

Pluralistic approaches and educational principles



Document for teacher educators

This unit, along with the unit "*Commitment to the values that underpin learners' rights*", offers an opportunity to reflect on the values, principles and attitudes that underpin the use of pluralistic approaches. It is based on a gradual exploration of the descriptors in Dimension 1 of the *Reference framework of teacher competences for pluralistic approaches (FTC-PA)*: "*Commitment to values and principles for using pluralistic approaches*".

A few explanations of the content of this dimension may be useful to teacher educators:

The descriptors for this dimension are grouped according to four themes identified by colours: diversity, education, society and working with pluralistic approaches.

The relationship between this grouping and the values and principles is as follows:

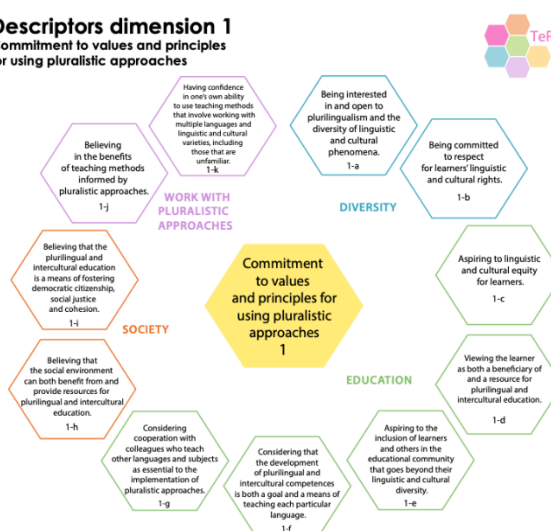
- values : descriptors 1-b, 1-c, 1-e
- principles : 1-d, 1-f, 1-g, 1-h, 1-i


The other descriptors are to be considered simply as attitudes.

Please refer to the PowerPoint provided to access all the descriptors of the dimension (last slide) and their groupings.

In the table below, all the descriptors of this dimension are listed, except for the attitudes covered in the unit "*Commitment to the values that underpin learners' rights*", i.e. *Being committed to respect for learners' linguistic and cultural rights* (1-b), *Aspiring to linguistic and cultural equity for learners* (1-c) and *Aspiring for inclusion of learners and others in the educational community that goes beyond their linguistic and cultural diversity* (1-e). It is strongly recommended to complete that unit before addressing this one.

Descriptors dimension 1 Commitment to values and principles for using pluralistic approaches



Attitudes examined in this unit	
Dimension 1	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Being interested in and open to plurilingualism and the diversity of linguistic and cultural phenomena. 1-a</i> • <i>Viewing the learner as both a beneficiary of and a resource for plurilingual and intercultural education. 1-d</i> • <i>Considering that the development of plurilingual and intercultural competence is both a goal and a means of teaching each particular language. 1-f</i> • <i>Considering cooperation with colleagues who teach other languages and subjects as essential to the implementation of pluralistic approaches. 1-g</i> • <i>Believing that the social environment can both benefit from and provide resources for plurilingual and intercultural education. 1-h</i> • <i>Believing that plurilingual and intercultural education is a- means of fostering democratic citizenship, social justice and cohesion. 1-i</i> • <i>Believing in the benefits of teaching methods informed by pluralistic approaches. 1-j</i> • <i>Having confidence in one's own ability to use approaches that involve working with multiple languages and linguistic and cultural varieties, including those that are unfamiliar. 1-k</i> 	
<p>(Reminder: Unlike the other dimensions, dimension 1 does not contain competences, but only values, principles and attitudes.)</p>	

Scenario

Estimated overall length: 2h

Supporting materials: If participants need additional information on "plurilingual and intercultural education" to carry out the proposed tasks, this can be found in the [glossary](#). If participants need further information on pluralistic approaches, they can refer to the relevant ECML documents (carap.ecml.at).

Materials provided :

- A PowerPoint presentation with images of the descriptors will be displayed gradually as the activities progress. The final outcome will thus appear as the result of progressive work. The notes for each slide give indications of how to use them, depending on whether prior work on "*Commitment to values that underpin learners' rights*" has been carried out or not. Alternatively, large labels can be displayed on the board.
- A document containing [examples of activities](#) based on pluralistic approaches.

