



Like every year, there will be an International Terminology Summer School in 2007. After the University of Vienna in 2006, this year's TSS will be hosted by the Institute for Information Management at the Cologne University of Applied Sciences, Germany.

We talked to the organizers Prof. Dr. Klaus-Dirk Schmitz and Anja Drame

Question:

Prof. Schmitz, your institute will host TSS for the second time this year. As trainer, however, you belong to the TSS team for a much longer period. In your opinion, how has the event changed over time?

Schmitz:

In the course of years the idea of TSS has changed quite drastically indeed. It all began as a basics course. Later there were attempts to run Summer Schools or Summer Academies, as we called it, aiming at particular target groups*. For instance we have developed and realized train-the-trainer seminars or one focused on terminology applications in localization. But it has always shown that there is a huge demand for a basic introduction. We are now again tackling this demand in the first place. Back to Square 1, so to speak. Of course the content and tools for terminology work have changes as well since the first TSS nearly a quarter of a century ago. New fields like localization and semantic interoperability have joined the traditional ones like terminology standardization or translation. Our topics always cover the most recent developments in science and technology and problem fields.

Question:

The title of the event reads "Terminology Management: Theory, Practice and Applications". However, there are a multitude of training, workshops and conferences on the market, which are dealing with terminology. What makes TSS so special?

Schmitz:

It is true, there are many conferences. Usually these are focusing on very specific aspects only and consist of disconnected or even incoherent papers. Other than these, TSS covers the whole spectrum of knowledge, and skills that are needed to do good and sound terminology work. Moreover, with TSS we try to remain independent from single software providers. Most terminology seminars are a bit too tool-specific.

Drame:

There are a few university courses. But these are way too time-consuming and theoretic for most. Especially for those, who are already working and need this qualification for their job.

Schmitz:

True. Furthermore, not all universities offer adequate terminology training to students of related subjects. For this reason we offer 6 ECTS according to the European Credit Transfer System for participation. This is a special appeal for students (together with the huge discount).

Question:

Which target group are you aiming at exactly then: Students, scientists or practitioners?

Schmitz:

The answer would be „yes“. Three times yes. We address students of universities without terminology curriculum. The ECTS are relevant for them. Scientists might be most interested in didactical questions, how to teach terminology work. Besides getting insight into terminology practice, that is. Practitioners will find authentic examples, real-life exercises and a comprehensive introduction into the field.

Drame:

You must not forget to mention that TSS addresses all age groups and backgrounds. Diversity is really no foreign word for us.

Question:

But is a course for such a heterogeneous group achievable and reasonable at all?

Schmitz:

Heterogeneity is hard to avoid. We always had this kind of groups in the past. However, feedback we received always showed that this is not seen as a problem by the majority of participants. On the contrary, mutual benefiting from each other's experiences is desired. TSS program also takes different kinds and levels of experience into account and offers the chance for discussion rounds, breakaway sessions and special foci.

Drame:

The participants at TSS do not only learn from what the trainers tell them during their lectures but from each other in the first place. The most important message we try to teach is „you are not alone out there“ and „take a step back and take another look at the broader picture and you'll be surprised that other might have made almost similar experiences“. Learn to learn from each other. The rest is pure theory. A crash course like TSS is an incredibly efficient way to network within the community and beyond. Many friendships and new contacts stay alive long after the course. I can tell from personal experience.



Question:

One last question about costs for participating...?

Schmitz:

Costs range in the lower categories of what is usually charged for training. This is not in the least because we have non-commercial background and luckily can make use of university infrastructures. But we also have to be self-supporting. Even more so because we are proudly independent and impartial and do not want to become depending from commercial sponsors. We have to be able to carry all costs on the one hand and be affordable for all on the other hand. We are proud to have achieved this in the past years.

Drame:

(laughs) And where else does one get world-class experts for the different terminology applications who take time during a whole week to help the most individual problems and tell you all you ever wanted to know about terminology work?