

ECML Project B.1 – ICCinTE

Incorporating Intercultural Communication in Language Teaching and Learning

National Training Event

Bratislava, 3 June, 2005

Žilina, 4 June, 2005

Report

The third NTE for the ICCinTE project took place in Slovakia, in Bratislava and Žilina. The two one-day workshops were organised locally by Anna Hlavnová, Vice-Dean for Foreign Affairs and Public Relations at the Faculty of Science, University of Žilina, and Lubica Rovánová, Head of the Department of Foreign Languages, Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Information Technology, Slovak Technical University, Bratislava. The workshops were co-facilitated by the two local organisers and Gabriela Matei, director of EduPlus Consulting, Timisoara, Romania, team member in the ICCinTE project of the European Centre for Modern Languages, Graz.

The Bratislava workshop was attended by 27 participants, mostly university teachers of English, but also teacher trainers for in-service teacher training, trainer trainers, and secondary school teachers of English. The workshop took place at the Department of Languages, Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Information Technology, Slovak University of Technology, Ilkovicova 3, 812 19 Bratislava.

The Žilina workshop was attended by 15 participants, mostly private or state secondary school teachers of English or other subjects taught through English. It took place at the Private Bilingual Grammar School, Sturova 1, Žilina.

Our objectives for both workshops were:

- to raise participants' awareness of intercultural communicative competence (ICC);
- to familiarize participants with basic concepts related to the theoretical background of intercultural communicative competence;
- to give practical interactive training in developing ICC in language classes and in teacher training.

The structure of the one-day workshop was the following:

9:00 – 10:30 session 1	Through linguistic competence towards intercultural competence
10:30 – 11:00	coffee break
11:00 – 12:30 session 2	Perceptions of time in intercultural settings
12:30 – 13:30	lunch break

13:30 – 14:30 session 3	Stereotypes
14:30 – 14:45 coffee break	
14:45 – 15:45 session 4	Eating and drinking habits across cultures
15:45 – 16:00	Feedback session

After a brief presentation of the European Centre for Modern Languages, Graz, its projects, activities and its website, the workshops consisted of interactive presentations, as well as tasks for participants, pair and group activities, many of them based on the textbook *Mirrors and Windows*. The workshop presentations and activities were well received by the participants, who cooperated fully with the facilitators and with one another. The participants also appreciated the materials received from the facilitators, in particular the two project publications.

Participants mentioned in their feedback questionnaires that:

1. they took away from the workshop not only “very interesting practical activities that can be used to increase students’ cultural awareness”, or “a lot of inspiration and ideas I plan to implement in my teaching”, but also an awareness of “how important attitudes are”; not only “a good framework to think about”, but also “the realization that stereotypes can be dangerous: this forces me to start thinking how not to become a stereotypical teacher”.
2. they were surprised by various things during the workshops, including “the complexity of the approaches presented”, “the importance of ICC awareness”, and “how involved and motivated the audience was, considering it was during the weekend”.
3. they would recommend that “this kind of workshops should continue”, and that they would welcome even more examples and activities.

The feedback we received from participants at the end of the two training days made us as facilitators confident that we achieved the outcomes we expected from the workshops: participants mentioned that they left the workshops with a raised awareness of not only intercultural differences, but also of the importance of developing their own and their students’ intercultural communicative competence; they also mentioned that they felt inspired to incorporate ICC elements in their teaching, at knowledge, skills and attitudes level.