

RESEARCH REVIEW
LEIDEN UNIVERSITY
CENTRE FOR LINGUISTICS
LEIDEN UNIVERSITY

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This report was finalized on 12 February 2019

REPORT ON THE RESEARCH REVIEW OF LEIDEN UNIVERSITY CENTRE FOR LINGUISTICS

1. FOREWORD BY COMMITTEE CHAIR

The evaluation committee that authored this report was assembled by QANU (Quality Assurance Netherlands Universities) at the request of the participating universities (including the University of Utrecht), and it included expertise from a broad spectrum of linguistic sub-disciplines, consisting, as it did of Prof. Dr. B. (Balthasar) Bickel, Zurich; Prof. Dr. A. (Ann) Bradlow, Northwestern (Evanston, Illinois); Prof. Dr. S. (Seana) Coulson, University of California at San Diego; Prof. Dr. J. (Jane) Grimshaw, Rutgers (New Jersey); Prof. Dr. A. (Alison) Mackey, Georgetown (Washington, D.C.); Prof. Dr. Ir. J. (John) Nerbonne [chair], em. Groningen and Freiburg, and Prof. Dr. W. (Wendy) Sandler, Haifa (Israel). Beyond their specialist expertise, the members were remarkable and valuable for their broad view of linguistics and their willingness to examine scientific areas well outside their research foci proper and for their energy in considering practical issues of organization, financing and management that often seemed foreign. These topics were also included in the evaluation. The committee also enjoyed its collaboration and I am grateful to all of them for their professional attitudes and pleasant interaction.

Jetje De Groof served as secretary to the committee, and she was essential to the process at all stages, suggesting a division of labour, providing more concrete instructions to committee members on how to follow the Standard Evaluation Protocol (SEP), as well as on how to keep the "Terms of Reference" (ToR) of our particular evaluation in mind, and sitting at my right hand during meetings and keeping notes to ensure that the committee was addressing *all* the crucial points of the SEP and the ToR. She also received the rough drafts of all the various parts of the report, which she edited with me, and I was very grateful not only for her close attention to the report's expected topics, but also for her efficient and clear style of writing. One committee member – confusing the various specialized meanings of the word 'secretary' – objected that she be referred to at all in this way: "She was so much more!". I am grateful for all the very competent work that she invested in this report.

The researchers of the Leiden University Centre for Linguistics (LUCL) at Leiden University (LEI) were assiduous in providing us with a great deal of information on their work in the six year review period, 2012-2017, not only with respect to matters that are normally catalogued carefully, such as publications and grants, but also with respect to their record in matters that often fall outside academic reporting, such as work on scientific popularization or marks of recognition from outside academia. We received a fifty-two page report plus several appendices on the research programmes, most them informationally dense. All of this material facilitated the committee in obtaining as complete a picture of the work at LUCL as possible. On the occasion our visit on Oct. 1, 2018 we spoke with over 30 LUCL members about their scientific work; their aspirations, and how well they found themselves able to work and advance professionally at LEI; how well their various research lines dovetailed with the institute's strategic emphases – both scientifically and with respect to extra-scientific interests and applications; and, perhaps most extensively, about their frustrations in seeking to realize serious scientific and applied-science ambitions at the LUCL. I am certain that I speak for all committee members when I acknowledge how much we profited from the very cooperative atmosphere we encountered during our visit to the LUCL.

A chair who is currently an emeritus professor may be forgiven a personal note, even in the foreword to a very official document. Science, I believe, profits a great deal from its younger practitioners. They see correctly that they can contribute and be recognized if they are tenacious enough to continue to insist on their insights, to search for new evidence, and to keep developing new demonstrations, even while ignoring some criticism. The stereotyped self-opinionated researcher isn't without problems, but lots of advances are due to the tenacity and energy of young researchers working hard to prove that they're right. If indeed we profit a lot from the energy and tenacity of

young researchers, then it behoves us as a profession to see that they get a fair chance to prove themselves. We therefore include in the report below a suggestion to pay special attention to younger scholars when developing plans to protect research time.

Our visit was well organized and our reception at LUCL by prof. Niels Schiller and by dr. Kate Bellamy was cordial.

John Nerbonne
Chair of the committee

2. THE REVIEW COMMITTEE AND THE PROCEDURES

2.1. Scope of the review

The review committee has been asked to perform a review of the research in Linguistics at four research institutes (at the universities of Amsterdam, Leiden, Utrecht and Nijmegen), and the Netherlands Graduate School of Linguistics (LOT). This report includes the committee's findings on the Leiden University Centre for Linguistics (LUCL) at Leiden University. The findings on the other institutes can be found in separate reports.

In accordance with the Standard Evaluation Protocol 2015 – 2021 (SEP) for research reviews in the Netherlands, the committee was asked to assess, both in quantitative and qualitative terms, the quality, the relevance to society and the viability of the scientific research at LUCL (institute level) as well as the strategic targets and the extent to which the unit is equipped to achieve these targets. Furthermore, a qualitative review of the PhD programme, research integrity and diversity was part of the committee's assignment.

In addition, the review includes separate evaluations of LUCL three research groups: (1) Theoretical and Experimental Linguistics; (2) Language Use in Present and Past; and (3) Descriptive and Comparative Linguistics. The committee was asked to provide both a quantitative and a qualitative assessment of these programmes, in accordance with the SEP criteria. Furthermore, the committee was invited to discuss the relation between these separate programme assessments and the overall evaluation of LUCL.

2.2. Composition of the committee

The composition of the committee was as follows:

- Prof. Dr. Ir. J. (John) Nerbonne [chair]
- Prof. Dr. B. (Balthasar) Bickel
- Prof. Dr. A. (Ann) Bradlow
- Prof. Dr. S. (Seana) Coulson
- Prof. Dr. J. (Jane) Grimshaw
- Prof. Dr. A. (Alison) Mackey
- Prof. Dr. W. (Wendy) Sandler

The committee was supported by Dr. Jetje de Groof, who acted as secretary on behalf of QANU.

2.3. Independence

All members of the committee signed a statement of independence to guarantee an unbiased and independent assessment of the quality of the Leiden University Centre for Linguistics at Leiden University. Personal or professional relationships between committee members and the research unit under review were reported and discussed at the start of the site visit amongst committee members. The committee concluded that no specific risk in terms of bias or undue influence existed and that all members were sufficiently independent.

2.4. Data provided to the committee

The committee received the self-evaluation report from the units under review, including all the information required by the SEP.

The committee also received the following documents:

- the Terms of Reference;
- the SEP 2015-2021;
- lists of publications, consisting of five key publications per research unit

The panel also received a list of ways in which the Dutch academic system differs from others, esp. the American. The committee discussed these prior to the site visit in order to avoid misunderstandings.

2.5. Procedures followed by the committee

The committee proceeded according to the SEP. Prior to the first meeting, all committee members independently formulated a preliminary assessment of the units under review based on the written information that was provided prior to the site visit.

The final review is based on both the documentation provided by the institute and the information gathered during the interviews with management and representatives of the research unit during the site visit. The site visits of all institutes mentioned in 2.1. all took place in one week (30 September-5 October 2018). The site visit of LUCL took place on 1 October 2018 in Leiden (see the schedule in Appendix 2).

Preceding the interviews, the committee was briefed by QANU about research reviews according to the SEP. It also discussed the preliminary assessments and decided upon a number of comments and questions. The committee also agreed upon procedural matters and aspects of the review. After the interviews the committee discussed its findings and comments in order to allow the chair to present the preliminary findings and to provide the secretary with argumentation to draft a first version of the review report.

