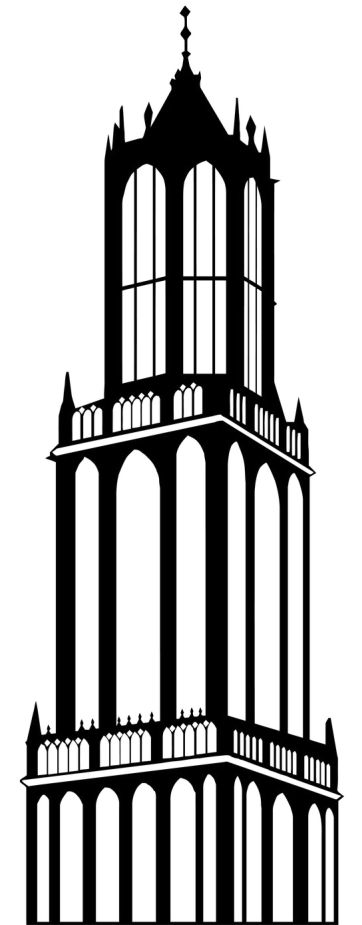


Policy plan

Board XVII

o.d.z. 'More language more better'



BABEL
Studievereniging
Taalwetenschap
UTRECHT

Policy plan Board XVII 2021-2022

Dear Babelaars,

Before you lies our policy plan for the academic years 2021 and 2022. We are very much looking forward to it, especially with the possibility of a corona-free society on the horizon. We will all see that next September! This year, your board will consist of no less than five board members, all of whom will enthusiastically dedicate themselves to the association and our members. We hope to make it a smashing reopening year!

Love,
Board XVII

Lotte Neijmeijer, *Chair*
Laura Moia, *Secretary*
Lydwine Beelen, *Treasurer*
Myrthe Spitzers, *Commissioner of Internal Affairs*
Lotte Boelens, *Commissioner of External Affairs*

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Chapter 1: Corona

For over a year now, corona has been making everything different from what it used to be. It limits many possibilities and it requires creativity from the board and committees to keep organizing fun activities. Corona also requires flexibility, as there is only a short time to look ahead and the situation is very unpredictable. While we hope that everything has gone back to the way it was as much as possible when the new school year arrives, we will also have to take into account the least favorable scenario. Therefore, we have devised four scenarios, which will be explained below. To conclude, we will say something about the Big and the Small Trip, which are held every year. Of course, we will always observe all corona rules in effect in the Netherlands at that time.

a. The scenarios

i. No corona measures

If the government decides to lift all corona measures, we will strive to organize as many activities as possible physically. We consider it safe enough for our members to come together in that situation. In addition, we have noticed that attendance to activities has declined over the past year and that the bonding among primarily first years is less. We expect that these problems can be counteracted by organizing physical activities (see also Chapter 4: *First years*).

ii. Few corona measures

In the case where the amount of corona measures is limited, we will move to a hybrid condition. In this situation, for example, the one and a half meter distance rule applies, there are only limited physical classes and some Babel activities may be provided on site. We still want to organize as many of the activities on location as possible in this situation. In this regard, we consider the study-related activities, such as Blocks with Babel, to be especially important. However, online activities will also be organized. This is to take into account members who do not yet dare to go into groups. In addition, some of the members live relatively far from Utrecht and may be less inclined to come with a long travel time. Previously, these members came to Utrecht for classes, so this travel time played a smaller role in attendance at activities. Therefore, when planning offline activities, we will take into account any physical lecture times of members. Examples of online activities are games, such as Werewolves.

iii. A lot of corona measures

In this situation, there is virtually no on-site teaching, and offline Babel activities are not allowed. In this scenario, the Netherlands is in lock down again. We will not host any physical activities, but move everything to the online environment.

So all activities, room hours and Blocks with Babels will then take place online (see also Chapter 9: *Babel Room*).

iv. *No corona measures in the Netherlands, but they do for other countries*

In this scenario, it is already possible to organize physical activities within the Netherlands, which we will certainly do. However, it may be that our international members are still abroad. In order not to lose contact with them, we will also organize an online activity about once a month. The non-international members of Babel are also welcome to join us. This activity can be organized by the Accie or the Intercom, for example.

b. *The Big and the Small Trip*

We hope of course that the trips can continue as normal next year. If there are still problems with traveling abroad because of corona, we will choose to have the trips take place within the Netherlands.

