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ALTE 60th Conference Day

Bad Homburg | April 2024

PROGRAMME

Friday 12th April 2024

Closing the gap – Assessment for skilled labour

All sessions will take place in: Kongresscenter Bad Homburg, Louisenstraße 58 61348 Bad Homburg. The plenary sessions will be streamed and video-recorded. Please note, the workshops in the afternoon will be face to face only and will not be video-recorded. All sessions are in CEST (Central European Summer Time).

Time	Session	Venue
8:30-9:00	<i>Registration</i>	Lobby Kongresscenter
9:00 –9:10	Welcome - Representatives from ALTE Nick Saville, ALTE Secretary-General Graham Seed, ALTE Secretariat Manager	Landgraf-Friedrich-Saal
9:10 – 9:30	Opening address Oliver Jedynak, Mayor of Bad Homburg Susanne Deß, Chairperson of the Supervisory Board Jürgen Keicher, telc Managing Director	Landgraf-Friedrich-Saal
9:30–10:05	Olaf Bärenfänger, Leipzig University, Germany <i>Laying the foundations.</i> <i>Devising a model for work-related language competence in German.</i>	Landgraf-Friedrich-Saal
10:05–10:40	Sibylle Plassmann, telc gGmbH, Germany <i>Fairness by design. Navigating diverse needs in assessment for labour migration</i>	Landgraf-Friedrich-Saal
10:40–11:10	<i>Coffee/Exhibition</i> <i>Drop-in session with Kasia Woźniak</i> <i>(ALTE Services Unit Manager)</i>	Lobby Kongresscenter
11:10–11:45	Jens Behning, Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, Germany The German Federal Program of Vocational Language Training	Landgraf-Friedrich-Saal
11:45–12:15	Dominique Casanova, CCIP Le Français des affaires, France <i>Recognition of professional French communication skills in different parts of the world</i>	Landgraf-Friedrich-Saal
12:15–12:45	Helga Grabbe, Carl Duisberg Centren Mexico, Germany Svenja Sanyang, Deutsche Seniorenstift Gesellschaft (DSG), Germany <i>Case study – work migration from Mexico to Germany</i>	Landgraf-Friedrich-Saal
12:45–13:15	Round table discussion Olaf Bärenfänger, Leipzig University, Germany Sibylle Plassmann, telc gGmbH, Germany Jens Behning, Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, Germany Helga Grabbe, Carl Duisberg Centren Mexico, Germany	Landgraf-Friedrich-Saal

(continued on the next page ►)

Time	Session	Venue
13:15–14:30	<i>Lunch/Exhibition Drop-in session with Kasia Woźniak (ALTE Services Unit Manager, from 14:00–14:30)</i>	Lobby Kongresscenter
14:30–15:00	Gaby Probst, University of Applied Sciences Fribourg, Switzerland <i>Learning, teaching, and assessing in business language courses: What tools to use today?</i>	Landgraf-Friedrich-Saal
15:00–15:15	Closing remarks	Landgraf-Friedrich-Saal
15:15–15:30	<i>Coffee</i>	Lobby Kongresscenter
15:30–17:00	Parallel Workshops	
	Gaby Probst, University of Applied Sciences Fribourg, Switzerland <i>Learning, teaching, and assessing in business language courses: Exchange on tools that contribute to best practice</i> <i>Lernen, Lehren und Beurteilen in Wirtschaftssprachkursen: Austausch über die Tools, die zur optimalen Praxis beitragen (in German)</i>	Salon Kleist
	Magdalena Igiel and Hannah Blumöhr-Giuri, telc gGmbH, Germany <i>Expanding the CEFR for work-oriented tests</i>	Salon Hölderlin
	Lucy Cochrane, Cambridge University Press and Assessment, UK <i>Just what the doctor ordered? Creating language assessments for healthcare</i>	Salon Jacobi

Willkommen bei telc!