The draft report by committee and secretary was presented to LUCL for factual corrections and comments. In close consultation with the chair and other committee members, the comments were reviewed to draft the final report. The final report was presented to the Board of the University and to the management of the research unit.

The committee used the criteria and categories of the Standard Evaluation Protocol 2015-2021 (SEP). For more information see Appendix 1.



3. LINGUISTICS: GENERAL THEMES AND FINDINGS AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

Before turning to the Leiden University Centre for Linguistics and the evaluation of its research, the committee wishes to make some general remarks based not only on all four research institutes that were visited and evaluated but also on the national research school LOT. This subsection appears in all of the evaluation reports of the institutes that were part of this review.

Dutch linguistics has a sterling reputation internationally. The work is respected and cited, its senior researchers are sought after for important international appointments, and its graduate students can compete throughout the world. We are very impressed by the state of the discipline of linguistics in the Netherlands. We note that high quality sign language research is being conducted at three of the institutes we visited and this widespread recognition of the relevance of this field in the Netherlands is noteworthy.

Against the background of this genuine respect, we note some aspects of the context within which linguistic research is conducted in the Netherlands which may depress its excellent quality over the long term. We discuss only general issues in this section since we attend to the individual institutions in the separate institute sections.

The fundamental reliance on student numbers in funding university study programmes means that distribution of staff tends to follow the decisions of students entering the university. In other words, since universities are motivated to staff programmes that are popular among students, and since staffing decisions inevitably influence not only what is taught but also what is researched, the reliance on student numbers as an indicator of required academic staffing has an impact on research. Entering students are unaware of the frontiers of research, so they will tend to choose subjects based on their experience in secondary schools. Subjects not taught in secondary schools, such as linguistics, are at a distinct disadvantage in this sort of system. While all institutes insisted that once openings in the staff have been approved (due to the needs of instruction), hiring committees *always* seek excellent researchers, it is still rare that a research institute can initiate a hiring procedure based on the need to strengthen specific research areas or the opportunity to take advantage of new developments. Research institutes in other countries enjoy more autonomy. We note that the new NWO requirement that *Vidi* proposals be accompanied by a guarantee of employment (or participation in a tenure track program) is likely to increase the influence of instructional needs on research recruitment.

Three of the four institutes we visited noted heavy instructional demands as a weakness or a threat in their SWOT self-analyses, and concerns about this were spontaneously expressed at every institute the committee visited. Whenever we asked about factors limiting research productivity, the first one mentioned was always the amount of instruction. One researcher sent a copy of the academic calendar at her institute that ran continuously from early Sept. until late in July, with the exception of two weeks off at Christmas. Sabbaticals are rare at all universities and not regular as they are elsewhere (e.g., in Germany or the US). Several people complained of being in the classroom more than ten hours/week, some even more, and many people (N.B. not those in management, however) said that they did not understand how teaching responsibilities were determined. Without attaching great importance to the anecdotal reports, our impression is that Dutch researchers may be at a disadvantage in comparison to researchers internationally in being required to devote a large part of their time to instruction and in having little chance to devote concentrated periods to research. We would therefore suggest that research institute directors take this very general dissatisfaction seriously. First, they could decide to be proactive in explicitly accepting the task of protecting the research time of institute members, and second, it is advisable for all faculty members to be aware of how instructional demands on individuals are determined.

The committee also learned of the consequences of the so-called '*Flexwet*' for early career researchers, such as postdocs, who are limited to a small number of non-permanent positions before their contracts must become permanent. Various researchers informed us that the usual decisions in such cases do not result in permanent contracts, but rather discontinuation of the researchers' contracts. In the case of postdocs 3-5 years after the PhD, discontinuation could threaten their careers. The apparent motivation is to force the universities to make a decision about the permanent employment of a researcher earlier rather than later, but in the case of postdocs 3-5 years after their PhDs, there has already been a clear commitment on the part of the postdoc to a career involving research. Forbidding permanent contracts for such individuals is harsh on them and may depress research quality.

While university researchers could once aim to pursue long-term research lines, this has become less attractive as the universities rely more and more on NWO and other funding agencies for financing PhD candidates and postdocs via projects. This change, which was triggered by a deliberate policy shift toward competitive procedures for a larger share of research monies, was justified originally as a way to channel more research energy to the best scientists, but it has also had the perhaps unintended effect of making a lot of research more project driven and less compatible with longer-term strategies. This impacts the better institutes and programmes more than others, and it indirectly influences hiring practices, collaborations, and the training of young researchers. The committee suggests that research institutes and university administrators monitor this development lest the tendencies we already see be aggravated.

Finally, the committee was initially apprehensive when it learned about the increasing importance attached to the societal relevance of research. Concerns were expressed about theoretical work being crowded out, about the danger of commercial influence, and about how successful societal outreach was likely to be. However, during the course of our evaluation visits, we encountered a number of projects and research lines with clearly applied goals where the scientific content was eminent and where those conducting the research were enthusiastic about the applied, societally relevant aspects of the work. We also reviewed a large number of projects dedicated to public outreach, usually popularizations of research, which the scientists involved were excited about, and which we, too, are positive about. We understand that public understanding and appreciation of scientific research contribute in important ways to its support, and to attracting good students. We therefore voice our remaining apprehension even more cautiously, noting only that not all scientific work lends itself to short-term application or to popularization efforts. The demand for societal relevance should therefore not be aimed at each project, but strategically, at the institute as a whole.

4. DESCRIPTION OF THE LEIDEN UNIVERSITY CENTRE FOR LINGUISTICS (LUCL)

Through the preparatory documents and the site visit, the committee received a clear view of the governance, mission, strategy and management of the Leiden University Centre for Linguistics (LUCL). The section below, which provides a description of LUCL, is based on the information provided in the self-evaluation report. The assessment of LUCL by the committee follows in section 5 of this report.

4.1. Organizational context and governance

LUCL (14.2 FTE research staff in 2017) is one of the seven institutes of Leiden University's (LEI) Faculty of Humanities (FGW). It functions as an integral part of the Graduate School of Humanities (GSH). The Academic Director of LUCL is formally responsible for the budget and personnel relating to all linguistic research and teaching. Together with the Institute Manager and the Director of Education, he/she forms the Management Team (MT) of LUCL. The MT is advised by three councils, i.e. the Advisory Council, the PhD Council and the Institute Council.

Research at the institute is organized into three research programmes (RP's). These are Theoretical and Experimental Linguistics (TEL), Language Use in Past and Present (LUPP), and Descriptive and Comparative Linguistics (DCL). They all contribute to the understanding of the institute's overarching research theme, i.e. linguistic variation and diversity. The RP's interact and overlap to various degrees. The institute does not have chairs, as this fits best with its non-hierarchical internal organization and the institute's culture. As a result, collaboration across RP's has increased in recent years. The division of research programmes is dynamic rather than static, and there is quite a bit of overlap in interests and actual cooperation between the members of the RP's.

