporating the work of the Council of Europe and numerous professional development sessions across Canada (with David Little and others), synthesizes the CEFR and ELP literature for teachers and administrators. This resource has been very timely for decision-makers and educators as a means of showing how the CEFR and ELP can be integrated into programme planning and classroom instruction and assessment.

Assessment Toolkit (2nd ed.)

This two-year funded project was intended to update existing Assessment Toolkit documents (for both French and English as second language contexts) to reflect new assessment practices, such as assessment for learning, learner autonomy, goal-setting and also link to the Common European Framework of Reference (including tools to use in a language portfolio). In Year 1, project leader/researcher, Dr. Laura Hermans, oversaw educator-design teams as they developed a template for assessment tasks with samples at the A1 level. Teacher feedback was sought and, in Year 2, teams are now proceeding to higher CEFR levels with a growing group of pilot teachers. Teacher validation and feedback will be incorporated into the next stages of development, and the toolkits will be available to school boards in the months ahead.

Administrators Leadership Support Folio Series

Each folio highlights a key topic and incorporates the latest research to guide administrators in supporting their second language teachers and programmes (along with suggested readings to extend professional learning). The first phase, led by Dr. Cynthia Lewis, involved developing folios to guide administrators in the following areas:

- supporting professional growth,
- organizing effective second language programmes,
- maximizing student learning,
- recruiting and retraining teachers,
- assessing for learning, use of the framework and portfolio,
- promoting success for all learners (differentiation, inclusion).

The second phase involves the marketing the folios to school board and school-based administrators as well as providing professional development sessions for their implementation.

Pre-service and Inservice Teacher Portfolio

Le portfolio canadien des langues pour enseignant(e)s, a project led by Dr. Miles Turnbull (University of Prince Edward Island), is structured like the European Language Portfolio (with passport, biography, self-assessment charts and dossier) and designed to support preservice and inservice teachers in reflecting on and recording their linguistic and intercultural competencies. These competencies are framed in specific contexts that relate to teachers' daily language use in the classroom and in their professional lives as language educators. This tool will be marketed to faculties of education, school boards and schools.

Teacher Research Grants

CASLT provides grants for Canadian teacher research around questions of importance to language educators. Classroom teachers may submit a classroom-based research proposal and seek funding in order to collaborate with colleagues, conduct classroom observations, or other activities that will enable them to address a question of practice. An example of two projects presently underway are how the use of journals can enhance oral production and what strategies can be borrowed from an intensive delivery model to enhance a core French programme. Findings are shared in CASLT's quarterly publication, *Réflexions*.

Canadian Modern Language Review Teacher Research Guides

A two-year pilot is underway to increase access to relevant second language educational research published in the scholarly journal, *The Canadian Modern Language Review/La revue canadienne des langues vivantes*. Dr. Callie Mady (Nipissing University, Ontario) has produced teacher professional support guides related to several articles. In each guide, she summarizes the key points and highlights practical applications for classroom use based on the findings of each study. The guides will be marketed to school boards and universities and include a one-year subscription to the *CMLR*. Virtual discussion workshops are planned once the guides have been published.

Conclusion

These are but a few items on CASLT's research agenda. We strive to stay ahead of the curve by anticipating where trends are moving in languages education, what our members need to know and how we can infuse an informed pedagogical perspective into the various agendas of policy makers and decision makers. Through our conferences, publications and projects, as well as strong partnerships with others who care about language education, CASLT strives to maintain a strong and current knowledge base and ensure that its members are well informed.

Dr. Wendy Carr (University of British Columbia) is a Director at Large on CASLT's Board of Directors : <http://educ.ubc.ca/faculty/wcarr>

CASE STUDY 9.2

ROMANIAN ENGLISH TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

**Cristina Rusu, EFL Teacher, "Emil Racovita" National College,
Cluj-Napoca. Romania**

The key-word in today's fast-paced world is information. If you have it, the world is your oyster. On the other hand, because of an unfortunate information gap, highly capable people fail to achieve otherwise easily achievable goals, or fail to take advantage of opportunities that could help them advance or improve professionally. In my view, a professional association should set a primary goal for itself, that of providing its members with top-quality, up to date information. Our association tries to do just that and it mostly succeeds.

