

WORKSHOP C: Main points from the workshop on lifelong language learning

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1. (multilingual) classroom:

- Start as early as possible (age 4 at kindergarten/ école maternelle): play with the language; use an integrated approach, combining different subjects.
- Immersion programs are more successful than just a few hours of language teaching per week (esp. for countries with two national languages).
- Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) should be promoted to support language learning.
- Parents should be convinced of the advantages of early language learning by pointing out the advantages for the child, esp. employment opportunities.
- ICT-skills are essential for language learning in the 21st century: both essential for any job in Europe.
- Method of inter-comprehension is recommended to motivate young learners.
- Schools should make more use of the Internet: films, open university offers, etc.
- Language learning has to become a tool instead of a goal to become successful.

2. Language teacher education:

- The lack of qualified language teachers in primary schools may partially be overcome by not formally qualified native speakers (e.g. parents). (Warning: A native speaker is not necessarily a good teacher.)
- A teacher's high standard of language competence is essential for the success of language teaching at school.
- Language assistants are a good means of supporting language teaching and intercultural learning in the classroom and in the school community: greater funding of respective EU-programs is advisable, esp. for lesser widely spoken languages.
- "Student ambassadors" from Higher Education establishments, who work at schools for some time, present a role model for successful language learning and are able to inspire children at school.

3. Diversity of languages taught

- Experimental project in Britain: start with Esperanto to raise awareness for more difficult languages and to increase the diversity of languages taught at a later stage. (Warning: Other members would prefer a foreign language spoken in a country.)
- On the predominance of English: We need a "lingua franca", but this is not enough.
- Companies tend to concentrate on English only as a prerequisite for employment.