

A New Paradigm in Croatian Higher Education: Non – Formal Foreign Language Learning

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Abstract

Knowledge of legal English, with English as lingua franca of international communication has become an essential precondition for communication of legal professionals worldwide. That is the reason why law students and legal professionals in Europe, especially those working in new member states of the EU, are interested in widening their knowledge in legal English within different forms of non-formal foreign language education. In this paper, the author presents a new paradigm of foreign language teaching at Croatian universities that was introduced due to recent changes in professional communication, the intensive development of IT, and growing importance of English in international context. The objective of the paper is to present examples of good practice and innovation in teaching LSP in Croatian higher education. The challenges of professional communication in the field of law are presented and discussed in the introduction of the paper. In the main part, the types of non-formal education are presented that were developed at the Faculty of Law Osijek, Croatia as a response to requirements of the EU labour market and the professional communication between lawyers. The first non-formal type of education presented in the paper is the Lifelong Learning Programme for Lawyer Linguists, and the second one the course Legal English for Civil Servants developed within the European cross-border project CATCH, organized by Croatian and Hungarian units of local and regional self-government. In the conclusion, the author discusses the achievements of the two programmes and offers her vision of the future developments in foreign language teaching at European higher education institutions.

Keywords: higher education, non-formal foreign language learning, lifelong learning, community projects

Introduction

In the Strategy for the period 2010-2020, the Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek, among other goals, expressed its commitment to promote lifelong learning programmes as non-formal ways of education (Strategy, 2011: 54), directed at the acquisition of additional knowledge, competences, and skills by students, academic community and wider civil community. According to the European Recognition Manual, non-formal learning is defined as "(...) learning which takes place through planned activities (in terms of learning objectives, learning time) where some form of learning support is present (e.g. a learner - teacher relationship). Very common cases of non-formal learning include in-company training, structured online learning and courses organized by civil society organizations."¹ In the past twenty years, the European Commission has been promoting both non-formal and informal learning as the evolution of what in the 1980s was called continuous training. The Commission has defined non-formal learning as a specific type of learning activity, which is structured in terms of learning objectives, learning time, and learning support, and intentional from the learners' perspective (European Commission 2001: 33). Under conditions of constant changes and developments in information technologies, which influence every sphere of human activity, informal learning is also highly recommended. "Informal learning concerns learning resulting from daily life activities related to work, family or leisure. It is not structured (in terms of learning objectives, learning time or learning support) and typically does not lead to certification. It may be intentional of the basis, but in most cases, it is non-intentional" (European Commission 2001: 33).

In this paper, the author aims at presenting two different programmes within non-formal ways of teaching and learning foreign languages as examples of good practice in FLT. The programmes are presented as illustrations of a new paradigm of non-formal teaching and learning in the higher education system of Croatia. The first programme presented in this paper

¹www.enicnarc.net/fileusers/8220_European%20Recognition%20Manual%20Second%20Edition%20FIN.pdf accessed on 10. December 2018, at 14:10

is the Lifelong Learning Programme for Lawyer Linguists developed at the Faculty of Law, University of Osijek, and the second is an in-company training organized in cooperation with the local Public Administration Office within a wider interregional European project. Both programmes are in line with the commitment of the Faculty of Law, University of Osijek, to provide its students and the wider local community with knowledge and skills which would help them meet the challenges of modern society. The programmes were organized by the Department of Foreign Languages of the Faculty. As the author has already presented the Lifelong Learning Programme for Lawyer Linguists and the methodological approach to its delivery in detail in previous publications (Kordić: 2015a; 2016), the Programme will be shortly presented here only as an illustration of the specific type of non-formal education at the tertiary level.

