Internationalisation and successful projects with global teams

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Kieli- ja käännöstieteiden laitos

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Successful projets and global teams

International / European research projects

+ international/multilateral networking:

- How to start
- How to get funding (no ready-made solutions!)
- How to achieve the work

→ A "good" project with cooperative members has more chance to get funded than a project which has been drafted rapidly

Personal experiences

(in blue: research; in black: networking; in red: editing + organizing)

- *International research project (Sept. 2003 - Feb. 2007): The cultural politics and economics of language and translation in global news, granted by AHRB (UK) (Arts and Humanities Research Board). Warwick (coord.)+ Aston Uni + TY*

- Network on *Quality and qualifications on translation and interpreting,* (2006-2010), within BSRUN (Baltic Sea Region Uni Network). TY (coord.) + Kaliningrad + St Petersburg + Vilnius + Riga + Tallinn + Gdansk + Grodno (Belarus)

- *Building a Nordic-North West Russia education and research network through a multilingual e-platform* (2010). TY (coord.) + Kaliningrad + Herzen State Pedagogical Uni (St Petersburg) + CBS/Copenhagen. Granted by the Nordic Council

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- *Subtitles and Language Learning* (2009-2012), within Lifelong learning programme (LLP, EU). TY (Coord.) + 9 European partners

- EMCI (European Master in Conference interpreting). 15 European members. 1997-2010

- EMT (European Master's in Translation): network of 54 universities. As an expert, since 2007.

- OPTIMALE (Optimising Professional Translator Training in a Multilingual Europe) (2010-2012), within LLP. 64 members.

- TIME (Translation Research Training. An Integrated and Intersectoral Model for Europe) (2011-2014). Leuven (coord.) + Aston Uni + Tarragona + TY. Within FP7/Marie Curie (ITN) programme.

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In blue: research + in black: network + in red: editing + organising)

- General editor (series Benjamins Translation Library), since 2005
- Editorial boards + Advisory boards of Journals in TS (+ 10)
- Editor of TS Bibliography (since 2002) + Handbook in TS (since 2009) (both are on-line) (more than 200 collaborators)
- Visiting professors + training trainers in translation in Europe + International Doctoral Schools in TS
- Steering/Scientific committees of international conferences (+20)
- Vice-President (1992-1998) and President (1998-2004) of EST (European Society for TS)

Defining and constructing a team

- Direct calls by e-mails?
- Knowing each other and good will: not enough
- Sharing goals (setting team goals and drafting project plan early). Clear understanding of project targets and requirements
- Defining leadership, roles (specific responsiblities), ethics
- Trust
- Willing to work together and ready to adapt to changes

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Setting expectations

- The more info you can share, the better (types and channels of communication: emails, blog, Skype, face-to-face meetings, etc.)

- Communicate often and openly

- English as a lingua franca? Assumptions + words and meanings (ex. "Session plan", "competences", "assessement"; how to write a questionnaire; etc.)

- Clear expectations from each team member

- Competence levels for all members

Initial processes

- Clear agreement on what would be built, when it would be delivered, and what quality is expected.

- Initial ideas for content (not imposing a project but co-elaborating it)

- Draft: delivered, evaluated, revised, resubmitted

- → Each team member knows the expected standard, who controls what part of the project, and understands final quality levels.

Resource management

- Estimate of time, cost, and resources in order to ensure team is properly resourced and "realistic" expectations are set

- Sometimes one person or another would pick up more to help everyone succeed (nor necessarily the coordinator)

- Compromises where needed

The impact of geography

- Time difference → coordination of schedules / deadlines
- Being aware of each other's needs and possibilities (ex. finding hours to meet)
- To create materials, collect data, review feedback, update content, share files, track budget…the distance is not an issue but time shift might be → possible stress (concerns about missing deadlines, or not providing the right info)
- Various factors impacting the deadlines

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Expected completion

- Deadlines of the team, delays and / but no extension from the institution which grants the project

- Re-evaluation of deliverables and deadlines (but holidays there, exams here, or heavy workload, administrative constraints, etc.)

- Conditions change and team needs to be flexible to a certain extent

- Communications and compromises make it easier to agree to change; compromises during the project may result in more effort

- Monotoring system/Quality control + Progress report + final report

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Conclusion

- How things have worked, changed over the course of the project

- How changes have been dealt with

- Why the project was a success or not really

- Problems of communication, timelines, delays, reviews, scope changes, expectations, commitment, geographic and cultural divide, competences, etc. How to keep a healthy balance between time, culture, work, family…?

- Projects are run by people. Respect, trust, understanding (beyond clichés), agreement that if any one of the members fail, then the entire team would fail.