

Avaliação de Unidades de I&D 2007

Unidade de I&D: Centro de Estudos em Letras [LIN-Norte-VilaReal-707]

- **Classificação:** Good
- **Unidade Visitada em:** 16-11-2007
- **Comentários do Painel de Avaliação:**
- The University's vice-rector met with the evaluation panel and was present throughout the whole meeting with the Unit and declared the University's engagement in promoting excellent research.

CEL is a relatively new Unit demonstrating a strong commitment to achieve a high level of scientific quality. This Unit appears to be well integrated in the University and to be supported by the University's administration in its efforts to reach scientific excellence.

The work produced by this Unit is impressive but so far has not yet reached the necessary international visibility.

In fact, although some of the central members of the research teams apparently lack English skills, there seems to be a clear policy towards internationalization, both from the host University and from the Unit itself. A particularly relevant aspect of this internationalization effort was the organization of special language courses for the Unit's researchers who still feel uncomfortable with using foreign languages when interacting with their international research partners. This is a very promising strategy that may be expected to promote the visibility of the Unit's research in international contexts.

The Unit has also entailed scientific exchange with other universities, which is likely to have significant positive consequences in the near future. Of particular relevance is the Unit's co-operation with the group of web experts from ISMAI, who will offer CEL their competence to create professional web interfaces where the work produced by CEL will become visible using up-to-date techniques for electronic publishing. By this means, CEL's analysis of unique medieval language sources (like the charters) will become available to the wide scientific community.

- **Grupos de Investigação na Unidade:**
 -
 - **(RG-LIN-Norte-VilaReal-707-1507) Linguistics**
 - The group has an impressive record in terms of master theses and conferences arranged. The list of publications is also quite long, although there are no peer-reviewed and very few foreign-language items. (A curious feature is that the bibliography includes works by Milton Azevedo, who is associated with the group but who according to his own homepage has been at the Univ. of California at Berkeley since 1976.) The work on early Portuguese grammarians appears highly relevant but it is essential that it be made accessible to a non-Portuguese audience.
 - **(RG-X-LIN-Norte-VilaReal-707-1570) Language Teaching/Didactics**
 - Implementation of the Bologna Treaty has severely harmed this group since they lost various professors. Recently they rearranged their research groups in four directions: Literature, Culture, Teaching of Portuguese & Didactics, and Communication.

A little bit geographically isolated in the country the researches established regular contacts with the University of Évora, 4 hours driving from the campus.

This research group appeared to take advantaged of this devoting part of its time to the study of Mirandês dialect, quite important to understanding the way Romance languages developed in Iberia.

During the visit it has been easy to witness the efforts of researchers backed up by the Vice-Rector. This group planned to host a site for internationally sharing their findings. Since this difficult goal appeared among other research units as well I would like to recommend FCT to be the host of at least three sites to offer Portuguese universities this kind of service: (1) Linguistics, (2) Literature, (3) Linguistic policies (in this case the site will be devoted to the teaching issues).

- **(RG-LIN-Norte-VilaReal-707-1571) Communication**
- The unit and research group is young, has serious aims and shows indications of having thought through how they may be implemented. For example, unit's aims to increase international publications would be supported by English proofreading assistance through overhead to the university's central administration. The unit has developed national collaborations which, albeit at quite a distance, complement the group by offering competent technical assistance. The unit's primary research strength lies in their extensive handling of unique medieval texts and charts.

Within the unit, Communication Science is a new research group which will be starting in 2007. The group defines the broad topic of "communication science" to include areas such as journalism, advertising, public and political communication, and information organization (e.g., library science), with the primary objective of studying how technology is changing communication practices. Within this broad aim, the research group has highlighted numerous relevant sub-issues to address, which despite the size of the group, nevertheless comes across as overly ambitious to be adequately addressed in the coming project period. This domain nevertheless raises important ethical issues about the handling of printed materials for research purposes, for which national ethical review criteria currently appear to be lacking.

Although a Communication Science is a new research group, the researchers involved have a solid starting point, having internationally published 2 books and 1 journal article in English, as well as 1 book and 1 book chapter published nationally in Portuguese.

Although issues of "Attitudes and work environment" weren't addressed for the individual research group, the unit as a whole appears to have a good leadership with relatively unified goals. They have identified relatively applied niches which complement other units we visited. They have also identified collaborators from other national universities that fill in where local expertise leaves off.

To support their aims of increasing international publications, the unit is especially in need of resources for English proofreading.

- **(RG-LIN-Alentejo-Evora-707-2680) Literature**
- Não foram submetidos comentários para o Grupo de Investigação pelo Painel.
- **(RG-LIN-Norte-VilaReal-707-1642) Culture**
- Não foram submetidos comentários para o Grupo de Investigação pelo Painel.