

Training teacher educators (TrainEd)

Project description

Updated the 22 August 2005

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1. CONTEXT

Especially during the past decade or so, many language educators have become teacher educators. Many language educators in Europe, for instance, have started by being involved in in-service teacher education to find that they are then asked to become trainers in their own right, mentoring student teachers or newly-qualified teachers, running staff development workshops in their schools, running courses locally/regionally/internationally for interested colleagues, or running summer schools. While such language educators feel familiar and confident about the content areas of the courses they are asked to conduct, they are frequently **untrained as trainers** and often have to 'learn the ropes' and important training skills the hard way.

This project aims

- to provide a training guide that (beginning or aspiring) teacher trainers can use in their training practice;
- to train a number of teacher educators who can use the training guide mentioned above at national (or international) level.

This project is particularly relevant for the promotion of professionalism and the professional status of language educators as expressed in the ECML call for proposals: it responds to real demands brought about by the changing roles and responsibilities of language educators: the increasing demand on language teachers to assume training responsibilities. Language educators' new **training roles** have already modified the status of the profession, by changing the way in which language educators are perceived by their colleagues.

This project will build on previous ECML projects, in particular on the results of projects 2.1.1, 2.1.2., 2.1.3. and 2.1.4.

2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

General aims

The general aims of the project are:

1. to promote professionalism and the professional status of language educators, by helping them in their changing roles and responsibilities, namely the situations in which language teachers become teacher educators, mentors, staff developers, etc.
2. to increase the training competences and skills of (beginning and aspiring) teacher trainers, thus contributing to a higher quality of teacher education in the member states.

Specific objectives

1. To examine the likely training contexts that those faced with the demand of training find themselves in, and identify the particular challenges they pose; also, to examine the knowledge, skills, attitudes needed to plan, organise, lead and review different training formats.
2. To develop a training guide containing materials and activities/tasks that are not language-specific but are necessary for any teacher trainer. This training guide, as well as other outcomes of the project will be published as a book with CD-ROM by the ECML.
3. To offer practical trainer training to key multipliers (as well as beginning/aspiring teacher educators in the 2nd workshop), so that they can, in their turn, become better trainers and train other teacher educators in their own national or regional contexts.

3. EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The outcomes of the project can be described both in terms of process and products:

1) process outcomes:

- a) the training of teacher educators and their development of training competences and skills;
- b) cascading activities through a range of training using the resources developed in the project.

2) product outcomes:

- a) a training guide focusing on training competences that are not language specific;
- b) a publication containing the training guide and other materials produced during the project (e.g., results of questionnaires, examination of various training contexts and needs).

Ultimately, the major outcome of the project will be an improvement in the quality of teacher training in the field of language education, as a result of the increased number of trainers equipped with training skills/competences, as well as with a transferable and adaptable training guide.

Some concrete criteria to measure whether the planned outcomes have been achieved could be: numbers of trained teacher educators/multipliers, size of network, availability of training guide. Less concrete (but not less valuable) criteria could be the appropriateness and usefulness of outcomes, as expressed by participants in their feedback to the team.

4. ACTION PLAN

2004

Specific objectives

1. To examine the likely training contexts that (beginning or aspiring) teacher trainers find themselves in, and identify the particular challenges they pose as well as to examine the knowledge, skills, attitudes needed to plan, organise, lead and review different training formats;
2. To produce the first draft of the training guide, to pilot it in the central workshop and to get feedback from the participants.

Actions:

23-24 January

Expert meeting – aims:

- Team-building;
- Planning in detail activities for 2004;
- Devising work breakdown structure.
- Establishing members' specific responsibilities.

February - August

- *Team revises and administers the 'TrainEd questionnaire' with the help of the ECML;*
- *Team examines the training contexts and identifies particular challenges;*
- *Team starts collecting and producing materials for the first draft of the training guide, taking into consideration the needs and challenges identified in the previous months;*
- *Team starts analysing the results of the 'TrainEd questionnaire'...*

17-18 September

Timisoara, Romania

Planning meeting for Workshop 9/2004 - aims:

- Team reviews and revises, where necessary, the project description.
- Team prepares the central workshop, by agreeing on modes of work, content of sessions, actions to be taken and deadlines.

October - November

- *Team prepares the workshop*
- *Team analyses the questionnaire results.*

7 - 11 December

1st central workshop (5 days)

Preceded by a one-day preparatory expert meeting

Objectives

- to explore the trainer training needs in the participating countries
- to develop and pilot materials for the trainer training guide
- to identify among the workshop participants trainers for the future expert missions

Expert missions

Participants will explore possibilities of disseminating the training guide more effectively in existing training schemes at national or regional level. Team members would be available to co-facilitate training using the guide, in cooperation with one or more central workshop participants.

Participants' profile:

The participants should be teacher educators for whom the training guide should be useful, who can contribute to its development and who will have opportunities to pilot it in a variety of contexts. This means that participants should have some experience in teacher education, e.g. mentoring, pre-service or in-service, school-based staff development, in-service institutes, etc.

NB: A specific outcome of the 1st central workshop should be the formation of a group of teacher educators committed to delivering training sessions using the guide (in their own training contexts) and giving feedback to the team. Subsequently, team members (supported by the ECML), together with workshop participants, will be involved in using the training guide in national or regional training events (see expert missions, in 2005)

2005

Specific objectives

- Revision of the training guide containing materials and activities/tasks that are not language-specific but are necessary for any teacher educator (on the basis of participants' feedback)
- Further dissemination of the training guide at national and regional levels through expert missions.

Actions:

Expert missions

Throughout 2005, team members and workshop participants will explore the possibilities of using the training guide in existing training schemes at national or regional level. Where such possibilities exist, team members and workshop participants will co-conduct training using the guide.

January - May

The team revises the training guide on the basis of the central workshop and of the results of the questionnaire study.

19-20 June

Preparatory meeting

- Team prepares the 2nd central workshop that will follow in January 2006.
- Team reviews the expert missions taking place in 2005

July – December

The team

- Prepares the second central workshop;
- Starts work on the publication draft.

2006

Specific objectives

- To facilitate the second central workshop
- To prepare and publish the final version of the training guide and CD-ROM as well as other outcomes of the project.

Actions:

28 February – 4 March

2nd central workshop (5 days)

Workshop description:

The project team has devised a package of trainer training materials, provisionally called the “Training Kit”, with the purpose of helping beginning or aspiring trainers. These materials were refined taking into account the ideas and suggestions of experienced trainers who participated in the 1st central workshop in Graz, as well as in 6 national training events in 2005. The purpose of this 2nd central workshop is to test and pilot the kit with its target audience: **less experienced trainers** .

Participant profile:

Participants must be pre-service or in-service trainers *with no more than 3 years of training experience*.

March- End of May

Team prepares draft of the publication

9-10 June

Expert meeting: team agrees on the final form of the publication.

June - September

Final revision of the publication.

October

Team submits the final version of the publication to ECML.

5. LANGUAGES

The working languages of the workshop and the project as a whole will be English and French. Simultaneous interpretation will be provided between these two languages at the central workshop. Participants must have productive and receptive skills in one and receptive skills in the other language. However, it would be desirable that trainers for languages other than English or French are also among the participants. German and Spanish are also languages spoken by several team members, and they could be used in the regional events.