

Brussels, 01/07/2009

**First Management Committee Meeting of  
COST Action IS0804 “Language Impairment in a Multilingual Society: Linguistic  
Patterns and the Road to Assessment”**

**COST OFFICE, BRUSSELS, 8-9 June 2009**

**MINUTES**

**Present:**

**Members:**

CY Dr Kleanthes Grohmann  
DE Prof Monika Rothweiler  
DE Prof Petra Schulz  
DK Dr Kristine Jensen De Lopez  
DK Dr Tia G.B. Hansen  
ES Prof Anna Gavarro Alguero  
ES Prof. M. Dolores Gorbau  
FI Prof Sari Kunnari  
FI Prof Ekaterina Protassova  
FR Dr Philippe Prevost  
FR Dr Laurice Anne Tuller  
GR Prof Ianthi Maria Tsimpli  
IL Dr Sharon Armon-Lotem  
IL Prof Joel Walters  
IS Dr Elin Thordardottir  
IT Prof. M. Chiara Levorato  
MT Dr Helen Grech  
NL Prof Anne E. Baker  
NL Dr Jan De Jong  
NO Dr Kirsten Meyer Bjerkan  
PL Dr Ewa Haman  
PL Dr Zofia Wodniecka  
RO Ms Alina Popa  
RO Dr Dorin Popa  
SE Ms Natasha Ringblom  
TK Prof. S. Seyhun Topbas  
UK Dr Theodoros Marinis  
UK Ms Carolyn Letts

**DC Rapporteur:**

Prof Alain Peyraube

**COST Office:**

Dr Julia Stamm, Science Officer (SO) ISCH  
Ms Felicitas Ambrosius, Administrative Officer (AO) ISCH  
Ms Magali Poinot, Grant Agreement Manager



## **0. WELCOME TO PARTICIPANTS**

The COST Office Science Officer for the COST Domain of Individuals, Societies, Cultures and Health (ISCH), Julia Stamm, welcomed the participants to the first Management Committee Meeting of the Action. She would chair the meeting until the Committee had elected a Chair of the Action (item 6) and grant holder (7) who would then take over.

## **1. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

The agenda was adopted.

## **2. STATUS OF THE COST ACTION**

The SO informed that so far 12 COST member states (DE, DK, ES, FR, GR, IL, IS, IT, NL, PL, SE, UK) had accepted the Action's Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). 7 other COST member states will accept the MoU in due course (CY, FI, LT, MT, NO, RO, TK).

An updated list of signatures and MC membership can be found on the COST Office website: [http://www.cost.esf.org/index.php?id=233&action\\_number=IS0804](http://www.cost.esf.org/index.php?id=233&action_number=IS0804).

The Action would be open for COST countries to join unconditionally until 23 November 2009 (one year after the Action's approval by the CSO), after which new members could join only after the approval of the MC. The Action would end four years after the 1<sup>st</sup> MC meeting, i.e. 7 June 2013.

## **3. PRESENTATION OF THE DELEGATIONS**

The participants presented themselves, among them the proposer of the Action, Sharon Armon-Lotem from Bar-Ilan University (IL)

## **4. GENERAL INFORMATION ON COST MECHANISM AND THE ISCH DOMAIN AND ON THE FUNDING AND REPORTING OF COORDINATION ACTIVITIES**

The SO presented the main characteristics, instruments, rules and procedures of the COST framework (see presentation in Annex I). The main items of the presentation are detailed below:

### COST History, Scope and Approach

COST was the first and is the widest European network for the coordination of nationally funded research activities. It is based on an inter-governmental framework for cooperation agreed following a Ministerial Conference in 1971. A commitment to a "wider" Europe was demonstrated by the then six countries belonging to the European Union as this agreement involved from the outset 19 European countries. Starting from a limited number of domains, COST has now grown into a system for research collaboration covering 35 European Member States plus one cooperating state, Israel, and is active in 9 scientific domains.

