



“Quality in Language Learning and Future Perspectives of the European Language Label” Transnational Report

**Florence, Italy
14 November 2014**

Report



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Report on NELLIP Transnational Workshop

On Friday 14 November 2014, in the framework of the International Conference “ICT for Language Learning – 7th Edition” held in Florence, the Transnational Workshop Quality in Language Learning and Future Perspectives of the European Language Label” took place.

The Transnational Workshop was organized in the framework of the NELLIP project, the Network of European Language Labelled Initiatives, funded by the European Commission - Lifelong Learning Programme – KA2.

The NELLIP Workshop started with an opening address by Manola Peschieri, Policy Officer and Coordinator of the European Language Label at the European Commission, Directorate-General for Education and Culture.

This was followed by a presentation made by Barbara Herman, the project officer in charge of the NELLIP project at the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA).

Elisabetta Delle Donne, president of Pixel and transnational coordinator of the NELLIP project, briefly described the activities carried out and the deliverables produced.

After this introductory part, the workshops participants split up in 3 different thematic groups focusing on and discussing about specific aspects of language learning and teaching (initial and in-service training of language teachers, transferability potential of successful best practices, language projects and social inclusion). The main results achieved were presented by the moderators involved and jointly discussed.

Thematic Group 1: Initial and In-Service Training of Language Teachers

Ingrid Gran (Swedish National Agency, Sweden) and Roxana Barlea (Prosper-ASE, Romania) moderated the first thematic group, addressed to initial and in-service training of language teachers, and presented the main results achieved.

The group proposed more cooperation and dialogue: within the 4 educational sectors (school education, higher education, adult education, vocational education and training); among headmasters, in order to define coherent political priorities in language teachers’ training; among teachers, helping each other and working together; among teachers and parents, in order to face together the main learning difficulties students usually meet in language learning.

In addition, another valuable proposal synthesized by Ingrid Gran and Roxana Barlea is to promote a more direct contact between teachers and real life, in order to help them understanding the practical and more vivid aspects related to the mastery of good language skills.





Thematic Group 2: Transferability Potential of Successful Best Practices

Alan Bruce (Universal Learning System, Ireland) and Jurgita Melaikiene (Lithuanian National Agency) moderated the second thematic group, dedicated to transferability potential of successful best practices.

The discussion looked at exchange of best practices as a combination of organizational will and intention, together with the added value for each individual learners as they engaged with language learning as part of a journey of personal discovery. The European Language Label itself had acted as a form of recognition for best practices, acting as a focus for recognition, prestige and validation of social, economic and pedagogical relevance. The workshop therefore separated the themes and issues around transferability of best practice into three subsidiary sections as follows:

- Process: transferability is basically grounded on the process of exchanging. Exchange is a process of both organizational and professional buy-in as well as a process of personal discovery. The personal discovery is driven by the enhanced levels of self-awareness and self-determined learning that inform and drive the self-activated language learning process.
- Methodology: once the process of best practice exchange was examined, the question became one of 'how' to achieve transferability. Partly, transferability rests on sharing techniques for language teaching (the example was identified of the system of intercomprehensive learning). Transferring best practices involved much more than mechanically transposing one practice in a randomly chosen manner from one environment to another.
- Requirements: the process of transferring best practice required a number of elements to be present to assure effectiveness and satisfactory outcomes with maximized value. Among these requirements participants identified: mentoring; guiding; promotion; marketing; flexibility; enhanced use of ICT; planning (both strategic and tactical); resources.

Thematic Group 3: Language Projects and Social Inclusion

Mayte Martin (Universal Learning System, Ireland) and Lieselotte Wengberg (Fågelskolan, Sweden) moderated the third thematic group, dedicated to languages projects and social inclusion.

According to this group's conclusions, linguistic diversity is highly relevant to social inclusion as the languages someone speaks (or not) influence which jobs they can get, which information they can access and who they can socialize with.

Native speakers' assistance, tailored linguistic services and a renewed political interest towards this topic are the tools identified by the group in order to use language as tool for social inclusion rather than weapon for social exclusion.

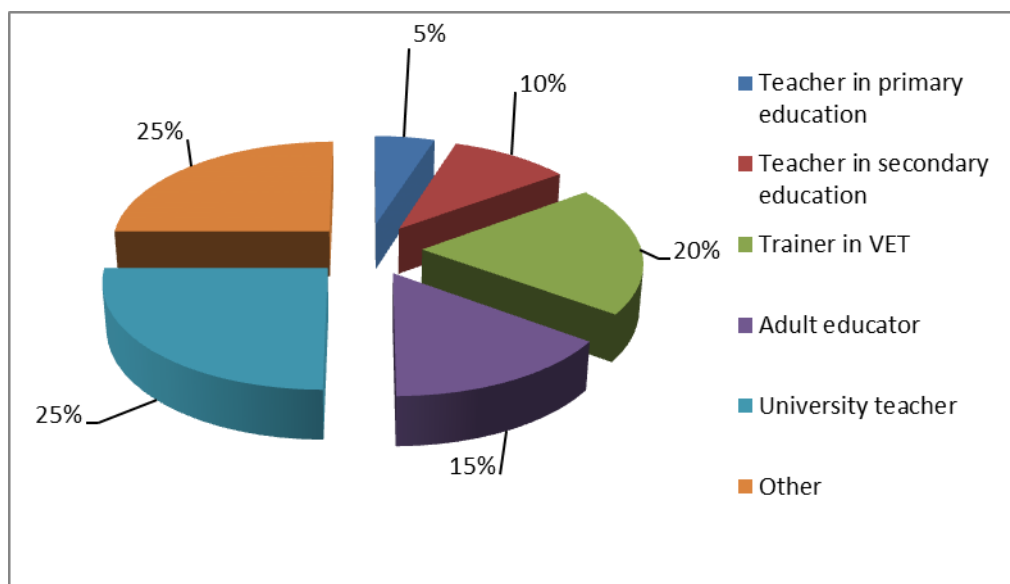
Bridging the gap between the sociologies of language and inclusion is essential to inform language policies that serve the common good.



