

**BILC CONFERENCE 2007
NATIONAL REPORT - GERMANY**

A. General

Once again, increasing international commitments resulted in an increase in language training measures in the area of the compulsory language training of officers and senior non-commissioned officers as well as in the area of job-specific and mission-related language training during the reporting period. Demand for language training of civilian personnel within the Bundeswehr, in other federal departments and on the state level has also risen. Some of the demand for more training was met by creating new language training facilities at the Bundeswehr Medical Academy and at the Bundeswehr Explosive Ordnance Disposal Center (s. below)

New deployment-oriented language training modules based on SLP level descriptions were developed and tested. Language training for civilians was also provided, for example, the compulsory language training for civil servants of the higher intermediate service of the Federal College/Defense Administration Department. As with military training, civilian language training also shows a tendency toward job-specific courses such as English for legal advisors.

By streamlining its organization and optimizing content, the language training division will do everything possible to maintain its training capacity of up to 4,100 students daily, including more than 200 selected foreign officers attending German language courses and the whole range of course offerings in English.

B. Language Training

English and Romance Languages

English for Explosive Ordnance Disposal Staff

The new English language training for explosive ordnance disposal personnel has finally begun in Stetten am kalten Markt following an extensive preparation period for the teacher.

Federal College of Public Administration (Defense Administration department)

The same students of the Federal Defense Administration department of the Federal College of Public Administration in Mannheim, who last year underwent the first mandatory SLP-course, have now been the first to take part in a special 4-week training program to prepare them for future international missions abroad. An English language component was part of the preparatory course, which culminated in a one week simulation of civilian duties on a mission. They had to “take over” from a previous contingent and then perform all the regular jobs plus cope with a number of incidents that a coordinating center surprised them with, via e-mail, telephone or in person. Depending on the situation, a lot of these tasks had to be understood or carried out in English rather than German. Examples included the visits of delegations with particular requests, job interviews with prospective local staff as well as typical problems such as breakdown of electricity supply or disputes among local staff.

Everyone agreed that the “hands-on” experience was not only a good way to practice the things that had been previously learned in theory but it also turned out to be an effective confidence-building measure.

Intragovernmental English and French Courses in Berlin and Bonn

The 3-day and weekend courses recently introduced in connection with the German EU-presidency were met with great enthusiasm, because they give a much greater number of employees the chance to participate. The usual length of a week or two excludes a lot of prospective participants who cannot leave their offices for that long.

German as a Foreign Language

In order to reduce training time in Germany the Bundessprachenamt supports German language training programs at the military language institutes of 39 countries. Last year German Language Training in Afghanistan was added to the list. The German as a foreign language program in Hürth includes professional seminars for German teachers from these countries.

Slavonic and Seldom Taught Languages

Norwegian

Following a long-established precedent, three Dutch officers from the Ministry of Defence of the Netherlands were among the participants in a Norwegian course in Hürth, completing the course in June of 2006.

Russian

A new, tailor-made course, "Russisch Kompakt," has been developed for officers of the Federal Police (formerly, "Federal Border Police") and is currently being offered to a selected group of police officers.

C. Teaching, Learning and Testing Materials Development and Projects

General

In September 2006, members of the materials development section organized and carried out a workshop on the topic, "Blended Learning: New Opportunities for Foreign Languages?" for the third Bundeswehr "Distance Training Convention", conducted in Hamburg. The next conference will take place from September 9th to 13th at the Helmut-Schmidt-University/University of the Bundeswehr in Hamburg, and will cover such topics as dynamic training contents and mission-oriented distance training. BILC members are again cordially invited to participate. Please consult www.fernausbildung.org for details.

Language Testing

In 2006 the number of examinations conducted at the end of courses, within the framework of the General Language Examinations of the Bundeswehr and on special demand remained high, with approximately 20,000 SLP tests and 30,000 placement tests carried out in the reporting period.

TEPSYS

Thanks to the introduction of new technology for scanning, scoring and recording test results, the process of evaluating large numbers of papers can now be carried out far more efficiently than was previously possible. In 2006 the so-called TEPSYS system (for "technologiegestütztes Prüfungssystem") was applied in evaluating and recording results during the placement test phase of the General Language Examinations of the Bundeswehr. This year the system will be used to evaluate and record results on final SLP examinations at nine language training centers.

Examination Guidelines

The examination guidelines have now been implemented in all 38 language training institutions of the Bundessprachenamt as well as in the compulsory language training offered at the universities of the Bundeswehr in Hamburg and Munich.