Chapter 2: Charter

As of July 1, 2021, the Law on Management and Supervision of Legal Persons (Dutch: Wet Bestuur en Toezicht Rechtspersonen, WBTR) will enter into force. For SV Babel this means that we have to change our statutes within five years, to comply with this legislation. We think it is better to do this as soon as possible, which is why we want to change the statutes immediately next year.

At the GMM in November 2021, we want to ask for input from the members about possible changes in the charter, in addition to the mandatory changes for the WBTR. At the February 2022 GMM, there will be a vote on the charter changes. Then, at the 2022 consent GMM, the new charter will be presented

Chapter 3: Internationalisation

Last year large steps towards internationalisation were taken. This year we will continue the good work of Board XV and XVI and add some of our own initiatives.

a. *The bachelor*

The first point we would like to improve is the bachelor itself. Quite frequently we hear complaints from the internationals about assignments for which knowledge of Dutch is required. Examples of this are Dutch practice material without glossing and supplementary material solely available in Dutch. We strive to collaborate with the Curriculum Committee in order to make the bachelor accessible to everyone.

b. Dutch classes

Also, Board XVII wants to facilitate learning Dutch for the internationals. The plan is to offer weekly classes that will be taught by native Babel members. On top of this a teacher of Dutch as Second Language has been approached to give more formal classes. The number of these classes will depend on the animo and the costs. Also we will organise informal activities related to Dutch, like going for a drink in our local pub and speaking Dutch in the evening.

c. Language buddies

Of course the internationals are not the only ones who want to learn a language within linguistics. We plan on using this by matching native speakers of Dutch with internationals that speak a language the Dutch student wants to learn. This way one can practice together and get to know a fellow student. We also think that it might be fun to organize extra activities with these members.

d. Ambiance

Internationalisation does not only regard the educational aspect but also the ambiance within the group. The past year has shown that internationals are considerably less active within Babel. In order to involve the internationals more we plan on tailoring some activities to the intercultural aspect. This could for example be in the form of information clips about the language and culture of the internationals or cooking activities with dishes from different cultures. This way the Dutch students get to know different cultures and the internationals learn a bit about the Dutch culture.

Chapter 4: First years

This year there will be two cohorts that will be given special attention: the first years who will start the bachelor and the second years who are actually just starting their student life.

a. The new students

i. Mentor groups

Just like in the previous year the first years will be divided into mentor groups with in each group two mentors. During the year there will be held meetings if deemed necessary to receive with the current state of affairs.

ii. Introduction week

Currently it looks like the introduction will be predominantly offline with some online components, although a completely online scenario has been prepared in case needed.

1. Introbooklet

This year too the introcie and the babcie have been charged with the task of making a beautiful introduction booklet. This will be accompanied by a letter to the parents containing information regarding the parents newsletter and the possibility to become a Friend of Babel.

b. Cohort 2020-2021

Because of the pandemic the second-year students haven't experienced a lot of the student life yet and are probably less involved with Babel and their fellow students. We would like to improve this by organising activities that target this group. A potential realization of this is a year-lunch in which each year has lunch together. This way the students get to know their classmates and get to bond. Of course we want to mix the years too, but this already happens during regular activities.

c. Break Week

Obviously everyone hopes the Break Week will be held live. Unfortunately, it is not clear yet whether this will be possible as it depends on the university rules. In case the Break Week can not be held physically the week after the first block we will first look critically at the possibility of organising it physically later on in the year. If this is not deemed possible an online alternative will be organised.

Chapter 5: Website

We want to give the website a greater role in the communication and activities of the association. To achieve this, the website must also be redesigned to be easier to use and navigate.

a. Content

We hope to use the website more to keep members informed of the ins and outs of the association. By keeping the website more active, new members can also find more information and a better impression of the atmosphere of the association through the site. To ensure that members without Facebook can stay informed of the activities and events, we want to communicate more through the site. This will run parallel to the Facebook promotion and will not replace it.

b. Layout

At the moment, things are in an illogical or awkward place, making it difficult to find what you are looking for. The site does not work intuitively. So the site will be rebuilt with the needs of the association in mind. One specific point we want to include in the new design is the placement of the Colourless Green Ideas box, and the (T)issue box. We hope that by placing these more prominently, people will make more use of them. The promotion of activities is already done via the site, but we hope to expand this with the redesign of the site, so that members will also look at the site more often.

c. Practical

There is no money budgeted for the redesign of the site, because it will be done by the board. Therefore, no external parties will be hired. It is not expected that the site will have to be offline for a while. Until the new site is finished, the old site will remain online.

