"Students' use of English during internships in the Brussels area – a pilot study"

De Cock, Sylvie

ABSTRACT

The Master in multilingual communication (MULT) was first offered by the Université catholique de Louvain (Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium) in 2004-2005. The major objectives of this two-year multidisciplinary programme (120 credits), which was born out of a one-year diploma in multilingual business communication, are (1) to help students develop business communication skills in two languages (Dutch, English, French or German) and (2) to provide students with a multi-faceted understanding of the business world (with e.g. courses in communication, economics and management) and of the economic, legal, social and political aspects of the countries where the two languages chosen are spoken. The programme has a strong professional focus and students are required to complete a three-month internship in a company/organisation where at least one of the two major languages chosen is spoken (in Belgium or abroad). This paper sets out to present the findings of an exploratory study of the students' ...

CITE THIS VERSION


Le dépôt institutionnel DIAL est destiné au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques émanant des membres de l'UCLouvain. Toute utilisation de ce document à des fins lucratives ou commerciales est strictement interdite. L'utilisateur s'engage à respecter les droits d'auteur liés à ce document, principalement le droit à l'intégrité de l'œuvre et le droit à la paternité. La politique complète de copyright est disponible sur la page Copyright policy.

DIAL is an institutional repository for the deposit and dissemination of scientific documents from UCLouvain members. Usage of this document for profit or commercial purposes is strictly prohibited. User agrees to respect copyright about this document, mainly text integrity and source mention. Full content of copyright policy is available at Copyright policy.

Available at: http://hdl.handle.net/2078.1/187471

[Downloaded 2020/03/22 at 12:17:13 ]
Students' use of English during internships in the Brussels area

Sylvie De Cock (Université catholique de Louvain, Université Saint-Louis Bruxelles)

The Master in multilingual communication (MULT) was first offered by the Université catholique de Louvain (Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium) in 2004-2005. The major objectives of this two-year multidisciplinary programme (120 credits), which was born out of a one-year diploma in multilingual business communication, are (1) to help students develop business communication skills in two languages (Dutch, English, French or German) and (2) to provide students with a multi-faceted understanding of the business world (with e.g. courses in communication, economics and management) and of the economic, legal, social and political aspects of the countries where the two languages chosen are spoken. The programme has a strong professional focus and students are required to complete a three-month internship in a company/organisation where at least one of the two major languages chosen is spoken (in Belgium or abroad).

This paper sets out to present the findings of an exploratory study of the students' use of English during their internship at companies/organisations in the Brussels area. Using information from the students' internship proposals and internship reports and from the evaluation sheets filled in by the internship supervisors, the study examines (1) the type of company/organisation where the students worked (e.g. big multinational companies, Brussels-based SMEs), (2) whether English is the official language of the company/organisation, (4) which other language(s) the students also used, (4) whether English was used with native speakers of the language or as a lingua franca (Jenkins 2007, Seidelhofer 2001), (5) whether English was mainly used in written and/or spoken communication tasks, (6) the actual tasks that had to be completed in English, and (7) whether English was used essentially for internal (e.g. with the other employees) and/or for external communication (e.g. with suppliers, clients) purposes.