A University Mainly in Esperanto

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AIS San-Marino
Overview (1)

• A bit of history
• Goals of the AIS
  – Promoting student mobility
  – Comparability of degrees
  – Avoiding discrimination by language
• Use of Esperanto
• Use of other languages
Overview (2)

- Classes and textbooks
- An experiment: „Just-in-time“ Esperanto
- Situation in 2008
- Experience with Esperanto (faculty, students, administration)
- Overall experience
- Perspective in the Internet
A Bit of AIS History

• 1983: SUS 1, conference in San Marino (SUS = Sanmarinian University Session)

• Objectives:
  – Design the structure of a virtual university
  – Prove that a university using Esperanto is feasible

• 1985: Official formation of AIS San Marino
  – AIS = Akademio Internacia de la Sciencoj = International Academy of (the) Sciences
Essential Goals

- No barriers for interdisciplinary exchange
- Transnational student mobility
- No linguistic discrimination
  - In academic research
  - In academic teaching
Promoting Student Mobility

- Acknowledgement of studying credits
- Comparability of degrees
- Requiring external credits for exams
- Opening SUS conferences for students
Comparability of degrees

- Four levels (abbreviated Latin titles)
  - „Bac.“ = baccalaureatus (bakalaŭro)
  - „Mag.“ = magister (magistro)
  - „Dr.“ = doctor (doktoro)
  - „Dr. habil.“ = doctor habilitatus

- Objective criteria for each degree
Avoiding Discrimination by Language

- Use of a neutral, easy language.
- Esperanto was chosen for practical reasons.
- Can be changed if an association such as the United Nations adopts another neutral language for international use.
- „I. L.“ or „ILo“ (= Internacia Lingvo, International Language) is used as a placeholder.
Mandatory Use of Esperanto

- In scientific courses during a SUS
- In final exams (graduation)
- In students' theses, in parallel to another language, chosen by the student
- In sessions of the Academic Senate
- In sessions of the General Assembly
Example of a bilingual text

**Definition von IM**

und die „Minimalität“ von IM, die besagt, daß IM nirgends höhere relative Genauigkeit als \( \varepsilon \) besitzt:

\[
< \varepsilon, \left| \frac{g_2 \cdot x}{x} \right| < \varepsilon \implies g_1 = g_2 \quad \text{(E2$_1$)}
\]

**Ausgehend von der Zahl 1 \( \in \mathbb{M} \) findet man alle Elemente von IM.**

Forderung (E1) wird für Maschinenzahlen meistens vorausgesetzt, da durch sie die Multiplikation auf natürliche Weise ein neutralen Ele-

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**Définition de IM**

kaj la „minimumeco“ de IM, kiu diras, ke IM nenie havu pli grandan relativan precizecon ol \( \varepsilon \):

\[
x \in \mathbb{R}, \quad g_1, g_2 \in \mathbb{M} : \quad \left| \frac{g_2 \cdot x}{x} \right| < \varepsilon, \implies g_1 = g_2
\]

El (AP) kaj (E2$_1$) sekvas, ke por du sin-sekvaj \( g < h \in \mathbb{M} \) kun \( m := (g+h)/2 \):

\[
\frac{m-g}{m} = \varepsilon, \quad \frac{h-m}{m} = \varepsilon
\]

Elirante de la nombro 1 \( \in \mathbb{M} \), oni trovas ĉiujn elementojn de IM.

La postulo (E1) estas kutima ĉe mašinaj nombroj, ĉar per ĝi la multipliko nature konsideras elementon \( \frac{1}{\varepsilon} \).
Use of Other Languages

- In scientific courses outside a SUS, especially by local partner institutions
- In scientific lectures, even during a SUS (no translations)
- In the assembly of the Supporting Sector (possibly with translation)
- In theses, in parallel to Esperanto, also to help authors to achieve greater clarity
Classes and Textbooks

- Faculty should regularly contribute courses:
  - During conferences
  - In „virtual“ form (book, video, E-learning, WWW pages)

- Faculty are encouraged to present their courses in the Web (www.ais-sanmarino.org)

- Lecture notes published in „Acta Sanmarinensia“

- Local partners use textbooks in local language
An Experiment: “Just-in-Time” Esperanto

- Introductory Esperanto courses before a SUS
  - 1 or 2 days, on site
  - Focus on passive understanding
- Successful (as judged by course exams)
- Unsuccessful (as judged by later motivation)
De Facto Situation in 2008

• Over 30 SUS conferences in eight countries
• About 90 other conferences in 19 countries
• Over 300 graduations
  – 133 bachelors
  – 122 masters
  – 48 PhDs (many by nostrification)
• Government support reluctant
Experience with Esperanto: Faculty

- Esperanto-speaking university teachers
  - No communication problems
  - Few cultural issues known
- Other interested university staff
  - Not many
  - Generally good motivation (integrative?)
  - Integrated after a few months
Experience with Esperanto: Students

• Unique specimen for instrumental motivation
  – Very few pronunciation issues
  – Tendency to get by with a small vocabulary
• Hesitation to apply Esperanto outside classes
• Barrier to accept Esperanto as “just another language”?
Experience with Esperanto: Administration

- Accepted as „of course“ in the Senate and the General Assembly
- Other administrative languages (English, French, German, Italian) used in external correspondence only
- Translation of regulations into the other languages lags behind
Overall Experience

- Positive experience with Esperanto as a neutral language.
- So far no language problems with E. in the academic sector.
- So far no socio-linguistic analysis of the AIS.
- (The AIS cannot quit – too many students.)
Perspective: AIS 2.0?

- Extended Internet site under consideration
  - a blog
  - social network for members (community platform)
  - E-publishing of SUS proceedings
  - AISpedia, a reference of AIS knowledge
- Goal: an integrated web 2.0 environment