Lifelong Learning Programme as a Non-Formal Type of Foreign Language Teaching

In accordance with the Strategy of the University of Osijek and the Strategy of the Faculty of Law, the Chair of Foreign Languages of the Faculty has launched in academic year 2012/13 a non-formal education programme in the period of accession of Croatia to the EU. The programme was developed within the lifelong learning aspect of education and was titled “Lifelong Learning Programme for Lawyer Linguists”. It was launched in the first year of the accession of the Republic of Croatia to the European Union when new employment chances have been opened to Croatian lawyers and linguists on the EU labour market. The European Personnel Selection Office of the EU Commission published on its website job announcements for lawyers, legal administrators, legal translators and a new profession: lawyer-linguists. The goal of the Programme was to equip students with new skills and abilities, which would enable them to meet the challenges of the changing economic and political environment and the requirements of the European market. That goal could be achieved by introducing a new paradigm into a traditional approach to higher education: a non-formal way of teaching practical skills focussed on European law and European legal terminology in the three working languages of the EU: English, German and French.

The programme is comprised of seven courses: Introduction to the EU Law, Introduction to the Theory of Legal Translation and Terminology, Exercises in Legal Translation – English Language, Exercises in Legal Translation – German Language, Introduction to the French Language of Law, Croatian Language for Lawyer-Linguists, and Online Translation Tools and EU Vocabulary. All the courses were allocated 22 ECTS credits. Since December 2012, the Programme has been delivered every winter semester. It has lasted for three months and encompassed altogether 160 teaching hours. As for the target group of participants, the programme was intended for senior year students of the Faculty of Law and for graduate lawyers from the wider local community. The structure of participants varied from one year to the other and included unemployed graduate lawyers, lawyers practicing law in private law firms, and young legal advisors employed in local courts. The precondition for the enrolment was that they had achieved the best possible grades in English or German as their first foreign language and acquired an A or B level in the second foreign language (either German or English), which must be proven by corresponding certificates. According to the tradition of foreign language learning in the region Slavonija and Baranja where the University of Osijek is situated, the prevailing first foreign language is English and the second German. As a rule, French is not instructed in primary and secondary schools in the region. That is the reason why French has been instructed as the third foreign language from its basics. Based on the certificates of the FL level achieved in English and German, participants have been organized in two groups according to their first foreign language and have been instructed simultaneously in two groups for Exercises in Legal Translation in the first foreign language and for Exercises in Legal Translation in the second foreign language. All other courses have been attended by all participants together. Apart from Translation Exercises in the three languages, the participants were also instructed in other contents that should be mastered by a translator of EU law texts: Introduction to EU Law, Introduction to the Theory of Legal Translation and Terminology, Online Translation Tools and EU Vocabulary and Croatian Language for Lawyer-Linguists. After passing all exams, participants obtain certificates signed by the Dean of the Faculty. All courses have been delivered by using modern teaching methods and electronic teaching tools, especially PowerPoint presentations and the Internet. Internet sources represent at the same time the main source of information and the object of instructions within the course Online Translation Tools and EU Vocabulary. In this course, computer technologies are implemented to equip participants with the ability to independently approach all the original sources, databases and documents available at the official online platforms of the EU necessary for a professional, reliable and accurate translation of EU legal texts.

Teaching English in Local Community Units - a New Type of Non-Formal Higher Education