The mission of COST is to strengthen Europe in scientific and technical research through the support of European cooperation and interaction between European researchers. It covers both basic and more applied or technological research and also addresses issues of a pre-normative nature or of societal importance.

The funds provided by COST support the coordination costs of the research networks ("Actions"), while the research itself is funded nationally. A "bottom-up approach" (there are no pre-set thematic priorities), "à-la-carte" participation (only countries who wish to participate in an Action do so), equality of access (participation is open to all COST countries) and a flexible structure (easy implementation and lean management of the research initiatives) are the main characteristics of COST. As a precursor of advanced multidisciplinary research, COST has a very important role in building the European

Research Area (ERA), anticipating and complementing the activities of the Framework Programmes, acting as a “bridge” spanning the scientific communities of the whole Europe, increasing the mobility of researchers across Europe and fostering the establishment of large Framework Programme projects.

### COST Governance and Funding

The organisation of COST reflects its inter-governmental nature. Key decisions are taken at COST Ministerial Conferences which are held every five years on average. The Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) is the highest decision-making body and is charged with the oversight and strategic development of COST. The Secretariat of the CSO is provided by the General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union. Each COST Member State appoints two representatives to the CSO, one of whom is usually the COST National Coordinator (CNC).

The COST Domain Committees (DC) report to the CSO and each DC is responsible for supervising the COST Actions in their respective Domains. They also assess new proposals and watch over the strategic development of their respective domains. Each COST country may appoint one to two representatives, a senior scientist or expert, to each Domain Committee.

The Domain Committees perform quality control duties. Assessment of new proposals includes peer review (involving external experts), and an overall assessment by the Domain Committee. Current Actions are monitored by the Domain Committees through the appointment of “Rapporteurs” and by annual reports and presentations by Actions to their respective Domain Committees. Finally, there is an evaluation of completed Actions through an External Evaluation Panel, chaired by the Rapporteur, whose report is considered and approved by the DC.

COST is supported by a specific part of the EU RTD Framework Programmes (“Cooperation” in FP7). This is organised through a Specific Support Action contract between the European Commission and the European Science Foundation, appointed by COST as its legal entity to act as implementing agent on behalf of COST.

### COST Actions

COST Actions usually have a lifetime of 4 years and have an average budget of around € 90.000-100.000 per annum, depending primarily on their size, to support networking activities. Once a proposal has been accepted by the Domain Committee, it is referred to the CSO for formal approval. Each Action is then opened for COST Member States to join it by accepting a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). Once five acceptances have been filed, the Action can have its first meeting.

Each Action is under the supervision of a Management Committee (MC) with maximum two representatives per signatory country nominated by the COST National Coordinator. Normally, MCs form Working Groups (WGs) addressing specific topics of the Action’s work programme, described in the Technical Annex to the Memorandum of Understanding. The MC is responsible for:

- supervising and co-ordinating implementation of the Action on the basis of the MoU;
- allocating the Action’s annual budget;
- planning and approving activities (meetings etc.);
- reporting to the DC-ISCH,
- ensuring scientific coordination at national level.

COST Actions cover support for Management Committee and Working Group meetings, specialist workshops and seminars, including large final conferences, publications and dissemination, training schools and short-term scientific missions (STSMs) for the support of exchange visits between the institutes of the Action participants (see below).

## Eligible Expenses

### Supported Action activities (financial instruments)

There is no direct research funding by COST and the budget of the COST Office is targeted at the expenses needed to support the cooperation between the various participating organisations' scientific activities within each COST Action. The main instruments for the support of the cooperation of the COST Actions are:

*Travel and subsistence:* This covers the reimbursement for scientists for their attendance of Management Committee meetings, Working Group meetings, Core Group meetings, workshops, conferences, Domain Committee meetings or synergy meetings with other research activities such as ESF, the Framework Programme, etc.

The reimbursement is based on a flat rate for accommodation and meals and covers transport costs (train- air ticket, car, local transport, etc.), for which the meeting participants are encouraged to use the most economical means of transport (such as low-cost airlines) available.

