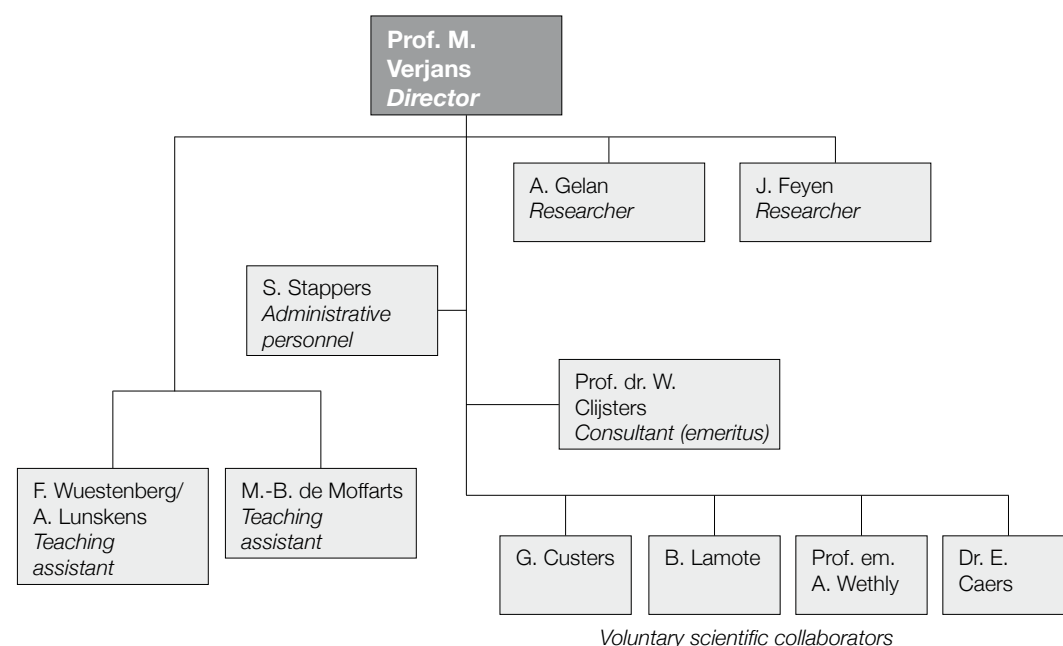


OVERVIEW

In 2006, the Centre Applied Linguistics (CTL) became the first research institute of the Hasselt University to be active throughout the entire Associate Universiteit Hasselt (UHasselt – PHL – XIOS)

CTL unites a large variety of competences, allowing cross-disciplinary cooperation: (socio) linguists specialised in Romance, Germanic, African and Classical languages, economists, experts in education, IT specialists...

Research projects are mainly carried out within the framework of an international cooperation between universities and business life. This complementarity ensures a solid multidisciplinary research. The focus lies on empirical research, mainly financed by Flemish, federal and European funds.



Key Figures 2009

Research budget: € 210.000

Researchers: 9

Administrative and technical personnel: 1

CONTACT

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CTL - Centrum Toegepaste Linguïstiek HIGHLIGHTS 2009

universiteit
▶▶ hasselt

PREFACE



One would probably not easily make the connection between research in the field of social sciences and more specifically applied linguistics, and Hasselt University, with its reputable research institutes in the area of sciences and technology. The Centre of Applied Linguistics nevertheless succeeds in gaining renown with its specific research in an increasingly international environment.

In 2008, CTL set out to expand its solid partner network to the Euregio Meuse-Rhine, since the Euregio provides a unique “lab situation” uniting 5 regional cultures and 3 different languages. In addition, the EMR is characterised by a large ethnic diversity. This euregional cooperation was fully materialised in 2009.

The linguistic and cultural diversity of the Euregio Meuse-Rhine constitutes important advantages for development, not in the least from an economic point of view. On the other hand, it can also lead to problems and issues, for which well founded solutions have to be found.

Together with its Euregio partners, CTL wants to contribute to the further development of this region. To achieve this, an enthusiastic, hard working team of experts is absolutely necessary. But that is not enough. Therefore I would like to thank the INTERREG IV programme and also the Provincial Government of Limburg, who offer the necessary financial support for carrying out quality research.