About the CATCH Project

Cooperation with the local community in the implementation of the international (interregional) EU project CATCH represents a new aspect of non-formal foreign language teaching at the tertiary level of education in Croatia. The CATCH Project ("Cooperation between Public Administration Offices in Cross-Border Areas of Croatia and Hungary to Provide Better Services to Citizens") was developed within the Interreg V-A Project Hungary-Croatia 2014-2020, which belongs to the network of European Territorial Cooperation (ETC) programmes. The overall aim of the programmes is "contribute to the overall economic, social and territorial cohesion of the European Union by tackling issues which cross the borders between countries and regions"¹. The project was launched by the Government office of the Somogy County in Hungary with the purpose of "reinforcement and expansion of the existing co-operative networks and contributing to the establishment of a sound basis for a dynamic and lasting co-operation across the border". Managing authorities of the Programme were the Hungarian Prime Minister's Office, Budapest and the Ministry of Regional Development and EU Funds of the Republic of Croatia, Zagreb. The CATCH Project within this Programme was implemented in the period from 1 June 2017 to 30 September 2018. Its overall goal was fostering better bilateral relations between public administrations of the Republic of Croatia and Hungary, which was strongly supported by the Prime Minister of Hungary and the Minister of Administration of the Republic of Croatia. The Programme was initiated by the Somogy County (Hungary) as the Lead Beneficiary, and the Public Administration Offices of the Osijek-Baranja County and the Medimurje County were beneficiaries on the part of Croatia. The specific goal of the project was to facilitate administrative procedures in cross-border territories and enable both the local citizens and the citizens from both sides of the border quicker and more efficient administrative processes in their local administrative offices with the minimum of costs. Professional knowledge of civil servants was widened by exchanging experience with Hungarian colleagues, the courses in web-programming and web-design of e-documents were organized, with the aim of increasing the quality and efficiency of the civil service. In the context of better cross-border co-operation in civil service issues, the knowledge of English as lingua franca of professional communication represented an indispensable precondition. That is why a tender in the local newspaper and on the webpage of the County was published for offers by local educational institutions to develop and carry out courses in English and Hungarian. Due to a long experience of teaching Legal English in formal and non-formal types of education at the Faculty of Law Osijek, the offer of the Chair of Foreign Languages of the Faculty was accepted as the best. As a non-formal way of teaching foreign languages demanded a different approach from that in formal teaching law students in English, the following section will be focussed on presenting the steps of development of the new course, the factors that were taken into consideration in that procedure, and the methodical approach to the delivery of the course.

Teaching Standards and Pre-Teaching Activities

As the Foreign language teacher was not familiar with the target group of students, with their needs and expectations in English language and the level of their mastery of English, several pre-teaching activities had to be performed prior to developing the course. These are the following activities: collecting basic data about the target group, the needs analysis, and placement test. In accordance with the ISO standard 9000 related to quality management principles, the following principles of European quality standards had to be taken into consideration in developing the course: 1. The needs and expectations of the learners should be considered and understood, 2. The target of the course should be defined in accordance with the learners' needs and expectations, 3. The initiators (here the project holders) should be informed about the needs and interests of the learners, 4. Learner groups should be kept in systematic order, and 5. The satisfaction of the participants with the programme and the achieved goals should be measured. Accordingly, the following standards referring to the teacher's activities in his/her approach to non-formal teaching had to be considered: 1. Setting up challenging targets, 2. Creating trust and removing fears, 3. Offering reliable and decent resources for teaching, and 4. Encouraging students and recognizing their achievements².

Before collecting the necessary data on the target group and their needs in English and before developing the course, a meeting was held with the project representatives in the Public Administration Office of the County. The goals of the project were discussed, and the number of teaching hours planned for the course as well as the place and the schedule of the

¹ <http://www.huhr-cbc.com/en/about-the-programme> , accessed on 20 February 2019, at 23:18

² <https://asq.org/quality-resources/iso-9000> , accessed on March 29, 2019, at 22:10

delivery of the course have been agreed. It was agreed that the course should be delivered in an intensive course of 40 hours starting from March 2018, carried out by the dynamics of four hours twice a week. It was also agreed that in the meantime the necessary pre-teaching activities would be carried out by using electronic mail, for which purpose the e-mail addresses were exchanged with the coordinator of the Osijek team of the CATCH-Project.

Collecting Basic Data about the Target Group and the Needs Analysis

In correspondence with the coordinator, contacts were established with 35 participants- the future participants of the course. All of them were civil servants in public administration offices of the County of Osijek-Baranja. A questionnaire was created for the purpose of the needs analysis, i.e. collecting the necessary data on the needs and interests within the English language for the legal profession. The results of the questionnaire were used as a foundation for the course development. Needs analysis is generally perceived as a necessary step in any serious and responsible course development. It is a systematic collection and analysis of the target group needs, its aim being to point at the desired destination of the course and syllabus design (Hutchinson and Waters 1987: 54). In teaching foreign languages for specific purposes, the needs analysis is observed by many scholars as the necessary foundation for the development of a foreign language course in a specific professional field (Swales, 1990; Robinson, 1991; Dudley – Evans and St. John, 1998).