Our main ways of getting information across to our members are face-to-face meetings, conferences and the internet. During our meetings, which are always highly publicized in advance, we tackle a variety of issues and also attempt to find out the needs of our members. Through polls and questionnaires, as well as open discussions, the teachers who take part in these meetings can ask for assistance, vote on proposed changes or simply acknowledge events or express views on different issues.

The website of the associations also contributes to the aforementioned process of information. It is easy to use and well-documented and it has improved our work considerably.

Periodically, we invite representatives of local or regional organizations and publishing houses to hold workshops and information sessions. For example, during the last association meeting, we had the regional manager of the British Council join us, and she informed us that the Council was about to place book orders for the upcoming year and that they were interested in the needs of the EFL community members in terms of publications, activities that the Council should organize, as well as courses that were needed, asking us to visit the BC website and send e-mails until a certain deadline, in which we should state precisely what our needs were. We found that particularly useful, as it provided us with a real, straightforward chance to ask for what we really needed in terms of materials or training possibilities. As well as this, we had Longman representatives present us the new materials and interactive websites of Pearson Longman; this is all information without which we could definitely not do our job properly.

On a more general note, the Romanian association is organized as a pyramid, RATE (which stands for Romanian Association of Teachers of English) being the central organism which is regularly in contact with the regional associations (CETA –Transylvanian/ North-West regional body , BETA – representing the capital city and the surroundings/ South- Central , TETA- the Association from the

Western part of the country and MATE- the Moldavian Association, North- Eastern part of Romania). While the members of these different –yet so similar- association groups meet at least once a year at the National RATE conference to share experience and research, the presidents of the four regional bodies meet on a regular basis and discuss the global issues that appear, ways of making the Association more efficient, as well as means to address the needs of the members; they are also in contact with the regional and national authorities, which ensures added transparency and efficiency in our field.

SECTION 10

FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES

SECTION 11

USEFUL COLLABORATIONS

CASE STUDY 11.1

DITCHING THE PRACTICE OF INSULARITY:

THE BENEFITS OF COLLABORATION FOR A SMALL LANGUAGE ASSOCIATION

Daniel Xerri

Some time ago I attended a workshop based on a multinational project entitled Language Associations and Collaborative Support. The main purpose of this project is that of increasing the collaboration between language associations based in different countries. It also aims to help with the dissemination of the work of the European Centre for Modern Languages. This article mainly discusses the benefits that can be reaped by a small ELT association when it collaborates with other language associations.

The ECML

The ECML was created by the Council of Europe with the express intention of promoting excellence and innovation in language teaching. This was done in the belief that for Europeans to overcome some of the obstacles that might hinder them from living in harmony together it is essential for each individual to be able to communicate in some of the wide variety of languages spoken on this continent. The ECML encourages the implementation of policies geared towards effective language teaching.

The LACS Project

The project is meant to disseminate the work of the ECML with all kinds of language associations and it will partly seek to achieve this by means of FIPLV networks. Gradually by means of this project it is hoped that many teachers and teacher educators will have access to innovative language teaching and learning methodologies. Moreover, the LACS project aims to empower teachers to hone their pedagogic skills even further by providing language associations with an opportunity to interact and collaborate.

I attended this workshop because as a member of the Malta Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (which is an associate member of IATEFL) I wanted to learn more about how language associations in Europe and the rest of the world can collaborate in order to improve their practices and hence help re-evaluate language teaching and learning. IATEFL already provides its associate members with help in trying to form partnerships with other teacher associations and these members are provided with an opportunity of publicizing their events in its newsletter and on its website. However, by also forming partnerships with associations that are not necessarily ELT oriented a small language association can achieve a wider sense of co-operation and thus attain further advantages.

During the workshop it was interesting to realise that many language associations all over Europe face similar challenges, especially with regards to membership numbers, financial support and the publication of newsletters and other materials. I found the opportunity to discuss the work of language associations with people coming from a wide variety of countries to be extremely useful and I came to realise how important it

is for different associations to collaborate together for the benefit of their members. Such collaborations are not unheard of in Europe and other continents and by means of this workshop I got to explore the advantages that small associations can derive by forging such alliances.

