

National Training Event – Budapest
ECML Project B.1
ICCinTE

Report

Teaching Language and Culture (Teacher Training Seminars)

The National Training Event (NTE) in Budapest consisted of four seminars held by Ildikó Lázár, project coordinator (Hungary) and Ágnes Samu, local organizer (Hungary) from 2pm to 5pm on 27 April, 18 May, 1 and 8 June 2005.

The venue was Kölcsey Ferenc Secondary School (1063 Budapest, Munkácsy M. u. 26), which is a French-Hungarian bilingual school. The school has a reputation of teaching 7 different languages (English, French, German, Italian, Russian, Latin and Portuguese). The participants of the NTE were 16 language teachers of the school teaching English, French, German, Italian, and Russian.

The language of the workshop was Hungarian.

Structure of the training event:

Each session of the seminar consisted of an introduction to the theoretical background of the various aspects of Intercultural Communication training followed by several topic-centred activities and discussions based on the teachers' personal experience as well. Between the sessions the participants did short mini-projects as homework to develop culture-based exercises in order to upgrade the textbooks they use.

Session 1

Defining key terms (culture, acculturation, intercultural competence, etc.)
Presenting the results of two ECML projects on culture in language teaching
Raising awareness and linking theory to practice with association and simulation games, role-plays and ethnographic tasks

Session 2

How to break stereotypes and encourage non-judgmental attitudes
Cultural content in coursebooks and how to supplement them
Important ingredients of a language course that aims to develop ICC

Session 3

Methods to help develop intercultural competence

Activities to discover cultural similarities and differences (in food, eating habits, holidays and celebrations, music, values and norms, etc.) based on *Mirrors and Windows*
Further reading and useful links

Session 4

The stages of acculturation

First impressions of travelers abroad

Using literary pieces for intercultural learning

Summary and evaluation

The teachers have been given a large number of handouts which were used during the sessions and which they can modify and use in their teaching. They have also been given a bibliography of recommended theoretical and practical resource books and articles and a copy of each of the ECML publications of *Mirrors and Windows* and *Incorporating Intercultural Communicative Competence in Language Teacher Education* as well as information brochures on the activities of the ECML.

The overall aims of the workshop sessions were the following:

- To raise awareness of the necessity of incorporating intercultural communication training into language teaching;
- To assist French, German, Italian, Russian and English secondary school teachers in implementing ICC in their own teaching by providing them with theoretical concepts and numerous examples of good practice and useful materials;
- To encourage intercultural learning at all stages of language learning;
- To explore various possibilities for adapting currently used coursebooks to better cater for ICC training;
- To encourage the participants to design their own ICC materials suitable for their own classes of students;
- To disseminate the results of ECML projects in the field;
- To make the ECML and its activities and resources better known.

Feedback

The feedback was mostly positive, highlighting the awareness raising function of the discussions during the workshop and appreciating the large number of materials distributed to the participants. One critical remark concerned the relatively slow pace of the sessions. In addition, at the end of the training both the participants and the facilitators felt that it would have been better to hold the workshop on two consecutive days instead of four afternoons spread over three months.