



EXAMPLES OF BEST PRACTICE IN PROJECTS THAT WERE AWARDED THE EUROPEAN LANGUAGE LABEL

GERMANY



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**Best practice in
School Education, Germany**

Der Sprachenfächer (the Language Fan)



„Der Sprachenfächer“ is a set of teaching material for the teaching of German; it is published in German and is concerned with the languages of school learners and the languages of the world and of work. There is an open choice of the language to work on and learners can decide to compare the language(s) of their families, local dialects, foreign languages learnt at school and any other language.

The project is the result of decades of work in the field of the integration of language variety into school teaching, with the aim of better integration of those who speak languages other than the language of instruction in the school. It has combined major research efforts – the collection and analysis of data from hundreds of learners and teachers – and used these to produce both a theoretical basis for the teaching of language variety and usable, practical teaching materials.

How did the project exemplify best practice?
Some of the ways in which the project exemplifies good practice are that:

- It is not limited to the duration of the project, but has been the result of consistent work over many years, including participation in European projects, notably the Comenius project 'Janua Linguarum' (Gateway to Languages);
- The results have been systematically evaluated through questionnaires for both learners and teachers. Learners have found the materials interesting and motivating. Teachers, who were initially reluctant to use the materials, have found that they contribute to transforming "problem" pupils (whose first language was not that of the school) into "experts" in language who make constructive contributions to the work of the class.
- The materials are flexible and can be adapted by teachers in creative and imaginative ways. They help promote learner autonomy. The materials were of sufficiently high quality to be published by a commercial publisher.
- They make a real contribution to the development of sound methodological and didactic approaches to the integration of language variety and of plurilingualism into school practice, especially at primary level. These approaches reinforce the role of languages in schools as a vector of social integration.

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Project website: www.sprachenfaecher.de

Project duration: 2008-to date

Link to the project description:

http://projects.pixel-online.org/nellip/DB_database_scheda.php?art_id=129

**Best practice in
School Education, Germany**

YELL – Young Europeans Love Languages



YELL is a Key Activities Languages Network project with 11 partner institutions in 10 partner countries which was supported by the European Commission. The participating countries were Germany, Spain, Belgium, Bulgaria, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, the United Kingdom, Latvia and Austria. The common themes of the project were to disseminate best practice in a network and to encourage language learning for young people in non-formal settings.

How did the project exemplify best practice?

The YELL project reflects best practice in a number of ways:

- First of all it is based on promoting the concept of best practice, and a major outcome of the project is a collection of examples of this from the participating countries.
- One of the features of this was the collection of examples of innovations which had been developed, but which had not been fully exploited. The project handbook describes the different practices and in this way provides a useful source of information and contributes to ensuring continuity of work and implementation of innovations which might otherwise be lost.
- The handbook – in nine languages (another example of best practice in its preservation of language diversity) – combines advice on how to go about innovation in language learning, together with practical examples from different countries and a number of useful tools for applying the ideas which have been developed.
- The project provides a new impetus for language learning by putting the emphasis on informal and non-formal language learning for young people and linking it

with sporting, leisure and cultural activities. It promotes the idea of learning for pleasure. In this way it has created approaches which give added value to school language learning.

Alexandra Sikorska, the coordinator of the project states that: "We believe that the YELL project is able to become a new impetus for language learning throughout Europe, as it offers innovative concepts and tools that can be used by educational institutions and teachers, trainers and lecturers as an inspiration for their own courses. In particular, the concepts which are not dedicated to conventional classroom instruction and which are thematically attractive and motivating for young people could be pioneering for the future of modern language learning."



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Project-related web sites: <http://www.yell-project.eu/eu/>

Project duration: 2009 to 2011

Best practice in Vocational Education, Germany

How to be a chef in Europe



Approximately 130 trainee chefs from 7 European nations collaborated in this e-Twinning project to illustrate how the professional training in this sector of the service industry is organised in their countries. Amongst other matters, they talked about their daily routine, the highs and lows of the job and their professional plans for the future.

How did the project exemplify best practice?

Here is a quotation from the leader of the project:

"There must be more to it than learning kitchen vocabulary, translating menus and talking about recipes!" This led to the idea to found an e-Twinning project in which trainee chefs from all over Europe come together to get to know one another, the other countries' systems of vocational education, and what it is like to work as a chef in the different European countries. But chefs have to be able to use English in their professional lives actively on the European labour market."

It encapsulates the reasons why it is an example of good practice:

- First of all, it seeks to go beyond normal classroom practice and use European cooperation to give real added value to vocational education;
- It contributes to mobility by bringing together budding professionals from seven different countries and giving them an opportunity to

learn about what it is like to work in other countries

- It is based on practical vocational issues – chefs will generally work in areas concerned with tourism, and the use of English as a common language is good training for their future lives.
- The project uses modern media and Internet tools – such as e-Twinning, web 2.0, flash meetings – in a creative and imaginative way
- It was self-financed and cost effective.
- It was fun for participants with real hands-on experience; here is one of the tasks: "One very impressive and effective task was the 'Cooking Carrousel' where each partner had to send a typical national or regional ingredient to a partner school. The receiving students had to create a new, unique dish with them (or more than one) which was/were then cooked the schools' kitchens."



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Project-related web sites: http://bk-albrecht-duerer.eschool.de/Joomla/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=289&Itemid=212

Project duration: 2010 to 2011

Link to the project description:

http://projects.pixel-online.org/nellip/DB_database_scheda.php?art_id=129

**Best practice in
Higher Education, Germany**
Theatergruppe Babylon



Babylonia is a project of the University of Regensburg in which foreign students at the University, together with non-German speaking employees, work together to study, rehearse and produce a play – in this case “Nasrin oder die Kunst zu traumen” (Nasrin, or the art of dreaming) by Asmodi. The project lasts for a whole academic year and covers the organisational and publicity aspects of producing the play, as well as the performances. Participation in the project involves weekly workshops, weekend seminars, and gives university credits.

How did the project exemplify best practice?

The project is a good example of the way in which languages can be taught in innovative and active ways. The participants in the programme stressed the way in which the theatre group not only contributed to better knowledge of German, but helped in cultural understanding and in social integration. *“I have not just widened my vocabulary; I have also broadened the horizons of my “world”. Through comparing different cultures I have learnt a lot, more than through books.”*

The project is a good example of “real” use of language. It led to a successful event, the performances of the play, but it also involved a very large degree of experiential learning in the accomplishment of all the various tasks in producing the play – the stage management, scenery construction, designing and printing the programme. It embodies very well the principles of the Common European Framework of

Reference, that language learning should be “learner-centred and action-oriented.”

Another aspect of good practice in the project is the way in which it brought together students and non-German employees of the University and thus contributed to the social integration of two groups which are often excluded from full participation in the university community. This corresponds well to the priority of the 2011 awards in that projects should be related to languages in the community.

The project leader gave this account of the experience of the learners: “there are the countless hours of rehearsal, and individual and pronunciation rehearsal as well, which contribute to giving learners confidence in using German as the language of the play. The rehearsal weekends serve to prepare the performance of the play and to develop team spirit and a shared responsibility for the success (or failure) of the project. There’s a lot of praise as well.”

The project received considerable local publicity and served to publicise the European Language Label. It is a good example of a project which is innovative, easily replicable, and an effective way of promoting social integration and real experiential learning.

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Project-related web sites:
www.theaterbabylon.de

Project duration: 2010 to 2011

Link to the project description:
http://projects.pixel-online.org/nellip/DB_database_scheda.php?art_id=129