

DEVELOPING PLURILINGUALISM: TEACHING MATERIALS FOR ADVANCED STUDENTS OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHER TRAINING COLLEGES

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Target audience

- ❑ Pre-service teachers
 - Primary teachers
 - Secondary teachers
- ❑ In-service teachers
 - Primary teachers
 - Secondary teachers
- ❑ Other situations: CLIL teachers

Itinerary

- ❑ Exploring attitudes towards languages and cultures

Abstract

The material presents examples of activities, accompanied by guidelines on how to prepare materials for developing plurilingual competence in learners regarding any particular teaching context and learners needs, with the help of multilingual dictionaries online. Ideas, layouts and web site addresses are provided, embedded in a text of particular interest to language teachers. The procedure is user-friendly and not time consuming. By changing the source text and selecting other words of interest, with the use of ICT, teachers can easily make up their own activities relevant to their teaching topic both in a language class and in a CLIL class.

Rationale

Fostering receptiveness to other languages and developing plurilingualism is of the utmost importance in learning foreign languages. From an early age, children are confronted with various languages, both in the mass media, such as TV, radio and the Internet, and in direct contacts with friends or adults visiting their families. Many children learn two or more languages simultaneously. In such situations, introducing various languages so as to form a cultural and linguistic background to language classes seems appropriate. This is particularly true in the case of future teachers studying in foreign language teacher training colleges, who are, on the one hand, advanced students of one or more languages and, on the other, people keen to develop their teaching competence. At that phase of their personal and vocational development, it is worthwhile to introduce a solution that is acceptable to them both as students and teachers. Being multilingual themselves, they will probably teach multilingual children in the future, so it seems worthwhile demonstrating to them ways to accomplish this. While creating their own activities students may also develop media competence through the use of Information and Communication Technologies for preparing plurilingual materials.

Personal and social dimensions

- Developing new educational approach promoting linguistic diversity
- Incorporating plurilingual awareness into English/foreign language teacher education curricula
- Implementing new ideas in language teacher education in practice

Professional dimensions

- Identifying yourself as language educator being able to introduce new ideas in language education in her/his own teaching
- Being able to prepare plurilingual teaching materials for various educational contexts such as language, culture and CLIL
- Developing media competence

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Worksheet: Activity 1

Fragment of the text:

Your first year by Gemma Warren¹ http://www.tes.co.uk/nqt/nqt_guide.asp 29.04.2004

Timing 45'

Part 1

Read the text, paying attention to the words in brackets. Answer the questions below.

Welcome to the most stimulating, energising fascinating (*faszinieren.de, fascinación.es, affascinare.it, fascinar.pt, fascination.fr*), frustrating, downright infuriating job in the world. You're right to be apprehensive, and beside yourself with excitement (*entusiasmo.es, eccitamento.it, entusiasmo.pt, enthousiasme.fr*) – during your years of teaching practice (*Praxis.de, práctica.es, pratica.it, prática.pt, pratique.fr*) and induction, you'll find yourself, quite literally, on an emotional and intellectual roller coaster.

Don't think for one minute that I can give you an exemplary guide to how to do it right. Some of my teaching practice mistakes (*Fehler.de, errores.es, errori.it, erros.pt, erreurs.fr*) read like a cross between a Monty Python sketch and your worst nightmare. But I am now entering my third year of teaching - which makes me practically an OAP.

One of the best things about teaching is the support you get from your colleagues (*Kollegen.de, colegas.es, colleghe.it, colegas.pt, collègues.fr*). When you enter a school, you really do enter a community of teachers, parents and, most importantly, children. There are horror stories, but they are the exception. Sharing coffee, expertise (*Sachkenntnis.de, maestría.es, perizia.it, perícia.pt*), anecdotes, nights out, aspirin and laughs are what teachers do best.

Questions:



What similarities can you notice between the words in brackets?



How do the words in brackets differ?



What other words in your native language or other languages are the words similar to?



Can you use this type of activity in your own context?

¹ Gemma Warren teaches at the Latymer School, Edmonton, in North London. She is also a columnist in *Friday* magazine. This is an extract from a guide she has written for new teachers.

Worksheet: Activity 2

Fragment of the text:

Your first year by Gemma Warren http://www.tes.co.uk/nqt/nqt_guide.asp 29.04.2004

Timing 45'

Part 2

Read the text. Match the words in different languages in four groups that mean the same. Find the words in the text that they relate to.

Teaching is, quite simply, the best job in the world. It will give you highs that no amount of caffeine can ever achieve, and it inspires such passionate debate nationally and internationally precisely because it is a job that involves real people, real emotions and real experiences. Children don't break down or crash like computers. You can't put them on call-waiting, or refuse to return their letters.

