

Language Educator Awareness (LEA)

Developing plurilingual and pluricultural awareness in language teacher education

Project description

Version 1.0

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1. CONTEXT

Language teacher education has traditionally been focused on the didactic procedures for teaching particular languages. However, developments in contemporary society oblige educational institutions to face up to the challenges of plurilingualism and pluriculturalism. Consequently, it is necessary to enrich language teacher education by including the competences needed to promote linguistic and cultural diversity for the construction of “democratic citizenship, social cohesion, mutual understanding and respect”.

Language and culture awareness help to promote these aims. The recognition and acceptance of diversity leads to the development of positive attitudes, which impel the individual to value diversity and to act in consequence. Such a programme would enable teachers become key social actors with a major role to play both locally as well as globally.

The materials and activities proposed for the language teacher training kit in this project will take into account the plurilingual approach presented in the *Common European Framework for Languages* that “emphasizes the fact that an individual person’s experience of language in its cultural contexts expands, from the language of the home to that of society at large and then to the languages of other peoples” .

Following the *Common European Framework for Languages*, one of the aims of the materials that will be produced throughout this project will be to develop a linguistic repertory, in which all linguistic abilities have a place. Furthermore, the materials will present a pluricultural approach to promoting what the Framework defined as “the favourable development of the learner’s whole personality and sense of identity in response to the enriching experience of otherness in language and culture”.

A rationale and activities to promote democratic citizenship, social cohesion, mutual understanding and respect, will be one of the main objectives of the kit for language teacher trainers.

The LEA project is particularly relevant to the general thematic area expressed in the ECML call for proposals of the 2nd medium-term programme “Languages for Social Cohesion. Language Education in a Multilingual and Multicultural Europe” because the main objectives of the project are aimed at **developing social cohesion** through language teaching/learning among teachers and consequently among their students. This project has two main orientations: **training** and **awareness raising**. That is to say, by means of training language teacher trainers, the team members’ main purpose is to develop plurilingual and pluricultural competences among language teachers and consequently among students at all levels.

This project will build on previous work done under one of the major focuses of the first medium term programme: *1.2 Language Awareness, Intercultural Competence, Multilingual Matters*. Particularly, it will be a follow-up, extension and development of the Ja-ling project (*ECML 1.2.1 and Socrates Jaling Comenius 95040-CP-1-2001-1-DE-COMENIUS-C21*).

The present project is a clear step forward. The previous Ja-Ling project aimed at learners as the final target group; logically, the following phase had to be intended for language teacher educators. Thus, dissemination of the basic assumptions of the Ja-Ling approach is guaranteed to be larger and deeper.

2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

General aims

- To raise awareness of diversity as a key element of society
- to develop positive attitudes among language teachers & trainees towards all other languages as well as their speakers
- to enrich language teacher education with the potential to exploit linguistic and cultural diversity at individual and social levels
- to facilitate curricular changes aimed at incorporating a plurilingual and pluricultural dimension into language classes.

Specific objectives

1. To elaborate a questionnaire to analyse the assertions beliefs that language teachers/trainees have with regard to plurilingualism and pluriculturalism. The questionnaire will be on the LEA web page
2. to elaborate a basic kit for language teacher educators, taking advantage of the experience gathered during the Ja-Ling project.

The kit will contain:

- i. a rationale
 - ii. procedures for motivating language teachers & trainees to work with language and culture diversity
 - iii. activities and materials designed to train language teachers & trainees in language and culture awareness
 - iv. sample activities and materials, which language teachers & trainees can use in their language classes, especially materials aimed at incorporating a plurilingual and pluricultural dimension into the learning of some particular languages.
3. to train the participants in the use of the kit
 4. to get participants to trial the kit in their own teaching environment
 5. to get feedback from the network members in order to improve the basic kit
 6. to train other language teacher trainers in the use of the kit at national level
 7. to evaluate on-going processes stimulated by the project
 8. to publish the final improved version of the training kit, as well as other outcomes of the project. The publication will be produced in electronic and paper form.

3. EXPECTED OUTCOMES

This project is expected:

- to promote awareness for plurilingualism and pluriculturalism among the participants.
- to provide them with instruments to introduce plurilingualism and pluriculturalism among language teachers and learners.

These processes will be measured, respectively, by the contribution of the participants to the improvement of the basic kit and by a piloted questionnaire delivered to the participants and other language teacher trainers who will take part in the project at national level.

The end product developed in this project will be the above-mentioned improved kit, which will help to develop plurilingualism and pluriculturalism competences among language teachers & trainees

4. ACTION PLAN

2004

16-17 January

Meeting of the project team at the ECML in order to

- plan in detail activities for 2004 and devise work breakdown structure, establishing members' specific responsibilities
- elaborate a questionnaire to identify language teachers/trainees' needs related to plurilingualism and pluriculturalism
- elaborate an outline for the LEA web page

January to June

The project team

- *distributes the questionnaire to language teachers/trainees in order to identify their needs related to plurilingualism and pluriculturalism*
- *reviews materials related to language and culture awareness, plurilingualism and pluriculturalism*
- *elaborates a draft outline of the basic training kit, taking into account language teachers/trainees' needs.*

25-26 June

Meeting of the project team at the ECML in order to

- review the draft outline elaborated by the project team members to produce the materials to be included in the LEA's basic kit
- review materials from other projects that might be included in the LEA's basic kit materials.

June to November

The project team

- *elaborates the basic training kit materials which will be piloted in the first international workshop (January 2005)*

18 - 19 October

Meeting of the project team in Granada, Spain, in order to

- complete the final version of the basic kit materials
- prepare the first international workshop.

2005

26-29 January

4-day ECML **workshop** to

- present the basic kit materials
- train participants for the development of plurilingual and pluricultural awareness in language teacher education and in the use of the training kit to carry out training themselves.

Participants' profile:

In-service and pre-service language teacher trainers interested in plurilingualism and pluriculturalism (including primary schoolteacher trainers) who are

- prepared and in a position to pilot the training kit and contribute to its further development
- committed to staying involved in the subsequent phases of the project by regular feedback on the piloting of the kit and attendance of the network meetings
- possibly able to contribute to the final publication.

February to June

The project team and network members

- *review and adapt materials from the basic kit to their own context together with other language teacher trainers at national level.*

24-25 June

Project team and **network meeting** (for network members who completed their tasks) at the ECML premises in order to

- give feedback and discuss on the adjustment of the materials
- prepare the national training sessions.

June to January (2006)

Project team and network members

- *set up and run in-service and/or pre-service language teacher training sessions in their own countries.*

2006

20-21 January

Project team and **network meeting** (for network members who completed their tasks) at the ECML premises in order to

- discuss and gather contributions to the basic training kit, after having piloted it in their own countries.

22-23 January

Meeting of the project team at the ECML in order to

- analyse and assess the processes and the results of the project
- distribute tasks for writing up the draft of the final publication

January to September

The project team

- *prepares the publication including the results obtained in the project and the final improved language teacher training kit.*

15-16 September

Meeting of the project team at the ECML premises in order to

- review and discuss the manuscript of the publication

October

Submission of the final manuscript.

2007

February

Publication of the material.

4. LANGUAGES

The working languages of the project are English and French. Simultaneous interpretation will only be provided for central events (ECML workshops).

Participants are expected to speak fluent English or French and have receptive competences in the other language.