

2011 Multi-lingualism & Multi-culturalism Annual Report

ADHO Standing Committee on Multi-Lingualism & Multi-Culturalism (SCM)

Report on activities and matters arising
June 2010 - June 2011
Elisabeth Burr

1. Meeting of the ADHO Steering Committee

At the meeting of the ADHO Steering Committee Mon 5 & Wed 7 July 2010 at King's College London (UK), it was decided that the Standing Committee on Multi-Lingualism & Multi-Culturalism (SCM) would be composed as follows:

- Elisabeth Burr (chair)
- Espen Ore (ALLC representative) - (2008-2011)
- Natasha Smith (ACH representative) - (2010-2013)
- Stefan Sinclair (SDH-SEMI representative) - (2008-2011)
- Jan Rybicki, co-opted member - (2010-2011)
- Jan Christoph Meister, ex-officio member, internationalization editor of DHQ

2. Meeting of the Standing Committee

2.1 Agenda

At the meeting of the Standing Committee on 7 July 2010 in London (UK) the following was on the agenda:

1. Report on activities
 - Calls
 - Research into the linguistic and cultural nature of the ADHO community
 - Research projects
1. Position paper prepared by the chair (not discussed)
2. Future Perspectives
 - Activities
 - Questions
 - Culture & Technology Seminar Series

2.2 Plan for Action

After an intensive and controversial discussion, the following plan for action was drawn up.

2.2.1 EXPLOIT

Jan Christoph Meister and Stéfan Sinclair will carry forward *EXPLOIT - digital tools for harnessing cultural plurality in scholarly discourse*

Action taken: at the moment of writing no report was received from the project leaders

2.2.2 Translation of Calls

Decision: to carry on with the translation of the call into different languages as a means to foster the awareness of the multi-lingual and multi-cultural nature of the community.

Action taken:

The call was made available in the following languages:

- English
- Spanish
- German
- Greek
- Hungarian
- Italian

Problems: The fact that the programme committee of DH 2011 changed the call considerably made the process of getting translations done very difficult. Contrary to former years when the chair could use the database of translations (see Excel-sheet) which she had built up over the years, could adapt it to the new call and flag changes to the voluntary translators, this method could not be used this time. In the end people who had volunteered to do translations in former years had to be asked to do a completely new translation.

Negative: considerable delay in sending requests to voluntary translators, fewer translations and people being worried about the value of a translation if it was put online after the closure of the call.

Positive: new voluntary translators joined the group, the conference organisers were well aware not only of the practical aspect of translations but also of their symbolic value, even late new language versions were put online straight away.

2.2.3 Collaborative Translation Tool

Stéfan Sinclair's looked around for tools that might allow to do translations in an easier and translator friendlier way than the Excel-sheets. He came to the conclusion that the *Google Translator Toolkit*: <http://translate.google.com/toolkit/> might be a useful tool, since the reference to the target language interface is very friendly and since it allows for multiple translators.

The Toolkit has since been tested by Committee members and was found to be worth a trial

when the next call is ready for translation.

2.3 Future perspectives

2.3.1 SCM session block

Decision: to have a SCM session block at the next conference for which there should be either a separate call or a separate evaluation of proposals or a panel of three speakers on a certain theme.

Action taken: proposal was put to the ADHO steering board, the Conference Committee (John Unsworth), ALLC (Lisa Lena Opas-Hänninen, ACH (Julia Flanders), SEDIH-SEMI (Dan O'Donnell) and the 2012 Programme Committee chair (Paul Spence).

The SCM-has not yet agreed on a thematic frame for this session.

2.3.2 Special SMC issue of LLC

Decision: to discuss a suitable theme for a special issue of the LLC and set up a list of suitable authors. As soon as this would have been done one or two members of the committee could do the practical work such as getting in contact with the journal editor (Edward Vanhoutte) etc.

Action taken: no action was taken yet.

2.3.3 Reviewing

Decision: to collaborate with the conference committee and the PC with respect to the work related to reviewing and the information given to proposers.

Action taken: no action was taken yet.

2.3.4 Culture & Technology seminar series

Decision: contact should be established with Laszlo Hunyadi in order to find ways of reviving the Culture & Technology seminar series which took place during the winter terms 2007/08 and 2008/09 via videoconferencing.

Action taken: no action was taken yet.

2.4 Other Activities

The Chair of SCM has been further involved in the following activities.

2.5 Programme Committee

The Chair of SCM was a lurker on the list of the 2011 Programme Committee. One problem that

turned up was the handling of session chairs.

The Chair proposed to send out official invitations to people who had expressed an interest in chairing a session. She proposed this with the idea in mind that in some countries people can only get funding if they take an active role in an international conference. Taking an active role, according to the experiences of the Chair, is understood in terms of giving a paper or presenting a poster, taking part in a panel or chairing a session.

In order to get a clearer picture of the funding conditions in the different countries with respect to the participation in international conferences, the Chair proposes to do a survey among the members of the community. Doodle might be useful here.

The results should be reported to ADHO's Conference Coordinating Committee so that it can give directions to the Conference Programme Committees.

2.6 Participation in a Research Project

Since ADHO 2010 in London the Chair of the SCM has been intensely involved with the international research project on "Understanding Academic Research Teams: Implications of Multi-Country, Multi-Language, and Multi-Culture Team Membership", led by Lynne Siemens and funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) of Canada. As this research project focuses on Multi-Country, Multi-Language, and Multi-Culture Teams the Chair cannot only contribute knowledge and understanding which plays an important role in the SCM of ADHO but can also gain valuable insight in differences, problems and solutions which will feed into the work of the SCM.

2.7 Web Pages

The Chair has updated the Web-pages of the SCM as far as was possible. More work needs to be done. The Chair needs to know, for example, whether and how files can be uploaded, where they are stored, how they can be linked.