Call for Papers

Language Centres at a Crossroads: Open Directions for New Generations of Learners

Comprendo que no existe
el camino derecho.
Sólo un gran laberinto
de encrucijadas múltiples.

Federico García Lorca

The European Confederation of Language Centres in Higher Education (CercleS) is pleased to invite you to the XVI CercleS International Conference "Language Centres at a Crossroads: Open Directions for New Generations of Learners". The Conference will be organised by the Czech and Slovak Association of Language Centres (CASALC) and held at The Masaryk University Language Centre, in Brno, Czech Republic, on 10-11-12 September 2020.

The conference is designed to showcase the cultural and cognitive richness associated with linguistic diversity. We wish to welcome higher education teachers, researchers and managerial staff from diverse working, cultural and geographical backgrounds to present, share and discuss their best practices, provide new perspectives and encourage in-depth reflection on issues at the heart of university language centre activities. The aim of the conference is to offer a three-day opportunity for an intensive, engaging and inspiring exchange of knowledge, skill and experience.

The concept of crossroads reflects the dynamic times we live in. Conventional strategies for addressing university language education have been changing, influenced by a great number of factors. New policies, strategies and designs, innovative initiatives and complex experiments are being shaped by the manifold social, political and scientific interactions at multiple levels, both at universities and in the world at large. Traditional authorities and processes in academia have begun to be challenged by a number of new actors and approaches. And in the middle of it all, language centres are exploring new directions.

We seem to be caught at the crossroads. What language/s do we offer, to whom and in what forms and intensity. Shall we offer teaching or all language support services? Whom shall we offer these to: students, academics, university admin staff, the general public, or to everyone? What skills shall we focus on: linguistic, communicative, intercultural, employability, or language-related soft skills? Shall we focus on English only, or on more languages? In English, shall we focus on English as lingua franca or English as a national language with a specific culture behind it? Who are we: language-support providers, academics, teachers, or coaches? Which methods, strategies and tools shall we employ? Whom shall we be responsible to: our students, the university, or society? How shall we develop and guarantee our quality? What best characterises us: diversity, flexibility and openness to new options, or interconnection, interdependence and complex networking?
We could ask many more questions, each with multiple answers. Each different answer sets the language centre and its staff on a different path. In order to address some of these questions, the Conference invites papers in seven broad interrelated sections. They are:

Section 1: Teaching methodologies and ICT

Section 2: Learners and their environment: interactions, roles, strategies

Section 3: Plurilingualism for academic and professional purposes

Section 4: Assessment and alternative forms of assessment

Section 5: Staff and quality development

Section 6: Policy and policy implementation

Section 7: Translation and Terminology management

CercleS

Language Centres at a Crossroads: Open Directions for New Generations of Learners

Section 1

Teaching methodologies and ICT

This section can be visualized as several multilevel crossroads of all decisions teachers take while pursuing their profession. We need to think on the level of an entire course as well as on the level of a teaching unit. When arriving at a particular crossroads, our chosen path will be guided by our responses to numerous questions. What is our aim? Which teaching methods and tools do we choose? How do we motivate learners? How do we balance language, content and skills? Which materials do we use? Each question opens a myriad of directions, so the final pathways engendered by particular teachers are potentially infinite and never the same.

This section includes, but is not limited to, the following areas:

- Maximizing the effectiveness of teaching and learning
- Encouraging active use of knowledge
- Needs analysis and consequent teaching strategies: motivation, teacher's commitment, critical perspectives, corpus-based approaches, interdisciplinary approaches...
- Flexible modes of delivery
- Learner as a content co-creator
- Language and skills (soft, life, interpersonal, intercultural, etc.)
- General vs. academic vs. specific language
- ICT as part of teacher literacy
- Variety and efficiency of ICT tools

Section 2

Learners and their environment: interactions, roles, strategies

In recent years, the crossroads in learners' lives have become complex and entangled. On the one hand, ample options provide countless forms of support and assistance, on the other, learners are required to take responsibility for their own learning. In this section we will investigate the crossroads of the learner's world in all its richness, including important decision-making, responsibilities and the emotional inventory of the learning process. We particularly open the space for exploring cognition, affection, and motivation without forgetting the necessity of enjoyment in the long process that language learning is. We will also look at specific generations of learners that meet in the classroom.