*Workshops/Conferences (organisational support):* Workshops/Conferences may be organised by a Management Committee in any COST country, which has accepted the MoU of the Action. They should be open, in general, to the whole scientific community and act as a showcase for the activities of the Action.

The Conference/Workshop should be organised in conjunction with a Domain or Management Committee meeting or other major scientific event in the field of the Action so that all members of the Committee can attend. The organisation of such events may require financial support which can be granted for the following expenses:

- Room and technical equipment rental.
- Phone, fax, mailing costs for announcements, letters of confirmation.
- Photocopying, printing of programmes, flyers, book of abstracts, application forms, draft report etc.
- Personnel - staff involvement - or temporary recruitment of a secretary if necessary, or the services of a Congress organising agency if the Conference/Workshop is very large.
- Local transport - e.g. a bus for a scientific visit.
- Coffee breaks and light refreshments.
- Meals/dinners (if deducted from the daily allowance of the reimbursed participants).
- Conference/Workshop Proceedings.

COST support is only a contribution to the total budget. For a requested support of up to € 3000, the contribution will take the form of a fixed grant. The contribution should normally not exceed € 10.000 (in this case, invoices as well as a scientific report will have to be provided). The SO recommended giving preference to smaller grants of up to € 3000. However, such a support should be granted exceptionally and only for bigger events.

*Training Schools:* "Training Schools" within the context of the Action topic are aimed at providing dissemination of the Action activities and intensive training in a new emerging subject in one of the institutes of the Action with unique equipment or know-how. The participants are basically but not exclusively early-stage researchers from across Europe, but these schools also cover appropriate re-training as part of 'life-long learning'. The duration is normally less than 5 days. The total number of participants should not exceed 30.

*Action General Support Grant (GASG):* COST Action's Management Committees (MC) may assign up to € 2000 p.a. from within an Action budget to the MC Chair as grant holder for the general support of the Action management. This grant can be used for the support and development of an Action Website as well as for general support of the Action's MC operation, such as secretarial support, small-scale Action-related ad-hoc activities and support for preparatory events. This grant will be allocated as a fixed grant to the MC Chair as grant holder. He has to report on the expenditure at the MC meeting.

*Dissemination, Publications:* The aim of the dissemination and communication policy is to inform the members of the networks, the scientific community, the potential beneficiaries and policy makers about

the outcome of the Actions and their planned programmes and activities. As far as publications, emphasis is placed on publishing:

- In scientific journals as special issue according to standard procedures for submission of manuscripts.
- As books produced by reputable publishers in the field of the relevant scientific research areas.
- As proceedings of workshops and conferences.
- General information leaflets and brochures.

COST support takes the form of buying from the publisher a number of copies (normally max. 100) for the Action members and others. Normally, the Action must approach at least two suitable publishers to negotiate competitive offers.

### **Short-term scientific missions (STSMs)**

**Inter-Institute Exchange Visits:** Missions or exchange visits are aimed at strengthening the existing networks by allowing scientists to visit an institution in another COST country to foster collaboration or to learn a new technique and/or methods not available in their own institution. They are particularly intended for Early-Stage Researchers. The SO proposed to the members of the Management Committee to consider nominating a STSM coordinator.

The duration of a STSM can vary between one week minimum (5 working days), and 3 months maximum (6 months for early-stage researchers). The Applicant must be engaged in a research programme in an institution of a COST Member State having accepted the MoU of the Action concerned. Both home and host institution should be in a COST Member State having accepted the MoU and participating in the COST Action. In exceptional cases, a STSM can be approved from a home institution in a COST country to a host institution in a non-COST country but not the other way round. Short-Term Scientific Missions between different Actions in the same field can be considered by the Management Committees involved.

The Management Committee (MC) of the Action is in charge of the selection of the applicant. The financial support is a contribution to the expenses of a STSM and may not necessarily cover all the costs in each case. The grant normally covers only travel and subsistence. The average contribution for a STSM will be a fixed grant based on the Applicant's budget request and decision of the relevant assessment committee. It will normally not exceed € 2500 (€ 3.500 for early-stage researchers). Any exception needs special justification.

