

ECML Project TrainEd/National Training Event
17 June 2005, Prague Czech Republic
Training Teacher Educators: Changing Roles and Responsibilities
of Language Educators

This one-day workshop was the third in the series of National Training Events of the TrainEd project and took place at the British Council, Prague. The workshop had been advertised and organised as a professional development seminar by Miluska Karaskova on behalf of the Czech AMATE Teacher Trainer Association.

The training event was facilitated by Uwe Pohl from the TrainEd project team and attended by 9 members of the teachers association. The workshop participants were all experienced trainers based either in Czech secondary schools and/or in teacher training departments at universities and colleges.

In preparation of the workshop the organiser had communicated the particular needs of her association at this time and made a number of suggestions for the format and content of the training. Specifically, the workshop was intended to help AMATE to attract more language educators with limited training experience and to motivate good teachers of English to take on training responsibilities. In the light of this the workshop was to have a strong focus on giving examples of principles, approaches and materials of practical value to beginning trainers. Accordingly, the workshop objectives were formulated as follows:

- to highlight key areas in which novice trainers need assistance
- to share and discuss practical ideas for helping language educators to become teacher educators
- to benefit from the personal experience and expertise of the workshop participants in order to improve the TrainEd training guide for novice trainers 'in-the-making'

The workshop programme was organised around the following sections:

Our workshop context: working as a language educators *and* teacher educators

Changes in teachers' professional development and language teacher education
The ECML's TrainEd project

Becoming a trainer

What was it like for *you*? – motivations and challenges

Teaching ≠ Training?

Getting prepared for unfolding training events
A look into a trainer's 'tool' kit: what is there and how it is used
Training needs and contexts
Course design

The trainer as facilitator
Problem incidents in training groups
What trainers do and what they say when facilitating

Coping with multiple challenges: working on a 'Problem Buster' for novice trainers
What should a problem buster for training events contain?
Developing strategies for some challenges

Evaluating training events
A review of some practical ideas
Follow-up in a longer perspective

The workshop went very well leading to greater clarity concerning the perceived needs of novice trainers and the range of available forms of 'hands-on' assistance. The participants also gave valuable feedback on the content and format of the KIT materials used and generated a number of additional materials (esp. for 'the tools of the trainer', 'Problem Buster ideas and strategies' sections) that are certain to be incorporated in the final trainer guide. At the end of what had been a relatively short but intense training experience there was clear feeling on the part of the participants that the workshop had addressed some of their immediate concerns and had helped them maintain a sense of professional curiosity and excitement in a longer perspective. Here are a few things the participants expressed in their feedback at the end of the workshop:

"Positive feeling that the time span was worth spending. I'm sure the KIT will be useful, I look forward to including it in my TT library."

"We have just finished the spring part of a regional project for unqualified teachers - this session helps me to stop and think over some of the steps and problems. I liked the trainer's method of gathering ideas. Thanks for the vocab!"

"My expectations have been met. It was useful and inspiring. But I've also learned other things, e.g. problems are useful too!"

"I gained a lot of inspiration and input and it was a pleasure to observe a professional trainer 'in action'."

