

TITLE

Intercultural learning and communication in the *German* language on the basis of an intercultural project

INSTITUTION

Inspectorate of Education, Brasov County, Kronstadt and Grup Scolar Industrial Rasnov (Lyceum from Rasnov)/bilingual instruction

CONTACT

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SUMMARY

Learner-centred instruction, improvement of communication in the *German* language, incorporate, compile and organize intercultural knowledge and experience in an intercultural project, create final product that can be used as material or pattern for further projects. Use the *German* language, expand vocabulary, sensitisation for intercultural values. Primary objective is for the groups to get to know each other better and acquire an extensive knowledge of the *German* language, C1 or C2 if possible.

TARGET AUDIENCE

Students between the ages of 15 and 19, Romanians, members of the *German* minority of Romanians, members of the Hungarian minority; language proficiency B1, B2, C1 and some C2; groups of 20/24 students: 6 boys and the rest girls

Students and adults learning *German*; A2, B1 who are studying or want to work in a *German*-speaking country

Language of instruction

German

IMPLEMENTATION

Intercultural projects; students work on projects lasting 6 to 12 weeks.

Based on a questionnaire and in discussions with the students, the instructor determines the subject of an intercultural project that corresponds to the curriculum and interests of the group.

The final product/form is chosen and defined.

The project is completed in various work phases and divided into work assignments. The students choose which assignments they want to work on in small groups with a constant focus on interculturality as a subject and goal.

The students research and collect the material.

Seminars/sessions are held during this period, in which oral communication is practiced, since communication is at the centre of language work.

To facilitate student-centred learning and to encourage communication, the instructor needs ample material: pictures, cassettes, songs, short supporting texts and texts in the German language that provide information about the different cultures that attract interest in the project.

The material collected is visually inspected and selected for the project product. The material is then prepared. The instructor moderates and coordinates all activities.

The material is consolidated and the final product compiled. The instructor coordinates and provides instruction throughout the entire period, talks with the students in German and helps the students complete the work successfully.

The final product is introduced by the students (group speakers are chosen or representatives of the various chapters introduce parts from the project).

The instructor ensures that there is or creates a correlation between the sub-products, so that the final product can act as a common project product.

Communication in the German language remains the focal point of each activity from start to finish.

METHODOLOGY

Questionnaire for selecting the topic and evaluating the sequence of the project work.

Communication based on short texts, pictures and audio-visual materials. Texts in the German language that should contribute to the exploration

of intercultural topics, and facilitate student knowledge and understanding, e.g. customs, traditions; historical, as well as current texts, etc.;

songs that describe different cultures;

slides with exercises that contribute to the development of communicative ability;

short video sequences that present interculturally-relevant scenes.

ILLUSTRATIVE MATERIAL available

Examples of developed materials.

Dialogues between students that demonstrate attitudes to work;

songs with cultural character that are incorporated in the instruction, suggestion for use as a teaching material ;

(Part of) final product of an intercultural project

WORK RESULTS

The results are by and large good and very good.

The students show interest for these topics, the method of operation and for these teaching methods. It is flexible, instructive, interesting, the students enjoy it, but must be implemented in conjunction with seminars/sessions, as already mentioned, in which communication is practiced specifically.

"STUMBLING BLOCKS"

Difficulties in implementation.

There are, of course, stumbling blocks:

- a. There is sometimes the tendency during work to rely too much on Romanian or another native language.
- b. Not everyone is equally involved when working in groups; some are more involved, some somewhat lazier; one must then motivate the lazy ones or a group member must encourage them and give them a special assignment to ensure that they are involved in the group work.

Relation to CHAGAL goals

My example of good practice corresponds to CHAGAL goals, learner-centred instruction (approach to teaching and learning). The target audiences are different: In the group, I have students from the German-speaking minority in Romania, who have not continued on at the German minority school and who have

to improve their language level to be able to study in German-speaking countries, or perhaps to be able to study subjects in the German language at a Romanian university; otherwise, there are also members of the Hungarian-speaking minority, where only one parent speaks Hungarian, and who then learn German in our schools to be able to apply to an academic institution in German-speaking countries or to find work in a German-speaking country. It has also been the case in some classes that Moldavian students in Romania learn German at our schools.

It is most important that the learners achieve a high command of the language (B2, C1 or even C2) and are then able to get along well in European countries or in foreign companies that do business in our country. Communication and intercultural sensitivity is very important in order to have positive experiences and learning success as an adult, and to become familiar with and appreciate the specificity and value of different cultures.