

European Centre for Modern Languages

Expert mission in the framework of project C.6 “Training teachers to use the European Language Portfolio” of the ECML’s medium-term programme of activities 2004-2007

Training sessions in Tampere, Finland, 12-13 May 2005

Finland, and particularly its Tampere region, has participated in the ELP project since the beginning of its piloting phase in 1998 and as a result there are very experienced ELP teacher educators in the country. Two of them, Ms Maaret Malhonen from Pirkanmaa College and Ms Leena Hämäläinen from Tampere College organized the sessions. Radka Perclová, a teacher trainer from the Faculty of Education of the Charles University, Prague, Czech Republic, was a presenter in the sessions. The goal of the mission was to encourage teachers’ reflection on their ways of teaching and on the ways of exploiting and fulfilling the potential of the CEF and the ELP.

The whole training event was divided into two main parts. The first aimed at language teachers interested in the CEF and the ELP, i.e. who had not necessarily begun to use the ELP. The second part aimed at language teachers from different vocational institutions in Finland who had already been involved in long-term in-service teacher education on the CEF and the ELP since September 2004. Their project was sponsored by the National Board of Education and organized by the Eduta Institute (University of Tampere, Faculty of Education). In both parts, awareness of the Finnish contribution to the ELP project was encouraged.

The sessions were a combination of lectures and workshops. The participants worked with materials published in the *CEF*, CUP 2001, in the Preliminary Pilot Version of the *Manual Relating Language Examinations to the CEF*, DGIV/EDU/LANG (2003) 5 rev.1, in the *ELP Guide for Teachers and Teacher Trainers*, Little & Perclová, CE 2001 and with the results of the research on ELP use in the Czech Republic done by the presenter. The participants reflected on objectives of the Language Policy Division of the Council of Europe and their fulfilment. They studied selected scales of communicative language activities and communicative language competence designed in the CEF, specific descriptors of communicative language activities used in the ELP and assessment criteria designed in the Manual and they compared their learners’ language proficiency levels with various scales and tables and considered the benefits of these scales and tables and their use. They designed series of detailed “can-do” statements referring to various fields of vocational education and various communicative activities that are highly relevant for specific vocational institutions in Finland. They observed a short part of a lesson with Czech learners and reflected on descriptions of three lessons observed in the Czech Republic. They considered the gradual introduction of learner self-assessment in their classes and ranked specific activities in order of the suitability for the particular context. They reflected on the research results showing approaches to working with the ELP in the Czech Republic, categorized these approaches on a continuum according to their orientation (teacher or learner directed and assessment or goal oriented) and reflected on

their approaches to working with the ELP. They evaluated the advantages and drawbacks of various activities encouraging learner autonomy and considered adjustment of these activities to their teaching context.

The following ideas related to ELP use were emphasized:

1. The CEF and the Manual assisting in the evaluation of language exams contain valuable materials that complement the ELP and help teachers in their work.
2. Development of learner autonomy and learner self-assessment is a long process that should be facilitated by teachers' guidance.
3. When using the ELP in the Czech context, the teachers expressed different interests, highlighted different features and tried, developed and preferred different ways of ELP implementation, i.e. the ELP allowed methodological flexibility.
4. When developing learners' intercultural competence, increasing their knowledge of their own culture is important.

The specific data about the sessions are as follows.

12 May 2005, Tampere College, Sairaalkatu 6

Participants: 30 teachers representing different languages and various schools in the Tampere region

Programme:

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| 2.00 | Opening of the session – Ms Sanna Pihlamo, President of the regional language teachers' association, Ms Maaret Malhonen, Pirkanmaa College and Ms Leena Hämäläinen, Tampere College |
| 2.30-4.00 | The CEF - an effective tool for language teachers |
| 4.00-4.30 | Coffee break |
| 4.30-6.00 | Ways of exploiting the potential of the ELP |
| 6.00-6.30 | Discussion |

13 May 2005, Tampere College, Hepolamminkatu 10

Participants: 18 teachers, all participants of AMEKS group

Programme:

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| 9.15 | Opening |
| 9.30-11.00 | Ways of implementing the ELP into our common teaching and learning practice – the content |
| 11.00-11.15 | Break |
| 11.15-1.00 | Ways of implementing the ELP into our common teaching and learning practice – the methodology |
| 1.00-2.00 | Lunch |
| 2.00-3.30 | ELP use in the Czech Republic – learning from the Czech experience |
| 3.30-4.15 | Discussion and feedback |

Maaret Malhonen and Radka Perclová