Some Possible Benefits of Collaboration

The most immediate benefit of collaboration is the availability to an association's members of knowledge, skills and resources that are being promulgated by other associations. For example, MATEFL provides its members with such outside contact by sponsoring the attendance of one or two of its members at the annual conference organised by IATEFL. This is quite a recent development and in the past some of MATEFL's committee members funded their own expenses and then disseminated whatever knowledge and skills they managed to develop during the conference to the rest of the association's members.

However, other language associations in Europe and elsewhere organise conventions and publish materials that could be of interest to the members of a small association like the one I form part of. Whereas it is quite possible for different associations to share their publications and thus reach a much wider audience, attending international conventions is obviously expensive and few are those who can afford to do so. However, a feasible solution to this could be that of organising a conference in one's own country and issuing an international call for proposals through other associations so as to invite submissions from speakers from other countries willing to travel from abroad in order to share their ideas with the association's teachers. It would be even more feasible if an association manages to influence the implementation of a national ELT policy obliging teachers to keep a record of their continuous professional development because in this way attending such a conference will be considered a plus to any teacher's career.

Something that emerged during my discussions with representatives of other European language associations is a concern with how to actually organise and promote an annual language teaching conference. This is something that my own association could learn about from others since currently Malta lacks an annual ELT conference that would hopefully attract a host of new members and thus further strengthen the role of MATEFL. At present MATEFL organises a number of teacher training seminars and at least once a year it invites a renowned foreign speaker to give a talk or lead a workshop. These events entail a lot of work on the part of the committee and their efforts are truly praiseworthy. However, if MATEFL is to grow even further and to continue to address the needs of the EFL industry in Malta it needs to increase its numbers by roping in many of those teachers who might not be aware of the valid work of this association or who have not yet been convinced of the significance of its work and the positive effect of such work on their professional development. In addition, it must be borne in mind that the efforts of an association like MATEFL in promoting the most innovative and effective language teaching methods are not just valid within the strictly EFL scenario but are also applicable to such a context as that of mainstream ELT.

In Malta, for example, the EFL industry caters for the needs of approximately 83,000 foreign students per year. However, there is a large body of teachers who teach at primary, secondary and tertiary levels and who are responsible for a Maltese student population that in its majority is made up of L2 speakers of English. Besides their full-time job some of these teachers teach EFL during the summer months. Moreover, it is not

only English teachers who are interested in the work of an ELT association and in fact at such events I have had the opportunity of meeting teachers of other modern languages who are interested in methods and techniques that can be applied to the teaching of their respective languages. Even though an annual conference is obviously a huge headache for whoever is responsible for its organisation, there exist a number of positive outcomes for teachers and the association itself that cannot be easily overlooked.

Another area in which collaboration with other language associations could be of benefit to an association like the one I am a member of is that of policy making, that is, how such associations manage to influence national policies on language teaching and school accreditation. Since an association represents the views of its members those members depend on their association to give voice to their needs and concerns. Even though every country has its own contextual characteristics, there are still things that an association can learn by collaborating with other associations that have successfully influenced the drafting and implementation of effective policies concerning language teaching. Malta, for example, was one of the first countries to put into practice a national policy governing the EFL industry and MATEFL has a lot to offer to associations that would like to similarly influence the implementation of policies concerning language teaching and learning.

Finally, given that the LACS project is meant to spread the work of the ECML with regards to new pedagogies, curricular design and language policies that address the needs of 21st century students and teachers, one of the most important benefits that that can be derived by means of the collaboration of different language associations is the dissemination of such work amongst as many teachers as possible.

Conclusion

In this article I have tried to outline the advantages that an ELT association can derive by seeking to further focus on the synergy that can be effected through collaboration with other language associations that might not necessarily be concerned with the teaching of English. It is undeniable that small associations depend almost entirely on the hard work of their committees and the unflagging support of their members. Such associations face a number of challenges but perhaps one way of overcoming some of these challenges is by ditching the practice of insularity and resolutely taking part in the pooling of resources, knowledge and skills that many more European and international language associations need to engage in.

Daniel Xerri teaches at the University of Malta Junior College and is a member of the Malta Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language.

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SECTION 12

EVALUATION

Evaluation is increasingly becoming an integral part of associations' work. The benefits of regular surveys are uncontested, as they are often the easiest way for the associations to gather information on the needs and desires of their members and to determine whether the association's work is headed in the right direction.

