

Future perspectives for Language Centres & Self-Access Centres: What vision(s) for the future?

Following the 2021 Congress, which focused on the (dis)continuity of language learning and the consequences of the pandemic on training, the 2022 edition of the Ranacles Congress seeks to address the place of Language Centres (LCs) and Self-Access Centres (SACs) in the language policies of Higher Education institutions. The purpose of the Congress is to analyze how LCs and SACs have evolved to meet learners' needs as well as to respond to the demands of both the institutions to which they belong and governmental policies. An important objective is to get a better understanding of these two terms and their use and to question the future of LCs and SACs in Higher Education in France.

Ranacles is affiliated to CercleS (European Confederation of Language Centres in Higher Education) whose statutes specify that:

Language Centres in European establishments of Higher Education [aim at] fostering language and communication competences in their widest sense;
- the promotion at international level of research in related fields, with publication of the results;
- the promotion of international and interdisciplinary cooperation between Language Centres in order to enable them to co-ordinate the pursuit of their objectives;
- the promotion of the professional status of Language Centres and their staff.
(Article 2.2, Statutes of CercleS)

As this excerpt points out, LCs fulfil multiple roles. They are called by different names in France (*centre de langues, maison des langues, département des langues, poles ...*) and are either independent or affiliated to different structures (*cf.* Tardieu, 2018; Brudermann et. al., 2016; Braud et. al., 2015). The expertise they house in the field of language teaching and learning seems to be gaining recognition within establishments of Higher Education. This Congress will provide the opportunity to discuss how LCs could develop or strengthen their position within the various institutions.

Moreover, whether integrated into LCs or not, SACs are constantly undergoing transformation. No longer a simple collection of resources, they are evolving into "complex systems" (Rivens Mompean, 2013). They are becoming essential to the language training of students of other disciplines (Lansod) and could thus become a central element of educational policies. In the European context where language training is often institution-wide, they offer individualised and personalised language

development opportunities (Brudermann & Poteaux, 2015, Poteaux, 2015). In this way, not only do they offer access to physical, digital and human resources but they can also be viewed as meeting places for languages, cultures and people (Toffoli, 2020).

Since the pandemic, SACs have become increasingly important in the training offered to learners of other disciplines. As recent studies have shown, blended learning facilitated by SACs makes it possible to enrich learners' experiences and go beyond a simple transposition of traditional face-to-face training (Chateau et al, 2021; Granjon, 2021). The large-scale international survey undertaken by CercleS in the spring of 2020 (Zamborová, Steffanutti & Klimova, 2021), goes so far as to question the efficiency of classic face-to-face teaching.

Proposals targeting future perspectives of LCs and SACs could be approached from the angles of both research and/or teaching practices, examining (but not limited to) one or more of the following themes:

Policies

- Consideration of LCs and SACs in institutional policies
- Place and role of the LC and SAC in Institution-wide training
- Integration and affiliation of the LC and SAC to research policies
- Human resources policy (status of staff working in the CL and SAC)
- International cooperation

Language teaching and learning (Didactics)

- Learning environments integrating SACs
- Potential and uses of SACs
- Pedagogical practices and resources
- Teacher, tutor, advisor support

Terminology

- Names used for LCs and SACs (categories/taxonomy)
- Taxonomy of language centres and SACs (past, present and future)

Abstract proposals (250 to 300 words, without references) accompanied with 2 to 5 keywords could be written in French or English and should be uploaded on the Congress website before the 1st of June 2022.

Registration will open on the 1st of May 2022 and four scholarships will be awarded to selected participants unable to avail themselves of funding from their establishments.

For further information, see the website: <https://ranacles2022.sciencesconf.org/>

Plenary speakers

- Anne Chateau, University of Lorraine
- Annick Rivens-Mompean, University of Lille
- Sabina Schnaffer, University et Polytechnic School of Zurich
- Libor Štěpánek, University of Masaryk

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