

WORKSHOP REPORT

DATE: 24 JANUARY, 2014

Please send the material mentioned below to Pixel. It should be organized in different folders each containing the listed materials

1) Information

Workshop organised by Universal Learning Systems

Date: 24.1.2014

Venue: Church of Ireland College of Education, 96 Upper Rathmines Road, D 6

2) List of participants

Please see enclosed list of participants in the workshop and sector to which they belong

Total number of participants 4

3) Programme of the workshops

The agenda for the day was distributed by email to potential participants:

- Presentation of NELLIP
- Case studies – participants
- Guidelines – dissemination
- Learning outcomes – best practices and challenges

4) Moderators and the experts involved

Ms. Mayte Martín (facilitator)

5) Materials used

NELLIP materials to be sent to participants upon request

6) Seminar report

- Presentation of NELLIP
- Discussions focused on the quality of language teaching and the experience of participants in the area of language as both learners and teachers/coordinators
- Experiences in relation to other European funded projects were also presented by participants
- Different language teaching methodologies from other countries were also introduced informally (some attendees had experience with the educational systems in other European countries)
- Several personal experiences about language learning were also put forward and discussed. Some examples of good practices were recommended by attendees
- The diverse background of attendees provided the opportunity to introduce different educational systems and their ethos. Discussions ensued regarding the ways these different school approached language teaching



7) Conclusions

- All participants had the experience of learning another language in particular Irish
- While Irish is not valued when students are in school it is highly regarded when travelling abroad as a way to define their own identity differently to English/UK
- There is some type of resistant in Ireland due to the fact that English is so widely spoken as a native and foreign language. Attendees insisted that Irish people do not see the need to learn other language, which has negative consequences in their aspirations in relation to other languages
- There was agreement among attendees on the need to promote and enhance the quality of learning teaching
- The importance for Irish people to learn another language was seen as a way to achieve a commercial and business edge as well as to discourage ethnocentrism and enhance social cohesion. The link between language learning and equality was established and was considered an important asset for a diverse workplace. Inclusion and equality values that should be fostered in school.
- Traditional language teaching methods used in Ireland in the past rely heavily on theory rather than on practical practice. Participants saw this as an important failure of language teaching in Ireland
- Attendees were very interested in the case studies gathered by NELLIP and considered that the practical approach was the best methodology to teach another language
- The need to start teaching languages from an earlier age was also highlighted
- Primary teachers need to be trained in language teaching
- Mainstreaming language teaching was considered important but it was felt that the need of resources that this would require discourages the Department of Education from taking any action
- The Irish school system which is based on points does not foster quality in language teaching, which would require other examination methods such as oral exams
- Schools, in general, are resistant to change
- Teacher training colleges are considered the best places to change the mentality/attitudes of the way educational system is administered and delivered in Ireland. A system that necessitates to encourage a better quality of language learning
- Given the increase of workload for teachers deriving from the Croke Park agreement, attendees thought that it would be a new deterrant to change the attitudes regarding language teaching

- There exists a reluctance to embark on European funding projects due to the administration burden
- NELLIP Guidelines were considered very helpful to assist with future projects

8) Evaluation Report

- The participants were all positive in their evaluation of the seminar. They found the information useful, in particular they commented on the benefit of meeting people working in different areas. All attendees expressed their satisfaction with the level of interaction and participation. The workshop met the objectives set and while they did not have the chance to hear from projects awarded the ELL, they expressed their commitment to being involved in future workshops. Overall the seminar was very dynamic due to the high participation and very positive interaction among attendees

*Dublin, 11. 2. 2014
Mayte Martín*