Although staffing in the materials development section has not kept pace with the demand, the content and format of all examinations were updated in compliance with the new regulations in time for the first examinations in 2006.

Examiner Training

In preparation for the new oral examination format, numerous oral exams were filmed in 2005 and 2006. These films formed the basis for comprehensive examiner training, helping to standardize the ways in which oral exams are conducted and evaluated. In future, this documentation will be used for ongoing examiner training.

Interactive Materials

French

In 2006 the interactive multimedia learning programs “Kombi Campus French 1 and 2” were presented on CD and DVD. They can also be used online in the Bundeswehr’s intranet learning management system and continue to be available as print and audio materials.

Seldom taught languages

The recently developed interactive survival materials in Dari and Pashto as well as numerous phrase-books and glossaries in other languages have demonstrated their value during Bundeswehr missions abroad. In 2007, illustrated pocket-size glossary cards are to be added to the survival level product series.

Course Materials

Georgian for Military Attachés and Staff personnel

The materials developed in 2006 have already been implemented in two separate six-month language courses for attaché staff personnel.

Uzbek for Military Attachés and Staff Personnel

The materials completed in 2006 were implemented in a six-month Uzbek course for attaché staff personnel. The next course will last for nine months; additional course materials are currently being developed.

Swahili Materials – Dialogs for Daily Life are being tested and revised during the current Swahili course.

Projects in Co-operation with other Institutions

Bundesagentur für Arbeit

Since the materials development section in Hürth produces tests and learning materials for all of the major languages offered in the language training institutions of the Bundessprachenamt, and these institutions all needed to conduct examinations in compliance with the new regulations, the demand for both tests and practice materials skyrocketed in 2006.

In order to produce materials more quickly and efficiently, projects to be conducted jointly with other institutions have been initiated. In cooperation with the German Federal Employment Office, for example, placement tests using the so-called “C-Test” format (s. www.c-test.de) have been developed and will soon be tested in several of our schools. If this phase of the project proves successful, the Bundessprachenamt will develop multiple choice items on the basis of the C-tests which are now being validated.

LINGUAPEACE Europe

Within the framework of the EU project “LINGUAPEACE Europe”, the Bundessprachenamt helped to produce a “Multilingual Glossary of Peacekeeping Terms”. This project received one of the ten “Helsinki Awards” given for “best practice projects” in 2006.

Blended Learning

In 2006, the Bundessprachenamt also participated in a study implementing a blended learning concept in the Bundeswehr. The pilot project used a traditional SLP “combi-course” in French, consisting of two-week classroom training phases, which are followed by three months of self-study, but the self-study phase was enhanced by a teletutor who monitored students’ progress and was available for questions at regular intervals. The participants particularly appreciated the opportunities provided for practicing speaking outside of the classroom.

The results of the study are to be validated in 2007 during a second pilot project.

Modern Technology (“CUSA”)

In 2006, twelve classrooms at Bundessprachenamt language training facilities were equipped with a computer for the teacher and a data projector. By the end of 2007, all 101 classrooms of the Territorial Defense Administration will be equipped with this technology. Fifteen classrooms have been transformed into so-called “CUSA-classrooms” – CUSA being an acronym for the German for “computer supported language instruction” – which provide from twelve to eighteen multimedia PCs that can be used either during class or for self-study. All PCs have access to the internet and are linked with each other via LAN or CUSA networks.

Teacher training in the effective use of the new technology was conducted throughout 2006. In addition to familiarizing teachers with the technology, the seminars also provided a platform for introducing and discussing didactic and methodological innovations in language teaching.

D. Languages taught during the reporting period:

BILC Conference 2007
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(total student throughput of 17,350)

Afrikaans	Hindi
Albanian	Hungarian
Amharic	Indonesian
Arabic	Italian
Algerian Arabic	Ivrit
Egyptian Arabic	Japanese
Gulf States Arabic	Kiswahili
Moroccan Arabic	Korean
Standard Arabic	Latvian
Syrian-Jordanian Arabic	Macedonian
Tunisian Arabic	Malay
Bosnian	Norwegian
Bulgarian	Polish
Chinese	Portuguese
Croatian	Romanian
Czech	Russian
Danish	Serbian
Dari	Slovak
Dutch	Slovenic
English	Spanish
Farsi	Swedish
Finnish	Thai
French	Turkish
Georgian	Ukrainian
German as a foreign language	Urdu
Greek	Uzbek