Chapter 6: Committees

We want to continue with the committees on the same footing as XVI. We want the committees to be able to function independently. To do this, we will use the function-specific White Papers created by XVI. We will also keep the standard banner and standard layout of posts. Being creative in promotion will be encouraged, but the standard formats will make the work of the PR commissioners easier.

a. Keeping them active

We want to ensure that committees remain active throughout the year. Board members will be actively involved in the committees they are members of and will ensure that the committees remain active.

b. Training

We will be training committee members in the same manner as XVI, which means they will be trained using the function-specific White Papers. The committee members who

have the same function will be trained at one time jointly by the board member with the relevant function.

c. The Festivities Committee

The Festivities Committee came to a halt last year as no festivities could be organized. We assume that next year parties can be organized again and we therefore want to start up the Feescie again this year.

d. Other Committees

The other committees that stopped last year because of corona we also want to start up again. These are the TravelCie, the Intercom and the MediaCie.

Chapter 7: Societies

We believe that the societies are a valuable contribution to the association. However, we have noticed that it can be difficult to keep the societies active. To address this we have a number of ideas for the societies.

a. Society coordinator

First of all we would like to introduce a new function, the coordinator of the societies. This person's job is to encourage the societies' contact person to organize activities. We hope that this person can help to keep the societies more active.

b. New Whatsapp group

We want to create a new Whatsapp group at the beginning of the year, just like board XVI. In this way, people have to choose to stay with the society in the coming year, making the boundary for quitting a society lower than if they had to quit a Whatsapp group themselves. This leaves only the active members.

c. Society Festival

We want to organize a society festival mid-year, rather than at the end of the year. Here the societies have the opportunity to put themselves on the map, which will motivate them to undertake activities during the rest of the year. In addition, it is a good way to make the societies even better known. One can also register for a society halfway through the year, which is more accessible at a festival. Suppose that due to corona it is not possible to organize a festival on location, we will do this online.

Chapter 8: Drinks

Monthly get-togethers are held on the second Wednesday of the month. Last year this did not happen due to corona.

a. Regular pub

Since last year we have a new regular pub: The Stichtse Taveerne. Although we did not have the pleasure of visiting there last year, we hope to hold our monthly drinks there next year.

b. Monthly Drinks

As more becomes possible after corona, we will pick up the monthly get-togethers again. The exact dates that the monthly get-togethers will take place will still be announced. The plan of board XVI to have these start at 20.00 instead of 21.00 will be continued.

c. Pub Lectures and theme drinks

To create some variety in the drinks, we want to organize pub lectures. This means that a mini-college will be given (by a lecturer) during the drinks. The location of these pub lectures will be decided later. We also think it would be fun to organize theme drinks, which do not necessarily have to coincide with the monthly drinks. An example of such a themed get-together is a Eurovision Song Contest watch party.

Chapter 9: Babel Room

Although it could hardly be used last year, we hope to spend a lot of time in the Babel Room next year.

a. Open Chamber Hours

If we are not allowed to hold chamber hours at the university due to corona, we will move to online room hours through Teams. Our goal is to hold a chamber hour once a week. Although this year it was found that there was little enthusiasm for online chamber hours, we think it is important that our members have a place to go and catch up with other members of Babel.

When chamber hours are physically possible again, we will hold five per week. This will involve the Babel room being open for at least two hours a day. If this turns out to be too little we will raise this minimum.

b. *Thematic chamber hours*

To increase the enthusiasm for the chamber hours, we will have a theme for some of them. For about the first three months of the year we will have weekly room hours. At this time, one society can organize something fun for that hour. In this way we hope that both the enthusiasm for the chamber hours and the enthusiasm for and the reputation of the society will grow. After all the societies have had their turn, we will organize a monthly thematic chamber hour. In addition to the above ideas, we will also celebrate the birthdays of the board members, with the birthday person bringing their own treat.

c. *Setting up*

Since Board XVI did not have the opportunity last year to follow through on their plans for furnishing the Babel Room, we have decided to take on their unrealized plans. First, in doing so, we will tackle the Babel Library. We will paint the shelf, add a name plate, and put up a fill-in list where members can write their name when they borrow a book. Second, we will purchase a cabinet or chest where members can put their bags. In doing so, we will take into account the limited space in the Babel Room. Third, we will place at least one plant in the Babel Room. Since it can sometimes get very hot or cold in the Babel Room, we will select a plant that can withstand extreme climatic conditions well. This plant will be taken home during the summer vacations by a member of the current board, so that it does not die a premature death. This plant will be given an appropriate name through a competition among the members.

d. *Babel brunches and dinners*

We think the Babel brunches and dinners are a fun idea and would definitely like to continue organizing them. These events will take place about once a block. We hope this will ensure greater attendance in the Babel Room. We would also like to hold an alumni reception once this year. This was skipped last year due to corona, but we would like to continue it next year.

