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**How can 'rank distance' help in development of CALL material? A comparative study of needs analyses for producing e-material**

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The innovative aspect of this paper consists in using a mathematical method for describing the similarity between socio-cultural and linguistic environments of different host countries.

In this paper we process and compare the needs analyses which have been produced for Czech, French, Polish, Portuguese and Romanian in the course of the development of the Euromobil 2 project (a hybrid multimedia language training and information programme to support student mobility). The needs analyses reveal, among other things, problems that the exchange students are confronted with, such as unexpected features of the host countries (both in positive and negative sense) or differences in communicative strategies in study and everyday situations.

We are interested in investigating the (dis)similarities between the results of the needs analyses for the five languages. We use the following strategy: For each language, the answers are categorised and the categories are then ranked according to their score. We compare the obtained rankings by using a particular method (called rank distance), which was successfully applied by the authors in different fields, such as computational linguistics, genomics and social sciences.

Our research not only confirms and/or details some natural expectations, but offers some insights, otherwise inaccessible through direct observations or intuition.

The results of this comparative study are expected to aid in the development of efficient e-material, specific for each target group.