This section includes, but is not limited to, the following areas:

- Helping students take responsibility for their learning, developing self-reflection and metacognition
- Autonomous learning and learner's autonomisation, implementing aspects of autonomy into mainstream teaching, self-organised learning
- Motivation and *flow* in the learning process
- The role of emotions in language learning
- New and recomposed target groups: Generation X, Generation Y, Generation Z, LLL (lifelong learners)
- Social aspect of learning: environment, interdependence, importance of cooperation, classroom dynamics

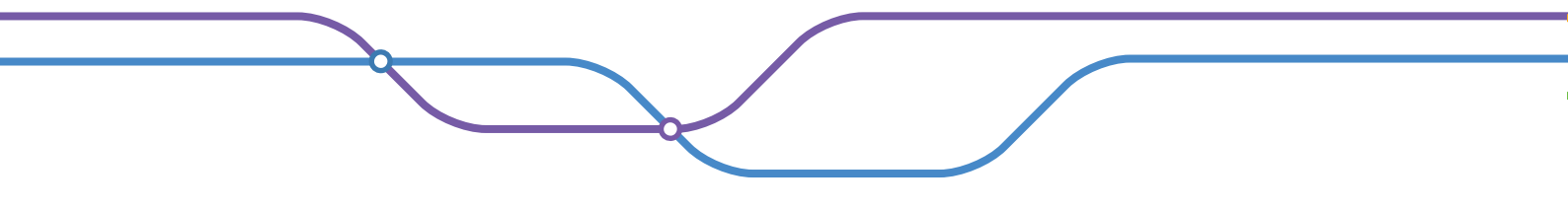
Section 3

Plurilingualism for academic and professional purposes

The last decades have changed language identities at universities considerably. The institutional focus on English as a lingua franca, on the one hand, and, on the other, foreign language classrooms no longer populated by monolingual, but increasingly by plurilingual students with diverse language backgrounds, have necessitated adapting language practices to the new plurilingual dynamics.
The key crossroads brings together three main paths: the first deals with English as a global lingua franca and its implications for the academic and professional world; the second covers plurilingual profiles, practices and educational approaches that can encourage multilingualism among students. Finally, the third considers the issues of preparation for the real world and workplace closely related to student satisfaction and their future success.

This section includes, but is not limited to, the following areas:

- Diversity of Englishes: World Englishes, global English, EMI...
- Plurilingualism and lingua franca
- Languages in contact: interference, code switching, code mixing
- Cultures in contact
- Academia and the workplace



Section 4

Assessment and alternative forms of assessment

Language assessment is a dynamic area that has been re-shaped by many newly-emerging considerations. The crossroads of this section, therefore, offers directions of transformation. New approaches to language assessment, new designs and new possibilities brought by digital tools, they all open paths to develop assessment fully conjoined with different styles of teaching and learning in individual contexts of assessed learners, re-emerging issues of validity and fairness, and the influence of political factors.

This section includes, but is not limited to, the following areas:

- Assessment appropriate for the academic context
- Assessment in multilingual contexts, ethics and justice
- Learning-oriented assessment, including less formalised testing
- Connections between teaching and assessment
- Digitisation and digital challenges
- Fairness, quality and validation of assessment
- What we assess: learner proficiency, learner development, achievement, skills, competences, task performance…
- Assessment and policy contexts

Section 5

Staff and quality development

This crossroads brings together three vital components of a well-functioning language centre: core skills-set of the LC teacher, managerial competence and dynamic interconnection between teaching and research. As the common denominator of this section is quality development and internal co-operation, we will examine definitions and implementation of quality and human-resource concepts relevant for language centres. Furthermore, the imperative increase in the quality of teaching requires an increasing application of interdisciplinary research in disciplines related to language teaching and language acquisition.

This section includes, but is not limited to, the following areas:

- Broadening and extending the core skills of the LC teacher
- 2020+ skill-set of language centre teachers
- Teacher's wellbeing
- Teacher and/or researcher
- Relevant forms of research for LC (action research, classroom research, exploratory practice,..)
- Professional expertise
- Team skills
- Managerial competences
- Effective recruitment procedures
- Internal dynamics at LC

Section 6

Policy and policy implementation

This section has an ambition to respond to the Wulkow Memorandum on Politics (2018) and deepen our understanding of the roles and responsibilities of language education so that language centres can participate in the development and protection of a well-functioning society anchored in democratic values:

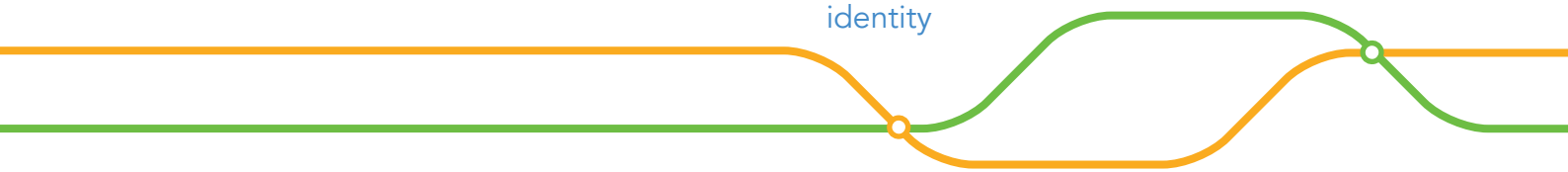
"…Language Centres do not exist in isolation from the rest of the higher education institution, and the latter in turn cannot isolate itself from political [and socio-cultural] developments whether on national or international level."