The aim of an evaluation is to find out how the participants assess an event, their impressions, criticisms, suggestions and possible requests for change or for further events. The evaluation is used to determine whether the stated objective has been achieved and to see what works and what does not. The results can be applied in different ways.

Which procedures and criteria do the associations use to assess the success of their events? Do they use formal surveys such as questionnaires, or informal conversations and spontaneous reports from participants? Are they used during the event or after, in printed versions or online? Do online surveys with links and follow-up increase the response rates or not?

Case studies from four association countries will be used to demonstrate how organizations evaluate their events. The first one (Case study 12.1) concerns the use of mandatory surveys in Iceland, as the bigger events receive public assistance. The second one from APFM Malta (Case study 12.2) reports on how they gather and use feedback from participants. The third one from Italy (Case study 12.3) tells us how AIG organizes an event and how they determine its success. The fourth one, from IDV, shows how externally funded events need to be carefully evaluated.

1. Questionnaires in general and their advantages

For the most part the participants are asked to fill in a questionnaire at the end of an event. It's usually short, consisting of one or no more than two A4 pages and therefore fairly clear. Most questions are multiple choice questions so that participants can respond relatively quickly and hand in the questionnaire before leaving, which increases the response rate. Most organizations evaluate similar criteria.

„Wir führen Evaluationen durch, die Aufschluss über bestimmte Kriterien geben (Kursleiter, Inhalt, Raum, Zeitl. Umfang)“. (**Arbeitskreis Deutsch als Fremdsprache in der Schweiz, Switzerland**)

„Durch Fragebögen, auf denen die Teilnehmer ihre Meinung auch ausformulieren können. Es werden Fragen gestellt zu Organisation der Veranstaltung , Auswahl der Vortragenden/Workshopleiter, die Vermittlung der Themen, der Aktualität, Vorschläge werden gesammelt für die folgende Veranstaltung usw.“ **(SDUNJ, Slowenischer Deutschlehrerverband, Slovenia).**

The questionnaire can often be answered online as well for a certain period after the event.

„Die IDTs werden normalerweise von den teilnehmenden LehrerInnen selbst evaluiert, indem diese vor Ort oder (per Mail) nach der Rückkehr einen Fragebogen dazu ausfüllen“. **(IDV, Internationaler Deutschlehrerverband)**

Replies to closed questions are easily evaluated for statistical purposes. They give initial feedback on the success of an event. The results can also serve as suitable promotional material to illustrate the value of the association events for members and interested parties.

Participation is easiest to measure and most frequently mentioned as a criterion in the answers from different associations. Therefore, detailed records of attendance are quite important.

„Ein erstes Kriterium ist die Teilnehmerzahl: wenn sie bei dem selben Tagungstyp jedes Mal ansteigt, ist das eine erste, wenngleich teilweise noch oberflächliche Erfolgsanzeige“. **(IDV, Internationaler Deutschlehrerverband)**

« Toute initiative de formation des enseignants se termine, par exemple, par un questionnaire d'évaluation et la participation quantitative n'est pas à négliger... » **(LEND, Italy)**

„Numbers of participants in sessions (conferences); numbers of readers of newsletters/communications“. **(British Columbia Association of Teachers of Modern Languages, Canada)**

2. Questionnaire: disadvantages

There are certain drawbacks/disadvantages to the evaluation of events based on questionnaires. The assessment is mostly done at the end of the event, giving the participants little time to digest the new information, impressions etc. The questionnaire is in writing, which may result in very short answers to open questions. Associations often end up with enough quantitative data, but may lack the qualitative data. In this case, other additional methods are necessary to close the gap.

“Allgemein gehaltene Fragen in Evaluationen ergeben meist diverse Ansatzpunkte für Veränderungen und lassen Handlungsspielräume offen; spezifische Fragen hingegen beschränken die Bandbreite der Interpretationen. Sollen aus den Ergebnissen einer Evaluation Konsequenzen für das zukünftige Handeln gezogen werden, sollte sich dieser Wunsch also in spezifischen Fragen niederschlagen. Mit Frage 8, baten wir die Teilnehmenden direkt, ihre Veränderungsvorschläge vorzulegen, um so konkrete Hinweise auf die zukünftige Durchführung des Seminars zu erhalten.” **(IDV, eine Evaluation des DACH-Workshops 2009. See Case study 12.4)**

Associations, that either place the questionnaires online or on a mailing list often complain about the low response rates:

“We send out questionnaires quite often but have a very low response rate. We do get feedback during various activities but they are specifically related to the activity but we could try to find out more about what they want and need during the next upcoming conference. There is always a session on just this question during our conferences ...”
(TEA, Teachers of English in Austria)

3. Other methods of evaluation

Other possible ways of evaluating during the events include short-feedback groups, round tables, posters at various locations for written suggestions and comments, mailboxes and blogs for ongoing discussions.

