REPORT ON EAQUALS NELLIP WORKSHOP IN GRAZ, AUSTRIA, 11th APRIL 2014

MATERIALS USED - POWERPOINT

PLANNING AND MANAGING LANGUAGE
PROJECTS

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PLANNING AND MANAGING LANGUAGE PROJECTS

DISCUSSION TASK

OR:
▸ Which sample project did you select from the Nellip database?
▸ Discuss with a partner why you selected it and what you thought made it a good project.

High quality education & training

▸ Is based on needs
▸ Motivates people to learn
▸ is relevant
▸ is interactive
▸ provides feedback
▸ Promotes reflection
▸ leads to verifiable outcomes

[AO Foundation]

What is 'quality'?

"Quality is simply meeting the requirements of the 'customer' " (J. Oakland)

"Quality is a customer determination based upon a customer's actual experience with a product or service, measured against his or her requirements - stated or unstated, conscious or merely sensed" (A. Feigenbaum)

Advantages of projects

▸ Focus on students' interests and their 'real world'
▸ Develop transversal competences: teamwork, research, communication, presentation, self-organisation etc
▸ So are relevant
▸ Should have clear aims & expected outcomes
▸ Can be long-term
▸ Can involve work outside the classroom and with partners elsewhere in the world
▸ Offer a change from normal class work

Why does quality matter?

It's about:
▸ Meeting the customer's needs and expectations
▸ Developing the organisation and its activities
▸ Efficiency and effectiveness of the service (or project)
▸ Value for money
▸ Ethics and honesty
▸ Professionalism and motivation
▸ Success and satisfaction for the customer

THINKING TASK

Which of the following aspects of projects can most affect quality:
▸ The project aims?
▸ The project activities and tasks?
▸ Where the project is carried out?
▸ The materials used?
▸ The way the project is managed?
▸ The teachers and other staff involved in it?
▸ The evaluation and monitoring of the project?
▸ .....

EAQUALS NELLIP Workshop, Graz
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PLANNING AND MANAGING LANGUAGE PROJECTS

Possible project features & aims

- **Movement out of the classroom**
- **Authenticity, interest and topics:** real contexts, genuine communication
- **Mobility in learning:** using computers, phones, and games
- **E-communication** between students/classes in different locations

Additionally:
- taking into account students' interests and personal aims
- Ensuring they are rewarding and motivating to work on
- Generating more interaction among peers
- Developing intercultural understanding and multilingualism
- Providing opportunities for authentic communication
- Offering students a new approach to language learning/practice
- Extending the use of ICT in language learning
- Providing opportunities to use the language outside the classroom
- Creating and trying out new teaching materials

Project scale and scope

	SMALL SCALE	LARGE SCALE
SHORT TERM		
LONG TERM		

Motivation is enhanced by…

- Practical and amusing content and activities
- Dynamic teaching methods & action-oriented approaches
- Opportunities for social interaction in the target language
- Varied, up-to-date 'authentic' learning resources and tasks
- Learning languages for specific, professional or study purposes
- Involvement of learners in the world of work
- Use of ICT and promotion of autonomous learning
- Fostering mobility and providing access to multicultural contexts & encouragement of multilingualism
- Acknowledgement of the achievements of participants and the quality of the project process and outcomes

PROJECT PLANNING

In groups, plan a future language project:
- either an intended real project involving people in the group, OR
- one person in the group can describe their own context, and the group discusses a project idea to fit that context:
- Choose a setting for the project (primary school, university, etc.)
- Refer to the factors and criteria discussed to define the objectives of the project
- Consider what kind of activities the project will involve
- Develop an outline project plan using the planning template:
  - not too much detail
  - a logical sequence, each step leading to clear outcomes.
  - one step at a time: objectives, outcomes and activities first, then resources and dates.

Projects – key issues

- The **skills and experience** of the project manager and the project team
- The **scope and timeline** of the project
- The **support** provided by the organization and its **commitment** to the project
- **Tasks and outcomes** that are useful and correspond to those in the project application and plan, and to the budget
- **Piloting and obtaining feedback**, and the use of the results of this
- The **impact of the project** in relation to the resources the input
- **Response to the needs of beneficiaries**
- **Standards applied**, e.g.: meeting procedures, schedules with set milestones etc.

SMART projects

- **SPECIFIC**
- **MEASURABLE**
- **ACHIEVABLE**
- **RELEVANT**
- **TIMEBOUND**

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PLANNING AND MANAGING LANGUAGE PROJECTS

ASPECTS OF PROJECTS

- Learner target group(s)
- Aims/target outcomes (during & after)
- Design
- Methodology – teaching & learning)
- Budget, financial resources
- Teachers/facilitators, other staff
- Materials, technological resources
- Events, 'critical moments'
- Milestones
- Management & communication
- Evaluation

Reasons for dissemination & exploitation

- To tell end users and others about your project.
- To contribute to the implementation of national, regional, local or European policy and development.
- To inform sponsors and funding bodies
- To support and enhance the image of your own organization
- To increase the impact of your project by networking
- To inform commercial organisations if you have a product to sell.