Wulkow Memorandum on Politics (2018)

We will discuss paths in which language learning becomes an instrument for education to tolerance and the elimination of barriers in the mindset of the population, as well as the medium of inclusion and social cohesion. It is the upcoming role of language centres to become this social actor and to elaborate well-designed language policies at all levels.

This section includes, but is not limited to, the following areas:

- Teaching languages of minorities
- Status of national languages
- University language policies (local, national, international) - creation, content and implementation
- Development of student and staff plurilingual identity



Section 7

Translation and Terminology management

This section explores the issue of translation as a service provided by language centres. The crossroads concerns the complexity of terminology and its management as well as the administration of this service. Different pathways for collaboration and networking will be explored.

This section includes, but is not limited to, the following areas:

- Management of translations: external and internal translators, general and ad hoc recruitment, quality guarantee
- Higher education terminology: strategy of choice, harmonisation of terms, harmonisation of concepts, different databases
- University as a client
- External clients - business strategy

Conference languages

Papers may be delivered in English, Czech, Slovak, French, German, Spanish, Russian or other languages that can attract a large-enough audience. This policy has the aim of enhancing the multilingual aspect of the Conference, to highlight the wide range of cultures and communication styles that practitioners at universities come into contact with during their academic life.

Conference session format

Oral presentations

30 minutes, i.e. 20-minute presentation + 10-minute discussion. Talks can be delivered in one of the conference languages. If a presentation is not delivered in English, its supporting materials (slides, handouts and other visuals) can be either bilingual (in the language of the presentation and in English) or in English.

Workshop

60 minutes. Workshops are practice-oriented sessions that are supposed to engage participants in a series of participative activities so that they can gain hands-on experience with tools, strategies or best practices. Presentation mode should take less than 25% of the workshop time. Workshops can be delivered in one of the conference languages. If a workshop is not delivered in English, its supporting materials (slides, handouts and other visuals) can be either bilingual (in the language of the presentation and in English) or in English.

Poster session

60 minutes. The poster session is an occasion when posters are displayed and commented on by the authors. Posters should include a title, the name and institutional affiliation of the authors, they should consist of a short text with clearly labelled photos, drawings or graphs, but in general, they can be as creative as the authors like. It is useful to have handouts to give to conference participants. All materials must be prepared prior to the conference because there will be no reproduction facilities on site. Poster size: Posters must not exceed a width of 88 cm and height of 118 cm. If the poster is not in English, some supporting materials (e.g. handouts) should be in English.

Panel discussion

30 minutes or 60 minutes. These sessions are organised collectively by a group of two to five speakers from different backgrounds and a moderator to discuss a pertinent issue or topic. Each speaker presents their views on the common topic. The moderator chairs the panel and ensures the combination of single talks presents a unified goal. After the presentations, time is dedicated for a lively and informative discussion between panel and participants attending. If a panel is not delivered in English, its supporting materials (slides, handouts and other visuals) can be either bilingual (in the language of the presentation and in English) or in English.

Round-table Sessions

60 minutes, i.e. 5-minute topic and question introduction + 55-minute discussion guided by the host. This session is designed for open discussion and active participation, to spark synergy and intensive exchange of ideas among peers while addressing one topic. The expected number of participants is ten to fifteen. The discussion can be delivered in one of the conference languages or English, depending on the participants. If a round table is not delivered in English, its supporting materials (slides, handouts and other visuals) can be either bilingual (in the language of the presentation and in English) or in English.

Discussion Hub

30 minutes. These interactive topic-focused networking events encourage communities to connect around shared interests, engage the participants in collaboration, peer-learning activities and discussions. The Discussion Hub topics are centred around a specific theme or community and led by one to two speakers introducing the topic and facilitating networking or focusing discussions. They are designed for active participation to spark synergy and build coherence among peers. If a Discussion Hub session is not delivered in English, its supporting materials (e.g. handouts) can be either bilingual (in the language of the presentation and in English) or in English.

Submission guidelines

Proposals should be submitted to abstractsCercleS@cjv.muni.cz by 30 January2020.

Proposals will be blind reviewed by members of the Scientific and Programme Committees.

You will receive an answer of acceptance by 29 February 2020.

Oral presentation proposal must contain the following:

(1) author name(s),
(2) affiliation and a contact e-mail address,
(3) title of the presentation,
(4) section in which you would like to be included,
(5) body of abstract in the language of the presentation (300-400 words). The language used in the abstract will be considered the language of presentation at the Conference.
(6) a short summary of your abstract (max. 150 words) in English (if the language of the presentation is not English) or in another language of your choice from the Conference languages.
(7) biography in English (80-100 words),
(8) the proposal may also contain up to five references.