- **Discussions during the event**

“Evaluation is performed using face to face, questionnaires, motivation system. An event is measured by a number of participants, quality of presentations, feedback from the members, number of sponsors and supporters interested in participating. If the information about the event is published by the media, it is being evaluated objectively as well.” **(Lietuvos kalbų pedagogų asociacija, LKPA, Lithuania)**

“Teilnehmerzahl, Anzahl und Lebhaftigkeit der Diskussionsbeiträge. Teilnahme am angebotenen Kultur- und Sozialprogramm.” **(Associazione Italiana di Germanistica, AIG, Italy)**

Discussions, questions and requests for more information to be presented during the event, provide useful information about the interests of the participants and shed light on possible topics for future events. Discussion with participants, whether formal or informal, is also an effective means to get feedback.

“Souvent pendant les stages pédagogiques nous posons des questions aux professeurs pour essayer de mieux comprendre ce qu’ils souhaitent obtenir de l’association. Parfois ils indiquent des sujets pour les stages futurs qu’ils retiennent utiles pour leurs classes.”

(Association des Professeurs de Français de Malte, APFM, Malta)

“Das einzige Kriterium: Dankworte der Deutschlehrer, Zufriedenheit damit, was wir zusammen gemacht haben.” **(DLV Kasachstan, Russia)**

- **Interviews by phone after the event**

Some associations ask the participants to indicate on the questionnaire whether they would be willing to be contacted for follow-up evaluation by email or by phone sometime after the event. In some associations evaluation by phone is a standard procedure, often in addition to the questionnaire.

“Evaluation de chaque activité avec questionnaire; Conversation téléphonique avec tous les membres inscrits (on se partage la liste entre les membres du bureau) pour savoir leurs souhaits.” **(AEFS association des enseignants de français en Suède; LMS lärare i moderna språk – section française, Sweden)**

4. **Different methods to obtain more reliable data**

Associations that evaluate their events regularly and systematically use various combined methods.

“We always ask ELTA members to give feedback at the end of a conference or workshop via questionnaires, interviews and evaluation sheets”. **(ELTA – English Language Teachers of Albania)**

“We evaluate the success of our conferences from the number of participants, satisfaction levels expressed either personally or in reports, the quality of the programme and the geographical spread of conference venues (Japan, Benin, Poland, Cuba, Denmark, China 2007-12). We evaluate our symposia by the prestige of the inviting university and the level of the non-esperantists participants and speakers. [...] We require and receive annual reports from our sections. We would like to be able to contact and survey our members individually”. **(International League of Esperantist Teachers, ILET / Internacia Ligo de Esperantistaj Instruistoj ILEI. Den Haag, the Netherlands)**

5. **Evaluation of publicly supported events**

Events that are supported by public funds must be evaluated in a very formal way. (See Case study 12.1 from Iceland and 12.4 from IDV.) Events receiving approval (and often funding) from a Ministry, for example, must be formally evaluated.

“The projects, festivals etc that are ministry-approved need to be very-well organized and reported on in order to be further approved. So far, all the events that we have organized have been re-approved, which means that they have been successful”. (**RATE, Romanian Association of Teachers of English, Romania**)

6. **Evaluation of events that receive support from the association**

Associations providing their members with financial support for regional events use similar methods.

“We review the reports and meeting minutes which they must submit at least once a year. All professional development and chapter projects are evaluated before funding is awarded. The annual meeting is evaluated through a survey of all attendees and used to develop the upcoming meeting.” (**American Association of Teachers of German, USA**)

CASE STUDY 12.1

EVALUATION OF OFFICIALLY SUPPORTED EVENTS

A CASE STUDY FROM ICELAND

Sigurborg Jónsdóttir, President of the German Teachers' Association of Iceland

According to the collective agreement, teachers in Iceland are required to attend further education of a certain amount of hours, but outside the regular school year. In return the Ministry of Education contributes each year for this purpose, a certain sum from its budget to a training fund.