Die telc gGmbH ist ein gemeinnütziger, international ausgerichteter Bildungsanbieter. In enger Kooperation mit Lizenzpartnern führen wir unter der Marke *telc – language tests* standardisierte Zertifizierungen von Sprachkompetenz durch. Unter dem Label *telc Training* lizenzieren wir Prüferinnen und Prüfer und führen weiterführende Seminare und Lehrgänge durch. Als Verlag entwickeln wir zielorientierte, abschlussbezogene Lehrwerke. Unsere Produkte und Dienstleistungen bieten wir je nach Nachfrage digital und online oder auf Papier und vor Ort an.

Seit 1995 ist telc Vollmitglied der ALTE. Wir stehen für Qualität und Professionalität im Testen von Sprachkompetenz. Daher ist die ALTE uns als Fachverband wichtig, der nicht nur für Austausch sorgt, sondern ein System der aktiven Qualitätssicherung etabliert hat. ALTE verstärkt zudem die europäische Perspektive, die telc seit Entwicklung der ersten Europäischen Sprachzertifikate 1968 besonders pflegt.

Die telc gGmbH ist eine Tochtergesellschaft des Deutschen Volkshochschul-Verbands e. V. Wir stehen für lebenslanges Lernen und aktive Teilhabe möglichst weiter Bevölkerungskreise an bedarfsgerechten, zeitgemäßen Lernangeboten. In besonderer Weise engagieren wir uns für die Förderung internationaler Qualifizierung und Mobilität sowie für die Integration von Zugewanderten in Gesellschaft und Beruf.

Die berufliche Integration ist Thema der 60. ALTE-Konferenz. Wir freuen uns auf fruchtbare Diskussionen und neue Impulse. Herzlich Willkommen in Bad Homburg vor der Höhe!

Welcome to telc!

telc gGmbH is a not-for-profit, internationally oriented education provider. In close cooperation with licensing partners, we carry out standardised assessment of language competence under the *telc language tests* brand. Under the *telc Training* label, we licence examiners and organise teacher training. As a publisher, we develop goal-orientated, qualification-related textbooks. Depending on demand, we offer our products and services digitally and online or on paper and on site.

telc has been a full member of ALTE since 1995. We stand for quality and professionalism in language testing. This is why ALTE is important to us as a professional organisation that not only ensures dialogue but has also established a system of active quality assurance. ALTE also strengthens the European perspective that telc has focused on since the development of the first European language certificates in 1968.

telc gGmbH is a subsidiary of the German Adult Education Association. We stand for lifelong learning and the active participation of as many people as possible in modern, needs-oriented learning programmes. We are particularly committed to promoting international qualifications and mobility, as well as the integration of migrants into society and the labour market.

Integration into the workplace is the theme of the 60th ALTE Meeting and Conference. We are looking forward to productive discussions and fresh insights. Welcome to Bad Homburg vor der Höhe!

Plenary presentations, Friday 12th April

Olaf Bärenfänger, Leipzig University, Germany

Laying the foundations. Devising a model for work-related language competence in German

Abstract

There is little doubt that language competence is a key to a successful professional career. But what exactly are the language requirements placed on employees? And how can such requirements be tested? Research has so far only addressed these questions selectively; a systematic model of professional language competence in German has not yet been developed.

In this presentation, a method will be presented for identifying communication situations based on the life cycle of employees which they must be able to successfully realize at work. By analyzing texts and genres, it is then possible to describe those linguistic competences that are required for participation in the world of work and calibrate them to the scale system of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). The result is a comprehensive model of professional language competence that maps different levels of this competence from job search to retirement.

Biodata

Olaf Bärenfänger is the director of the Language Centre at Leipzig University. The Language Centre offers a wide range of courses in many modern foreign languages, as well as in Latin and Ancient Greek, for almost 4,000 students each year. In addition to general language courses that are open to students from all departments, the Language Centre offers modules for specific purposes.

He studied German Philology and Philosophy at Heidelberg University and at the Université de Paris-Sorbonne. After receiving his MA from Heidelberg University in 1998, he was employed as a research fellow in the Department of Psychology at Heidelberg University, in the Department for German as a Foreign Language at Bielefeld University, and at the Test-DaF-Institut in Hagen. He received his PhD from Bielefeld University with a thesis on research methodology. In 2016, Leipzig University awarded him the *venia legendi* for German as a Foreign and Second Language.

