

**LANGUAGE SERVICES AT THE UPC FOR ACADEMIC STAFF
DELIVERING LECTURES IN ENGLISH:
THE EXPERIENCE OF THE LANGUAGE AND TERMINOLOGY
SERVICE**

**SERVEIS LINGÜÍSTICS A LA UPC PER A PROFESSORAT QUE
FAN DOCÈNCIA EN ANGLÈS:
LES EXPERIÈNCIES DEL SERVEI DE LLENGÜES I
TERMINOLOGIA**

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1. Introduction

Teachers working with CLIL are specialists in their own discipline rather than traditional language teachers. They are usually fluent speakers of the target language, bilingual or native speakers. In many institutions, language teachers work in partnership with other departments to offer CLIL in various subjects.

European Commission (2012)

The Language and Terminology Service (SLT) at the *Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya* (UPC) provides language services to lecturers that intend to or already deliver lectures through English. The services and activities are tailored to the academic staff's specific needs, which range from general language skills to academic language proficiency. The SLT does not address the “content” aspect of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL). The SLT and CLIL share one word in common in their titles, namely “language”:

CLIL: Content and **L**anguage Integrated Learning.

SLT: **L**anguage and Terminology Service.

At TRICLIL 2012, the SLT will present practical information on its experiences in providing language services and activities it has designed and implemented for academic staff at the UPC. Academic staff can use these services on a voluntary basis.

2. Objective

In order to provide support to academic staff at the UPC who either lecture or intend to lecture in English, in February 2010 the UPC approved and passed the UPC Language Plan in which policies and strategies to this end were included and established. The Language Plan promotes building the University's language model and establishing transversal objectives and actions for improving the knowledge, use, quality and interaction of languages across the UPC.

The SLT is responsible for the technical coordination of the Language Plan and the Institute of Education Sciences (ICE) is responsible for learning programmes for academic staff.

More specifically, the Language Plan clearly exposes among other objectives that it aims to:

- “Empower members of the University in relation to languages so that they are able to achieve appropriate levels of multilingual competence”.
- “Design and implement language training plans that enable teaching, research, administrative and service staff to reach the language levels required of them.”
- “Provide language-learning courses, services and resources that are diverse with regard to format, requirements, target audience and communicative purpose, and that make use of virtual learning environments, Web 2.0, technology and informal learning strategies.”

In this paper, the SLT would like to present the specific action and steps it has taken since February 2010 to implement and achieve these objectives.

Within the context of CLIL, the SLT focuses its service specifically on language, namely by improving the level of English among academic staff, by providing services and resources to support lecturers who communicate in English and by revising teaching material in this language.

3. Context and participants

The SLT has created and implemented a range of language support services specific to the needs of academic staff lecturing in English. These services include:

- Individual coaching
- Formal learning plans
- Informal learning activities
- Resources on academic communication

These services are described in the next section on development, strategies and materials.

Throughout the academic year 2010/11, over 300 members of academic staff participated in activities designed specifically for them.

4. Development, strategies and materials

In 2010/11, the SLT delivered the following strategies and activities to academic staff. Each activity practises one or more language skills.

4.1. Strategy: Individual coaching

Activities: Revision of teaching material, 1:1 coaching sessions with feedback and advice.

Language skills: Tailored to individual language needs.

4.2. Strategy: Formal learning plans

Activities:

- Pathways: online courses provided via Moodle, an e-learning platform.

Pathways delivered in 2010/11 include:

- Lecturing in English
- Pronunciation and Intonation
- Academic Collocations
- Pronunciation of mathematical formulae

- Workshops, to communicate research in English and to practise lecturing in English.

Language skills: Academic language proficiency; academic vocabulary; academic presentations; phraseology; self-study pronunciation tools and many other skills.

4.3. Strategy: Informal learning activities

Activities: Innovative fluency activities such as:

- Speed Teaching
- 59 seconds
- Book Club
- Pub Quiz

Language skills: Fluency in spoken general and academic English.

4.4. Strategy: Resources on academic communication

Activities and materials:

- Writer's Toolbox: a blog for academic staff who are looking for expert advice and resources on academic writing.
- ACR: Academic Communication Resources, an area within the SLT website in which experts have carefully chosen top-quality resources related to academic English.
- Class-Talk: Innovative tool for academic staff. Class-Talk is an online dictionary with audio files that includes phrases used in a classroom environment.
- Higher Education Lexicon (HEL) and UPCTERM: Online multilingual dictionaries with academic and technical terms in order to provide language and terminology support to the UPC community.

Language skills: Academic vocabulary and technical terminology.

5. Evaluation and feedback

The feedback on programmes run by SLT has been extremely positive.

The general evaluation provided by academic staff is that by researching and developing language courses with a specific purpose, lecturers believe that they save time, receive a personalised service from language experts, are encouraged to continue lecturing in English and that once they have completed a course or activity, they are more autonomous in improving the quality of language they use to lecture in English.

6. Proposals for the future

The SLT's role in the future is to reinforce the coordination of language learning services at the UPC by creating a unified programme that combines the range of services on offer at the UPC in order to maximise resources and create a greater impact within the university. It aims to identify the specific needs of each professional group at the UPC. Based on the results, the SLT will design and implement learning programmes aimed at achieving specific objectives and will collect and analyse data on language competence of each professional group.

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