

PILOT PROJECT No. 6

"SOME DOS & DON'TS IN MULTICULTURAL SETTINGS"

FINAL REPORT and EVALUATION

PROJECT TITLE

"Some Dos & Don'ts In Multicultural Settings"

PILOTING INSTITUTION(S):

VWU- Vorstudienlehrgang der Wiener Universitäten

PILOTING INSTRUCTOR(S): Hannes Vogler / Monika Fritz

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PROJECT SUMMARY

Please describe briefly the overall goal and objectives of the pilot project.

It could be shown that a project like this, which uses a concrete goal (= production of a booklet) and the surrounding of the institution (= interviews with fellow students about cultural and everyday peculiarities) is able to reach the main targets:

- * Enforcing the use of foreign language as a medium of communication
- * Breaking up mono-cultural groups of (Chinese) students and developing contacts with other cultures
- * Gaining study skills (learning how to do a project, how to make a work-plan, how to present etc.)
- * Doing some "learning by pleasure" (and not in a "traditional" way)
- * Producing a "souvenir" for students themselves that can also be used by the course-running institution to present itself.

The project also demonstrated what the limitations are:

- * Such a project mainly reaches those students who have "open characters" and are interested in new things instead of "horse headed learning by heart".
- * Such a project cannot be 100% replicated for every company or firm (groups are too big, resources are smaller, incentives are less...)

TARGET GROUP

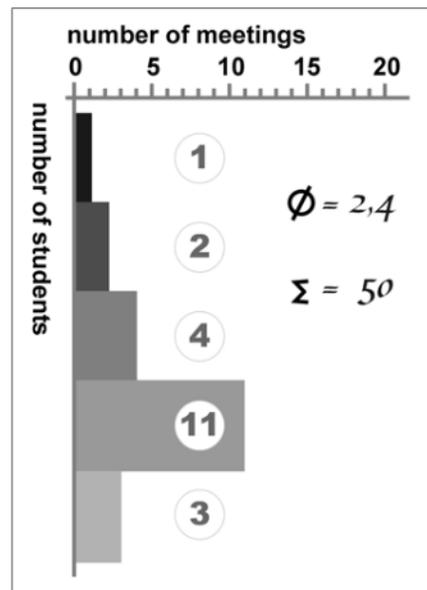
Please indicate age, gender, national profile and number of students in the pilot group and level of their language proficiency according to the European Framework.

In the beginning:

- * 25 students, attending both the lessons in Geography & Economics and German
- * between 20 and 31 years,
- * 13 female/12 male,
- * 18 Chinese, the others from India, the Arabian region, Albania, Thailand and the Ukraine.

Finally:

- * Active participants: 21 (= 84 %),
- * 15 Chinese (age and male/female-relation was not compared because during the project it was clear that there was no representative factor).
- * 50 % of them were doing "what had to be done", 50 % more.
- * The graphics shows how many intercultural meetings (= interviews) took place:
One "project student" had to meet at least one other student from another country and another from VWU's course to ask him/her about "dos and don'ts" in his/her country.
(One partner had been nominated for every "project student", meeting-time and -place had to be fixed by themselves.)



PILOT PROJECT RELATION TO CHAGAL PRINCIPLES

Please specify how your project fits into the CHAGAL Curriculum Guidelines.

1. *Learner centered approach*: The project was based on the students' everyday life experience and the students themselves carried out the central activities.

2. *Language competence*: The participating students had to use the German language to get and to write down information. Besides that some special skills such as transforming from positive to negative expressions and relative sentences could be trained with their own material.

3. *Problem solving competence*: Students had to arrange their meetings, to gather information, to formulate and to produce it for sampling for the booklet "Ausländer sein - aber richtig!" (~ "How to be a real stranger!", see facsimile.)

4. *Study/learning competence*: The students learned/trained presentation skills (learning the *netplan-technique*, see photo) and organisation- and process-management-skills (performing presentations on their home countries and preparing handouts for their colleagues).

How well this worked can be shown with the following graphics. It is based on an anonymous evaluation questionnaire at the end of the project. Students were asked in which field they had learned something by participating (21 questionnaires returned, more than one answer was possible):

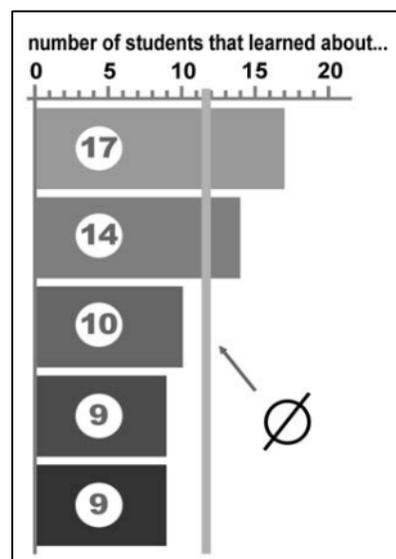
I learned something about foreign cultures.

I have got practice in speaking German.

I have got practice in writing German.

I have learned how to organize and realize a project.

