



PlurCur Project at the Hertha Firnberg Schools Vienna

Hajnalka Berényi-Kiss



SCHOOL

- The Hertha Firnberg Schools offer educational courses in business and tourism
- Focus on applied training
- Emphasis on gender equality and multilingualism – students learn on average three modern languages
- Courses are often bilingual (English and French CLIL classes)
- The school curriculum supports plurilingualism and intercultural competencies



PROJECT OVERVIEW

TOPIC

- Multilingual awareness and empowerment

FORMAT

- Interactive workshop via Moodle
- 18 stations with a great range of various language-related tasks, video links and exercises with flexible structure
- Different learning styles are considered
- Working language: English and students' languages



TARGET GROUP & CONTEXT

- Three groups of students from third year (aged 16-17).
- The groups were linguistically mixed with varying levels of competence in different languages.



TARGET GROUP & CONTEXT

- The PlurCur workshop was delivered during the project weeks at the end of May, 2014 as part of the regular English course
- 5-6 lessons were dedicated to the workshop in each group



PROJECT AIMS (STUDENTS)

- Awareness of one's own languages
- Awareness of various languages in one's environment
- Building confidence in using and developing one's own languages and other modern languages
- Increase motivation to use other modern languages more extensively
- Use one's own languages in order to comprehend others and enhance intercultural communication



PROJECT AIMS (STAFF)

- Raise awareness about the various languages that students can use
- Demonstrate the benefits of plurilingualism
- Use the students' plurilingualism as a tool in language courses
- Be able to design new teaching material including the aspect of pluri-/multilingualism



INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

- Questionnaires before and after the interactive workshop
- Overall de-briefing session after the workshop – positive feedback by participants
- Students did not receive any grades for their participation in the workshop

A vertical photograph on the left side of the slide shows a modern building interior. It features a staircase with a glass railing and a large, textured spherical sculpture in the foreground. The lighting is warm and the architecture is clean and contemporary.

RESEARCH

- How can the awareness and the acceptance of the plurilingual background of the students contribute to a more successful teaching and learning environment?
- What could be a possible link between the two aspects above?



PROJECT STATIONS

- 1 Language portraits – students are asked to colour their own language portrait and reflect on their drawing
- 2 Language portfolio – students are asked to self-evaluate their languages skills (CEFR scale) and discuss their results ([link](#)).
- 3 Link to the “Great Language Game” – students are asked to guess as many languages as they can. After the game they are asked to reflect on why were some languages easier to guess than others ([link](#)).



PROJECT STATIONS

- 4 “TEDed” Video about how languages evolve combined with a critical reflection on linguistic diversity and language maintenance ([link](#)).
- 5 The language tree – students are given information on the similarities in certain language families and asked to make connections between certain languages ([link](#)). Students complete a table with basic words in Germanic, Romance, and Slavic languages.



PROJECT STATIONS

- 6 “Multilingual language quiz of the European Commission” – students are asked to complete the quiz in any of their languages that they understand ([link](#)).
- 7 “Goethe-Institut: Die Stadt der Sprachen” – students are asked to explore how many languages there are in the world ([link](#)).
- 8 “Language quiz about Europe” – students can research new facts about the existing languages in Europe ([link](#)).



PROJECT STATIONS

- 9 “Turkish for beginners” – students are given several online resources as well as a handout and asked to learn a few Turkish expressions and include these in their language portfolios.
- 10 Learning Finnish and Irish – students are given online materials, books, dictionaries and worksheets. They are asked to work with the resources and discover these languages and learn a few phrases.



PROJECT STATIONS

- 11 Reading in Dutch – students are given an interactive German-Dutch vocabulary matching exercise. After the task students attempt to decipher and understand short paragraphs from current Dutch language teen magazines.
- 12 Students are asked to compare a German, Swedish, and Danish text on the lingu@net website and find similarities on the vocabulary and sentence level ([link](#)).



PROJECT STATIONS

- 13 “European Day of Languages” – students are asked to match the language with its country ([link](#)).
- 14 Students are instructed to listen to Dizraeli perform a poem about language change and loanwords, “The 21st Century Flux”. Then they complete tasks about loanwords in English from their own languages and vice versa ([link](#)).
- 15 Multilingual poetry – students are asked to create and share multilingual poems.



PROJECT STATIONS

- 16 Awareness of accents and dialects 1 – students guess the origin of the English accents (some native some foreign) ([link](#)) and reflect on what helped them to guess correctly.

- 17 Awareness of accents and dialects 2 – students are asked to listen to geographically close as well as distant English dialects in the UK and Ireland ([link](#)) and discuss what makes these dialects sound so different and why were some of accents more unfamiliar to students.



PROJECT STATIONS

18 As a **final task** students are asked to reflect on their learning in a multi-langugae feedback:

Students are asked to write and share a text in which they describe their experience of the workshop; how much did they learn, what was the most interesting part, how do they feel about their plurilingualism.



PROJECT STATIONS

The PlurCur workshop will be delivered to most third year students

ADVANTAGES

- + Course can be recycled and adapted
- + The variation of task formats motivate participants to try different things

DISADVANTAGES

- Difficult to timetable due to the mixture of different class groups
- Due to teachers' workload, might be difficult to involve colleagues