Special Session

Language and population studies from the Latin American perspective

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Trying to answer the questions put forward by the session organizer

How is language “rules” at ALAP meeting currently
  - Some ideas/proposal

How is at the Brazilian Journal of Population Studies
  - Some ideas to put forward
How has linguistic practice changed for the demographers your associations represent?

- The experience with ALAP is very recent (2004).
  - All materials started more with Spanish but have expanded to Portuguese, but for other languages there are still a large barrier. (ex. English and French).
  - The use of Spanish dominates but Portuguese is more accepted (and understood) now.
  - The mixture between Spanish and Portuguese (Portuñol) seems to be more accepted also (Ex. Webpage)
  - There are more tolerance with mistakes.

- Translations some times are very bad (experience with recent seminar) because translator do not understand the technical language – and sometimes presenters are very confusing.

- Large difficulties to have “materials” in other language to disseminate our research to other parts of the world (very few resources to translate – even the WEB page does not have a version in other language – only Spanish).
What are the main language issues and challenges in the diffusion of demographic knowledge?

- In our country
  - It must be in our own language (ex. Papers I have published only in another language is not read, known or cited in my country)

- Outside
  - We do have to have a common language
    - “removal of linguistic barriers and therefore the improvement of communication between researchers”
  - And we have to put an effort to publish and translate to the audience we want to get attention from
Differences in the way population studies are practised in different language areas

- I find that some languages are more direct than others.
- There are more differences in thematic areas than there are due to language differences
  - Statisticians, Sociologists, economists, social politicians, etc. have different approaches to spell out the same results, regardless language.
- In population studies the differences seems to be more due to the approach to the topic than due to the language itself.
How is language issues currently at ALAP’s Conferences

- Can submit and present papers in any of the 4 major languages of the region:
  - Spanish - Portuguese - English - French
- There is no simultaneous translations to any language (5 meetings already organized)
- Burden is on the audience (and the presenter)
  - In practice, since the majority of members and participants speaks Spanish: almost everyone try to present or at least to have the presentations in Spanish. The papers are in participants own choice.
- Regarding to IUSSP translations, the General Assembly of 2010 made a requirement to be sent to IUSSP council, approved by the majority, that IUSSP would provide Spanish translation.
Proposal for conferences

- Associations should create a **Language Committee**
  - **Objective**: raising financial resources and organizing translations for meetings/conferences depending on the interest of the specific conference/meeting for reaching out the target audience.
  - **Participants**: one person from each of all different regions/subregions of the association.
Abstracts
- Portuguese, Spanish, and English

Full papers
- Originals
  - Accept and publish Portuguese, Spanish, English
  - Professionals to revise the papers in these languages
- Proposal for next years: To publish the original and to provide a translation:
  - To English – papers of general interest (paid by the authors (projects) or the journal if there is general interest in the paper) **BUT** translation from professionals indicated by the journal
  - To Portuguese (from English only) - (paid by the journal if there is general interest)
Proposal for Journals/Publications

- Creating a network (list) of translators/reviewers
  - The biggest problem is having good translators who knows the technical language in Demography
  - Shared list of translators specialists in the field (collaboration of the associations)

- Review of the Demographic Dictionary, mainly paying attention to the translation of the technical terms (including new ones).
Thank you!

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