The results achieved in the framework of the practical sessions were jointly discussed. Workshop participants were provided with an Official Certificate, attesting their participation in the Workshop and their active involvement in the NELLIP Network activities.

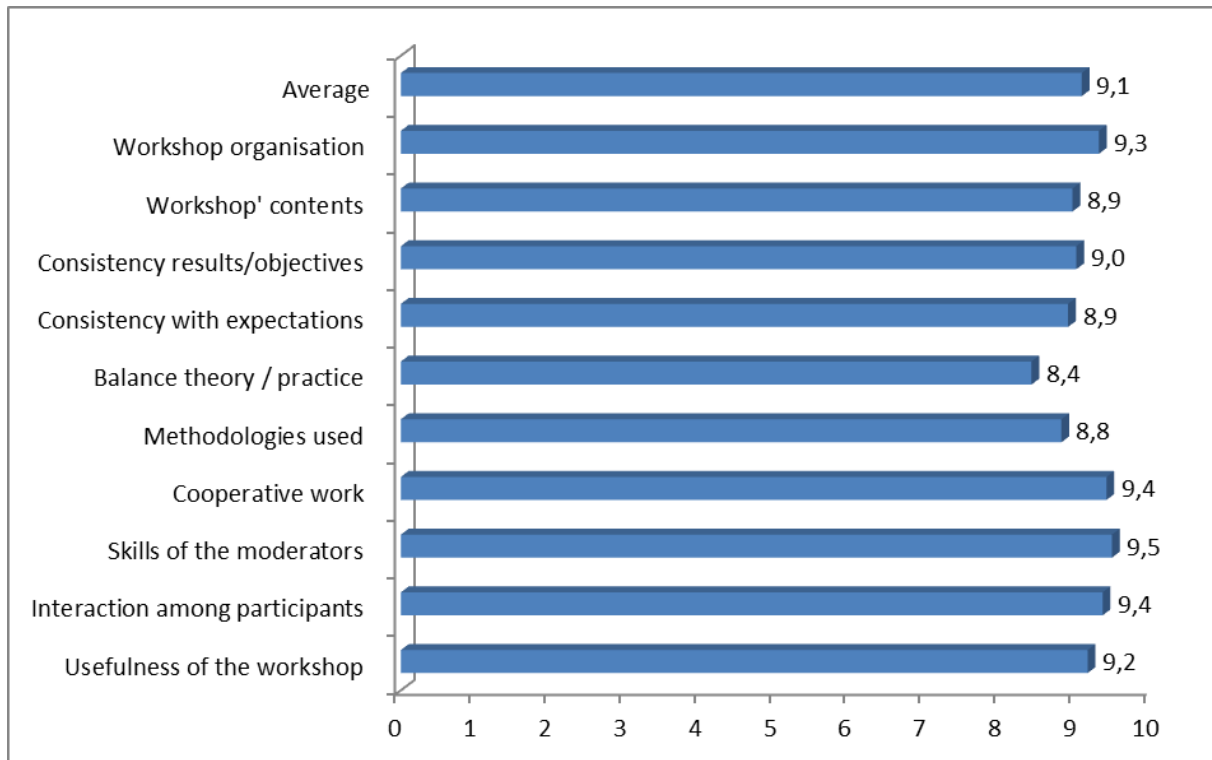
All the participants expressed their interest in this activity and filled in the evaluation questionnaire.

With reference to the professional details of the participants:



most of them (25%) were University teacher, whose participation enriched the value of the initiative. Trainers in vocational education and training were also well represented with the 20% of the total amount of the participants, adult educators stopped at 15%. Teachers in primary and secondary education were the less represented categories (respectively with 5% and 10% of the participants). The Workshop was indeed addressed to all the categories directly or indirectly involved in language learning and teaching: that is why the “other” category (25%) was also well present during the Workshop (most of them were language experts and representatives of National Agencies).

With reference to the level of satisfaction of the Workshop participants, the results were very positive.



The workshop participants highly appreciated the skills of the moderators (9.5 / 10) and the cooperative work developed (9.4 / 10) which lead to important conclusions and reflections. Those results were possible, thanks to the positive interaction among participants (9.4 / 10). The structure of the workshop obtained a positive mark with 9.3 out of 10. Usually, in occasions like this, there is a substantial gap between the initial expectations / the planned objectives and the achieved results. With reference to the NELLIP Transnational Workshop, there is a substantial consistency between initial objectives and the achieved results (9.0 / 10) and between the initial expectations and the achieved results (8.9 / 10). The balance between theory and practice should be further developed (8.4 / 10), but the result is an excellent average mark of 9.1 / 10.

Some of the feedbacks provided by Workshop' participants:

- *I enjoyed working in a European environment with language experts and representatives of best practice I can learn from. The workshop met my expectations and I am looking forward to reading the final report of each group work. Our group moderator was excellent. Lots of new ideas and stimuli.*
- *I liked the fact that we had the opportunity to interact, to discuss, to see the differences between the countries, to find common partners and to talk on the solutions (potential ones).*



- *Great collaboration among the participants. Great aspects pointed out by the moderators and very useful examples of best practice.*
- *All my expectations were met. An interesting opportunity for discussions and taking initiatives in the field of language education.*