The questionnaire, which was produced by Sierocka and conducted in its original form in wider international research (Sierocka, Chowancova, Kordić, 2018), encompassed the following areas: 1) age, sex, and education level of the candidates; 2) the reasons for their learning Legal English; 3) attitudes about the most useful language element in learning Legal English; 4) what they wish to achieve from a Legal English course in speaking, writing, reading E[and listening skills; 5) the skills they consider most useful in their respective professional domains; 6) attitudes towards the role of grammar in teaching Legal English, and 7) legal domains that are most useful in their professional life. The questionnaire was conducted by e-mail, and served as a foundation for the course development and the teaching material development. Altogether 35 participants joined the course, while 29 answered the questionnaire. Most questions could be answered by multiple choice. The needs analysis has resulted in the following findings:

All respondents were graduate lawyers, mostly women (altogether 6 men), with an average age of 35 – 45 years.

The prevailing reason for their learning Legal English was the wish to communicate with other people in their profession (23/29), and to exchange information with colleagues from abroad (15/29).

Asked about most useful language element in learning Legal English (the choice between four elements was offered: a) grammar, b) vocabulary, c) pronunciation, d) something else), most respondents (24) have highlighted vocabulary.

As for achievements in the four language skills, in the field of *speaking* most respondents have chosen expressing opinions – agreements and disagreements (24/29) and negotiating (19/29). In *writing*, they preferred formal correspondence (23/29) and writing applications, pleadings, requests (17/29); in the field of *listening* they preferred listening for details (22/29) and listening (and understanding) public announcements, instructions, warnings, etc (19/29). In the sphere of *reading*, as most useful activities the respondents equally assessed the understanding of original English texts (finding specific information, understanding details in the text) and widening legal vocabulary based on reading authentic materials, chosen by 22 respondents each (22/29).

As the most useful skills for their profession, the respondents have chosen listening (19/29) and speaking (18/29). The writing was assessed as third in the rank of importance (13/29) and reading as least important (10/29).

The intention was also to find out whether the participants wanted a) to repeat English grammar thoroughly, b) to discuss only grammar structures frequently used in Legal English c) not to include any grammar items in the Legal English course (only one answer had to be chosen). Most respondents (20/29) were of the opinion, that the grammar structures frequently used in Legal English should be addressed in the course.

As for the legal domains that teaching within the course should be focussed on, they were ranked in the following order: 1. European law (25), 2. administrative law (23), while three branches were equally ranked in the third (3.) position: sources of law (e.g. constitutional law), contract law, and civil law (each chosen by 20 respondents).

Determining Teaching Goals and Preparing Teaching Environment and Teaching Tools

The findings of the needs analysis have shaped the scope and the direction of course development within the cross-border cooperation project of Croatian and Hungarian public administration. Due to the fact, that civil servants of the Public Administration Office of the Osijek-Baranja County were the target group of students, the course was entitled "English for Civil Servants". Based on the needs analysis results, the following directions for course development have been established and goals of the course determined:

- 1) the course should enable students to master Legal English in their professional field of public administration to be able to communicate with their colleagues and clients from Hungary (and other countries) in their respective field of professional activity;
- 2) it should enable them to learn professional vocabulary in preferred legal fields and to use it in communicating with colleagues and clients from abroad;
- 3) as participants wanted to improve their listening and speaking skills – they should be trained in listening for details and understanding public speeches, lectures, announcements, while in the field of speaking they should be trained in expressing opinions and negotiating (reading and writing were not considered very important);
- 4) the course should thematically focus on authentic texts in English in the fields of European law, administrative law, contract law, constitutional law and civil law;
- 5) the course should also contain grammar structures, especially those important for the language of law and frequently used in English legal texts.

