

## “The introduction of language awareness into the curriculum ”

Project description

Version 1.0

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### 1. CONTEXT

How can education prepare individuals to face the cultural and linguistic diversity of the society they are living in?

Learners experience this diversity since school, through language multiplicity which they face and learn, but also, more frequently through the diversity of their origins.

It is in this context that a certain number of innovations have been started up in several countries, mainly in primary schools, under different titles (éveil / ouverture aux langues, *language awareness*, *Sprachaufmerksamkeit*). They have lead recently to the Comenius and the Evlang (Socrates / Lingua) programmes. The latter is still under way.

In this approach, every pupil faces a considerable diversity of languages, of different status, in which he performs exploring activities. The aims are to develop both a positive attitude towards linguistic diversity (including lesser - used languages, migrants' and regional languages), and to build metalinguistic skills which will be used again when learning other languages (foreign languages and languages at school).

The project which will be set up with the support of the ECML, Graz, aims at more widespread dissemination and curricular insertion of language awareness (from which the name: DifCurEv is derived). It would start in the kindergarten and run through the lower secondary school years.

The main aim is to create synergy between linguistic learning, within the framework of the teaching both of more languages and more diversified languages.

## 2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES / EXPECTED RESULTS

The expected results at the end of the project (2002) are as follow:

- a) a combination of tested and validated **curricular plans** concerning the introduction of the “language awareness” approach in some education areas, from kindergarten to the end of secondary school;
- b) a combination of **teaching resources** (teaching and learning material) in order to establish these plans and future developments and adaptations;
- c) a combination of **knowledge** concerning how (learning process, types of teaching intervention ) to use it in a general language course and how to make the most of the learner ´s abilities (knowledge, know how, behaviour) in the framework of the language awareness activities...
- d) 2 - 3 **booklets** and a **multimedia** product in order to disseminate the results described under point a) and point c): curricular plans and new knowledge.
- e) the **development of a know how** by the teachers, persons responsible for the education and researchers taking part in the project, which could be the starting point of a wider dissemination and of subsequent development of the project.

## 3. ACTION PLAN

At the first workshop (29 February – 4 March) we will introduce the “language awareness” approach, through different existing teaching resources, and we will discuss the aims of DifCurEv and its future organization (participants would be in two different networks, one dedicated to primary and preschool teaching, and the other to the lower secondary school years). Group activities and follow – up activities in plenary sessions will aim at elaborating the curricular issue and developing some ideas of possible curricular plans. Curricular levels and themes will be established by teams and combinations of national teams.

- March-June: initial contact and dissemination of the approach of several countries; setting up of working plans inside, including drafts of partial curricular plans.
- June 2000: meeting of both networks. (The meetings of the two networks will always take place in Graz. A three-day meeting, including one day or half a day common to both networks. Presentation of the projects developed; validation by the network and coordination of these projects.
- June 2000 –January 2001: fieldwork, production (and / or adaptation of existing resources) of the necessary teaching resources to set up the projects.
- January 2001: meeting of both networks in Graz. Introduction of the teaching resources; approval from the network; development of a preliminary combination of observation and trialing tools.
- January –June 2001 : trialing the teaching resources and of the partial curricular plans; development of a methodology concerning the collection of information to study the teaching / learning process in the curricular perspective adopted.

- June 2001: meeting of both networks, appraisal of the trials; development of the partial curricular plans of the teaching resources exchanges; introduction of the methodology concerning the collection of information.
- September 2001 – May 2002: implementation of the partial curricular plans and collection of information.
- June 2002: meeting appraisal of the implementation of the curricular plans; preliminary consultations on the analysis of the results.
- June 2002 –December 2002: development of a booklet and of a computerized multimedia product in order to present the curricular approaches; analysis of the observation data.
- December 2002: dissemination workshop. Presentation of the experiences; presentation of the booklet and of the multimedia product; overview of the results of the teaching / learning process observation; perspectives.

Nota bene :

A local / national financing will have to be sought - the total amount will remain modest. To study the teaching / learning processes, which contribute to the evaluation of the curricular approach, in order to ensure high quality results based on a broad trialing, research and development. This shall also have a bearing on the choice of participants to be nominated.

#### **4. PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS / PEOPLE INVOLVED**

Participants for the workshop 29 February – 4 March 2000 must be able to set up and run innovative approaches in teaching (of variable size) in their education system throughout the duration of the project. Participants can be either researchers in universities or teaching resources centres, or teacher trainers, language teaching specialists with very senior positions in the Ministry of Education.

Participants are requested to bring to the workshop:

- documents related to any experience carried out in their countries (whether they have been involved or not) concerning the “language awareness” approach;
- official texts (from the ministries, institutions responsible for the programmes) detailing the aims and objectives of the teaching in their country (from kindergarten to the end of secondary school) concerning all subjects.

#### **5. WORKING LANGUAGES**

Participants must speak one of the two working languages (**French** and **English**) and understand the other one. Competence in other languages would be appreciated considering the nature of the project. **Simultaneous interpretation between these two languages will be provided for the workshop.**