His research interests include multilingualism, language(s) for academic and specific purposes, assessment, quality management, research methodology, and foreign and second language acquisition research. He has published widely on these topics in international journals. He also directed a considerable number of research projects covering the topics mentioned above, he has lectured at many universities in Germany, in Europe and overseas, and is also a frequent instructor in staff trainings. He is vice president and co-founder of the Institute for Test Research and Test Development (ITT). He is member of the academic boards of the Federal Ministry of the Interior, of the Federal Ministry for Labour and Social Affairs, of the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), and of the Goethe Institute.

Sibylle Plassmann, telc gGmbH, Germany

Fairness by design. Navigating diverse needs in assessment for labour migration

Abstract

Fairness as a broad concept in assessment will be considered from different perspectives: What needs to precede a test in order to make it fair? What about the different uses of test results by different stakeholders? How can the test design in itself ensure fairness?

Focusing on a specific exam suite, the German Tests for Work (Deutsch-Tests für Zuwanderer/DTB) A2–C1, different aspects of fairness and fitness for purpose will be presented in some detail. The context of labour migration requires legal security as well as an appropriate orientation towards the communicative demands of the workplace. Test takers need to be able to show their full communicative competence, and teaching should be facilitated by clear learning objectives and a helpful test format.

The DTB example will lead to general questions about the need for work-related tests, their practical use – and possible misuse – and how such tests can be developed by using and expanding CEFR descriptors.

Biodata

Sibylle Plassmann is the head of the Test and Training team at telc gGmbH. She has a background in linguistics and teaching German as a foreign language. She received her PhD in German Philology from Mainz University. Her teaching career focused on German for academic purposes at the Universities of Mainz, Leipzig and Oxford. As a test developer, she has worked on a wide range of projects, including language tests in German and English, language teacher training and curriculum development. She is particularly interested in assessment for migrants, and tests for medical German and for general work-oriented purposes.

Jens Behning, Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, Germany

The German Federal Program of Vocational Language Training

Abstract

Federal language programs for adult migrants with hundreds of thousands of course participants each year require a multifaceted approach. The Federal Office for Migration and Refugees strategically aligns testing tools such as Deutsch-Test für Zuwanderer (DTZ, created 2009) and the Deutsch-Test für den Beruf (DTB, created 2022) with a comprehensive competence model, course concepts, additional teacher qualifications and approval procedures for textbooks. This approach, rooted in the understanding of Constructive Alignment, emphasizes the coherence and alignment of all elements within the language learning framework.

Central to this framework are the Integration Course established in 2005 and the subsequent Vocational Language Courses initiated in 2016 as a follow-up program. The system of Vocational Language Courses is designed with a dual focus, offering general work-related language training as well as occupation-specific language skills. Since 2016, the general work-related courses have been guided by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and mandate a certificate final examination, ensuring standardized assessment and recognition of language proficiency.

This interconnected approach underscores the importance of holistic language support for migrants, recognizing the diverse linguistic needs and contexts they encounter. By integrating testing, competency modeling, teacher training, curriculum development and teaching and learning media, the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees demonstrates a commitment to comprehensive and effective language support, ultimately fostering the successful integration of migrants into the workforce and society at large.

Biodata

Jens Behning is working in the fields of vocational language training and language testing, and has served at the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees in Nürnberg since 2017. With a background in German secondary education and degrees in German as a foreign language and Spanish, his career has taken him across borders, teaching German in Ireland, Cuba, and Germany. During his tenure as a junior researcher at universities in Munich, Bayreuth, and Erlangen-Nürnberg from 2006 to 2016, he delved into content and language integrated learning (CLIL), with his PhD thesis focusing on the evaluation of university students' texts. A prolific scholar, he has contributed to several publications in this field. Dr. Behning's commitment to fostering effective learning settings and promoting linguistic integration underscores his dedication to empowering adult migrants through language education.