Before developing the syllabus of the course, the teaching materials and tools to be used, the contact person of the project was contacted to get precise information on the teaching environment and teaching tools at the disposal of the Public Administration Office. It offered two suitable County halls that could serve as classrooms as well as the use of their computers and LCD projector necessary for course delivery. Before starting with course delivery, it was also necessary to write the final version of the syllabus, prepare copies of the teaching materials and handouts for attendants, prepare the electronic version of teaching materials on CD, agree with the project representatives on the dynamics of teaching and timetable, etc. It was also agreed with the project holders that all materials had to be submitted to them along with the needs analysis questionnaires, placement tests, the teacher's report upon the delivery of the course, and the contract on the course delivery within the CATCH project based on public tender.

The Development of the Course *English for Civil Servants*

Focus, Ideas, Principles, and Pedagogical Standards of Teaching

In developing the course, the pedagogical standards of communicative foreign language learning and factors of teaching are taken into consideration, especially the target learners, their specific needs, goals of the course and the specific professional context of teaching English as the language for specific purposes. This approach is founded on the principles described by Brown as modern pedagogical trends in foreign language teaching, "(...) upon which teachers can choose particular designs and techniques for teaching a foreign language in a specific context. Every learner is unique. Every teacher is unique. Every learner-teacher relationship is unique, and every context is unique" (Brown, 2006: 28). The teacher's main task is to understand those relationships and contexts and to achieve the goals resulting from the needs analysis by a communicative approach.

According to the results of the needs analysis, the course content should be focussed on the texts dealing with European law, administrative law, civil law (with some branches of law of interest like family law, property law, etc.), constitutional law, and contract law. In developing the course, the principal idea was to ensure the quality of teaching appropriate to the target group of students who were graduate lawyers with remarkable professional experience, some of them in highly ranked administrative and/or political positions. For the first meeting with the participants, the placement test was planned to establish the average knowledge level of the group, with the purpose of establishing the appropriate teaching approach and most striking weaknesses in their mastery of English language. The idea was also that the introductory lecture should

be dedicated to presenting linguistic features of the language of the law to develop the awareness of the participants of structures, phrases, grammar items and stylistic features that distinguish legalese from other technical languages. The chosen texts had to be relevant, up to date, well structured, clear and involving legal terminology and phrases from the chosen fields of law. The topics had to be interesting and discussion provoking, in which students could apply phrases and structures suitable for expressing agreements and disagreements and elaborating on their personal opinions. At least one text had to be appropriate for developing negotiating skills, and the first idea was that it could be the one concerning contracts. The focus was to be placed on speaking exercises in connection to each legal text planned in the syllabus. Presenting grammar structures, especially those frequently used in legal texts was also planned as a part of the course. Instruction had to be based on the legal text that students are familiar with and the illustrative examples had to be related to legal topics. Students' needs and interests being the principal criterion of structuring the course, an audio-visual material had to be incorporated in the teaching plan as well. As in English courses within the formal Law Studies, the HBO documentary "Hot coffee case" is used to illustrate the term *tort* in common law system, the idea was that this video material could be used in the course English for Civil Servants as well. This material could serve as an excellent example of the differences in scope, meaning, and interpretation of the concept *tort* between the common law system and the civil law system to which the Republic of Croatia belongs. By this specific HBO documentary, the problems and challenges of translating legal texts from English into Croatian and vice versa can be well illustrated. As the translation problems in the language of law have been explored by the author of this paper in several previous publications, the plan was to present the most interesting findings from her scholarly research concerning differences in legal concepts and terms in different legal systems (Kordić, 2015, 2016) within this course as well. The intention was also to put special emphasis on the examples of relative equivalence of legal terms (Sandrini, 1999) in the English and the Croatian languages of law as two languages stemming from different legal traditions and cultures.

