



JOURNAL

Linguapeace Europe: more than just English for Specific Purposes

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Das europäische Projekt *Linguapeace* unterstützt die Entwicklung von Friedenssicherung und -erhaltung, indem es Sprachlernmaterialien und Sprachgebrauchsrichtlinien zur Verfügung stellt, die von militärischem Personal aus ex-kommunistischen Staaten verwendet werden. Die Grundlagen des Projekts sind Respekt und Empathie für das Individuum, Persönlichkeitsentwicklung und interkulturelle Sensibilisierung. Friedensunterstützende Massnahmen sind nur mit entsprechend ausgebildeten Kommunikations- und Fremdsprachenkompetenzen adäquat zu bewältigen. Dabei geht es weniger um Englisch als Fachsprache im Militär, als um umfassendere Grundlagen, die an Diskurslernzielen ausgerichtet sind. Kommunikativer Erfolg misst sich stark an konkreten Ergebnissen und weniger an der Qualität der Sprache, die benutzt wird. Grammatikalische Kategorien realisieren dabei bestimmte Diskursziele. Abtönungen dienen der gebotenen Form von Höflichkeit. Mit dem Lehrmittel ‚At Ease: English for Peacekeeping‘ erreicht man eine für Militärpersonen attraktivere Lernumgebung als mit herkömmlichem Fremdsprachenlernen. (Red.)

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Background

Linguapeace Europe is an EU-funded project which focuses on the use of English by the military forces in the new Europe. As a particular example of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) with certificated outcomes, it provides an interesting case study, but the project is more than just ESP. It also offers insights into the sociological and military developments of contemporary Europe and beyond, reflecting both the changing geopolitical and societal realities of Europe, and the changing role of military forces in the world. Led by Bulgaria, the project includes representatives from Estonia, France, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Spain, with accreditation from the pan-European International Certificate Conference, and native speaker input from the United Kingdom. The website for this Leonardo da Vinci sponsored project (NBG/03/B/F/LA-166009) has more detailed information.

The significance of the Linguapeace Europe project

Linguapeace Europe is a project where the main focus is clearly on language use and materials development. However, underpinning the objectives of the project are various considerations concerning the role of the military in the new Europe which has emerged since the immense changes in Eastern Europe and the enlargement of the European community. The project can therefore be considered from three aspects:

- geopolitical and societal change in Europe;
- the changing roles of the military today;
- developments in ESP.

A first, more limited project attempted to bring about a change in thinking and in culture among the primary target groups, namely the uniformed personnel of two former Communist states with aspirations to join the EU (Bulgaria and Slovakia). The success of that project led to the current initiative, which embraces a far larger constituency of former communist states and a wider selection of existing NATO or EU countries.

Change in Europe

Membership of the EU imposes on the candidate states wide variety of admission criteria which must be met. The most frequently reported tend to be financial matters or perhaps human rights issues. Behind these lies the role of the uniformed personnel in the countries concerned. The British concepts of policing by consent and a volunteer professional army are at one end of an EU-cline far removed from the control and use of the police and military in the former communist states.

Linguapeace Europe is not concerned with teaching participants to be soldiers: they have already received their own national training and are assumed to be experienced professionals. Rather, the project uses the medium of English as the international language of peacekeeping to promote new ways of appreciating and experiencing the military role. It approaches this task by including within the language-training packages three elements:

- respect and empathy for the individual
 - personal development
 - cross-cultural awareness
- [...]



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