The associations commit to holding training courses on behalf of the Ministry and can apply for scholarships once a year thereby partly or completely financing the event. In the application the theme and contents of the training course must be explained in some detail, together with the estimated number of participants, length of the event, who will be invited to give lectures or conduct workshop, the form of training (courses, lectures or workshops, etc.), the location and time, educational material and the administrator from the association. A cost estimate forms a part of the application.

At the end of the event participants are requested to fill in a questionnaire (see below) for evaluation purposes. Of the eight questions six are multiple choice questions. If not enough time for answering the questionnaire is planned in beforehand, most often very little has been written in reply to the two open questions. All questionnaires are assessed by staff from the training fund. The associations receive the complete evaluation.

If the associations want additional or fuller information, they need to refer to other resources. Most use unofficial conversations, comments received via e-mail etc. The associations in Iceland are small and the members get to know each other quickly. Therefore, it is not surprising that the participants state their satisfaction or dissatisfaction during the event.


Increased activity and participation of the members says a lot about the quality and relevance of the events. At least once a year, many associations also carry out an online survey about member's wishes for continuing education and other events. The results are compared with those of the official questionnaire, and quite often the comments are similar. Smaller events have been assessed in a very informal way, for example in informal discussions at the expert leader meetings, held once a year. The Board of the DLV plans in future to conduct very short online surveys on the home page to make events even more targeted and involve more members in the process of participatory democracy.

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Evaluation

CONTINUING EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF ICELAND

Please evaluate the workshop by answering the following questions, where 5 is the highest and 1 is lowest.

	5	4	3	2	1
1. Structure of the workshop	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Handouts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Teaching	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
D.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
E.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
F.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Service	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Class room / Setting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Overall evaluation on the workshop	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. What other topics would you like workshops on?

8. Other comments or remarks

Thank you for your participation

- +

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CASE STUDY 12.2

FEEDBACK FROM PARTICIPANTS

ASSOCIATION DES PROFESSEURS DE FRANÇAIS DE MALTE (APFM)

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Introduction

The APFM is a small association of teachers of French as a foreign language (FLE) founded in 2008 and contains about one hundred members. It should be noted that there are about one hundred and twenty total FLE teachers in Malta (secondary and tertiary levels) and that most teachers are women between thirty and forty-five years.

When APFM organizes activities, it tries to choose activities that may be of interest to teachers. From previous experience we realized that the teachers like it when the APFM organizes session speakers from abroad to talk about practical subjects related to teaching, activities related to French culture and presentations of educational books and materials.

It is always a challenge to decide the date and time that works best for our members because the choice of the date or time are very important for the success of the business. The APFM tries not to organize activities during the school examinations period, or public festivals, etc. Thursday afternoon is often a good day to organize an event because a lot of teachers teaching in high school meet (October to January) to prepare all tests so they are already at the Centre Franco-Maltais, where the APFM organizes most of its activities.

The APFM also realized that when the activity is recognized by local and foreign institutions such as the Ministry of Education of Malta, the Embassy of France in Malta and the French Alliance of Malta-Mediterranean more teachers participate. I can cite here the two courses that we organized last year (in February / March and July) to sensitize teachers to the DELF examination. These two courses were a huge success even though the one in February / March was held on Monday and Wednesday for three consecutive weeks. The course was organized in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, the French Alliance and the Embassy of France. Each teacher received a

certificate of participation and the speaker in question was from overseas and a specialist in the field.

On the day of each activity the Secretary General makes a list with participants' names and which school they represent or simply keeps track of the number of participants. After the activity, committee members often have the opportunity to talk with a few members present to judge the success but not the value of the activity. Sometimes they even ask individuals who participated to write an article that can be downloaded from the site of the APFM to encourage other members to participate.

During the week of activity, we consult the electronic mail as some members like to give us their feedback in this way, and we take note of their suggestions. This is useful, because talking with teachers we take stock of these activities but it also gives us an indication of what activities the teachers prefer.

We always ask our members to confirm their attendance in advance in order to have some idea of the success of the business. We have already had to cancel some activities because there was insufficient participation. For example, the Committee decided not to organize social evenings (dinner) because experience has shown that our members are not interested.