I have got to know people whom I would not have met without the project.



METHODOLOGY

Please give a description of the methodology that you will use to achieve your pilot project objectives. Indicate the tools/instruments that will be developed/used during the pilot project (e.g. visual aids, questionnaires, handouts, teacher-developed materials etc.).

The main methods have been:

- * *Information lessons* to bring basic knowledge about how to manage a project, how to carry out an interview how to transform information into descriptions etc.
- * *Working groups* gain experience in *net- planning*, interview- and description-techniques
- * *Presentations* made by the students themselves about their home countries and their cultural peculiarities (photo shows a Chinese tea ceremony presented by a student in traditional clothing as an example)
- * *Correction lessons* to improve transcriptions.
- * *Feedback lessons* to exchange information and to evaluate the project's outcomes and to assess whether the project did work.



The main work for getting material to produce the booklet has been done by the students on their own. Therefore a lot of material was produced (see *appendix*).

ACTION PLAN

Please provide a short description of the activities carried out within your pilot (e.g. who was doing what and when).

The graphics show the different parts of the project (10/2003 = Oct. 2003 and so on):

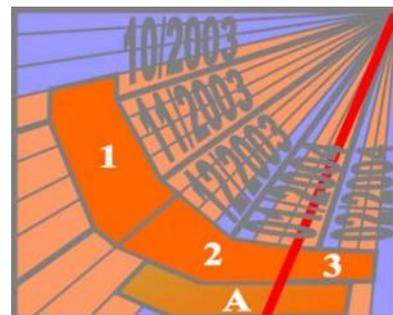
Phase 1: *Information phase*, including preparation via teaching on time-planning, interview-techniques, cultural peculiarities and test-interviews

Phase 2: *Activation phase*, including interviews conducted by the students on their own.

Phase 3: *Evaluation phase*, including production of the booklet by the teacher and feedback-questionnaires.

Phase A: *Presentation phase*: Students' presentations about their home countries.

Usually 1 lesson per week (45 min.) was used to carry out the project (except the Students' presentations).



EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Please indicate what YOUR idea of the outcomes was BEFORE starting the pilot project (=text of your proposal).

1. *Product:* Booklet **A Good Guide To Bad Manners**. Every student involved in the project will get a copy.
2. *German language:* Increase of language proficiency
3. *Study skills:* As described in "Relation to the CHAGAL-principles" above.
4. *Social outcome:* Impact on students' integration.

ACTUAL OUTCOMES

Please compare the outcomes AFTER the end of the pilot project to the expected outcomes above.

1. *Product:* **Booklet A Good Guide To Bad Manners**. *Every student involved in the project will get a copy.*

A 22 page booklet was produced (title-facsimile see above, whole booklet see *appendix*) and distributed not only to the students but also within the CHAGAL-community and to VWU's teachers. Additionally it was also used as a training material in two of VWU's courses during March 2004. Actual number of copies: approximately 200.

In fact the title had to be changed, because the samples collected as examples of "bad manners" in different countries turned out not that specific and unique as hoped - therefore it now has a more gentle title: "Ausländer sein - aber richtig!" (~ "How to be a real stranger!")

2. *German language:* *Increase of language proficiency*

As seen in graphics above language proficiency increased rather significantly.

67 % (14 out of 21) participating students see themselves as having had *practice in talking German*.

44 % (10 out of 21) participating students see themselves as having had *practice in writing German*.

Indications from both Geography and German language lessons showed that those who participated more intensively made more progress in language learning. (Although it has to be said, that as there was "normal work" too it cannot be said definitely that this is the precise reason why their language competence improved!)

3. Study skills: As described in "Relation to the CHAGAL-principles" above.

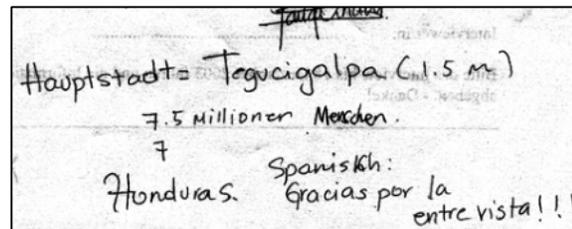
43 % (9 out of 21) stated in the questionnaire: "I have learned how to organize and realize a project!" – The number was less than expected.

One reason might be that Chinese students have great difficulties with learning German and the information material provided was too complicated for them because it was oriented at "real life conditions" (information had been put together by using professional web-sites).

4. Social outcome: Impact on students' integration.

This turned out to be the most positive and surprising one:

82 % (17 out of 21) said that they had "learned something about foreign cultures" and additional observations showed how deep this worked. Some of the students found new friends and many of them made more notes than they had to. An example is



shown here. (The Chinese student had to ask a colleague from Honduras and noticed some additional things about the country and the Spanish language.)

Additional: CHAGAL-Project 6 was also presented at Ruhruniversität Bochum, an invitation made by her department for courses in German as a foreign language (March 5th 2004).

