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**Announcement of the:**

**12<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of EFNIL  
in Florence 26-28 September 2014  
hosted by the Accademia della Crusca**

**Conference theme: *Language use in University Teaching and Research -  
Past, Present and Future***

The use of languages in tertiary education and university research has been under discussion for several decades, particularly because English has increasingly become used as the principal medium of instruction and publication in the higher education institutions of non-Anglophone European countries. This development was discussed by EFNIL under the more general heading *Linguistic functional domains* eleven years ago, at our founding conference in Stockholm 2003. In the contributions of participating members to that conference, the domains of higher education and research were singled out as those demonstrating an increasing use of English alongside or in place of individual national languages. At that time, most participants considered this development to be a threat to their native languages.

Our 2014 conference at the Accademia della Crusca should provide us with a more detailed picture of the present linguistic situation within tertiary education and university research in various European countries. We would now like to **invite members** to present reports at our conference on the use of languages in the different academic fields at university level in their own countries, including the ongoing discussion on actual or potential political measures which address this issue. It would be instructive if the description of the current situation could also be complemented by a historical sketch of the development in each country. After all, modern national languages have not always been the media of university instruction and learned publication. In some countries it was not until the 18<sup>th</sup> or even the 19<sup>th</sup> century that progressive scholars and scientists succeeded in emancipating their native languages from Medieval Latin, and to use their own native languages for teaching and publication. In several countries, French or German were used until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century alongside or instead of the national language. As regards the present situation, the EFNIL members should also consider whether the thematic panorama could be rounded off by some recommendations concerning future language use in university teaching and research within the European countries.

The conference programme will contain general reflections and overview papers by several invited experts and a series of compact 'national' reports by up to 10 of our members. In addition, as language use in the academic world is closely connected with the preservation and further development of European linguistic diversity, representatives of the European Commission will be invited to present new programmes for the enhancement of European multilingualism.

Expert guest speakers will be asked to cover in their contributions topics such as:

- Historical aspects of language use in university education and research in Europe
- Current general tendencies in language use in the academic world in Europe
- The interrelation between language use in tertiary education and the development of national standard languages

- Advantages and disadvantages of using a lingua franca in the academic world

Representatives of the European Commission will be invited to discuss the topics:

- New programmes to enhance European multilingualism
- The policy of the EU institutions and agencies in stimulating and funding research projects concerning linguistic issues
- To what extent do EU project directors also consider the language(s) used for communication between project partners and the publication of project results?

Representatives of EFNIL's member institutions or specialists of their choice are invited to give country reports concerning a **combination** of several of the questions below. Some eight or nine reports (20-30 minutes) will fit into the time frame of the conference programme.

- For how long has/have your national language(s) been used in university teaching and research?
- Are there laws or other national or regional regulations concerning the use of languages in tertiary education in your country? If so, have they changed significantly in recent years?
- Are there specific regulations in your country concerning language use in master's theses and/or PhD dissertations?
- What is the present practice as regards the use of languages for teaching or publication purposes in the universities of your country?
- Do the various academic fields differ significantly in their use of languages for teaching and research, e.g. between natural and social sciences and the humanities?
- Are there significant differences of language use in teaching and research between public and private universities?
- Is a certain level of foreign language competence required from students who enter a university, depending on the chosen field of studies or some other factor?
- Is a certain level of competence in the official language(s) of the country required from foreign students?
- Are the curricula of secondary education matched to the linguistic requirements of tertiary education?
- Is there considerable public discussion in your country concerning language use in tertiary education? If so, what are the major arguments?

We would like to invite members of EFNIL who would like to offer a presentation covering several of these topics or suggest a speaker to contact the EFNIL Secretariat ([efnil@nytud.hu](mailto:efnil@nytud.hu)) as soon as possible.

The thematic part of the conference will be concluded with a panel discussion on the question: "Present academic language use - *laissez faire* or counter-measures?"

For budgetary reasons the interpretation service will again be limited to four languages; this time these will be Italian, English, French and German.