Dominique Casanova, CCIP Le Français des affaires, France

Recognition of professional French communication skills in different parts of the world

Abstract

The increasing professional mobility of individuals and the professional integration of migrants should favor the development of teaching, learning and assessment of language communication skills in a professional context. But there are few public policies relating to linguistic competence in a professional context in French-speaking European countries. Migration or integration policies mainly rely on training and assessing general language skills.

It is most often the Professional Orders which are responsible for verifying the linguistic competence before giving access to the profession, particularly in the field of health. It is particularly the case in Quebec, where the Office Québécois de la Langue Française has developed exams for the 46 professional orders.

In the absence of specific requirements, certifications in professional French find their audience more among technical or university training establishments. French language, which until recently was taught as a cultural language, is in fact increasingly seen as an asset allowing one to broaden one's professional horizons or differentiate oneself in the job market.

Business French has therefore developed a system aimed at creating a climate favorable to the development of professional French, both in an educational context and in professional training. This system includes strategic support for institutions wishing to develop course offers in professional French (Les clés du français pro), support for teachers for the construction of a course in professional French (L'essentiel du français professionnel), the provision of a bank of resources in French for specific purposes (Numerifos) and the offer of a range of certifications of professional French skills (Les diplômes de français professionnel).

Biodata

Dominique Casanova is responsible for scientific development at Le français des affaires, which is part of the education division of CCI Paris Île-de-France. He is notably responsible for providing a relevant psychometric framework for the quality management of the Diplômes de français professionnel. Dominique has regularly participated in meetings and conferences of ALTE. He is one of the chairs of the ALTE Special Interest Group (SIG) on Technology in Language Assessment.

Helga Grabbe, Carl Duisberg Centren Mexico, Germany Svenja Sanyang, Deutsche Seniorenstift Gesellschaft (DSG), Germany

Case study – work migration from Mexico to Germany

Abstract

When Concept meets Reality

In the year 2017, the Federal Employment Agency (ZAV) of Germany approached the Carl Duisberg Centren (CDC), after they had signed a bilateral agreement with Mexico on the recruitment of medical specialists for the German labour market. ZAV was looking for language training providers in Mexico to teach German and conduct intercultural management training to the audience of Mexican nurses. In 2018, CDC launched the first programme in Mexico City.

The first part of this presentation is about lessons learned, and how CDC is continuously improving teaching in a special learning environment.

In 2022, CDC and DSG Deutsche Seniorenstift Gesellschaft mbH & Co. KG started to collaborate. DSG operates 29 nursing homes in northern and eastern Germany. 2,200 employees take care of more than 3,000 residents and customers. 5% of the employees have been recruited abroad.

The second part of the presentation discusses the procedures of professional recognition and the challenges of how to help foreign employees to integrate into the new working environment. Presenting the onboarding system at DSG, the case study will also reflect on expectations of the new employees, and the patients. It summarizes the following findings and challenges:

- DSG patients and residents hear less well, and their pronunciation is more difficult to understand.
- Understanding the spoken dialect is an additional challenge.
- How can they develop the language skills and the vocabulary really needed for daily work?
- How can they overcome the fear of making mistakes or not being understood?

Biodata

Helga Grabbe has been working in the field of German as a Foreign Language since 1992. With a Master's degree in Sinology and Education, she has taught at various educational institutions in Germany and Greater China.

During her 20 years of professional experience as lecturer and intercultural trainer, she has been working on language training programmes and teaching materials. From 2017 to 2022, she was responsible for all language training programmes at Carl Duisberg Centren gemeinnützige GmbH (www.cdc.de). In the year 2019, she became Presidenta of Centro de Capacitacion Aleman in Mexico (CDCMX). Today, she is committed to improving existing training programmes and developing new collaborations to train more professionals and trainees in Latin America.

