

**Report on an ELP training event organized in Albania (Tirana)
on 16 and 17 March 2006 within the framework of
Project C6 – Training teachers to use the European Language Portfolio
(Expert mission: David Little)**

The Albanian national context

The government that took office in Albania in the summer of 2005 is strongly committed to the promotion of language learning at all levels of education. This was emphasized by both the Minister for Education and Science, Mr Genc Pollo, and the Deputy Minister, Mr Halit Shamata, at separate meetings we had with them. The government's commitment is reflected in the Ministry's decision to support the development, piloting and implementation of ELP models for the school and university sectors in Albania. The Minister and Deputy Minister acknowledged the potential of the ELP and the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages to support the development of language teaching and learning in Albania. The senate of the University of Tirana has already recognized the CEFR's common reference levels, as the Rector, Prof. Dr Shezai Rrokaj, confirmed when we met him.

Albania was represented by Tatjana Vucani at the central workshop of project C6 (November 2004). The purpose of this Albanian follow-up event was to launch the development of ELPs for language learners in high schools and universities in Albania. It was attended by twenty-four language teachers: eight from the University of Tirana, eight from private high schools, and eight from public high schools. They will develop and pilot ELPs for their sectors, and in due course some of them will train other teachers in the use of the ELP.

The training event: content and process

The working hours were as follows: Thursday 16 March, 9.00–17.00; Friday 17 March, 9.00–14.00. The earlier finish on Friday was agreed in advance with ECML in order to accommodate the meetings with the Minister of Education and Science, the Deputy Minister, and the Rector of the University of Tirana, mentioned above.

Thursday 16 March – The seminar was opened by the Director of the Department of Curriculum Development in the Ministry of Education and Science and the Director of the National Centre for Qualification and Training in Education, both of whom stressed the importance of ELP design and implementation and ELP-related teacher training. Tatjana Vuçani gave a PowerPoint presentation outlining the national situation as regards ELP development and summarizing the objectives of the seminar.

In the first working session David Little gave a plenary lecture in three parts:

1. An introduction to the ELP and its relation to the Council of Europe's language education policies in general and the Common European Framework

in particular, and an explanation of the role of ECML in supporting the current implementation phase.

2. An account of the design and implementation of the Irish ELP for secondary learners of foreign languages. Although this model is not widely used, its implementation in a number of schools has been extensively researched. The model can be viewed at www.tcd.ie/clcs, together with many examples of students' work, and an evaluation report can be downloaded.
3. An account of the design and implementation of the Irish ELP for primary learners of English as a second language. This model was developed by Integrate Ireland Language and Training as the central pedagogical support in the teaching of English as a second language at primary level. Some 5,000 copies are distributed each year (this ELP can be downloaded from www.iilt.ie).

The second session was devoted to the module on learner autonomy from the kit of teacher training materials that project C6 is developing. David Little used the PowerPoint presentation to introduce the module, the three working groups then spent an hour on the discussion questions and activities integral to the module, and the session concluded with plenary feedback and discussion.

The final session of the first day focussed on key design features of the ELP. David Little gave a PowerPoint presentation prepared specially for this event, after which the working groups discussed how they would embody these features in the ELPs they are to design.

Friday 16 September – Most of the second day was concerned with the CEFR's common reference levels and the development of descriptors and checklists. The day was divided into four parts:

1. The three groups worked on a series of activities designed to familiarize them with the common reference levels.
2. David Little gave a specially prepared PowerPoint presentation on the development of descriptors.
3. The three groups each divided into two subgroups, and each subgroup developed a set of descriptors for a particular level and skill/communicative activity.
4. In a plenary feedback session the descriptors developed by the subgroups were reviewed and discussed, David Little led a general recapitulation of the themes and activities of the training event, and the participants began to negotiate their future programme of work.

The general atmosphere of the training event was very positive, and we are confident that it succeeded in its aim: to launch the development of the first two Albanian ELPs.

The two modules created specially for this event, on design features of the ELP and the development of descriptors, will be added to Project C6's teacher training kit.

David Little and Tatjana Vuçani
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