4.2. Mission and strategy

LUCL's stated mission involves studying linguistic diversity from different perspectives. During the past six years, it aimed to deepen our understanding of linguistic diversity and to interconnect the study of diversity by encouraging interaction of theory-driven and data-driven research and development of interdisciplinary approaches to investigate linguistic phenomena. To achieve this goal, the institute encourages joint, interdisciplinary research projects, and organising lectures, symposia and conferences. It aims to capitalize on its in-depth theoretical and experimental know-how regarding a broad variety of languages and language families, including its state-of-the-art linguistics laboratory facilities. Combined with profound expertise on the history and usage of languages, LUCL provides a comprehensive research environment. The cross-fertilisation of research staff from different research programmes, so the self-evaluation reports describes, creates a rich and diverse empirical basis, enabling refinement and application of new methodologies, feeding into new theoretical insights. This in turn leads to new, theory-driven hypotheses to be tested empirically.

4.3. Funding, talent management and support

Table C in Appendix 3 of this report indicates that research time in the institute as a whole (expressed in full-time equivalents) has grown during the past six years. In terms of the funding of its personnel, about three-quarters of the budget derives from teaching-related activities. The compartments of research time funded by streams 1 and 2 have remained more or less stable, while the percentage of research in stream 3 has risen (6% > 17%). 80% of the institute's tenured staff's work time is dedicated to teaching and administrative duties and 20% to research. Nonetheless, it strives for a ratio of 70% – 30%, and has granted additional teaching relief to staff who had been involved in relatively time-consuming administrative and/or teaching tasks. The Faculty houses several laboratories for experimental linguistics research. Research support is offered by Leiden University's Centre for Digital Scholarship, by LURIS for knowledge exchange and grant development, and by a number of faculty-level departments and committees such as IFZ, FEZ, C&W, and "Commissie Tweede Geldstroom". The institute supports its staff through a grants advisor and a conference assistant, and it has a service-oriented LUCL office.

5. ASSESSMENT OF THE LEIDEN UNIVERSITY CENTRE FOR LINGUISTICS (LUCL) – INSTITUTE LEVEL

In this section, the committee evaluates, both quantitatively and qualitatively, the performance of LUCL on the three criteria of research quality, relevance to society and viability. In addition, the committee gives its qualitative evaluation of the PhD programme, research integrity, and diversity at LUCL, as stipulated in the Terms of Reference (see 2.1.). An overview of the committee's recommendations is given in section 6 of this report.

5.1. Research quality

The institute's mission relates to linguistic diversity, a theme that runs through all groups and which generates a stimulating intellectual environment with a sense of coherence and shared mission. The span of expertise across diverse aspects of linguistic structure and diverse methodological perspectives is impressive. The committee believes it is vital for the institute to keep this richness, especially in view of its excellent tradition of linguistic fieldwork where combined expertise and multiple methods is key. Also, the committee is pleased to note that the institute has recognized the needs of modern data science, including statistical methods, across all sub-disciplines. Data science and statistics play an essential role in most areas of linguistics, and they have especially grown in importance in historical linguistics, corpus linguistics, psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics and language acquisition. It is essential that progress in this area is closely monitored and that the institute finds sustainable ways for keeping up with this highly dynamic field (see also 'viability').

The publication record is very good. The institute reports 487 refereed journal articles over the six years covered by this review (2012-2017), equalling 3.4 journal publications per year per FTE research staff.¹ In addition, LUCL produced 418 book chapters and 208 conference proceedings (see Table B, Appendix 3 in this report). Also, the institute has delivered 87 PhDs over the reporting period, an average of 7.6 PhDs per FTE scientific staff over the review period,² which is excellent. We need to add that the researchers at the LUCL are formally entitled to only 20% research time. When we asked about this relatively low figure and what it entailed for teaching responsibilities, the LUCL management maintained that teaching duties at LUCL were essentially the same as those at other institutes. Practically, LUCL researchers teach roughly the same number of classes, lasting the same number of hours and with the same number of students as do colleagues at other research institutes. They are then free to devote the rest of their time to research. They explained that the lower percentage of research time that staff formally has at its disposal compared to other institutes is largely a result of a different way of calculating the time attributed to teaching and research. Readers that compare reports on different institutes need to keep this in mind, especially in examining rates of production per research FTE.

The key publications, which were presented for each research group separately rather than for the institute as a whole, are primarily in high quality venues, including the very high-impact general journal *Proceedings of the Royal Society B*, several excellent specialist journals such as *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory*, *Syntax*, *Frontiers in Psychology*, and *Neuropsychologia*, and finally monographs in excellent book series at Brill (Leiden) and Language Science Press (Berlin). One of the key publications in the Theoretical and Experimental Linguistics (TEL) group has already been cited 58 times and another 24. One of the Descriptive and Comparative Linguistics (DCL) group's key publications has been cited over 200 times, a second 56 times and a third 36 times. One key publication in the Language Use in Past and Present group (LUPP) has been cited 47 times and another 23 times.

¹ The committee included scientific staff and postdocs in the research staff totals, but not PhD candidates (see table A, Appendix 3)

² For the calculation of PhDs per FTE only took into account scientific staff, not post-docs (see table A, Appendix 3)



The committee notes that currently there are as many book chapters as journal articles, continuing a deeply established tradition in linguistics. However, challenges arise for this from the drive towards more rigorous peer review, and cross-disciplinary relevance. It is clear that linguistics continues to need to strike a balance between these demands and highly specialized outlets where the pool of independent expert reviewers is small (e.g. for publishing specific etymologies, highly technical formal analysis, or field reports). However, the Institute is encouraged to make sure that its total output range remains fully in sync with the developments of the discipline and that its voice keeps being heard in neighbouring disciplines and their important publication venues.

In addition to publications and presentations in academically oriented outlets, the Institute's researchers are active in contributing datasets, databases, and (annotated) corpora for broad distribution to peers (see also Appendix IX of the self-evaluation report). A collection of the lexicalizations of 600 concepts in over 100 languages of the Sunda islands is available and is being used by researchers in historical linguistics, and a typologically inspired collection of numeral expressions in 35 languages, which has been annotated with respect to syntactic properties is now being documented. Unusually, LUCL researchers have also collected linguistic works, including Indo-European dictionaries and guides to (correct) usage, which they make available to colleagues as well. The datasets produced in experiments in the lab facilities (map-task transcriptions) are being used by peers, as are the corpora of natural speech (Leiden Learner Corpus). We add only that more systematic reports on actual use of these products for peers would be insightful. The range of uses is too diverse to do this in a uniform way, which means different metrics would need to be used to gauge the products' use and impact over time.

The committee is also pleased to see a very good track record of grant acquisition (see Table C, Appendix 3 in this report; and Appendix V of the self-evaluation report), including no less than five European Research Council (ERC) grants in the reporting period and also two further EU grants. Also awarded were four NWO Veni grants, seven Vidi grants, one Vici grant, five grants in NWO's free competition and one NWO Horizon project. These numbers attest to LUCL's strength in research as well as to its attractiveness as excellent and innovative centre for researchers.

The impact and reputation of the Institute is also visible in the fair number of editorships that LUCL researchers take on. The self-evaluation report shows that LUCL researchers assumed, on average, 31 editorships per year of the review period, which is a good rate of professional contribution relative to the number of faculty members listed in Appendix 3 of this report. We didn't receive detailed information on marks of recognition such as prizes, but the reputation of LUCL researchers is further evidenced by the many conferences and workshop they have organized (Appendix VII of the self-evaluation report), including high-impact conferences like the SLE and innovative workshops at the Lorentz Center.

In summary LUCL conducts very good, internationally highly visible and widely recognized research. Its researchers are highly productive and their research has a high impact. They have also contributed important data sets and tools, are active professionally in influential organizations, and are successful in grant acquisition. The committee identified two areas that need special monitoring in the future. First, the Institute is encouraged to review its publication strategy. Second, progress in the area of modern data science, including statistical methods, needs to be carefully monitored.