Svenja Sanyang is head of Integration at DSG Deutsche Seniorenstift Gesellschaft mbH & Co. KG. Her tasks include recruiting nurses from other countries, the associated administrative tasks and integrating them into the work of nursing homes and in Germany general. Before that, she trained as a healthcare clerk and completed healthcare management studies.

Round table discussion

The panel will shed some light on the challenges and benefits associated with closing the gap in skilled labor shortages through assessment and integration processes. Recognition and demand for language skills to suit local needs, as well as experiences and outcomes of work migration provide valuable lessons for policymakers, employers, and individuals involved in skilled labor recruitment and integration.

Biodata

Helga Grabbe ▶ *Please see page 9*

Jens Behning ▶ *Please see page 7*

Sibylle Plassmann ▶ *Please see page 6*

Olaf Bärenfänger ▶ *Please see page 5*

Gaby Probst, University of Applied Sciences Fribourg, Switzerland

Learning, teaching and assessing in business language courses: What tools to use today?

Abstract

This presentation seeks to unravel the dynamic landscape of business language education by addressing the pivotal question: 'Learning, teaching and assessing in business language courses: What tools to use today?'

Teaching today is completely different in many aspects than it was just a few years ago, before the wave of digitalization reached the classroom. At the same time, nothing has changed in the actual teaching situation: course instructors still stand in front of more or less interested course participants and try to pass on their own knowledge or skills to others.

Still, the business world continuously undergoes rapid transformations driven by technological advancements and global interconnectedness; therefore, it is imperative for adult trainers to adapt their teaching strategies and incorporate innovative and effective tools to enhance language acquisition in professional contexts. Thinking of tools today, the range is larger than only technology – pen and paper are still very useful learning aids. Nevertheless, it is impossible to imagine teaching today without digital tools.

The presentation will try to give a comprehensive overview of available tools for learning, teaching and assessing, focusing on examples of new technologies to promote a (more) dynamic and interactive learning environment that aligns with the demands of our participants, who are now used to home working and consider their continuous training in a different way from before the 2020 pandemic.

Participants will gain insight into digital or Blended Learning scenarios, the use of interactive tools such as live online polls, and collaborative tools applicable to both face to face and online courses. As tools are in themselves only assisting devices, we will here focus on the way these can be used to facilitate learning, simulate real-world business scenarios, and for the fostering of practical language application and critical thinking skills.

Biodata

Gaby Probst is Head of Pedagogical Development and a member of the Executive Board at the School of Management in Fribourg, where she teaches Business German.

Born in Berlin, she began her career with a commercial apprenticeship and a university degree in Education in her birthplace. Since then, she has taught German as a Foreign Language and Business German in Adult and Higher Education in Switzerland. After completing her Master's degree in Adult Education, she began providing targeted training and support for lecturers and adult trainers for various institutions in Switzerland and Germany.

Her most important topics are pedagogical issues such as active learning strategies, heterogeneity, generational differences, and the training of language examination experts. Another important topic for her is learning and teaching with technology or Blended Learning, subjects on which she has published numerous articles and conference papers since 2021.

Parallel workshops, Friday 12th April

Please note, the workshops on Friday afternoon are a repetition of the workshops which will take place on Thursday 11th April.

Gaby Probst, University of Applied Sciences Fribourg, Switzerland

*Learning, teaching and assessing in business language courses: Exchange on tools that contribute to best practice**

Abstract

► Please see page 11

Biodata

► Please see page 11

Lernen, Lehren und Beurteilen in Wirtschaftssprachkursen: Austausch über die Tools, die zur optimalen Praxis beitragen

Dieser Workshop dient als Plattform für Sprachexperten, um einen produktiven Austausch über Erkenntnisse und Tools zu führen, die zu bewährten Praktiken im Unterrichten von Wirtschaftssprachen beitragen.

Die Unterrichtslandschaft hat sich in den letzten Jahren dramatisch verändert, und in diesem Workshop werden wir die Rolle der Technologie für effektives Sprachenlernen und -lehren diskutieren. Der Workshop stellt eine Vielzahl von Lehrmitteln, Technologien und Ressourcen vor, die das Lernen und die Bewertung von Lerninhalten verbessern, insbesondere im Bereich der Wirtschaftssprachkurse.