Choice and Development of Materials

In developing teaching materials, several elements have been considered. Firstly, as the participants were graduate lawyers, most of them were familiar with the legal texts in the textbook "English for Lawyers" that was applied at Croatian law faculties in the past two decades. Although it was updated, most texts were kept for years. Because of that and the fact, that a new course should be focussed on specific legal topics chosen by participants, it was necessary to develop a completely new teaching material. Luckily, a new textbook in English for law students was in the publication procedure, so upon the agreement with the authors of the book (colleagues teaching Legal English at the Faculty of Zagreb), a few texts have been chosen from that book, shortened and adapted to the purpose of the course English for Civil Servants. Articles from the EU Newsletter, an EU journal available online, have been used as a source of the texts related to the European law and the Croatian membership in the EU. Parts of scientific articles in respective legal fields available online have been chosen and relevant chapters from the teacher's own books and papers have been excerpted and adopted. Additionally, to the purpose of learning legal terminology and phraseology in their professional fields and of dealing with problems in translating legal texts, specific chapters of laws on public administration in English language and their translation into the Croatian language have been downloaded from the official platforms of the Croatian and British Ministries of Public Administration. As mentioned in the previous section of this paper, the HBO documentary *Hot Coffee Case* was also introduced in the programme of teaching with the purpose of developing listening skills and understanding the original communication of native speakers. Grammar units were attached to each textual unit based on the PowerPoint presentations used by the teacher in her formal lectures at the faculty. Grammar units and the illustrating examples have been chosen in compliance with the needs and interests of the target group and in accordance with the predicted outcomes of the course.

Syllabus Development

Before collecting and organizing teaching materials, a draft teaching programme of the course was prepared (draft syllabus), but the limited approach to appropriate legal texts in the chosen fields of law and the copyright issue have influenced introducing slight changes in the programme. Because of that, the final version of the syllabus for the course English for Civil Servants was developed after all teaching materials had been collected and prepared (Appendix). The following step was to organize the material in 40 hours of teaching and copy them on the CD. As the first session was dedicated to presenting the course and the quick placement test with the purpose of establishing the average knowledge level in English of the students, the remaining 39 hours have been divided in 13 units of three hours. Each unit was comprised of a specific legal text from the fields of law suggested by the students, followed by oral exercises focussed on

developing speaking skills in that specific professional field, and the third hour within the session was dealing with grammar structures typical of the language of law and the corresponding exercises. Legal texts included the topics like *Accession of the Republic of Croatia to EU, EU Institutions, The Reform of Croatian Public Administration, The Local and Regional Self-Government Act, Marriage and Divorce, Private International Law, Contract, etc.*

The teaching material was organized according to the planned syllabus, printed out, and tied in a teaching manual for students, and submitted to the project representatives in the print and electronic versions. The representatives of the CATCH project have prepared copies of these materials for all participants. Handouts and online sources have also been prepared for use in specific lectures.

Course Delivery

As discernible from the syllabus, during the first meeting with participants, the results of the needs analysis were presented and the planned organization of the course according to those results was explained in detail. After that, a quick placement test was conducted as a ground for future implementation of the teaching approach that would be most appropriate for the target group, and to establishing the weaknesses in their mastery of English language that should be in focus while teaching grammar and/or legal vocabulary. The placement test, which was developed by Macmillan Inside Out editions, was downloaded from their web page¹, printed out in 35 copies and submitted to the participants for solving in 15 minutes. Due to the possibility of a quick correction and delivery of results, the results were analysed during the same introductory hour of the course. The average score was 39 points. According to The Quick Placement Test Conversion Table, the range of 30-39 points refers to the intermediate level (B1). As the scores were very close to 40 points ascribed to the upper-intermediate level, the average result was satisfactory. Several participants with the lowest score claimed to have forgotten a lot of their English knowledge as many years had passed after their graduation in law, so it was agreed that in grammar sessions tenses should be briefly repeated as well. It was also agreed that the course should be delivered in sessions of three hours twice a week. The delivery of the course started in the second week of March and was carried out in sessions of 3 hours twice a week. Teaching was organized in a way that the first hour within each session was dedicated to legal texts and introducing new terminology in the respective field, the second to implementation of new terms and phrases in oral exercises of different types and the third to review of grammar units frequently used in the English language of the law.