Chapter 10: Other Associations

In previous years, Babel has had good contact with study associations of the Faculty of Humanities and with other Linguistics associations. We would like to continue this.

a. *Constitution Drinks (CoBo)*

We are now assuming that the constitution drinks can go ahead in the coming year. If this is not possible at the beginning of the year, we hope to be able to make this happen later in the year.

b. *ABC gala*

Previous boards have organized a gala with other study associations: the ABC gala. We think it would be very nice to organize this again this year. This would also be good for the mutual mixing of the members of these associations.

c. *StuTS*

We think it would be fun to go to the language conference StuTS with the interested members of various study associations. StuTS is a language conference focused on the German language and linguistics in general. We were approached this year by the StuTS to organize this conference. This did not seem feasible to us at the time, but we think it would be great fun to attend the conference together with other societies. This joint outing will help with mutual mingling and to keep the ties between the societies strong and active.

Chapter 11: Promo and Communication

The way communication is going now is good. We would like to continue this next year. We don't want to change much about the promotion either.

a. *Whatsapp group*

We think the Whatsapp group is a good way to announce events and other things to the members. We will continue with this way of communication. Furthermore, we will strive to send a message every week with the activities of that week as a reminder, as board XVI had introduced.

For the general Babel group chat, we will not use a new group. New members will be given a link to enter this app group and old members can get out on their own. If this is not done we will remind them after three months via a Whatsapp message.

b. *Instagram*

We will keep the Instagram account in use to post nice pictures of activities and promote committee related posts. We will also do a board day in the life/q&a at the beginning and halfway through the year, so we can introduce ourselves in a different way. By doing this around the time that the application for board XVIII begins, this may also help make being a board a little more appealing to freshmen.

c. *Website*

We notice that the site is not used much. We hope to use it more often for promotion and communication to the members, also as an addition to facebook for the members who do not use it. More about this in chapter 5: *Website*.

d. Colourless Green Ideas Box and (T)issue Box

Next year we will do our best to promote the Colourless Green Ideas Box and (T)issue Box more, so that members will be more aware that they exist and will use them more. This will be done through the site and Whatsapp.

e. Members

We will continue to add birthdays of members who like it to the newsletter. We will do this by sending out a form at the beginning of the year where members could fill in their name and birthday. Furthermore, we will also continue with Member of the Month to highlight a member each month.

f. Facebook

Last year Facebook was mainly used to announce activities. This will be continued next year. By still using Facebook for activities, members can indicate if they are either interested or coming. This can cause other members to also come because they see that friends are also going.

Chapter 12: Confidants

Two confidants were appointed by Board XVI last year. We think this is a good concept and will continue it this year. Last year the plan was to do a monthly walk-in hour. Unfortunately this could not take place due to corona. We hope that this will be an option next year, and will try to set it up in consultation with the confidants. This walk-in hour may also be physical. This depends on the situation regarding corona. A White Paper will also be made available to the confidants.

Chapter 13: Study

Of course, our members should also study next to having fun. To help them, the initiatives of previous boards will be continued.

a. Exam preparation

Following Board XVI we will organize exam preparations for the first years. These will be given by students who master the material for that course well.

b. Blocks with Babel

We strive to organise a Blocks with Babel before each exam week. It may occur that the actual amount of blocks with Babel will deviate from this in case this is necessary, like if a subject has a theoretical part and a practical part. The form of this depends of course on the current state of affairs regarding covid, but in general we try to have them physically.

Chapter 14: Students outside the bachelor's degree in Linguistics

We want to encourage possible members outside the bachelor Linguistics to become members. For example, we plan to invite students from the Linguistics master's program to one of the activities in the introduction week and to drop by the master's student introduction on Thursday, September 9 or Friday, September 10 ourselves. In this way we can increase the awareness of Babel among the master students and hopefully we will recruit more members. Furthermore, we will continue to encourage former members to become alumni by emailing them information about this option.

Chapter 15: Sponsorship

a. New sponsorship deals

As with last year, we will continue to focus on existing deals with current sponsors. However, we will always remain open to new deals that could be beneficial to members. We will also ask members if they have any ideas for sponsorship deals that they think would be beneficial.

b. Current sponsorship deals

Some of the current deals do not seem to be very well known to members. We will try to change this. For example, we will promote Sponsorkliks better by reminding members once in a while via Whatsapp and putting it in a clear place on the site.