COMMON QUALITY ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK
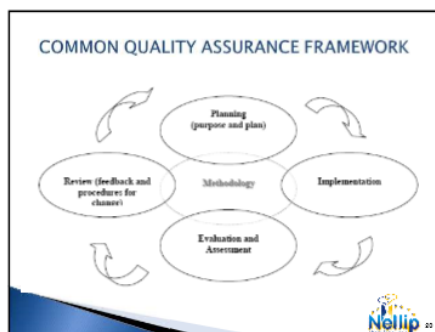
Networking involves...

- establishing a common vision of the importance of the topic or activity around which the network is being constructed.
- Agreeing on shared values
- Pooling shared experience of common areas or specific sectors.
- Using existing and new contacts to form new 'communities'
- Establishing mechanisms to develop and maintain it

FACTORS IN QUALITY MANAGEMENT

- Effectiveness: are aims SMART, appropriate, well expressed and being achieved?
- Practicality: is the design right for the aims and context?
- Communication: are style, content, frequency etc right?
- Management and execution: are they efficient and smooth?
- People: are people with the right attitudes and competences involved and contributing evenly?

After the workshop

- Links to Nellip documents
- Slides in PDF
- List of participants to facilitate networking
- INTERESTING AND FRUITFUL PROJECTS!
- Exchange of information about these

Thank you

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MATERIALS USED - HANDOUTS

TEMPLATE FOR PROJECT PLANNING

NAME OF PROJECT:

MAIN OBJECTIVE:

WHO WILL BE INVOLVED (learners, teachers, others…)?

STEP	LANGUAGE LEARNING OBJECTIVE & INTENDED OUTCOME(S)	MAIN ACTIVITIES	HUMAN, FINANCIAL & OTHER RESOURCES NEEDED	START DATE	END DATE
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
Follow up					

Notes:

    a. Add as many steps as needed but not too much detail. Where relevant, subdivide steps into i, ii, iii (e.g. different people doing different activities)

    b. Steps can overlap or even happen at the same time

    c. One or more steps should involve evaluation of some kind, project piloting etc.

A CHECKLIST FOR QUALITY IN A LANGUAGE EDUCATION PROJECT

1 Project beneficiaries

☐ The target groups are clear and well defined
☐ The learning needs of the target groups have been clearly identified and assessed
☐ Appropriate methods for motivating and involving the target groups have been decided on.

2 Project objectives and outcomes

☐ The project objectives are well defined and clearly explained
☐ The project contributes to increased language learning and communicative skills
☐ The project outcomes and impact envisaged are achievable, useful and measurable.

3   Project planning

☐   The planned activities are well structured and the necessary resources are available
☐   The institution has the human and financial resources needed to run the project
☐   The plan for monitoring and evaluating progress is effective
☐   A plan for evaluating the quality of the outcomes has been developed
☐   There is a clear plan for disseminating and exploiting the project results
☐   Key stakeholders have been identified and have been or can be contacted
☐   The institution has direct contact with the target group(s) and expertise in working with them
☐   Criteria, standards and indicators exist for project management, project development and outcomes.

4 Project management and implementation

☐   A management plan was developed at the beginning of the project; it includes:
 − A work plan with realistic timescales for all the project activities
 − A well prepared budget for each of the project activities
 − The assignment of clear responsibilities to each partner and/or team member
 − Mechanisms for efficient collaboration and effective communication among partners
 − An appropriate reporting system, and an internal document sharing system, available to all partners
 − Time management and problem solving mechanisms

☐   There are procedures for assuring the quality of project activities and outcomes including:
 − carrying out an assessment of the needs of the target groups
 − choosing a methodology that meets learners' concrete needs
 − ensuring coherence between the project objectives and planned activities and outcomes
 − establishing quality criteria for the project products/outcomes
 − involving the target groups at all stages, and obtaining feedback from them
 − testing any project products and improving them accordingly

☐   Time management mechanisms are in place for:
 − monitoring whether short term and longer term objectives have been met
 − identifying deviations from the work plan and project goals, and adjusting these as required

☐   The project partners use the same reporting methods and templates to report on the activities carried out in the separate contexts, including:
 − the costs incurred
 − dissemination activities
 − feedback from participants and stakeholders.

☐   recommendations are put forward by internal or external evaluators and, if necessary, changes are made
☐   there is feedback on partner reports
☐   There is a clear plan for dissemination during the project and after it ends; the dissemination plan:
 − creates maximum awareness of the project and its goals
 − Is adapted to the project objectives and target groups
 − Is reasonable in terms of the financial resources needed.