

EUROPEAN LANGUAGES GALORE!

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This activity is based on

- a pragmatic theory of linguistics: the use of various linguistic forms in different languages reveals the various cultural, and sociocultural, approaches to the topics under consideration
- interactive theories of learning: the student teachers work in multinational groups and must debate in order to produce a joint interpretation
- a reflective approach to teacher education: all tasks are followed by a debriefing session during which the student teachers must elicit what they have learnt, how they have reached their objectives, what else could have been done and how they could transfer this activity into the classroom

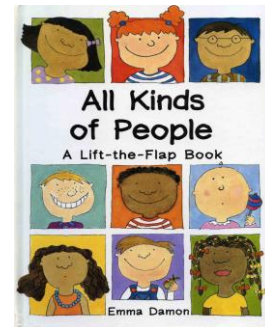
The groups of student teachers were planned so that there would be a variety of native speakers of different languages in each group.

We devised a series of varied and graded tasks in order to develop language awareness in trainee teachers of all disciplines, and to help them build their own self-confidence when faced with an unknown 'foreign' language.

Because we are working within a European project aimed at promoting European citizenship in teacher education, we limited our choice to a variety of European languages.

The documents we chose, besides being available in many languages, are also relevant, in their contents, to the two major issues addressed by the Istepec project: European citizenship and Intercultural practices.

Document n°1: *All Kinds of People*, by Emma Damon and its translation into 8 European languages, is a book for children aged 6-8, which illustrates at the same time the notion of differences among children and that of the uniqueness of the individual and which encourages self-confidence by enhancing a positive view of the self and respect for others.



Document n°2: *The home page of Google search engine* in 25 different European languages enables the participants to address the issue of international communication via the Internet in the Global village. <http://www.google.com/>

Document n°3: *The News page of the European Parliament Website* provides an opportunity to discover European matters under discussion at a given moment, to compare the ways in which they are presented in different languages and, as a follow up task, the student teachers can exchange their own views on the topics. <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/default.htm>

8.b- European Languages Galore!

Target audience: Student Teachers of all disciplines

Aims and objectives:

- to develop language awareness
- to discover similarities between families of European languages
- to boost self confidence in front of unfamiliar languages

Resources:

- Photocopies of the front cover of Emma Damon's *All Kinds of People* in 8 different European languages and worksheet
- The actual books in all 8 languages
- Photocopies of Google's home page in 25 European languages a worksheet and a map of the various linguistic families across Europe
- The ICT room with a video projector

Episodes	Activities and expected productions	Modes of work
20'	All the student teachers receive the 8 photocopies of the cover pages: <i>All Kinds of People – Tous différents! – Somos todos diferentes – Cada uno es especial – En ik, en ik, en ik – I bambini del mondo – Różni, najróżniejsi – Az emberek</i> and a worksheet. An extra worksheet is given to each group for the final, collective, answers.	Individual study, then Group work: after filling the grid individually, the trainees must agree on ONE set of answers in each group.
20'	The worksheet is a table with the names of the languages at the top of each column and a number of lines: 1. Verb or Noun; 2. Adjectives; 3. Personal or General; 4. Theme or Notion; 5. Interpretation. (Note that no technical terms are used, as the trainees are not all language specialists).	During the plenary session, one group gives their answers and the others agree or disagree and everything must be explained and justified.
30'	The books are then distributed among the groups; 1 or 2 per group, depending on the number of groups. The trainees are asked 1) to look at the books; 2) to try and understand the general message; 3) to decipher one or two pages and then 4) to imagine how they could use this in class.	The second plenary session is devoted to general interpretation and reflection on the interest of the activity, for themselves as well as in class
15'	(after coffee break, possibly in ICT room) The trainees receive the copies of Google home page in 25 languages. The copies are numbered but the languages are not named. A map of the linguistic families of languages in Europe is given to each group; or they can search on : http://home.unilang.org/main/families.php?l=en The trainees must group the Google pages in 'families', try to identify the languages, and distinguish between Indo-European and Uralic languages.	Group work Each group must give only ONE set of answers.

20'	The groups compare their findings and explain how they came to their conclusions. The main distinctive features (word order, word formation, declensions, accents and alphabet...) are listed. Common roots are recognized.	Plenary
20'	In ICT room – The lecturer will demonstrate on the video projector. The student teachers are asked to go to the website of the European Parliament and to open the page in their own mother tongue. They are given a few minutes to explore the site, and then to open the “News” page, which they are asked to scan-read and make notes of the main features in their own languages.	Individual work
20'	Each student teacher now opens the News page in two other languages; one that they are familiar with and the other that is unknown to them, with a view to comparing the presentation of the news items; they make notes of what is similar and what, different.	Individual work
15'-20'	General debriefing of tasks 2 & 3, from the points of view of language awareness, European dimension and Teacher education	Plenary
Evaluation : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accuracy and relevance of the student teachers' contributions in all four tasks • Implication of all in the tasks and fair distribution of speech in the groups • Motivation and pleasure in making linguistic and cultural discoveries 		

Bibliography

Damon, Emma (first published in 1995; latest reprint in 2005), *All Kinds of People*, London, Tango Books - For publications in other languages, check with your own bookshops.

<http://home.unilang.org/main/families.php?l=en>

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/default.htm>

<http://www.google.com/>