### **Work and Budget Plan**

The SO informed the MC that the current Action budget amounts to 50.000 EUR. The future Action Chair is requested to submit a Work and Budget Plan as soon as possible after the 1<sup>st</sup> MC Meeting, covering the period from June 2009-May 2010. This work and budget plan will have to be revised once the Action migrates to the COST Grant System.

The SO informed that she would try to allocate additional funding to the Action. More information will be available in July.

### **Financial Reports**

The SO informed that, under the CGS, the grant-holder will have to submit a Preliminary Financial Report to the COST Office after 6-9 months after the start of the grant period. The Final Financial report will have to be submitted after the end of the grant period. This means that each year two financial reports are due.

### **Progress Report**

The SO informed that the Action has to submit an annual Progress Report to the COST Office, normally before the Annual Progress Conference (APC) in June. This means that the Progress Report is normally due in April. It has to be submitted by the Chair on behalf of the MC.

### **Annual reviews at the Annual Progress Conferences**

The SO informed that the Action Chair will have to attend the Annual Progress Conference and present the progress of his Action to the Domain Committee of the ISCH Domain. This will also be the occasion to meet the other ISCH Action Chairs, to exchange and to interact. During the Conference, the DC-ISCH (especially through the DC Rapporteur) will give its feedback on the work of the Action.

The DC Rapporteur must be included in the Action's e-mail list for invitations, minutes, etc. and kept updated on plans for meetings and activities. The Rapporteur will monitor the progress of the Action on behalf of the DC and will chair the panel of the Final Evaluation. The Rapporteur normally attends one Action meeting per budget year and is reimbursed through the Action's budget. The DC Rapporteur for IS0804 is Prof Alain Peyraube from France.

### **Website**

The Action has to set up a website with a clear link to COST. The GASG can be used to support its maintenance.

After the SO's presentation, Ms Magali Poinot introduced the COST Grant System to the MC Members. The Action is expected to adopt the COST Grant System (CGS) in the coming months. The SO will inform the Action Chair accordingly.

Ms Poinot's presentation is attached to the minutes (ANNEX II).

## **5. AGREEMENT ON THE INTERNAL RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

The standard rules of procedure for COST Management Committees (COST 270/07, Annex III) were approved.

## **6. ELECTION OF THE CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR**

The MC elected Sharon Armon-Lotem (IL) as Chair and Jan De Jong (NL) as Vice-Chair of the Action. After being elected Dr Armon-Lotem chaired the meeting.

## **7. IDENTIFICATION OF A GRANT-HOLDER, ACTION SECRETARY AND TWO FINANCIAL RAPPOREURS**

The SO explained that in the traditional COST support model, the MC agrees on activities, which are then funded directly by the COST Office on an event by event basis. In this "pay-as-you-go" system, expenses are reimbursed directly to each participant for each event (committee meeting and/or workshop etc) or exchange visit (STSM) agreed in advance.

However, Action IS0804 will in the course of the coming months adopt the COST Grant System. One of the MC's institutions will receive a block grant and it is then responsible for funding/reimbursing the activities agreed by the MC. The grant is based on the detailed work programme and budget proposal of the Action for the grant period and on the budget allocation to the Action as part of the overall domain funding.

The Grant Agreement is based on a contract between the COST Office and the grant holder following a request from the Action's Management Committee. The grant-holder is selected by the Action's Management Committee from the institutions of its members.

The grant is used by the grant-holder to execute the secretarial work and payments related to the activities planned during the grant period by decision of the Management Committee. The grant-holder is responsible for the timely reimbursement of eligible costs in accordance with the COST Vademecum financial rules and for the execution of the work plan agreed by the Management Committee of the Action. The grant-holder's scientific, administrative and financial roles are the following: financial reporting, scientific and administrative secretariat, coordination, liaison, publication and dissemination.