In 2009, CTL also obtained funding for starting up an important fundamental research project in the area of geographically conditioned cultural differences. This project will most likely lead to important new findings and some interesting publications. Especially in economically challenging times, high quality research applied to a concrete field paves the way to recovery and further progress. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you believe that we can be of any help to you.

Professor Martine Verjans, Director.



HIGHLIGHTS 2009

Research 2009

The expansion of CTL as the first research institute to be active throughout the entire Associatie Universiteit Hasselt (UHasselt – PHL – XIOS) in the area of intercultural-foreign language communication was materialised. Within the framework of the two acquired INTERREG IV projects, **INTERcCom** and **LinguaCluster**, a close cooperation was established with universities and other institutions of higher education from the Euregio Meuse-Rhine, among which: Université de Liège, RWTH Aachen, Provinciale Hogeschool Limburg, Hogeschool Zuyd and Open University The Netherlands. In addition, CTL, in cooperation with XIOS, drew up an R&D project proposal within the area of Building Construction Engineering, currently waiting for approval by the European Commission.

Other projects (EU-LLP):

- TST-ID: Language and speech technology to promote the intercultural dialogue
- PRO-Multilingua: transfer of innovation in the area of professional multilingual communication
- LANQUA – Language network for quality assurance
- YELL – Young Europeans love languages

Publications – project descriptions – partners: www.uhasselt.be/ctl

Services 2009

A new association “Interculturalis” was created for all the services to primary, secondary and higher education (Flemish Olympiad of French, Tournoi Mondial de Français par Internet, Didactic study group French, Weeks of the Francophone Film).

Education 2009

The educational concept of blended learning - combining e-learning based on modules developed by CTL with contact education – was extended to an extra-curricular Master course “Intercultural Business Communication French”.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

The first principle of CTL’s research is that a sound knowledge of the (foreign) language is an absolute requirement for communication. But such knowledge alone is not sufficient to communicate effectively on an international level. Moreover, misunderstandings often result from cultural differences. CTL mainly investigates the geographical characteristics of cultures and their influence on communication.

A second principle is that fundamental research needs a socially relevant field of application. Important stakeholders are not only companies involved in international business, but also students who need a solid preparation for the international labour market. To fulfill the needs of both target groups, CTL investigates the efficiency of methods for learning to communicate effectively in another language, taking also into account the specificities of the culture.

Research areas:

- Communication needs and problems, and the influence of linguistic and cultural differences on verbal and nonverbal communication, especially in relation to business populations, either linked or not to a sector and/or function.

- The efficacy and efficiency of (foreign) language teaching and/of didactic methods, with a special focus on ICT as a support for semi-autonomous blended learning.



Valorisation

Based on the research results, CTL often develops e-learning modules. These modules are valorised internationally by CommArt International N.V., a spin-off of CTL-UHasselt (www.commart.be). Usually, international specialists are involved as partners. Additionally, CTL valorises its research by means of publications in specialised international Journals and participation in international conferences and congresses.

More information on www.uhasselt.be/ctl

SERVICES

If companies want to optimise their international communication, both CTL and CommArt International can give them a hand. A few examples of services are: mapping communication needs, developing e-learning modules that are company tailor-made, training of coaches (semi-autonomous blended learning) and mentoring of e-product developers (by means of Lingu@Tor Author, the self-developed multimedia electronic authoring system). CTL also carries out government contracts in the context of ICT supporting language education, e.g. calibrating the curricula on the Common European Framework of Reference for foreign languages (CEFR) etc.

LINK RESEARCH - EDUCATION

Important stakeholders of CTL are national and international companies, where most Business Economics graduates start their careers. The content of the e-learning modules is based on the intercultural foreign language profiles of various business functions. Methodologically, they have been conceived for semi-autonomous blended learning. As a matter of course, they are implemented in the language education programmes of the faculty of Business Economics.

Students also learn how to set up a conceptual model based on international research on cultural differences. Thereafter they apply their acquired knowledge to concrete communication related business situations. The ZAP (tenured professors), associated with CTL, are also promoter of Master theses.