5.2. Relevance to society

LUCL researchers are active in a wide range of societally relevant activities (Appendices XIII, IX and X of the self-evaluation report). The committee was pleased to note that LUCL researchers did not report seeing any conflict between the needs of science and social relevance, and that they have found ways of (a) communicating why their science matters for society and (b) deriving socially relevant output from their basic research.

With regard to (a), the committee was particularly excited about the tight cooperation that the Institute has established with the municipality, for example when setting up the *Taalmuseum*. The

committee was impressed by the strong support the Institute is receiving from the city of Leiden in this respect. The *Taalmuseum* is a remarkable project. On its website it is described as a contemporary museum that promotes knowledge and enthusiasm for language, which makes language tangible and comprehensible. On the site, visitors learn about the Leiden wall poem, can buy games built around new words entering the language, and can read discussion about 'correct' language. The museum also mounts physical exhibitions. It is formally set up as an independent foundation with financial contributions and input from both the public and the university; it is run by projects, with crowd funding.

The Institute also demonstrates its societal relevance in disseminating its research findings in over 184 articles that target professional audiences and the general public (Appendix 3, Table B of this report). It is also engaged in a number of outreach activities, making its work known to a broader public. LUCL staff members are regularly on TV, radio, and in national newspapers, as well as public and professional magazines to discuss their work or deliver comments based on their expertise (Appendix A of the self-evaluation report). Other channels that are used are the LUCL Twitter account and staff's personal social media accounts and blogs (e.g. LUCL's Leiden Language Blog and the blog on 'Languages of The Hague' Facebook page).

The Institute defines social relevance not only in local terms, but it is also active internationally, by offering MOOCs (with the most successful at Leiden coming from LUCL) and engaging in knowledge transfer and utilization in study programmes for example in various places in Africa. The MOOC 'Miracles of human language' is an online course developed by a top researcher and universally accessible. It introduces the foundations of linguistic analysis and explains how understanding language gives us insight into the mind. This is an outstanding contribution to the field at large, and makes it possible to introduce the science of language to a very broad audience. The fact that this MOOC has been the most successful one offered by LEI to date (taken by tens of thousands of people globally and rated 4.7 out of 5) speaks for the impact of the Institute's societally relevant activities.

With regard to deriving socially relevant output from their basic research, the committee was impressed by the output from the AThEME and SpeechView projects, which have immediate and obvious relevance for society. Of particular interest was also the '*nieuwschecker*' programme where LUCL linguists bring their methods for studying language use to a joint effort with media studies in order to submit news stories to rigorous fact checking and claim extraction. Also, as with use of research products by peers, more systematic reports on actual use and impact of the Institute's societally relevant activities would be useful.

In summary, LUCL makes an outstanding contribution to society through the high quality and great quantity of its outreach activities. The panel asks LUCL for continued attention to deriving societally relevant output from its research. As with use of research products by peers, more systematic reports on actual use and impact of the Institute's societally relevant activities would be useful.

5.3. Viability

The overall mission statement of linguistic diversity provides a framework that individual researchers and groups feel comfortable with and which brings them together in a common cause. This is a remarkable achievement. The current structure provides a highly integrative and stimulating environment. The Institute has also succeeded in achieving its goal of moving away from the insular organization it once had, consisting only of traditional chairs, and has fostered an environment of cross-group interaction. In fact, the differentiation into three research programmes appears primarily to serve the purpose of presentation since the actual work is done in smaller units that often cross-cut the programmes. There is an increasingly dense network of collaboration that brings together theoreticians with experimentalists as much as with historical and descriptive linguistics in various ways, including shared supervision of students and postdocs. The panel finds this sort of collaboration a sign of a vibrant research atmosphere.



The committee was impressed with LUCL's strong and reflective management team, its broad vision on the Institute, and their appreciation of the work of the Institute's researchers. The management has come up with some very helpful initiatives to encourage cooperation and innovation which include small add-on grants, teaching replacements and sabbaticals. Moreover, the Institute has experienced excellent growth both in terms of permanent research staff and in terms of lab equipment. The establishment of positions for an information officer and for a grant advisor were clever and timely measures. In these regards, the LUCL is well-prepared for the future and the committee found that institute members are very pleased with the current situation.

A particular challenge for LUCL however is the fact that research funding and strategic planning are increasingly driven by student intake. Currently, 75% of funding depends on the first stream, which is directly tied to the number of students. The problem was noted above (section 3 of this report) but it seems especially pressing at the LUCL because of its laudable inclusion of a large range of languages in its research strategy. The Dean and the management team remarked during the site visit that hiring procedures are still driven by research and a commitment to innovation. But both the long-standing connection between staffing and student numbers as well as the new requirement that Vidi applications be accompanied by the guarantee of a position (see Section 3) are potential threats to the Institute's focus and research strategy. Challenges need to be clearly identified and strategies need to be developed for the Institute to cope with the new conditions.

As noted earlier, another challenge comes from the needs for data science and the use of quantitative methods that increasingly characterize all areas of linguistics. The committee is pleased to see a clear commitment by the Institute to invest in this and encourages the management team to monitor international developments here very closely.

In sum, LUCL is very well equipped for the future. The committee finds the Institute's mission and strategy viable (see also section 5.1.). The committee's assessment that the Institute is well-equipped to achieve its strategic targets is supported by several elements: its structure is highly integrative and its environment is stimulating; its mission is supported by its staff; it has an excellent leadership and good facilities for implementing its strategy. There are, however, two important challenges for the future that need careful monitoring. The first one is the fact research funding and strategic planning is increasingly driven by student intake, where LUCL's commitment to descriptive and comparative linguistics aggravates a difficulty all linguistics research institutes have. Their proactive steps (noted above) will need to be maintained and perhaps supplemented. The second is the need for data science and the use of quantitative methods at LUCL. The committee took note of the fact that this issue is already on the radar of the Institute and that steps have been taken to improve the situation.

5.4. PhD programme

LUCL's PhD programme is embedded within the FGW's Graduate School of Humanities. PhD candidates are supervised by teams of at least two supervisors, at least one of whom is an experienced full professor at LUCL. The Institute works with a progress monitoring system, with periodical checks with the supervisors. Employed and fellowship PhD candidates are required to do at least 280 hours of training. A budget of € 2,000 per candidate is available for this purpose. Discipline-specific training takes place within at least two of the LOT summer and winter schools. Other obligations include giving a presentation at a minimum of two international conferences and taking LEI's courses on academic integrity and data management. Employed PhD candidates spend a maximum of 15% of their time on teaching. LUCL offers tailor-made didactic training courses to prepare PhD candidates for this. There is a confidential advisor at university level and two PhD counsellors within LUCL. The Institute's PhD coach offers individual coaching and workshops to help PhD candidates realize their full potential, for example, via writing workshops.

A point for attention is the average time for completing a PhD dissertation. 52% of the PhD candidates successfully defended within 6 years but 48% took longer than six years. In contrast, the overall trajectory nonetheless looks good, meaning that the problem has been monitored, and the PhD

students are now receiving more checks with attention to the issues that might be delaying them. When asked about extra-class/coursework and help they were getting to improve finishing times (e.g. to speed them along), students complimented the Dean's office for keeping track of their milestones and creating a workshop for helping them understand job opportunities outside academia. They complimented their PhD coach for designing and implementing a writing workshop amongst other things.