Steps	Aims	Tasks	Remarks
Step 1	To raise awareness of: - the opportunities that pluralistic approaches offer to teachers to act in accordance with the values related to learners' linguistic and cultural rights.	1- Guided analysis of teaching materials that are characteristic of pluralistic approaches 2- Discussion in plenary group	This discovery step is optional. For those who have already worked on the unit " <i>Commitment to the values that underpin learners' rights</i> ", it will serve as a reminder of descriptors 1-b, 1-c and 1-e. For the others, it will be an opportunity to discover these descriptors quickly. Analysis of classroom video recordings, testimonies from learners/teachers, classroom visits: these opportunities to discover certain characteristics of pluralistic approaches may have been provided to participants beforehand. Alternatively, the documents or visits can be distributed among several participants. It is also possible to make a selection from among the materials proposed.
Step 2	To raise teachers' awareness of the underlying principles of PAs, that are likely to support the use of pluralistic approaches To facilitate teachers' commitment to these principles.	1- Analysis (or re-analysis) of teaching activities that are based on pluralistic approaches 2- Comparison (in plenary group) with the descriptors of teacher attitudes in the corresponding parts of the FTC-PA reference framework.	The activities in this step must be carried out in a single block.
Step 3	To raise awareness of the importance when using pluralistic approaches: - of having confidence in their benefits and in one's ability to use them - of being interested in and open to plurilingualism and the diversity of linguistic and cultural phenomena	For each of the two aims: 1- Analysis of one or several descriptor(s) 2- Guided reflection (in plenary group)	This step is optional and allows for familiarisation with other descriptors in dimension 1.

Step 1 Pluralistic approaches: a contribution to the fostering of values related to linguistic and cultural plurality

This step enables teachers to discover that pluralistic approaches can be used to promote these values.

Participants will first be asked to examine a few examples of teaching activities based on pluralistic approaches. Some materials that can be used for this are provided in the examples file.

Pluralistic approaches: a contribution to the promotion of values related to linguistic and cultural plurality

The proponents of pluralistic approaches claim that the teaching materials they propose facilitate the implementation of classroom activities that promote values related to linguistic and cultural plurality. We would like you to verify this by examining a variety of materials which are representative of pluralistic approaches.

After reading, you will discuss questions related to the characteristics of pluralistic approaches that you were able to identify in the materials.

To prepare for these questions, please take notes on the following points as you read:

- the question of respect for and promotion of linguistic rights
- other benefits for learners that you find particularly interesting
- the connection of these activities with society.

2. Questions to be asked of all participants:

In the teaching materials you examined did you find any elements that enable the teacher to act in line with the values related to linguistic and cultural plurality?

Are some of the materials you examined more suitable than others for this purpose?

Step 2 Pluralistic approaches: adherence to certain principles related to linguistic and cultural plurality

This step enables teachers to discover that the use of pluralistic approaches are based on adherence to certain principles which will be revealed at the end of the activity after they have been collectively formulated through group discussions:

- *Viewing the learner both as a beneficiary of and a resource for plurilingual and intercultural education. (1-d)*
- *Perceiving the development of plurilingual and intercultural competence as both a goal and as a means of each particular language. (1-f)*
- *Considering cooperation with colleagues who teach other languages and subjects as essential to the implementation of pluralistic approaches. (1-g)*
- *Believing that the social environment can both benefit from and provide resources for plurilingual and intercultural education. (1-h)*
- *Seeing plurilingual and intercultural education as a means of fostering democratic citizenship, social justice and cohesion. (1-i)*