The grant-holder can request an overhead fee of up to 15% of the *actual* expenditure in order to cover administrative costs. 65% of the COST Office's financial contribution is paid to the grant-holder after the signature of the contract. Up to 35% are paid after approval by the COST Office of a preliminary financial report.

- a) The MC identified the institution of the Action Chair, the Bar-Ilan University (IL), as its grant holder.
- b) The Grant Holder Secretary will be from the Grant Holder Institution. The MC also nominated Jan de Jong as the Academic Secretary
- c) The MC nominated Philippe Prevost (FR) and Monika Rothweiler (DE) as Financial Rapporteurs.

## **8. WORKING PLAN FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COST ACTION (MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING) AND PRESENTATION OF THE ACTION BY THE PROPONENT**

### – Objectives and working programme

The Chair presented the Working Plan. The main objective of this Action is to profile BISLI by establishing a network to coordinate research on the linguistic and cognitive abilities of bilingual children with SLI (BISLI) across different migrant communities. For derived objectives, secondary objectives and means see Appendix III.

During the discussion a number of decisions were made. They are listed underneath, together with comments from the group. The slides used for the presentation will be distributed along with the minutes (Appendix III).

- *Summer School*: It was suggested that the first Summer School could be organized earlier than in Year 3, i.e. at the end of Year 2; preferably back to back with another summer school (EMLAR, LOT) so that junior researchers can attend both. No decision was taken yet. This point will be discussed again in a year.
- *Publication policy*: The following guidelines for publication (taken from the UvA-ACLC site) were accepted for the Action:
  - “All named authors should meet conditions 1, 2, and 3.
    - 1) They must make substantial contributions to conception and design, or acquisition of data, or analysis and interpretation of data;
    - 2) They must be involved in drafting the article OR revising it critically for important intellectual content;
    - 3) They must give final approval of the version to be published.Fulfilling all these conditions is a necessary condition to be an author. Order of authorship should be decided on the basis of importance of contribution and otherwise alphabetically.”
- *Members from Non-COST countries* - Johanne Paradis, University of Alberta and Kathryn Kohnert, University of Minnesota were approved.
- *Near neighbors* and other relevant parties: interest has been shown by researchers from Lebanon and Russia (ST Petersburg). Some countries have a special status and allow for participants (not MC's): South Africa, New Zealand, Australia. Names of candidate collaborators from those countries were exchanged.
- Working method - organisation and management (including working groups)
- Management Committee - The MC will be responsible for the overall coordination of the Action and the interaction between the four WGs. The leaders of the four WGs will form a Steering Group. The MC will organize the biannual COST meetings
- Steering Group - The steering group will help the chair and vice chair in coordinating the activities of the different groups with the help and support of the MC.