Students were, overall, very satisfied with their supervisors and advising processes. Supervision is becoming more evenly spread among the faculty because non-professors can now apply for the *ius promovendi*. This incurs a new challenge in that students might end up with complex co-supervision structures. The Institute is encouraged to monitor the development in this regard closely, as some students voiced concerns.

A second issue that students reported as contributing to delayed graduation involved printing the dissertation and booking the room for the hearing/ceremony which students reported as taking at least six months owing to the fact that there is only one available room. While these issues would not be particularly troublesome for domestic students, for those on foreign grants, these delays would be problematic. If the students are wrong on this count, then the Institute might communicate promotion procedures more thoroughly.

The programme offers a rich variety of training, including general skills that are also useful for a career outside academia. Students are very pleased with this, and also more specifically with special career events on the many paths that are open after completing their PhD. One area that needs to be further developed is training in research integrity and ethics, more clearly tailored to the language sciences and covering both experiments and fieldwork (see also the section below on research integrity). Having said that, students were happy with the availability of statistics support, and reported it as a particular strength of the programme.

In terms of support for student travel to conferences, domestically and internationally it was observed that there is something of a two-tiered system for budget – meaning that those on external grants felt they had all the support they needed built into the grants, whereas other students had a fixed amount, after which they needed to apply for competitive funding. It should be noted, however, that students in general seemed happy with respect to their travel allowances.

5.5. Research integrity

The Institute follows Leiden University's Academic Integrity Regulations. In addition, it has commendably developed its own 'Ethics Code for linguistic research in the Faculty of Humanities at Leiden University'. The latter addresses specific aspects of research conducted in the field or in one of its labs. The Institute mentions in the self-evaluation report that it considers it equally important to foster a safe, transparent and collaborative environment in which questions can be asked, doubts expressed and mistakes discussed and learned from. It actively promotes awareness and discussion of academic integrity and employ specific measures to safeguard quality and compliance.

Thinking about the future, the committee was concerned that the current set-up for integrity monitoring may not be specialized enough. Linguistic research comes with very specific challenges when doing experiments with adults and children, when doing fieldwork with for example illiterate speakers, or when working with highly private data (e.g. village gossip data). Internationally, the field of linguistics, within social science, is consistently evolving in respect to ethics monitoring. The committee encourages the Institute to address these challenges in the near future.

LEI drew up a first set of Research Data Management Regulations in 2016. In 2017 LUCL started on the formulation of its own LUCL protocol on data management, which will be finalized in 2018. LUCL actively encourages open access publishing and responsible data management, and it organizes a mandatory course for its PhD candidates. The committee is pleased to see these developments and the general commitment to FAIR and Open Science principles. The concrete implementation of these



principles needs of course to take into account privacy rights on the side of the human subjects and the speakers that are recorded.

5.6. Diversity

The Institute reports being committed to creating a diverse and inclusive academic community in which everyone, irrespective of gender, ethnicity, age, cultural background, sexual orientation or physical limitations, feels safe and at home, and has equal opportunities to develop their talents. The composition of its staff has become more diverse in terms of ethnicity and age, and more gender-balanced compared with the previous research assessment (currently 42% female full professors). Five of the six researchers appointed to chairs since 2014 are women.

The committee finds that the Institute has been successful in obtaining a more balanced distribution of genders. During the reporting period, six out of eight hirings and five out of six chair appointments were women. Part of the reason for this success is that search committees are required to demonstrate the efforts that they took in soliciting applications from female researchers. The committee recommends that these positive efforts continue.

5.7. Conclusion

Overall, all indicators point to a research environment that is consistently producing high quality research products with a high degree of international recognition. A broad range of activities is being developed in order to optimize the societal relevance of the research, and the Institute takes a constructive and effective approach to connecting basic research with matters of interest and importance to societal partners. Finally, the Institute's structure is highly integrative and stimulates cross-group interaction, and LUCL has good resources at its disposal. The leadership is strong and the committee has confidence in their ability to implement measures that provide an adequate answer to the challenges identified.

5.8. Overview of the quantitative assessment of the research unit

After having assessed the research quality, relevance to society and viability, and comparing that to the developments and standard in the field of linguistics, the committee comes to the following quantitative assessments:

Research quality:	very good
Relevance to society:	excellent
Viability:	very good

6. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR the LEIDEN UNIVERSITY CENTRE FOR LINGUISTICS (LUCL)

The committee strongly support the management, structure, and achievements of LUCL. Nevertheless, it has the following recommendations:

- Make sure that LUCL's voice keeps being heard in neighbouring disciplines and publication venues of general interest.
- Closely monitor the area of modern data science, including statistical methods, across all sub-disciplines, in order to find sustainable ways for keeping up with this highly dynamic field and how it's impacting linguistics.
- Continue the policy of involving specialists in lesser studied languages in instruction in general linguistics as a means of allowing LUCL to continue its broad profile even in the face of relatively little instructional demand directly connected to lesser studied languages. See remarks on the DCL group (below) as well.
- Track whether and how products intended for use by peers or by the general public are used and how popular they are. The range of uses is too diverse to do this in a uniform way, which means different metrics would need to be used to gauge the products' use and impact over time.
- Continue to monitor the time to degree of PhD students and further improve the monitoring system of PhD students.
- Track PhD candidates' career trajectory for a longer time and more systematically after they have finished their PhD.
- Determine whether the existing general training in research integrity and ethics for PhD students (and all others) is meeting the needs of linguists, or whether more specialized training is needed that is more clearly tailored to the language sciences and covering both experiments and fieldwork.
- Continue positive efforts to approach a more balanced distribution of gender at LUCL.

7. ASSESSMENT OF THE LEIDEN UNIVERSITY CENTRE FOR LINGUISTICS (LUCL) – GROUP LEVEL

In this section, the committee evaluates the performance of LUCL's three research groups on the three criteria of research quality, relevance to society and viability. The ToR (see section 2.1. of this report) asks the committee to evaluate the research groups both quantitatively and qualitatively.

7.1. Theoretical and experimental linguistics

7.1.1. Profile

This research programme brings together LUCL researchers focusing on theoretical and experimental linguistics. By using theoretical, experimental and digital tools and methods, the programme's researchers seek to understand the nature of language, language acquisition, language variation, and how language is processed in the brain. The researchers in the field of experimental linguistics are also members of the Leiden Institute for Brain and Cognition (LIBC), a network dedicated to the interdisciplinary exchange of knowledge and expertise on topics related to brain and cognition.

7.1.2 Research quality

Theoretical and Experimental Linguistics' (TEL) mission is to understand diversity in language and related cognitive systems from the perspective of variation across dialects and languages, particularly in situations of multilingualism. This contrasts with the primarily monolingual perspective which limits most theoretical and experimental work in the field, where multilingual speakers and their grammars do not form part of the central domain of analysis. Understanding how and why these multiple languages interact linguistically, cognitively and socially requires scientific knowledge of how linguistic pre-dispositions interact with linguistic experience. The committee highly values how this research programme encompasses research on such questions of quite different kinds and even within different species. This focus of TEL is intertwined with that of the LUCL as a whole, so TEL members interact dynamically with members of other research programmes.