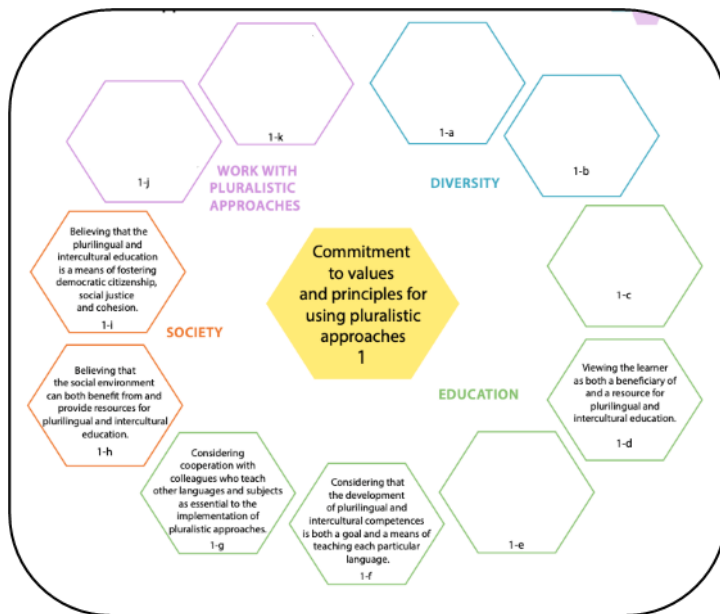
For this purpose, participants will first be asked to examine (or re-examine, if they have already completed step 1) a few examples of teaching activities based on pluralistic approaches - the same as those examined previously.

In groups of four, they will be asked to explain the benefits that learners and/or society could derive from the use of different pluralistic approaches, as well as the relationship between the aims of language and culture education and the aims of learning a particular language.

What benefits do you think learners can gain from these types of activities?	
Examples of activities	Benefits
-	-
-	-
-	-
And what benefits can society potentially gain from such activities?	

It can be expected that the participants will find that a number of the materials based on pluralistic approaches provide a wealth of opportunities for action in accordance with these principles. For groups that have not completed step 1, teacher educators can organise , a preliminary group discussion before the group work begins. During this initial discussion, the focus will be on the underlying principles of pluralistic approaches that are being highlighted during the group work.

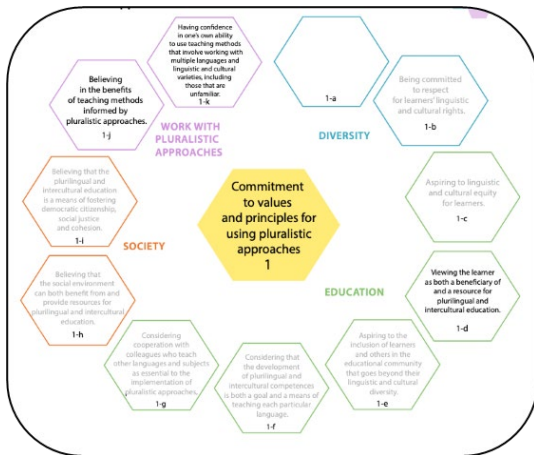
This last task can also be carried out using the following image (image 1) found in the power point file:



To make it easier to relate the questions asked to the principles and materials given as examples, teacher educators can refer to following diagram.

Questions asked	Expected answers	Attitudes	Examples of materials
What benefits do you imagine learners can gain from these types of activities?	Recognition of identity and skills / Better language learning / Knowledge of the world/ Curiosity and openness ...	<i>Viewing the learner as both a beneficiary of and a resource for plurilingual and intercultural education. (1-d)</i>	A, B, F ...
And what benefits can society gain from these activities?	Social cohesion through understanding the dangers of stereotypes / linguistic and cultural integration of minority groups / development of democratic culture by learning tolerance through exposure to other languages and cultures	<i>Believing that the social environment can both benefit from and provide resources for plurilingual and intercultural education. (1-h)</i> <i>Believing that plurilingual and intercultural education is a means of fostering democratic citizenship, social justice and cohesion. (1-i)</i>	A, B, F ...
How, in some of these activities, can learners be drawn upon as resources?	By drawing on the language repertoires of learners and their parents, taking into account the languages of the immediate social environment / by establishing links with the learners' parents	<i>Viewing the learner as both a beneficiary of and a resource for plurilingual and intercultural education. (1-d)</i> <i>Believing that the social environment can both benefit from and provide resources for plurilingual and intercultural education. (1-h)</i>	A, B, D, E, F ...
How do you see the relationship between the goals of language and culture education and the goals of learning a particular language?	Plurilingual education promotes comparative approaches, positive transfers from language to language that foster learning, and reflection on the relationships of a language with other languages and cultures. Conversely, it is seeing the linguistic, metalinguistic, and cultural learning developed through the learning of a particular language as part of the general goals of language education.	<i>Considering that the development of plurilingual and intercultural competence as both a goal and a means of teaching each particular language. (1-f)</i>	D, E ...