We try to use revision courses at the end of the school year to distribute questionnaires. We do not inform members of the results of these questionnaires because we use the information only to prepare the agenda of activities for the following year. Feedback from teachers is used for the annual activity report (which may be read on the day of the General Assembly), in the newsletters that we send to our members but also when we write articles to promote the association.

The feedback also helps us to show the funding agencies that the voluntary work of the Committee is useful and essential, and to support the association. It is also important to have representatives on the Committee who can speak for minorities such as student-teachers, retired teachers, teachers who work on our sister island Gozo, etc., because often it is the Committee members that transmit the feedback from their constituencies.

CASE STUDY 12.3**THE NUMBER AND LIVELINESS OF DISCUSSIONS AND
PARTICIPATION IN CULTURAL ACTIVITIES****MEETING OF MEMBERS OF THE ITALIAN ASSOCIATION OF GERMANISTS
IN ROME, 24.-25. JUNE 2011**

Prof.Dr. Marina Foschi Albert, Vice-president of AIG

The Italian Germanist Association (Associazione Italiana di Germanistica AIG) was founded in 1996, with one of the objectives being to organize scientific meetings. In this regard, every three years, AIG organizes, at the end of each board meeting, a scientific conference, both of interest for literary scholars as well as for linguists. AIG also organizes an annual membership meeting, usually at the place of each Board. To make the event for members nationwide attractive and worthy of participation, the meetings offer suitable opportunities to organize panel discussions, in which university policy, and professional and methodological issues which are relevant for all members are discussed. The five board members select the topics, after taking into account the related needs and suggestions of all association members.

To evaluate the success of a conference, our association has so far not collected statistical data. Since AIG is financed by membership fees and receives no further funding, the Association owes no institution an evaluation. Of course, for the Board, the views of all members are very important. Explicit indicators of the success of a meeting can be any unsolicited feedback from various colleagues to board members. The members in most cases only get in touch if they wish to express congratulations and gratitude for the organization of a successful meeting. A relatively reliable implicit indicator of the success of a meeting is the number of participants at the conference itself and in the individual events, participation in the social programme, and the lively involvement of the audience in the discussion.

In general, the annual AIG member meetings are attended on average by one third to half of all association members, i.e. from about 80 to about 100 participants. The scientific meetings that take place every three years can expect a slightly higher number (100-120) of participants.

The social programme is usually attended by all conference participants. Since the association was founded, lunch and dinners have been part of the programme providing important opportunities to socialise. As part of a social programme AIG often offers a cultural programme e.g. readings, concerts and exhibitions in the field of German culture. Although there is no formal evaluation of the social and cultural programme, the Executive Board has sometimes been informed that a programme without shared meals is undesirable in Italy. Dinners and other similar offers seem to

AIG members to represent an indispensable opportunity to build and to deepen social and professional relationships in an informal atmosphere.

At our last meeting in Rome (91 participants) no cultural programme was organized due to the tight scheduled programme and lack of time. The outdoor dinner was offered at the invitation of the DAAD. The vast majority of conference participants (about 80 persons) attended. The food was served around 8.30 in the evening and the guests enjoyed lively conversation until well past midnight, which can be interpreted as a positive sign of collegiality and social networking.

Apart from this year's General Assembly meeting there were four panel discussions on the following topics:

- German in Italy: the role of institutions.
- The role of German in European language policy.
- The future of the humanities.
- Germanistik in the universities of the future.

Each discussion was scheduled for 90 minutes with 4-8 participants. The time for discussion in the plenary had to be reduced to about 20 minutes, which in most cases seemed to be too short. After the first panel discussion, there was only one contribution to the public discussion. After the second there were four contributions, five were made after the third, and four after the fourth, four contributions were made. In the last three debates, relatively many remarks were made, which led to a very lively discussion. The time available was always too short, so that the discussion could not fully develop in a satisfactory manner.

Conclusion

The number of discussion contributions is not an absolute criterion to measure the success of a conference. A small number of them are not a distinctive sign of lack of interest regarding the topic for discussion. When a topic is covered fully and in detail, it may well be possible that the audience has no questions. Vice versa, it must be taken into account that burning questions really require time if they are to be debated in plenary in any detail.