TEL has produced very high quality research, in studies employing a wide variety of technical and theoretical expertise, all bearing directly on the limits of variation within linguistic systems and related cognitive systems. The key publications from TEL appeared in journals ranked in the top quartile for language and linguistics, experimental psychology and behavioural neuroscience, biology, and one of the most cited journals in multi-disciplinary psychology. These papers are already having an impact on their sub-disciplines, and have been cited an average of 21 times. For example, the paper in *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* proposes that movement options from NPs depend on ellipsis options, and that these choices are not independent. This important proposal has been taken up in subsequent literature, such as Sailor's (2018) reply in the same journal. The top four researchers in this group have h-indices ranging from 22 to 39, very respectable levels in linguistics. 34 PhD defences were conducted for candidates supervised by this group, a very large number.

Members of TEL have also been active in the organization of conferences and workshops. This includes the Lorentz Center Workshop 'Language development in children and adolescents,' the 11th Old World Conference in Phonology, and the Generative Linguistics of the Old World conference (GLOW). The organization of the GLOW conference is a particular mark of distinction and a sign that the linguistics community regards TEL staff in high regard.

Also, TEL has secured a number of high prestige grants for important projects. These include an EU FP7 project 'Advancing the European Multilingual Experience' (AThEME), which has been highly effective in orienting theoretical research toward multilingualism. The acquisition of two NWO Vidi grants and an NWO Horizon project are other examples of important science funding, and external recognition of the quality of the research group. Three new grant proposals were provided to the committee, demonstrating that this group continues to actively seek funds for new research. The new proposals concern multilingualism, comparative morpho-syntax and Bantu syntax and

information structure, all of which the committee found exciting and well thought out. They demonstrate the commitment of the staff to the vigorous pursuit of their major research goals.

7.1.3. Relevance to society

The focus of societal activities in the TEL programme has chiefly been outreach to the general public regarding the findings of language and linguistics research. These activities have included the development of a MOOC ('Miracles of human language', already mentioned in section 5.2.), numerous public lectures, and participation in the *Taalmuseum* (see also section 5.2.). TEL researchers are highly involved in the museum's advisory board.

It is noteworthy that two of the three case studies of societal impact discussed in the overall LUCL report are associated with this research programme: AThEME and SpeechView. AThEME, which we just cited as evidence of the group's research quality, also brings the findings of 'large-scale collaborative linguistic research' to bear on policy and practice across eight European countries. The prevalence of multilingualism and its rapid increase due to population migrations make this a highly significant project which will help parents, educators and policy-makers make informed choices. The SpeechView glasses are a remarkable example of a research product that has obvious potential for societal value. Its potential interest to society at large is demonstrated by the attention of the media, documented in the LUCL self-evaluation report. What is perhaps less obvious is that it depends on decades of research on speech and language, and on the expertise of scientists who put the results into action in this exceptional practical application.

7.1.4 Viability

TEL's SWOT analysis is rightfully proud of its achievements. The talent and expertise within the programme is formidable, and future research plans promise continued excellence and high productivity. Also, they have made strong recent hires. The group has particular strength in interface research and cross-linguistic variation, which feed into their societal projects. The flat organization and open structure of the group is highly suitable for the research goals of the programme, and should serve them well going forward.

The laboratory facilities are up to date and well suited for the research conducted by the group. One concern is that the financing is precarious, as it is contingent on group members securing external grant funding. When we take into account the need for funding for corpora collection and annotation and computational resources for digital humanities, together with the scarcity of research funds within the Netherlands, it is clear that it will be a challenge to consolidate the foundations for the needed facilities.

In spite of potential difficulties in safeguarding research time (see institute remarks), the candid self-assessment, together with the group's obvious strength and excellent leadership inspires trust in the viability of the group

7.1.5. Conclusion

Theoretical and Experimental Linguistics is an ambitious and very strong multi-faceted research group with a substantial research record and a strong agenda. It makes an outstanding contribution to society, as is evidenced by its contribution to large projects on multilingualism, by its development of products aimed at broad use, and by its outreach activities. TEL is very well equipped for the future with its excellent talent and expertise, future proof research plans, solid earning capacity, and strong leadership. The fact that TEL members interact dynamically with members of other research programmes also attests to its viability. The group moreover has a clear view on potential threats.

7.1.6. Recommendations

The committee advises TEL to:

- Collaborate with LUCL FGW and LEI to set up structural funding for the laboratories.
- Continue the policy of ensuring a strong theoretical base for the institute as a whole, providing for faculty expertise in the core areas of linguistics.



7.1.7. Overview of the quantitative assessment of the research unit

After having assessed the research quality, relevance to society and viability, and comparing that to the developments and standard in the field of linguistics, the committee comes to the following quantitative assessments:

Research quality:	very good
Relevance to society:	excellent
Viability:	very good

7.2. Language use in past and present

7.2.1. Profile

Researchers of the research programme 'Language Use in Past and Present' (LUPP) involved in this research programme aim to create a theoretical understanding of the ways in which linguistic, cognitive and cultural factors constrain and shape past and present language use (both in terms of structure and of actual usage) and of the effects of language use on members of linguistic and cultural communities. By further developing and applying various methodological and theoretical research models, LUCL researchers analyse the structural properties of language at all levels of grammar as well as actual language use and variation of language use in present-day and historical contexts.

7.2.2 Research quality

The LUPP programme offers a unique combination of historical linguistics, sociolinguistics, corpus linguistics, discourse, rhetoric, and media studies. These disparate approaches are united in the way that they all afford the study of language as inextricably bound to its social, political, and historical context. Accordingly, the scholars in this programme all appeal to empirical methods and are committed to studying language in the context of its use.

Faculty includes very competent scholars, some of whom have an international profile. Two have Google Scholar h-indices of 15 or higher.³ Faculty have been involved in impactful activities such as organizing conferences and symposia and playing important editorial roles in scholarly publication. For example, LUPP staff organized the *Societas Linguistica Europaea* meeting in 2016, and directed the production of the Hyper Usage Guide of English (HUGE) database. Peer recognition of LUPP staff is evident in their receipt of competitive grants from the NWO including one free competition grant and two Vidi grants. Nine PhD defenses were conducted for students in this group. Nevertheless, the group's profile and impact on the international linguistics community could be further improved via targeting higher impact publication venues and greater participation in international conferences.

Key publications display the breadth of research in this programme. They include a monograph (*In Search of Jane Austen*) that describes a sociolinguistic analysis of Austen's private correspondence, covering her spelling, vocabulary, and grammar. Key publications also include a book about the Letters as Loot corpus, *Letters as Loot: A Sociolinguistic Approach to Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Dutch*. In this work, the authors discuss the social factors, such as class and gender, which determine dialectal variation. Likewise, the interplay between social factors and historical language use is the topic of the article on the 'Birchbark' texts, a historical corpus of Russian. Another article uses experimental methods to demonstrate language users' intuitions regarding which kinds of implicatures speakers are morally culpable for, and which they are not. Key publications were all of high quality and were cited a total of 80 times.

7.2.3. Relevance to society

Given the emphasis of the scholars in this group on the role of language in social interaction and discourse, the relevance of this research to society is high. The main focus of these activities is outreach, but LUPP researchers also compiled the latest release of the *Letters as Loot* corpus, which has attracted a great deal of professional as well as public interest. With respect to outreach, members of LUPP blog about their research, providing a public forum for information about their findings. Other activities include a weekly column on multilingualism and the languages of The Hague in the newspaper *Den Haag Centraal*. LUPP contributed to the Taalmuseum exhibit 'Whose language is it?' in 2016, and staff members have given several public lectures on linguistic topics. A LUPP university lecturer received a prize for *Een sprinter is een stoptrein zonder WC*, a book about pragmatic aspects of meaning aimed at the general public. Perhaps the most tangible LUPP project was the fact checking project to assess the accuracy of statements made by Dutch politicians, started by LUPP staff and supported in part by Facebook.