Während des gesamten Workshops werden Demonstrationen und Interaktionen mit den Teilnehmern die Gelegenheit bieten, praktische Erfahrungen mit einfach zu verwendenden Tools und Techniken zu sammeln. Die Teilnehmer haben die Möglichkeit, sich über ihre Erfahrungen, Schwierigkeiten und Erfolge auszutauschen und so eine kollegiale Atmosphäre zu schaffen, die auf eine kontinuierliche Verbesserung von Unterricht und Bewertung abzielt.

Am Ende der Veranstaltung werden die Teilnehmer mit einem Überblick über Ressourcen, Strategien und bewährte Verfahren zur Verbesserung der Qualität des Unterrichts in den Wirtschaftssprachen in ihrem jeweiligen Kontext nach Hause gehen.

* This workshop will be delivered in German. No interpretation will be provided.

Magdalena Igiel and Hannah Blumöhr-Giuri, telc gGmbH, Germany

Expanding the CEFR for work-oriented tests

Abstract

This workshop aims to address the development of work-related descriptors for vocational language testing based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Although the CEFR is widely recognized as a framework for describing language proficiency levels across various contexts, there is a need to adapt this framework to the specific requirements of the workplace when designing work-related tests.

This workshop will explore the challenges and considerations involved in developing work-related descriptors based on the CEFR, taking into account the specific requirements and demands of different industries and job roles. Participants will also discuss best practices in work-related language testing and how to align assessment tools with the developed descriptors.

Through interactive discussions and hands-on activities in small groups, participants will have the opportunity to develop their own work-related descriptors using the CEFR as a reference point. The session will conclude with a plenary discussion concerning the process of mapping language skills to the workplace context and the importance of context-specific descriptors for more accurate language assessment.

Biodata

Magdalena Igiel is the Head of Test Development at telc gGmbH. She manages the digital language assessment and validation processes. One of her major projects as a test developer involved managing the German Tests for Work suite development. She holds a PhD in International Communication from the University of Oklahoma, where she focused on semiotics of social change in international contexts. Prior to joining telc, she taught a variety of in-person, hybrid, and online communication courses at the New York City College of Technology.

Hannah Blumöhr-Giuri is a test developer at telc gGmbH. She manages the certificate examination Deutsch-Test für den Beruf, which has been compulsory for all participants in vocational language courses in Germany since 2022. She is an experienced editor with many years in the field of teaching German L2, as well as creating teaching materials and tests for assessment and certification. She received her Master's degree in German as a Second Language from Heidelberg University.

Lucy Cochrane, Cambridge University Press and Assessment, UK

Just what the doctor ordered? Creating language assessments for healthcare

Abstract

The demand for healthcare workers in the EU is already high. But it is rising. Fast. In 2023, the World Health Organisation identified a shortfall of 1.8 million healthcare professionals in the EU, with a warning that this could rise to 4 million by 2030, if not addressed. Employing qualified and skilled healthcare workers from overseas is one measure governments are taking to fill this gap, and so providing high-quality assessment of target language proficiency for medical professionals is, and will continue to be, crucial. In this interactive workshop, we will look at the principles of good practice in language assessment and how these can be practically applied to the creation of assessments of medical language skills. We will explore what is needed to ensure that these high-stakes exams really are 'just what the doctor ordered'; ultimately that they are able to accurately measure the required language skills needed by medical professionals in the target community.

Biodata

Lucy Cochrane is an Assessment Manager with Cambridge University Press and Assessment, working on the production of assessment materials for the Occupational English Test (OET), a test of workplace English for medical professionals. She has been involved in English language education and assessment for more than 25 years, working as a teacher, director of studies, teacher trainer, educational manager, examiner, and materials and course writer. She has a Master's degree in Applied Linguistics and TESOL.

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If you have any questions about the programme, the events or the town, or you are unable to attend the ALTE Meeting and Conference, please do not hesitate to contact us.