Apart from mastering new vocabulary and legal phraseology in the fields of European law, administrative law, family law, constitutional law and the law of contract, some units were focussed on differences between common law system and the civil law system (Conflict of Laws, The Law of Torts) and on the specific features and terminology of international law. In practicing legal terminology and phraseology, the emphasis was put on typical linguistic structures like legal phrases and idioms, phrasal verbs, legal doublets and triplets, etc. Pair work, group work, and discussions on professional topics were the prevailing types of teaching discourse focussed on developing speaking skills. Participants were also trained in using terms and phrases expressing agreements and disagreements in discussions on specific legal topics, e.g. reform of public administration in Croatia, Croatian membership in the EU, benefits of European projects, marriage and divorce, the cases of conflict of laws under the jurisdiction of Croatian courts, etc. They were also taught how to negotiate on terms and conditions in concluding contracts. As for grammar, the focus was on structures frequently used in the language of law and their application in different types of oral exercises related to relevant legal topics. The content of teaching was adjusted to the needs and preferences of the participants. This fact may be perceived as the main reason for their evident advancement in English, and for their pleasure with their own achievements at the closure of the project.

Trends and Perspectives

Modern means of communication worldwide, along with the increased intensity and various models of political, economic and educational cooperation within the European Union, have given rise to new models and types of non-formal education. This especially refers to teaching foreign languages, which has always been open to international cooperation and novelties in the teaching approach. In Croatian higher education institutions, apart from formal foreign language teaching within accredited formal studies, different kinds of non-formal education have been introduced, particularly after Croatia has become a full Member State of the European Union. This new paradigm in education has been presented here on the example of the Faculty of Law, University of Osijek. At this faculty, different models of non-formal teaching have been developed: lifelong learning programmes, international projects within Jean Monnet programmes, Erasmus + projects,

¹ <http://insideout.net/new/resources/placement-test> accessed on 28 March 2019 at 12:30

national projects financed by the Croatian Science Foundation. The Department of Foreign Languages has developed one lifelong learning programme that has been carried out since 2012 and participated in the interregional European project CATCH launched by the local Public Administration Office. Possibilities of new models of non-formal education in the field of foreign languages have not been exhausted by this. One of the novelties in developing non-formal ways of learning Legal English is the participation of our students in an international virtual Legal English course. The project called *Virtual Erasmus* has been launched in 2016 by Dr. David Best from the University of Brussels. He gathered students of the 1st and 2nd year of studies at the law faculties of Brno, Krakow, and Brussels and in the year 2018 four students from the Faculty of Law Osijek. The international team is comprised of 16 students (four from each of the four law faculties) who attend the virtual Legal English course and work together in international teams of four students on solving one legal case. Virtual cooperation by means of electronic media resulted in four essays delivered by four international teams on how to solve a specific legal case. The essays are available on the Moodle platforms of the four faculties and are currently in the assessment procedure. As new developments of informational technologies enable closer cooperation between educational institutions, teachers, and students on national and international levels, new models and programmes of non-formal education can be expected in the future.

Concluding Remarks

Rapid changes and intensive developments in IT sector and the possibilities of easier contacts and cooperation between higher education institutions worldwide have strongly influenced teaching processes. Students' learning habits are changing, their proficiency in English is improving and their expectations from foreign language courses are more demanding, so foreign language teachers are faced with new challenges and demands. Due to Croatian Membership in the EU as a conglomerate of different nations, cultures, languages and national policies, Croatian lawyers are also faced with the necessity of constant updating and refreshing their professional knowledge and skills in different lifelong learning programmes and other types of non-formal learning in the field of the legal profession. In this paper, two models of non-formal higher education carried out by the Faculty of Law Osijek have been presented. The first is the Lifelong Learning Programme for Lawyer Linguists, launched and delivered by the Department of Foreign Languages of the Faculty, and the second is the course English for Civil Servants, developed within the international cross-border project between Hungary and Croatia, in which the Faculty of Law was a contractual partner of the local Public Administration Office. New courses within the lifelong learning programme as well as the course English for Civil Servants have been developed with an overall idea of enabling all interested parties from the wider community to acquire knowledge, competences, and skills in the field of Legal English. In the EU context, communication in English as lingua franca of international communication represents an important factor of non-formal education in the legal profession. The question whether the prospect of Brexit will bring any changes in the choice of the language of political and legal cooperation within the EU is to be answered in the near future.

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Endnotes

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