- The Steering Group includes:
    - Chair & Vice-chair
    - WGs Leaders
    - STSM Manager
    - Dissemination Manager
  - The Working Groups (WGs)
    - WG1 - Syntax and its interface with morphology and semantics
    - WG2 - Narrative and discourse abilities
    - WG3 - Lexical and phonological processing
    - WG4 - Executive functions.
  - Distribution of tasks
    - *WG leaders* were chosen:
      - WG1: Theo Marinis & Petra Schulz
      - WG2: Joel Walters & Natalia Gagarina
      - WG3: Dolors Gribau & Ewa Haman
      - WG4: Anne Baker & Kristine Jensen de Lopez
    - *WG members*: A procedure was decided on for the selection of (additional) WG members. Importantly, invitations to the COST meetings for WG members are dependent on budget. Acceptance of too many WG members would exceed the budget. Therefore, three steps will be taken:
      - (1) Information will be gathered on the candidate members' credentials. The Vice-chair will circulate an application form for WG members by which they can summarize their background. The forms can be filled in by the MC('s) from the country concerned. These forms are submitted to the WG leaders and the Vice-Chair *two weeks* after reception of the form.
      - (2) A list of candidate WG members will be made by the Vice-Chair (in consensus with the WG leaders and the Chair) on which the MC's have to vote.
      - (3) The Vice-Chair will circulate a proposed description of the criteria for invitation of WG members to COST meetings to which MC's can react. Although the number of WG members will not be restricted (see (1), (2)), the budget for each meeting is limited and a procedure for deciding who to invite is necessary.
    - WG members cannot be members of more than one WG.
    - *MC members* must also notify the WG leaders (cc to Vice-Chair) of their WG preference. It is recommended that MC members will join more than one WG.
    - Since the budget for individual meetings is limited, it is extremely important that MC members who cannot attend a meeting notify the Chair in time, so that another WG member can be invited. If an MC member does not respond to the invitation to a meeting, he or she will be considered to not participate, allowing the Chair to invite another researcher.
    - STSM manager: Laurie Tuller agreed to do it for years 1&2 (Spyridoula Vorlokosta already volunteered for years 3-4). The MC approved
    - Dissemination Manager: Kleanthes Grohmann has volunteered to accept this position. The MC agrees.
- Clinical Assessment and Intervention Committee: Elin Thordardottir agreed to head the committee. This will be voted on in it
- Promotion of gender balance and of Early Stage Researchers (ESRs)
  - Gender Balance: The positions of Chair, Vice Chair, and Steering Group members will be divided equally between genders, as much as it is possible. Constant efforts will be made to achieve gender balance in recruitment of early-stage researchers. Gender balance will also be considered in approving STSM applications.
  - Early Stage Researchers: The Action will encourage the involvement of early-stage researchers (MAs, PhDs, postdoctoral fellows) in:
    - Workshops and Conferences of the Action (target: 35%)
    - 75% of STSMs
    - 75% of places in the Summer School
  - There will be a special emphasis on training early-stage researchers from multilingual communities who speak minority languages.



- Time-table
- Year 1 – Exchange of Knowledge and narrowing the domain
- Year 2 – Methodologies agreement
- Year 3 - Findings
- Year 4 – Dissemination and Publications

**Milestones:**

- End of Year 2 - a peer-reviewed report setting the guidelines to be used in studying the different language pairs, narrowing the range of linguistic and cognitive phenomena to be studied and the tasks to be used. This milestone will be achieved in two stages
  - 1 - narrowing the domain of each WG by the end of the first year
  - 2 - a methodological agreement by the end of the second year when the guidelines are to be set.
 A report of this stage will be the basis for further collaboration and studies by current and newly recruited participants/groups in Years 3-4.
- End of Year 4 - a concluding conference, publications, position papers and a final report are expected.
- The biannual meetings will serve as intermediate milestones for presentation of findings and development of new materials for differentiating LI and TD bilingualism. Each bi-annual meeting will be followed by 10-15 STSMs to enhance the collaboration and train young researchers.

See Appendix III for further details

**9. BUDGET PLAN**

- The budget plan starts from the assumption that we have a total of 107,000 Euro for 2009/2010. The budget, then, will be allocated as follows:

– Aim	– Amount
– Kick-off meeting	– 20,000
– Amsterdam meeting (November/December) – for 40 participants from COST countries (40*800=32000) and two invited experts from Canada (Johanne Paradis) & the USA (Kathryn Kohnert) – 1200 each	– 34,400
– Newcastle meeting (April/May) – for 43 participants from COST countries (43*800=34400) and an invited expert (1200)	– 35,600
– Organization COST support for the two meetings (2*3000)	– 6,000
– STSMs (around 10)	– 15,000
– General Action Support Grant (GASG) – For setting a webpage	– 2,000

–

**10. PLACE AND DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Future meetings: the first dates are: 15-18 November 2009 (Amsterdam); April/May 2010 (Newcastle). A precise date for the Newcastle meeting will be circulated to the MC's. For the subsequent meetings a number of candidates have volunteered.

**11. AOB**

None

## **12. CLOSING**

### **ANNEXES:**

**ANNEX I:       Presentation on COST given by the SO**

**ANNEX II:       Introduction to the COST Grant System**

**ANNEX III:      Presentation on the Action given by the Chair**

**ANNEX IV:      Rules of Procedure for Management Committees**