CASE STUDY 12.4

THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF GERMAN TEACHERS (IDV)

Whenever an association event is subsidised - as for example the International Conference of German Teachers (IDT) is subsidised by the German Foreign Ministry via the Goethe Institut – then a full official evaluation must take place.

The IDV carries out two evaluations in regular succession:

- 1) evaluations of the IDT (every 4 years)**
- 2) evaluations of the Seminars for Regional Studies in the German Speaking Countries (every 2 years)**

The evaluation of the IDT is usually carried out by the specially commissioned expert committee contracted to manage the conference.

The results are published online in two prominent locations:

- On the website of the conference hosts (eg in 2009 the University of Jena)
- On the homepage of the IDV - see <http://www.idvnetz.org/> (at the very bottom of the page) or http://www.conventus.de/nmtemp/media/6273/evaluation-kurzbericht_idt_2009_23sep09.pdf

The evaluation criteria cover the conference venue, the theme of the conference, an overall assessment of particularly successful elements of the conference, and suggestions for improvements. These results are brought together to highlight strengths and areas of potential development, with a final summary at the end:

“The 14th International German Teacher Conference held in Jena-Weimar from August 3-8 2009 was from the point of view of its participants a very successful event. Aside from small criticisms that focus on specific aspects, and in spite of (or perhaps because of) the vast numbers of participants, the organisers have managed to host an international gathering of German teachers without any hitches or difficulties. The evaluation has produced a few recommendations for the staging of further events, which are:

- (1) To expand the range of training and professional development activities at the conference in view of visitors’ interest in acquiring relevant practical inputs that they can apply to their day-to-day work;
- (2) to further develop the use of group work as one of the key

organisational principles at the conference, and in particular to enhance the practical/didactic elements of the conference as well as to promote targeted networking among certain groups (eg young teachers); (3) to introduce more varied thematic focus points (eg interculturalism, the use of multimedia and internet in the classroom); (4) to further help individuals organise their visit to the conference by providing clear, timely and easily understandable information on the content of the various conference activities.” (Conference evaluation of the 14th IDT, 2009 Jena-Weimar)

The Regional Studies Seminars are evaluated in writing by the participants responsible for organising the events (see questionnaire below). These evaluations are also uploaded on the IDV website.

“In addition to this an objective report on the seminar is submitted at the next IDV members’ meeting for the benefit of the representatives of the Association who are present. In the case of smaller events we receive comments from participants through the post, along with reports for our online publication *IDV-Magazin*.” (**IDV, Internationaler Deutschlehrerverband**)

Für welches Land gilt die Evaluation?

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DACH-Workshop 2009

Bitte beantworten Sie uns einige Fragen zum aktuellen Seminarteil.

1. Haben Sie in diesem Teil des DACH-Workshops Dinge kennengelernt oder Verhaltensweisen erlebt, die Sie als *typisch deutsch, schweizerisch, österreichisch* betrachten? Bitte nennen Sie Beispiele:

2. „Reisen bildet!“, heisst es. Inwiefern hat sich **Ihr Bild** von *Land und Leuten* in den letzten Tagen verändert?

3. Würden Sie uns **Ihr wichtigstes Erlebnis** mitteilen?

4. Welche 3 Adjektive charakterisieren die **Menschen** hier Ihrer Meinung nach am zutreffendsten?
a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
5. Welche 3 Adjektive charakterisieren das **Land** für Sie am zutreffendsten?
a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
6. Sie lernen in jedem Land, das Sie im DACH-Workshop besuchen, **lokale Wörter** kennen. Geben Sie bitte 5 solcher Wörter an:
a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
d. _____ e. _____
7. Was werden Sie aus diesem Seminarabschnitt vermutlich in den eigenen **Unterricht übernehmen**?

8. Was sollten **wir** beim nächsten DACH-Seminar **anders machen**?

9. Bitte geben Sie auf einer Skala von 1 – 5 an, wie **zufrieden** Sie mit dem DACH-Seminar sind (1 = „sehr zufrieden“ ... 5 = „sehr enttäuscht“).

1	2	3	4	5
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Sie können auch gerne noch auf der Rückseite schreiben: „Vielen Dank!“

14

The questionnaire on the 2009 Regional Studies Seminar

In contrast to the Icelandic questionnaire only one of the nine questions is quantitative.