

Workshop

Developing and Managing Successful Language Projects

organizat în cadrul proiectului NELLIP - Rețea de inițiative distinse cu certificatul European Language Label (519129-LLP-1-2011-1-IT-KA2-KA2N)

Improvement Plan

Team:

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Initial project:

DinoCroc Travel to Balkans (LLP-LdV-TOI-2007-BG-166013)

The project Dinocroc travel to the Balkans implements a language learning method which combines language learning techniques with narrative frames and role-play techniques. The indications for trainers suggest a whole transcendence from the “mother language world” into the “new language world”, so that emerging into a new language goes beyond playing simple didactic games.

Children of three, four, five and six years old and their teachers dress up for the format (they have Dinocroc t-shirts) and count up to 10 in the new language. From that point on, a magic spell is cast on everybody and they cannot speak another language, but that of the format. By creating this “virtual medium” children are provided with a special location of their “play” with a special kit concerning the “do’s and don’ts”. The two main characters and all the other characters in the stories come into the scene one by one, played out by the trainer (teacher) and then by the children who will eventually grow into these characters and their language. The principles involved in this “second-life” play are the same as the mechanisms at work when children learn the first language: see, feel, and touch, do and say.

The material used as a course support is video and audio providing children with a gradual release of information. The teacher can create a personalized approach by combining the set of materials offered.

The idea that children should begin their foreign education at an early age seems to have gained the status of a prime condition for the future European citizens, as long as the European Community White Paper states that in addition to their mother tongue, European citizens should be able to speak at least two other European languages. The earlier language acquisition starts the more proficient the speakers will become. Intentions are not enough in the absence of the appropriate method. The narrative format model within The Adventures of Hocus and Lotus aims to provide an educational model whose philosophy and methodology are consistent with the natural developmental process of language acquisition.

Aim of the project:

Integration of children with special needs using the Dinocrocs method.

Project's objectives:

- adaptation of the educational materials for the children with SEN;
- train the teachers in using the method;
- teaching languages activities with SEN children, using the Dinocrocs method

Target group:

Direct target group:

- SEN children
- Language teachers/trainers
- Parents of SEN children

Indirect target group:

- Special schools
- Educational and Language Institutions

Main activities:

- Research on identifying the language learning needs of the children with SEN
- Research on the actual methods used by the teachers in teaching languages
- Using the existing Narrative Format materials according to SEN children's needs and elaboration of a drama-based methodology
- Training activities for teachers/staff working with SEN
- Activities of piloting the educational resources and method created with SEN children
- Feedback and evaluation on resources and methodology

Results:

- Research findings
- Videos on adapted Hocus stories (samples of Hocus for SEN stories)
- Videos on how to use the method

- Trainer's kit + training activities to support the use of the method
- Piloting activities
- Dissemination and valorisation activities
- Quality assurance system: Evaluation/Feedback forms

Impact:

- The project is dedicated to helping these children and it is in the best interest of all partner countries to contribute to identifying how successful the narrative format is with children with SEN as the method can easily be extended to many other categories of needy beneficiaries without much costs and available training.
- Help teachers share a new approach to FL learning which will enrich their knowledge and experience on communication patterns
- Foreign language teachers teaching SEN children will also benefit from the project in that they will be given useful tools and materials as well as blended training course to teach SEN children.
- The project aims at making language learning fun and successful by engaging SEN children body and mind in attractive learning experiences. The project also aims at helping SEN children with in their personal (cognitive, emotional, social) development with a view to benefit from an inclusive education.

Please mention the stages/ instruments/ methods used in developing your initiatives regarding:

Innovation:

- Videos on how to use the method
- Method applied to children with SEN - Innovative solution to language learning for SEN people, by adapting the Narrative Format and materials to the SEN children's special needs
- Deepen research in the field of SEN education through thorough analysis of the learning process of the children, in language as well as in social behaviors, and of their teachers and trainers, in foreign language competences as well as in their own teaching motivation and self esteem.
- New languages involved (RO, RU, PT, SL)

Dissemination/ Exploitation:

- Organizing national and international conferences

- Mainstreaming the new course/educational materials to other schools / centres of children with SEN /families with SEN children
- Network of Dino's friends

Quality

- Overall impact evaluation report (questionnaires/ interviews/ tests for both teachers and children)
- Associated partners: special schools/ centres of children with SEN