



**1st International Conference on Practical and Theoretical Implications
of LEADER/CLLD in Southeast Europe
November 20 – 22, 2019, Opatija
Republic of Croatia**

Surmounting a Linguistic Gap, or The Importance of Foreign Language Acquisition as an Empowering Social Capital Toolset

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Key Notions

LEADER/CLLD, LAGs, LSP, ELT, EGP, ESP, LLL
EU MSs, agripreneurship, HEIs, social capital

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Fundamental Hypotheses: Lifelong Learning (LLL) Promotion

1. in the European Union Member States (EU MSs), Local Action Groups (LAGs) embracing the Links between Actions for the Development of Rural Economy (*Liaison Entre Actions de Développement de l'Économie Rurale*, LEADER) and Community-Led Local Development (CLLD) principles **still not fully aware** of the benefits and potentials of a foreign (notably English) language teaching/learning = social capital
2. English generally perceived as a **modern lingua franca** (quotidian lifestyles and [applied] science) → world's 3rd vernacular (after Chinese and Spanish) + communicational tool for >942 million speakers (106 countries) + >603 million speakers use it as their 2nd language = Open Calls for project proposals usually phrased in English
3. in English Language Teaching (ELT) as a part of the Language for Special Purposes (LSP) scheme: a **difference** between the acquisition of English for General Purposes (EGP) and that of English for Specific Purposes (ESP)
4. the attainment of a foreign language, especially English: may **enhance** a LAG's overall dexterity and agripreneurial profile, transnational cooperation (networking), and its stakeholders' employability (career upskillings and personal professional developments, pursuant to the labor market demands) → individual digital/entrepreneurial aptitudes.
5. higher educational institutions (HEIs): universities, colleges, and polytechnics as the "natural" LAGs' partners = surmounting a linguistic gap.

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Ideas Realized **ESP Courses in the EU MSs** **Lessons Learned, Motivations Obtained**

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Agrobiotechnological HEIs and ESP in Southeastern Europe (SEE): Accomplishments, Challenges, Perspectives

- AT (University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna), BE (University of Ghent and the University of Liège), CZ (Czech University of Life Sciences, Prague), DE (Humboldt University of Berlin, University of Kassel, and Christian Albrecht University of Kiel), DK (University of Aarhus and the University of Copenhagen), FI (University of Applied Sciences, Seinäjoki), IT (University of Bologna), PL (University of Cracow), RO (University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine, Cluj-Napoca), SE (Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Uppsala) and SI (University of Ljubljana, University of Maribor)
- DE as a leader in the ESP-oriented learning opportunities and qualifications list → **French, German, and Russian also instructed** in the LSP programs in the EU MSs
- in HR: tailored agribusiness and biotechnological ESP courses also taught (DU, OS, ST, ZD and ZG), scoring 2 – 5 according to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) → announcements of the curricula/syllabi for the graduate study programs **lectured exclusively in English.**

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Deliberations and Conclusions

Basic English vs. ESP

Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (CEFRL)

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A1 Level, Free Offers — Minimized Effort, Maximized Result

- a) Basic English (CEFR level A1) and the prospective LAG coursegoers: may be studied individually, in a group (joint endeavor), or tutored = many EGP smartphone apps and websites are **free of charge**
- b) ESP and the prospective LAG coursegoers: **more demanding, but definitely not insurmountable** → instructors' adaptive expertise, guidance, and proficiency necessary = authentic text interpretation/translation, professional terminology appropriation, verbalization

ESP and the LEADER/CLLD Implications: Rationale

- LEADER's philosophy evolution: incipiently a regional, public-and-civic rural entrepreneurial initiative → a trendsetting phenomenon, frequently operationalized as the nationwide nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) (generally applicable to the municipal nuclei and all local communities) = **popular-scientific phraseology, preponderantly English** (comprehension becomes crucial)
- ESP linguistic barrier experienced by a LAG: an alternative knowledge management proposal (i.e., ELT) as a problem-solver = **coordination with a Local Development Strategy (LDS).**

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