UNIVERSITY OF COPENHAGEN

UNICA

LANGUAGE PROJECT

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Outline

- Survey on language preparation for students
- Sum up points made by Wolfgang Mackiewicz
- MOLEX
Survey on language preparation for students
by Eva Lack and Wolfgang Mackiewicz, Freie Universität Berlin

Incoming students’ level of proficiency in host language rated:

- good by 15 % of all universities
- average by 42 % of all universities
- poor by 42 % of all universities
Survey on language preparation for students

- Requiring a language test seems to bring about a higher degree of sufficient language proficiency

- 65% of all universities have had complaints from teaching staff that Erasmus students possess inadequate command of the language of instruction

- 85% of all universities have had complaints from students that Erasmus students possess inadequate command of the language of instruction
Quoting Mackiewicz

- Increasing importance of English as an academic *lingua franca*

- Language proficiency – general, academic, subject specific

- Language requirements for mobility differ widely, depending on the specific parameters and aims of a given programme or individual project
Importance of adequate language proficiency and cultural awareness

- for the quality and success of mobility
- for academic integration and success at the host institution, including credit transfer
- for social integration
- for progression in language learning during study abroad
- for achieving heightened cultural awareness and acquiring enhanced intercultural skills
Duties / recommendations for sending institutions I

• Offer language and cultural preparation

• Learning outcomes should be related to the proficiency levels of the Council of Europe’s *Common European Framework of Reference for languages (CEFR).*

• Provide info on level of proficiency in the language of instruction at the host institution along with the transcript of record

• Language competence must be a selection criterion.

• If the language of instruction is a language other than the language of the region / state in which the host situation is based, would-be mobile students should all the same have more than a basic knowledge of the language of the region / state
Duties / recommendations for sending institutions II

- Lay down info on language requirements by the various partner institutions
- Provide opportunities for returning students to continue learning the language of the host country
- Award credits for successful language learning potentially relevant to mobility
- Make full use of opportunities for non-formal language learning, especially of less widely used and less taught languages (e.g. self-learning, tandem, advice)
Duties / recommendations for receiving institutions

• Clarify requirements for the language(s) of instruction, subject-specific and expressed in reference to the CEFR or to internationally recognised proficiency tests. E.g. Humanities and Social Sciences: > level B2 of CEFR

• Offer intensive pre-sessional courses in language of instruction at different levels

• Provide linguistic support accompanying courses of study

• Award credits for successfully completed language study
Basic principles regarding intra-European horizontal student mobility

- Mobile students should be issued with a certificate stating the level of proficiency reached in the language of instruction / of the non-academic environment

- Universities should consider the following measures:
  - Creation of environments for independent language learning
  - Creation of language tandem systems
  - Launch of local European / international projects accompanying academic study
Internationalisation of European higher education

- Maybe inevitable for some universities to offer courses / portions of courses in English

- Sending and host institutions should provide opportunities and incentives for learning the language of the host community

- Continuing education / professional masters – a special case
MOLEX - Mobility for Language Experience

- Launched by the UNICA language core group
- Lifelong Learning Program application submitted in February 2009
- Application reply July 2009
- Start of project November 2009
Aims of MOLEX

• Identification & analysis of Case Studies with regard to Language / Culture & Mobility Policies,

• Subsequent Drafting & Approval of a Code of Appropriate Practice (10 basic principles - benchmarks),

• Quality Monitoring of the Exercise,

• Extensive Dissemination & Promotion targeted towards the wider EHEA,

• Awareness-raising campaign through a final event in Brussels
Goals of MOLEX

- Achieve better language teaching and stronger language preparation for mobility and employability,

- Promote the indissoluble connection between language and culture,

- Constitute an active contribution to the materialization of the European Higher Education Area,

- Heighten the quality of mobility,

- Increase mobility numbers and the quality of the language skills acquired,

- Adaption of a Code of Appropriate Practice may bring about an increased volume of multilateral cooperation and a higher degree of transparency and compatibility
Thanks for listening!
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