LACK OF COMMUNICATION IN THE WORLD OF HIGHLY DEVELOPED COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGIES

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Questioning the Bologna Process

- How is ESP taught? Do we teach what we are supposed to or what we believe in?
- Are we, the teachers within the framework of the Bologna reform following the right course?
- Do we know our students? Do our students know us or are we lost in the Bologna Process and swallowed by Bull Markets and Bear Markets in the world of knowledge-based economy?
MISSION: Creating the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) – that became reality with the Budapest-Vienna Declaration of March, 2010 (47 countries) as to:

- meet the global competitive challenges by developing a pan-European response on how countries can co-operate for a common good instead of one country competing with another.
- make Europe “the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and social cohesion” [Berlin Communiqué (Conference website), Berlin, 18-19 September 2003]
Purpose of the Bologna Process

- **ACADEMIC MOBILITY** - by implementing greater transparency and comparability of degree structures, and the removal of legal obstacles to the recognition of degrees;

- **EMPLOYABILITY** - by fostering culture of understanding cross-cultural differences, culture of dialogue, innovation and research. To prepare graduates for the European labour market (one of the three most prominent driving forces)

- **LIFELONG LEARNING** – by participating in joint projects, international conferences, seminars, distance learning, academic presentations and sharing information resources worldwide in both formal and informal contexts
The Impact of the Bologna Process on the ESP teaching and learning

- In the multilingual and multicultural EHEA and global context of the knowledge based economy, ESP plays a key role.
- Prerequisites of a successful academic mobility, employability and lifelong learning are: language competence, communicative and social skills.
- The Bologna Process has a clear vision of a multilingual Europe in which people can function in two or three languages.
Most continental Europe, previously - clear distinction of vocational and academic degrees

- ‘urged’ to implement the Bologna Process concurrently with other reforms in order to adapt to rapid changes

- the goal of converting the local credits to ECTS grading scale was:
  - to improve students' performance
  - to enable them to gain diplomas faster by introducing stricter standards
  - to replace traditional teaching methods by complex university programs: modules across disciplines with varying genres and varying contexts including networking, distance and electronic teaching,

- Distinction is blurred (3+2)
- Vocational degree students at a disadvantage
- Academic degree students at the point of baccalaureus are not properly prepared to enter the workforce - titles have been standardized but not the content of the qualification.

SIDE EFFECTS:

- unclearly defined new rules
- overhauling departments
- frequently the same courses being crammed into a 1.5 shorter period of study.
- Students: against the workload, the ineffective implementation and weak funding.
- The academics: too narrow curricula, turning universities into ‘diploma factories’ and statistical data
ECTS GRADING SCALE

PASSING GRADES

- the best 10% - an A-grade,
- 25% - a B-grade,
- 30% - a C-grade
- 25% - a D-grade
- 10% - an E-grade

It gives feedback as to how students compare to their peers, but does not provide feedback as to actual content mastered by student.

COMPETITION IS CENTRAL

FAILING GRADES

- FX (Fail – some more work required before credit can be awarded)
- F (Fail – considerable further work is required).

Those students who have not achieved a performance sufficient to allow a passing grade are given more opportunities (ADDITIONAL ASSESSMENT TESTS…)

Not involved in the in-depth studying but only focused on final results and fast achievements.
Universities should educate not only highly skilled specialists for the labour market but also highly motivated citizens for our democratic societies to understand what democracy is, to respect human rights and to live by the rule of law.

(Bergan, S and Radu Damian (Eds). *Higher education for modern societies: competences and values*, Council of Europe higher education series No.15, 2010)
How can language teaching and learning contribute to achieve this?

Learner empowerment:

- **learner training** - helping students to realise that they can play an active and self-directive role in their own learning.

- **learner involvement** - a gradual shifting of decision making from teacher to learners in the learning process of the target language.


- **Content Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)** - Knowledge of the language becomes the means of learning content and thus language is integrated into the broader curriculum (lifelong learning).

- **Converging competences** - not only acquiring skills, but also acquiring values and attitudes; not only training individuals for specific tasks, but educating the whole person.

(Higher education for modern societies: competences and values, Council of Europe higher education series No.15, 2010)
Conclusion

“For most people, regardless of whether they aim for international careers or life in their local communities, intercultural dialogue will become a fact of life rather than an option.

Education will need to play a key role in developing the ability to conduct intercultural dialogue, which is an integral part of developing democratic culture”.

(Bergan, S. and Hilligje van't Land (Eds). Speaking across borders: the role of higher education in furthering intercultural dialogue, Council of Europe higher education series No.16, 2010)

How effective the realization of the EHEA will be depends on interaction of both HEIs and society as a whole in

- eliminating weak spots
- overcoming a number of obstacles

by cooperating and conducting fruitful intercultural dialogue