<p>Can/should work with such activities be carried out within the framework of a single subject?</p>	<p>This is difficult to envisage. Plurilingual and intercultural education requires cooperation among teachers of different languages, including the language of schooling and the languages of origin, when they are taught, so as to provide the basis for translingual and intercultural reflection. Cooperation with teachers of other subjects is also desirable to promote reflection on the circulation of concepts between languages and cultures, provided that there are similarities between the learning of the language registers used to teach these subjects and the learning of other languages.</p>	<p><i>Considering cooperation with colleagues who teach other languages and subjects as essential to the implementation of pluralistic approaches. (1-g)</i></p>	<p>A, B, C, D, E, F</p>
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Step 3 (optional) - Other descriptors

This final step aims to make participants aware of the importance of the attitudes expressed in descriptors 1-j, 1-k and 1-a. It also aims to assist participants in constructing their content and understanding how the course contributes to it. For each of points a and b, work will involve the examination of one or more descriptors and guided reflection (in plenary group).

a) The authors of this **Reference framework of teacher competences** believe that, for teachers to be able to use pluralistic approaches effectively, it is important to be confident about:

- the benefits of these approaches;
- their own ability to apply them in their teaching

a.1. Read the wording of 1-j and 1-k on the slide shown to you (image 2) and provide your thoughts on those assertions. Are they justified?

a.2. Do you currently feel confident about both aspects (pluralistic approaches and yourself)? If not, how can this course contribute to your developing this confidence?

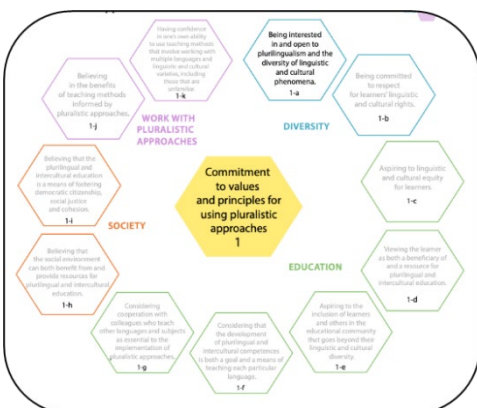
Possible discussion points : by accumulating examples of teaching materials and critically analysing what is said about the benefits of their use ; by providing opportunity to use materials and observe oneself or each other.

b) The authors of this reference framework of competences also believe that, for teachers to be able to use pluralistic approaches effectively, it is important for them to be interested in and open to plurilingualism and the diversity of linguistic and cultural phenomena, - as is indicated in the wording of 1-a in the projected image (image 3).

b.1. Can you explain the content of this formulation?

b.2. What difference us there for you between "plurilingualism" and "diversity of linguistic and cultural phenomena", and between "interested" and "open"? Do you agree that this is an important attitude for the effective use of pluralistic approaches?

During the discussion, and based on the responses from the participants, the following points should be highlighted:



- that taking an interest in plurilingualism means taking an interest in people's competences, and not just in diversity ;
- that both aspects are important for teachers working with pluralistic approaches: they must take an interest not only in the languages and linguistic and cultural varieties they work with, but also in the repertoires of the learners whose development they must support;
- that this interest should not be limited to certain languages and cultural backgrounds; teachers should, a priori, accept all forms of it in order to value the contributions of all learners and to act towards inclusive schools and societies.

c) Read the wording of 1-a on the projected image (image 3).

c.1. Is to the claim that it is important for teachers to have this competence in order to use pluralistic approaches effectively justified?

c.2. Can you relate the work you have done on these tasks to the development of this competence?

The discussion should also provide an opportunity to show that this new descriptor (1a) is closely linked, in various ways, to most of the other descriptors in the table, for which it is often an indispensable condition (for example: one cannot "aspire to linguistic and cultural equity for learners" (1-c) if one is not "open to plurilingualism and linguistic and cultural diversity").

To conclude, the last slide of the power point can be shown, with all the descriptors for dimension 1.