³ We suspect that a third, recently retired professor might be added to that number, but from the documents we received it isn't clear which group he belonged to.



7.2.4 Viability

LUPP has proven itself capable of acquiring external grants and has a solid leadership. The candid SWOT provided to the committee during the site visit shows that LUPP is well aware of current opportunities and threats.

Some of its senior research staff are clearly in the prime of their research careers, and the research interests of this group are conducive to fruitful interaction with both of the other research programmes at the Institute. Nonetheless, recent and impending retirements will pose challenges to LUPP in maintaining its quality. The committee however also sees an opportunity to use new hires strategically and to pursue on the one hand additional hires of linguists working in cognitive, functional, and usage-based frameworks on the sociolinguistic and historical topics of interest to extant LUPP staff. On the other hand, additional hires in the area of computational linguistics could foster increased collaboration with staff in the other two institute research programmes.

This group's instruction targets students with diverse academic backgrounds and requires travel to The Hague.. These tasks put the group members at a comparative disadvantage in protecting their research time. LUPP could devise a strategy for the systematic pursuit of grant funds to support more research time for programme staff.

7.2.5. Conclusion

'Language Use in Past and Present' is a multi-faceted research group with a solid research record. The relevance of its research to society is high. LUPP is well equipped for the future, with its strong leadership and an awareness of future threats and opportunities. Recent and impending retirements may pose challenges to LUPP in maintaining its quality. Nevertheless, they also provide an opportunity to further strengthen current research strengths and to increase collaboration with other groups in the Institute.

7.2.6. Recommendations

The committee advises LUPP to:

- devise a strategy and a social infra-structure for the systematic pursuit of grant funds to support more research time for programme staff.
- work to increase the group's profile and impact on the international linguistics community via targeting higher impact publication venues and greater participation in international conferences.
- pursue additional hires of linguists working in cognitive, functional, and usage-based frameworks on the sociolinguistic and historical topics of interest to extant LUPP staff.
- pursue additional hires in the area of computational linguistics and data-intensive analysis that could foster increased collaboration with staff in the other two institute research programmes.

7.2.7. Overview of the quantitative assessment of the research unit

After having assessed the research quality, relevance to society and viability, and comparing that to the developments and standard in the field of linguistics, the committee comes to the following quantitative assessments:

Research quality:	very good
Relevance to society:	excellent
Viability:	very good

7.3. Descriptive and comparative linguistics

7.3.1. Profile

The 'Descriptive and Comparative Linguistics' (DCL) programme is dedicated to increasing the scientific understanding of the ways in which linguistic and cultural factors shape human language in space and over time. Using a combined historical and synchronic perspective, research covers the study of proto-languages in the fourth millennium BCE right up to the languages used today. Languages from all corners of the globe are studied.

7.3.2 Research quality

The DCL group has an excellent standing in descriptive and historical linguistics. There are particular strengths in Indo-European studies, as well as in the languages of South America, Africa, including sign languages of Africa, and insular Southeast Asia/Oceania. In all these areas, Leiden is highly visible internationally and belongs to the leading centers worldwide. The committee highly appreciates the broad range of approaches to these languages, spanning the field from primary fieldwork, grammatical descriptions, typological and historical comparisons, to theoretical and experimental studies. The overall outlook of the group is modern as evidenced by the fact that it has sought cooperation with neighbouring disciplines, such as molecular anthropology and archaeology. This also extends to cooperation in methodology, for example with regard to quantitative methodology, with a large number of researchers including linguists at Tübingen.

Part of the reason for DCL's success is no doubt the highly impressive acquisition of grants, including four ERC starting and advanced grants as well as one HERA and one twinning project from the EU, three NWO Veni projects, three NWO VIDI's and one NWO VICI grant, supported by strong networks of collaboration both within Leiden and internationally. These cumulatively document the excellent quality of research with the group.

The key publications of DCL3 presented to the committee include an etymological dictionary of Proto-Germanic, which has been cited 200 times. Monographs on accent in Hittite and on the Arabic influence on Berber have been cited 36 and 56 times, respectively. Two more monographs, one on a Cushitic language in Tanzania and a second on the languages spoken on the Alor and Pantar islands in Indonesia further illustrate how diverse the spectrum of this group's work is.

The top six researchers in the DCL group have an average h-index of 19, which is unusually high for an area of research characterized by the need to catalogue and document extensively – even before analysing, and for the fact that other domain experts (i.e. those most likely to cite the work) are often rare.

An astounding 44 PhD projects were successfully completed in this group, where special mention must be made of the African language specialists, who accounted for fully half of this number.

The group is furthermore committed to the production of rich language documentation, following state-of-the-art standards in descriptive linguistics. These include the LexiRumah DB containing the lexicalizations of over 600 concepts in over 100 languages spoken the Lesser Sunda islands and the Indo-European Etymological Dictionaries Online (BrillOnline).

7.3.3. Relevance to society

The group is actively involved in outreach activities, most notably the online *Taalmuseum*, which informs the public about an array of programmes and studies about languages, and has developed an eye-catching video display of sign language poetry, raising awareness about deaf people and sign language in Holland.

DCL's relevance to society exceeds the national level. It has created a MOOC on 'The Art of Grammar' aimed especially at Africanists, and the World Cultural Council presented a special recognition award to one of DCL's members for her work on African sign languages. However, the committee is of the



opinion that its most lasting contribution to society will be through DCL's many field sites worldwide, where citizens are involved and where DCL members engage in education and outreach programmes.

7.3.4 Viability

The group is well equipped for the future. It has an excellent track record in attracting external grants, has a strong leadership and is well positioned to collaborate with members of other research programmes. It has made excellent hirings that guarantee its viability. DCL members play a critical role in popular undergraduate programmes in Leiden, undercutting the worry that attention to a broad range of languages is incompatible with substantial instructional responsibilities. This ensures that the group is well integrated into the university, and it allows DCL to pursue its more specialized research even if a portion of this research is so specialized that it is not easily marketable for a larger audience.

The most obvious challenge for the group is to stay in sync with the fast development of quantitative approaches in its focus areas. The committee is pleased to see that DCL faces this challenge. It has successfully conducted important projects in this direction, it has hired strategically, and it has established relevant collaborations to keep up with the latest developments. The group is encouraged to monitor these developments very closely and to formulate a clear strategy of how they want to position themselves in the international scene in the long run, especially in terms of how they envision the relationship between their excellent qualitative work and new quantitative approaches.

7.3.5. Conclusion

'Descriptive and Comparative Linguistics' is a strong multi-faceted research group with an excellent research record. DCL uses different channels to ensure that its research is relevant to society. It is well equipped for the future with its excellent recent hires, strong earning capacity and solid leadership. Its main challenge for the period ahead is to monitor the development of quantitative approaches in its focus areas.

7.3.6. Recommendations

The committee advises DCL to:

- Monitor the developments in quantitative approaches in its focus areas very closely and to formulate a clear strategy of how they want to position themselves in the international scene in the long run.
- Continue the policy of involving specialists in lesser-studied languages in instruction in general linguistics as a means of allowing LUCL to continue its broad profile even in the face of relatively little instructional demand directly connected to lesser studied languages.

