

XXXIII AESLA INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE



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BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

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Título: From diagnose to innovation: The role of applied linguists in the internationalization process

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This round table presentation will give an overview of the lines of action undertaken by the group of applied linguists taking part in the *TechEnglish* project. Their module or subproject, known as *TechEnglish 3*, is complementary to the phases which support English-medium instruction by broadening academic offerings, proposing bilingual models and spotting administrative obstacles (*TechEnglish 1*) and develop and implement pilot initiatives at the School of Civil Engineering (*TechEnglish 2*). *TechEnglish 3* operates in three major fronts:

- An initial needs analysis followed by an in-service training of teachers in the CLIL methodology, together with the facilitation of communicative repertoires for facing classroom interaction. According to the perceived and self-reported needs of the staff, which are determined through class observation and questionnaires and interviews, a cycle of interactive seminars on methodological and communicative strategies and issues is periodically provided.
- Personalized diagnose through class observation or mock teaching.
- A personalized coaching based on the improvable teaching behaviours noticed during the observations. It is accomplished with the help of selected bilingual interns, specifically trained to assist teachers in conversation and the adjustment of their didactic resources.

The results obtained so far and the changes made up to date will be commented on in detail, laying special emphasis on the predominant teaching profiles at our university and the main difficulties encountered in the remedial process.

Título: Feasibility study on bilingual education at ETSI Agrónomos (Universidad Politécnica de Madrid)

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Some decades ago, the ERASMUS Programme for student mobility began a process some as a first step to build the European Higher Education Area. This fundamental socio-political change in tertiary education across Europe has not only led to restructuring university programmes and curricula but has also made English-medium instruction a reality (Wächter and Maiworm, 2008; Smit and Dafouz, 2012). The response of Spain to this European context is far from being homogenous and many Spanish universities have just recently placed internationalization high on their agendas.

At a local scale and for some time now, the Madrid region has been implementing profound changes in English instruction at primary and secondary education, by promoting bilingual programmes based on CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) methodologies. These programmes involve 68,689 students (24% of the total of students enrolled in the public educational system) at Primary State Schools in 2010/2011, and it is expected that students acquire a B1 level at the end of their primary schooling. This new situation will undoubtedly -pose new challenges to Madrid's university institutions as well as in the rest of the country, since more students are increasingly demanding bilingual programmes to better meet the requirements of national and international companies that compete in a globalized world market.

These institutional initiatives and this socio-cultural framework motivated a group of teachers of the ETSI Agrónomos (ETSIA) to organize a research group for innovation in higher education (AgroInglés) and undertake a feasibility study to establish programs to be taught in English at the ETSIA. A complete survey was accomplished during the years 2013 and 2014, addressing issues such as: a needs analysis for bilingual instruction at the ETSIA, including the identification of necessary resources and the interest and background in the English language expressed by students and professors (Adán et al., 2013). The conclusions and recommendations to promote bilingual instruction at the ETSIA take into account the approaches followed by other Spanish universities, and adapt them to this technical school's idiosyncrasy.

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The School of Civil Engineering has pioneered the implementation of undergraduate teaching programs in the UPM. It is currently the only school in the Technical University of Madrid (UPM) where all the subjects of a degree (the degree of Materials Science) are fully -taught in English during two semesters. The good results of this experience have been encouraged by the action of several teaching innovation projects, which have caused the School, along with the high level of internationalization experienced by the construction and public works industry over the last few years, to design a strategy aimed at expanding English teaching to many other courses and degrees. This strategy has a twofold objective: the improvement of our students' speaking and writing skills in English, and the possibility of attracting learners from all around the world to the programs we offer.

The Civil Engineering School intends to implement this strategy through measures that address three priorities: first, non-English-native lecturers and staff; second, students, both national (not fluent in English), and foreign (who do not speak Spanish); and third, the dissemination of our English syllabi abroad, together with the sustainability of this strategy over time.

Regarding the teacher-and-staff supporting measures at our School, the Tech-English project aims to explore certain areas to help these two collectivities experience a smooth transition from a Spanish to an English teaching environment. To that end, and taking advantage of the Tech-English project, we envisage the implementation of the following initiatives: 1) Give support to young lecturers and staff members to spend short stays in English-speaking universities so as to improve their English, 2) Assist lecturers in the adaptation of their -didactic resources (e.g. slides- and notes) to an English-medium instruction environment -3) Organise workshops oriented to improve the English communication skills of lecturers, and 4) Invite native lectures from other universities to teach in our school.

Another crucial point in our strategy is to give support to both national and foreign students, who respectively are not fluent in English and Spanish. Through the Tech-English project we will define supportive measures to increase the national students' awareness of the importance of being -proficient in English. With this purpose we will count on the help of former students who are right now involved in the internationalization plans of big construction firms. Moreover, to facilitate the integration of foreign students in the Civil Engineering School, we will move towards the dissemination of bilingual information in the school (e.g. web, courses syllabi, academic guides, signs, etc.).

In addition to the measures previously mentioned, through the Tech-English project our school intends to increase the international visibility of the degrees given in English, in order to catch the attention of international students. Further, we intend to work out a plan to maintain and consolidate the programs in English in the future. To meet this objective we will resort to the Tech-English project, which will help us to seek ways to collaborate with construction and public works companies interested in hiring civil engineers with a competent level of English.

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Título: The TechEnglish project: organizing efforts to increase course offerings in English at the Universidad Politécnica de Madrid

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In recent years, coinciding with adjustments to the Bologna process, many Spanish universities have attempted to improve their international profile by increasing course offerings in English. Here we summarize the goals and some initial results of a recent project (TechEnglish) that aims to promote using English for teaching at the Universidad Politécnica de Madrid (UPM). Currently, the UPM has no specific program to promote teaching in English (also called bi-lingual or multi-lingual programs), although there is a Educational Model Whitepaper (with a focus on undergraduate degrees) that promotes the development of activities like the *International Semester* or the unique shared curriculum. Four tasks were planned during the year long project: to design a university wide program to increase course offerings, to identify administrative difficulties, to increase visibility of course offerings and to disseminate the results of the project. To design a program we analyzed existing programs at other Spanish universities, and other projects and efforts already under way at the UPM. A total of 20 plans were analyzed and classified according to their relation with students (learning), professors (teaching), administration, course offerings, other actors/institutions within the university (e.g., language departments), funds and projects, dissemination activities, mobility plans and quality control. For the second task, to begin to identify administrative and organizational difficulties in the implementation of teaching in English, we first estimated the current and potential course offerings at the undergraduate level at the UPM using a survey (student, teacher and administrative demand, level of English and willingness to work in English). The main difficulties were related to how to acknowledge/credit the departments, teachers or students involved in English courses, how students should register for the courses, how departments should split and schedule the courses (Spanish and English), and the lack of qualified personnel. Finally, we considered how to make the course offerings more visible, and more attractive for both Spanish and international students and how best to disseminate the results of the project. One of the first steps was to create a TechEnglish workspace on the Moodle education platform and a web page so that professors and students involved observe progress and have access to materials and useful links. We also assessed how best to use social networks to disseminate information and prepare workshops, conferences and seminars within the UPM.

Título: Experiential learning in teacher education: Exploring virtual collaboration

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