Workshop proposal must contain the following:

(1) author name(s),
(2) affiliation and a contact e-mail address,
(3) title of the workshop,
(4) section in which you would like to be included,
(5) body of abstract in the language of the workshop (300-400 words). The language used in the abstract will be considered the language of the workshop at the Conference.
(6) a short summary of your abstract (max. 150 words) in English (if the language of the workshop is not English) or in another language of your choice from the Conference languages.
(7) biography in English (80-100 words)
(8) the proposal may also contain up to five references.

Poster proposal must contain the following:

(1) author name(s),
(2) affiliation and a contact e-mail address,
(3) title of the poster,
(4) body of abstract in the language of the poster (300-400 words). The language used in the abstract will be considered the language of the poster at the Conference.
(5) a short summary of your abstract (max. 150 words) in English (if the language of the poster is not English) or in another language of your choice from the Conference languages.
(6) biography in English (80-100 words)

Panel Discussion proposal must contain the following:

(1) the names of panellists and the moderator,
(2) affiliation and a contact e-mail address,
(3) title of the panel discussion,
(4) section in which you would like to be included,
(5) a brief description in the language of the panel discussion (300-400 words) of the intended discussion (the topic and the goal of the discussion and their contribution to the conference theme). The language used in this description will be considered the language of the workshop at the Conference.
(6) a short summary of the intended discussion (max. 150 words) in English (if the language of the panel discussion is not English) or in another language of your choice from the Conference languages.
(7) biographies of the panellists and the moderator in English (80-100 words each)
(8) the proposal may also contain up to five references.

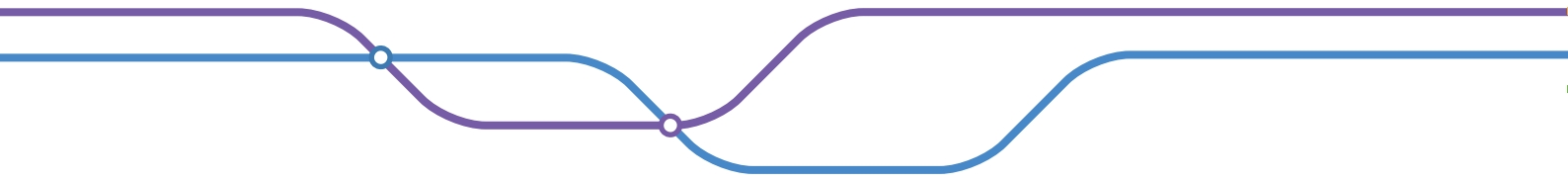
Round-table session proposal must contain the following:

(1) author (host) name(s),
(2) affiliation and a contact e-mail address,
(3) title of the round-table session,
(4) section in which you would like to be included,
(5) a brief description in the language of the round table session (300-400 words) of the intended discussion (topic and purpose of the discussion, list of main debatable questions). The language used in this description will be considered the language of the workshop at the Conference.
(6) a short summary of the intended discussion (max. 150 words) in English (if the language of the round table session is not English) or in another language of your choice from the Conference languages.
(7) biography of the host in English (80-100 words each)

Discussion Hub Proposal must contain the following:

(1) author (host) name(s),
(2) affiliation and a contact e-mail address,
(3) title of the discussion hub session,
(4) a brief description in the language of the discussion hub session (200-300 words) of the intended session (topic and purpose of the event). The language used in this description will be considered the language of the workshop at the Conference.
(5) a short summary of your abstract (max. 150 words) in English (if the language of the discussion hub session is not English) or in another language of your choice from the Conference languages.
(6) biography in English (80-100 words)

Please, send your abstract to: abstractsCercleS@cjv.muni.cz



Important dates

Registration open:	21 October 2019
Submission of abstracts:	30 January 2020
Notification of acceptance:	29 February 2020
Early bird registration:	31 March 2020

Conference fees

Brno 2020

	Early-bird	Regular rate	One day fee
CERCLES members	€ 180.00 (4 500,- Kč)	€ 230.00 (5 750,- Kč)	€ 100.00 (2 500,- Kč)
non-members	€ 210.00 (5 250,- Kč)	€ 260.00 (6 500,- Kč)	€ 100.00 (2 500,- Kč)
CASALC members	€ 130.00 (3 250,- Kč)	€ 180.00 (4 500,- Kč)	€ 100.00 (2 500,- Kč)
students	€ 100.00 (2 500,- Kč)	€ 100.00 (2 500,- Kč)	€ 100.00 (2 500,- Kč)
conference dinner	€ 30.00 (750,-Kč)		
post-conference trip	€ 40.00 (1 000,- Kč)		