



Integrating Content and Language in Higher Education

Annual Report from the Board to the ICLHE Association, 5 October 2017

This is the Board's first Annual Report to the ICLHE Association. This is an exciting time, challenging and maybe even daunting. An Annual Report looks back and looks forward. We see satisfaction and we see much, very much to do.

Let's begin with some dry bits. The Association was formally and legally registered at Maastricht, the Netherlands, on 6 December 2016.

The Board is obliged by its Articles of Association (or *Statuten*) to report to the Association on the past year. ICLHE has a financial year from 1 July to 30 June, and thus we are obliged to report for the year 6 December 2016 to 30 June 2017. The reason for the financial year differing from the calendar lies in Dutch law. An association has to report to its members within six months of the end of its financial year. ICLHE Conferences



Bob Wilkinson signing the Articles of Association at the office of the notary Mr. Versteeg.

– the most suitable moment for a General Meeting – are planned in the second half of the year; hence the financial year being to 30 June. Note that in a year without an ICLHE Conference, the Association still has to hold a physical General Meeting.

We look back. The finalizing of the Articles of Association took a great deal of effort. The notary was delighted when we finally succeeded and signed the document. Setting up an association is not in fact difficult. Indeed, the notary said that we became an association as soon as we said we were one. However, we were not a legally registered one, and thus as individuals would be liable for actions undertaken in the name of the association. To achieve legal status we not only have to meet the requirements of the Chambers of Commerce – Dutch in our case – and the tax authorities, we also have to meet the obligations under laws against money laundering and terrorism, something quite outside our thoughts when we embarked on the process.



Kevin Haines and Bob Wilkinson
in Utrecht after opening the
ICLHE bank account

Moreover without legal registration, it would not be possible for the Association to have a bank account. That may seem hardly much of an achievement, but it too takes quite an effort.

Our Articles of Association describe the bare bones of what an Association has to be under the law. To run the Association, we need a set of house rules, that is Rules of Procedure. During the past few months these have been drawn up for your approval at the General Meeting. Note that Rules of Procedure can easily be amended via a simple decision of the General Meeting. Changing the Articles of Association requires the action of a notary.

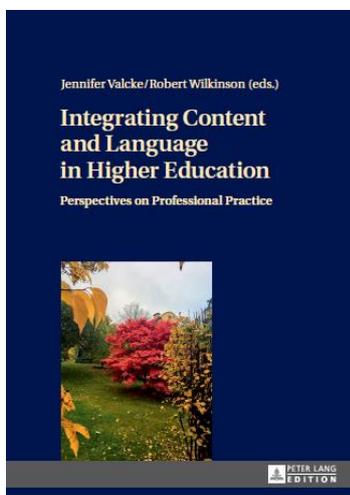
So much for the dry bits that have occupied much of your Board's attention.

The excitement lies principally in the Conference which you are now attending. The most prominent activity of the ICLHE Association is its conference, and thanks to the marvellous team at

the University of Copenhagen, the 5th ICLHE Conference promises to be an unforgettable experience. As we have already witnessed today, the high quality of the presentations – and the speakers – is sure to provide us with highly insightful and enlightening knowledge. The opportunities at the Conference to exchange ideas, swap personal experiences, suggest new leads to challenges, and simply to socialize across cultures, makes the event an edifying experience. We look forward in great anticipation to the next two days. So a warm note of thanks to Joyce Kling, Slobodanka Dimova and Patrick Wonsyld of the Copenhagen team!



ICLHE Conferences have led to a series of book publications, and our previous Conference in Brussels is no exception. Earlier this year ICLHE saw the publication of *Integrating Content and Language in Higher Education: Perspectives on Professional Practice*, edited by Jennifer Valcke and Robert Wilkinson. Much of the work for this book took place in 2016, thus outside the formal reporting year. The book joins the series of books under different publishers representing together a valuable fount of knowledge and experience of ICLHE from across the world. That's a total of 144 chapters describing teaching and learning experiences, reporting research studies, and sketching out policy. The authors work in 37 different countries. While European-based authors dominate, thirty-two chapters stem from the other four continents.



A website is the prime means of visibility for an association. It needs to be appealing and attractive to



stand out from among the competing demands for our online attention. The old ICLHE website did not fulfil this requirement. The new ICLHE website has just gone online: it is bright, informative, and up-to-date. Check it out at www.iclhe.org.

And we should look forward. We have seen incredible changes in

higher education in recent decades. Change is not new, and we should welcome it. Yet one surreptitious change has occurred and it is now blindingly obvious – and it is a major area of interest for the Association. Until fairly recently most students would have studied through their own language and rarely required knowledge of another except perhaps for social reasons. Increasingly we are finding that students require two languages for whatever study they undertake: the literature they read will often not be in their own first language. The ability of students to do so coupled with the ease of migrating to a different country for study has stimulated institutions of higher education to offer programmes in an additional language not just for mobile students, but also for those who stay put in their own country. Many students indeed may require knowledge of more than two languages.

And what are the impacts and consequences? What are the benefits? What are the drawbacks? Even if we restrict ourselves to just learning and teaching, a wide range of questions arise. How does learning in an additional language affect the construction of knowledge? What are the cultural impacts? How is the quality of the learning and teaching process assured? And also of outcomes? How can learning be optimally designed? Is the process the same and adequate for everyone? What are the vertical impacts? On earlier stages of education? On the working environment? What about the effects on the communities we live in? And the effect on our own languages and cultures?



There is clearly much for members of the Association to be concerned about, much for us to do. So far most of the ICLHE papers have concerned the design and outcomes of programmes and courses in an additional language, perceptions of the actors involved – the teaching staff, the students, the administrators. There is a larger area comprising studies in the students' first language but where the literature – and the culture carried by that literature – is in an additional language. We have scarcely touched this.

There is therefore much that the Association can look forward to doing over the coming years. The Board wishes for the Association to embark on much more collaborative sharing than we have been doing so far. The Board is taking up ideas such as circles of experts among us who are ready to offer advice and consultation to others, establishing special interest groups for those with shared concerns, or instituting webinars given by experienced members for others, and more.



However, we are limited by our funds. We have to tailor our goals to our level of income, which at present is meagre, as the financial report will show.

We are nevertheless only at the beginning. Indeed, to misquote Churchill, we are only at the beginning of the beginning. We look forward to embarking on an exciting journey in the Association, and we look forward to hearing much more about the achievements of members at the next Conference in 2019.



To close, there is one person in particular who needs thanking. The origins of ICLHE began in the margins of other conferences in the 1990s when several of us ran workshops or symposia. A chance meeting with an academic events organizer led to the first Conference in 2003. That organizer helped us through the first dozen years as only a conference and then as an incipient association, through to Brussels 2015, sometimes even at his own expense. ICLHE is indebted to René de la Fonteijne and his team at ExHem. We thank him warmly.

The ICLHE Board.