7.3.7. Overview of the quantitative assessment of the research unit

After having assessed the research quality, relevance to society and viability, and comparing that to the developments and standard in the field of linguistics, the committee comes to the following quantitative assessments:

Research quality:	excellent
Relevance to society:	excellent
Viability:	very good

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: THE SEP CRITERIA AND CATEGORIES

There are three criteria that have to be assessed:

- Research quality:
 - Level of excellence in the international field;
 - Quality and Scientific relevance of research;
 - Contribution to body of scientific knowledge;
 - Academic reputation;
 - Scale of the unit's research results (scientific publications, instruments and infrastructure developed and other contributions).

- Relevance to society:
 - quality, scale and relevance of contributions targeting specific economic, social or cultural target groups;
 - advisory reports for policy;
 - contributions to public debates.

The point is to assess contributions in areas that the research unit has itself designated as target areas.

- Viability:
 - the strategy that the research unit intends to pursue in the years ahead and the extent to which it is capable of meeting its targets in research and society during this period;
 - the governance and leadership skills of the research unit's management.

Category	Meaning	Research quality	Relevance to society	Viability
1	World leading/excellent	The unit has been shown to be one of the most influential research groups in the world in its particular field.	The unit makes an outstanding contribution to society	The unit is excellently equipped for the future
2	Very good	The unit conducts very good, internationally recognised research	The unit makes a very good contribution to society	The unit is very well equipped for the future
3	Good	The unit conducts good research	The unit makes a good contribution to society	The unit makes responsible strategic decisions and is therefore well equipped for the future
4	Unsatisfactory	The unit does not achieve satisfactory results in its field	The unit does not make a satisfactory contribution to society	The unit is not adequately equipped for the future



APPENDIX 2: PROGRAMME OF THE SITE VISIT

8.30-9.30	Closed session Committee
9.30-10.30	Interview Institute management -questions
10.30-10.45	Break
10.45-11.15	Interview with representatives programme Theoretical & Experimental Linguistics
11.15-11.45	Interview with representatives programme Language use in past & present
11.45-12.15	Interview with representatives programme Descriptive & comparative linguistics
12.15-12.30	Break
12.30-13.15	Informal working lunch with representatives of the Institute
13.15-13.45	Tour Lab facilities
13.45-14.00	Break
14.00-14.45	Interview with (selection of) PhD students (1st 15 mins incl Phd coordinator or director of relevant graduate school)
14.45-15.30	Meeting with societal partners and tour of Taalmuseum
15.30-15.45	Break
15.45-17.15	Closed session Committee
17.15-17.45	Presentation of preliminary findings

APPENDIX 3: QUANTITATIVE DATA

Table A: Research staff

	2012		2013		2014	
	#	Research FTE	#	Research FTE	#	Research FTE
Scientific staff	40,1	9,6	43,7	9,4	47,5	10,5
Post-docs	16,5	13,2	19,2	14,7	16,2	13,1
PhD-students - employed	33,5	24,8	31,3	25,1	34,5	26,7
PhD-students - contract	7,6	-	13,5	-	20,5	-
Total research staff	97,7	47,6	107,7	49,2	118,7	50,2
Support staff	-	-	-	-	-	-
Visiting fellows	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total staff	97,7	47,6	107,7	49,2	118,7	50,2

	2015		2016		2017	
	#	Research FTE	#	Research FTE	#	Research FTE
Scientific staff	51,5	11,9	54,3	13,3	62,6	14,2
Post-docs	16,5	13,8	17,7	14,9	19,7	15,9
PhD-students - employed	33,5	24,5	34,4	25,5	28,4	20,3
PhD-students - contract	12,5	-	10,9	-	7,8	-
Total research staff	114,0	50,2	117,3	53,7	118,5	50,5
Support staff	-	-	-	-	-	-
Visiting fellows	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total staff	114,0	50,2	117,3	53,7	118,5	50,5

Table B: Categories of research output

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
1. Refereed articles	89	65	94	84	71	84
2. Non-refereed articles	3	0	4	14	6	8
3. Books	9	6	9	13	10	3
4. Book chapters	64	74	78	51	61	90
5. PhD dissertations	10	13	14	19	12	19
6. Conference papers	32	35	41	35	32	33
7. Professional publications	19	7	10	9	18	20
8. Publications aimed at the general public	13	10	5	23	18	22
9. Other research output	90	76	119	108	114	146
Total	329	286	374	356	342	425

Specification of 9. Other research output	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Abstract	2	2	1	3	5	2
Blog entry	1	0	8	4	4	6
Book review	23	13	33	14	8	6
Conference poster	6	9	14	10	11	8
Database	0	2	2	2	0	1
Editorship	26	28	35	30	30	37
Entry in reference work	0	1	0	2	4	19
Film	0	1	0	0	0	0
Inaugural address	1	0	1	1	0	2
Interview	1	2	4	24	5	12
Lecture	22	15	14	12	18	28
Newsletter article	0	0	1	2	0	1
Other (not mentioned above)	7	3	5	4	29	22
Podcast episode	0	0	0	0	0	1
Website	1	0	1	0	0	1
Total	90	76	119	108	114	146

Table C: Funding

	2012		2013		2014	
Funding	FTE	%	FTE	%	FTE	%
Direct funding	16,3	34%	14,6	30%	16,0	32%
Research grants	28,3	59%	28,8	59%	27,8	55%
Contract research	3,0	6%	5,8	12%	6,4	13%
Other	0,0	0%	0,0	0%	0,0	0%
Total funding	47,6	100%	49,2	100%	50,2	100%
Expenditure	€	%	€	%	€	%
Personnel costs	2.775.909	88%	2.847.178	90%	2.910.787	87%
Other costs	373.484	12%	324.164	10%	435.504	13%
Total expenditure	3.149.393	100%	3.171.343	100%	3.346.292	100%

	2015		2016		2017	
Funding	FTE	%	FTE	%	FTE	%
Direct funding	12,7	25%	11,7	22%	14,9	30%
Research grants	28,9	57%	31,9	59%	26,8	53%
Contract research	8,7	17%	10,0	19%	8,7	17%
Other	0,0	0%	0,0	0%	0,0	0%
Total funding	50,2	100%	53,7	100%	50,5	100%
Expenditure	€	%	€	%	€	%
Personnel costs	2.965.088	89%	3.167.476	89%	3.256.867	86%
Other costs	379.545	11%	398.208	11%	540.312	14%
Total expenditure	3.344.633	100%	3.565.684	100%	3.797.179	100%



Table D: PhD candidates

Enrolment				Success rate											
Starting Year	m	f	Total (m+f)	Graduated in year 4 or earlier		Graduated in year 5 or earlier		Graduated in year 6 or earlier		Graduated in year 7 or earlier		Not Yet Finished		Discontinued	
2009	1	3	4	0	0%	0	0%	3	75%	3	75%	1	25%	0	0%
2010	8	7	15	2	13%	2	13%	7	47%	9	60%	6	40%	0	0%
2011	7	3	10	3	30%	3	30%	5	50%	6	60%	4	40%	0	0%
2012	5	14	19	0	0%	6	32%	10	53%			8	42%	1	5%
2013	4	11	15	0	0%	1	7%					14	93%	0	0%
Total 2009-2013	25	38	63	5	8%							33	52%	1	2%
2014	3	5	8												
2015	10	3	13												
2016	2	1	3												
2017	6	2	8												
Total 2014-2017	21	11	32												