LIST OF SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Please list the materials you have developed (e.g. questionnaires, forms, handouts, records, notes, students' feedback etc.). - Please include the documents into the **APPENDIX**.

1. Project diary
2. Material handed out to the students collected in the form of a script:
 - 2.1 Basics of *project work*
 - 2.2 *Project work* practicality
 - 2.3 *Project treaty*
 - 2.4 *Structured and unstructured work* (including information on the *netplan*-technique)
 - 2.5 How to make a *presentation*
3. Project treaties signed by students
4. Information sheets about the persons to be interviewed

5. *Do's & don'ts-questionnaires*, Version 1
6. *Do's & don'ts-questionnaires*, Version 2
7. *Do's & don'ts-questionnaires*, Version 3
8. Booklet "*Ausländer sein - aber wirklich!*" (~How to be a real stranger!")
9. *Handouts made by students* for their presentations (examples)
10. Evaluation of the *final questionnaire* including *transcript of the remarks on the project* by students
11. Originals of the *final questionnaire*
12. Handout to be given at *CHAGAL-Meeting* in Jena to *Chagal-course* running teachers (Jan. 2004)
13. Report on *CHAGAL-Project 6-Presentation* at *Ruhr-Universität Bochum* (March 2004)

PILOT PROJECT FINAL EVALUATION

Please answer the guiding questions below as far as possible. Additional comments are highly welcome, though.

1. Please describe the added value of the pilot project: benefit for the chagal student target group (e.g. with regard to competences, study skills, integration ...).

CHAGAL-Students benefited by demonstration and experience in different study skills such as *project working*, which would not have taken place without the *CHAGAL-project* and the possibilities it offered. It is nowadays necessary for students to acquire these skills because universities require them.

2. If applicable, please give a brief outline how (methodologically, in terms of content...) your pilot project supported / guided students into academic study - more efficiently, intensively.... than it would have been possible without the pilot project?

As stated above universities require students to have different modern techniques in *project working*, *presentation* and *research techniques*...

In fact a project like *CHAGAL* activates "hidden resources" and provides both material and psychological possibilities to carry out lessons and projects which require a lot of additional work. In this way a project like *CHAGAL* stimulates an outcome that would not have been had without it.

3. To underpin the findings above: please give a summary of students' feedback:

A German transcript of students' remarks can be found within the evaluation of the final questionnaire (see *appendix*, no.9). The most important ones are translated into English:

Positive Remarks:

"I learned what I wanted to learn."

"It was an interesting thing."

"The project was very pleasant and I learned a lot about foreign cultures."

"It was important for me to learn something about foreign cultures and to get in contact with people from other countries."

"We did a good job in working together."

Negative Remarks:

"We should have had more time!"

"We could have cooperated better."

4. If any, which level of study language proficiency would you think as preconditional for carrying out a project like your pilot project? Please indicate the level according to the European Framework.

Students should have reached level B because many of the contents are new and very complicated so that it is hard for them to combine both language learning and content-learning.

5. Please describe the added value of the pilot project: benefit for the academic community at (host) universities (e.g. benefit for academic (everyday) life, for academic studies, effects on the internationalisation process /Bologna Process, benefit for majority student groups ...).

Reiterating what has been said above modern universities require students to be able to work on their own. Training in *project working* can help to prepare students for these requirements and to enhance their capacity for study. Once that has been achieved it is less necessary for universities to train the students themselves.

6. You have finished a chagal pilot project. How much extra work did it afford (hours per week)?

How would you define the pilot project workload in terms of cost-benefit-ratio?

The amount of extra work is hard to say. Teachers are used to "working all around the clock" - because thinking and reflecting in spare time is also a part of work.

The operative work may have reached about 100 hrs in total.

In terms of cost-benefit-ratio it can be said, that...

...one of the special outcomes has been that I prepared a lot of material which I can use during the next semesters also.

...the motivation by taking part at an international project, doing some travelling and getting in contact with interesting people has been an enormous stimulation to me.

...I cannot imagine doing such a project within my normal working hours all the time because my routine work each day takes up a lot of my time. But if the conditions could be improved (especially smaller course-groups) it would be possible.

7. Sustainability:

How do you feel about continuing your pilot project work/ developing it further / implement your findings into your teaching? If applicable, please indicate any plans how you will proceed further.

Is your pilot project /or parts of it?/ transferable into mainstream teaching/learning at your institution? In which way would you suppose it might be implemented? Do you intend to do anything about it? Is there any support the chagal team can offer?

In fact I am very interested in continuing the ideas of *CHAGAL*-project as I also find it possible to implement parts of my project both into my and other persons teaching. I would be interested in:

- * *Cooperation with universities* to find out which parts of my projects are required in different studies.
- * *Making plans how the administrative and didactic surroundings* within our institutions can be changed to improve the conditions for a project like this.
- * *Finding out how the contents of project work and presentation skills can be managed and implemented* into the curriculum of different preparation institutions for universities.
- * *Clearing house for quality standard.* To implement a set of quality standard guidelines and how this quality standard can be fixed and made a kind of *quality-seal* for different institutions in different countries.