You get the opportunity to be creative and imaginative – you never stop thinking and re-thinking. There are some interesting ways of teaching about eggs and sperm and it's up to you to discover them. You're surfing a continuous learning curve and you develop personally as well as professionally. You face tests and challenges every day, and each new lesson brings the chance to try something new, or to re-work something that needs thought, or to think "what if?" Nothing can match the sense of achievement you feel at the end of the day. Plus, you will get the most supportive, humorous colleagues in the world. You will belong to a true community which means being served by your sixth-formers in Sainsbury's, or having an impromptu game of football with your Year 5s when you run into them in the park, comforting children (and often parents too) when there's a family crisis, or simply admiring Cynthia's new shoes.

de erwecken

de entdecken

de humorvoll

de Krise

it ispirare

it scoprire

it umoristico

it crisi

fr inspirer

fr découvrir

fr plein d'humour

fr crise

es descubrir

es humorístico

es crisis

es inspirar

pt descobrir

pt crise

pt humoroso

pt inspirar

Questions:



What makes it difficult to match the words?



What helps you to match the words?



Can you use this type of activity in your own context?

Worksheet: Activity 3

Make up your own activity relevant to your teaching context.

Timing 45'

Part 3

Read the guidelines. Make up your own activity step by step.

1. Select a text.
2. Copy it as a Microsoft Word document.
3. Select words to be exemplified in other languages.
4. Identify the selected words in one of the electronic multilingual dictionaries listed below. Select languages relevant to your teaching context. It is worth reminding students that dictionaries, electronic ones in particular, provide only approximate translations of a given word. Various dictionaries give words in different grammatical forms which are confusing to the novice. Bilingual dictionaries, however, may be used by those who know only one of the two languages and not merely by those who are familiar with both. The use of electronic dictionaries and Internet translators, in spite of their evident limitations, speeds up the process of the preparation of teaching materials. The following Internet sites are recommended:

Google language tools	www.google.com/language_tools?hl=en www.google.com/translate_t
Your dictionary	www.yourdictionary.com
Freedictionary	www.freedict.com
Lexicool	www.lexicool.com
Vocabulary	www.vocabulary.com

1. Copy words from the dictionary and insert them in the text as shown in the examples. Use of international abbreviations to indicate languages facilitates the use of English language materials with students of other native tongues. The format of words in other languages is up to you.
2. Ask questions relevant to your teaching context.

If you prefer to keep the original typography of a text taken from a periodical, for example, columns, pictures, etc., words in other languages and questions may be typed on separate sheets as additional exercises.

Questions:



Why did you select the text and languages?



What makes it difficult to make up a plurilingual activity?



What online tool was the most useful?

Appendices

A) Notes for teachers

Conclusions

Each method of introducing new words in foreign languages has its own advantages and disadvantages.

The method applied in **Activity 1** is used to introduce an unlimited number of foreign words, yet it disrupts the reading of the English text.

The method used in **Activity 2** facilitates the search for similarities between languages, and later, for tracing the word in the text that matches the group of words in foreign languages. This encourages an understanding of words and a search for equivalents in other languages.

As is evident from the classroom materials, the highlighted words in different languages are either similar to a certain extent or decidedly different. In the first case, students are reassured that there are “true friends” among words in various languages. In the second case, the differences should make them cautious in identifying “friends” among words in other languages. The same approach applies to identifying similarities between languages and language families.

Regular use of teaching materials and lexical information on other languages heightens awareness of similarities and differences in them. It certainly encourages plurilingualism and helps develop strategies for coping with multilingual environments; it may also be helpful for students learning several languages by creating associations between L2, L3, etc. The method of creating various activities is provided in **Activity 3**. It aims at developing the teacher’s autonomy, flexibility and creativity in using plurilingual materials.

Assessment

After each activity the group is asked the following evaluation questions:

- *To what extent do you think the choice of the materials and the way of doing the activity are helpful in introducing plurilingual awareness?*
- *How does the choice of languages influence on the plurilingual awareness and results of the activity?*
- *What do you think about the interrelation between the existence of the World Wide Web and the need for developing plurilingualism?*

B) Answer sheets

Activity 2

en inspire de erwecken it ispirare fr inspirer es inspirar pt inspirar	en discover de entdecken es descubrir it scoprire pt descobrir fr découvrir	en humorous fr plein d'humour de humorvoll es humorístico it umoristico pt humoroso	en crisis de Krise fr crise it crisi pt crise es crisis
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