



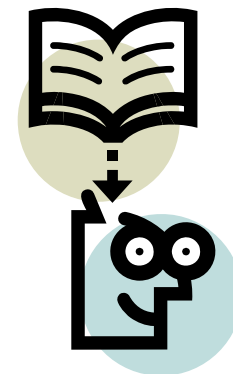
Attract Participation and Increase Motivation  
of Young Male Language Learners

# *The Handbook*

Multiplier Conference  
Istanbul, 12-13th June 2008

# Love Language Handbook

- This is aimed at teachers and trainers that are interested in theories and explanations
- We have provided a brief overview of many different aspects but there are many more opinions out there
- There are suggestions which can be taken, adapted or ignored



# Addressing Gender Differences



Young male target group is not a homogeneous group

Whilst many males do successfully integrate into schools and further education the group we are targeting here are those males that have not integrated for one reason or another but more those that drop languages

For some masculinity conflicts with educational engagement

Many have had negative past educational experiences with language learning



# Contents



- Language learning
- Creating a positive learning atmosphere
- Learning concepts to reach the target group
- Social skills training
- Portfolios
- Further reading & resources
- Exemplary excerpt of the Love Language Tool Box

# Why learn a language?



## Putting language learning into context

Improving language skills are central to improving communication within Europe and job opportunities

International encounters on a personal level offer many benefits such as:

- Experiencing other ways of thinking and lifestyles by contacts with other people
- Developing personality
- Getting to know the world of training and work in other countries
- Developing competitiveness beyond European borders

# Creating a positive Learning Atmosphere

The handbook suggests how to create a positive learning atmosphere and reduce drop-out by:

- Addressing the students' interests
- Briefly describing motivation theories
- Gives suggestions on optimum learning circumstances e.g. smaller class sizes, if possible changes in environment, shorter lessons etc.
- Taking into account different learning styles
- Pitching the difficulty level correctly so learning is challenging but not unobtainable



# Creating a positive Learning Atmosphere



- Relationships between teacher/trainer and learners needs to be genuine to be effective
- Incongruency between words spoken and tone of voice coupled with body language can be detected even if sub-consciously
- Teachers and trainers need to be honest whilst being sensitive
- Teaching more meaningful if genuine empathy can be learnt
- Many teachers are controlling rather than in control
- With our target group benefits would be seen by relinquishing control and providing the learner with more autonomy
- Giving students responsibility for their learning can make it more important for them

# Creating a positive Learning Atmosphere

The selection of tools and exercises used by teachers/trainers should consider possible obstacles in social skills such as:

- low self-confidence
- feelings of self-consciousness



Exercises addressing these would be beneficial

E.g. working on presentation skills and role plays as many learners are afraid to speak in public



# Slowly, slowly catch a monkey

- Exposure to uncomfortable situations
- In at the deep end only for some characters
- For most a step-by-step approach
- Transferable skills to increase confidence (useful in later life)

# Creating a positive Learning Atmosphere

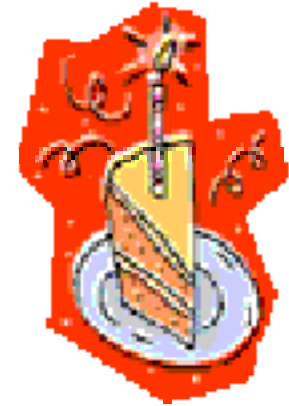
**Motivation:** – seeking pleasure/avoiding pain

Pleasure being:

- Feeling proud
- Compliments
- Recognition
- Good marks
- Cake

Avoiding pain being:

- Reprimands by parents/teachers
- Comparisons with peers
- Unsatisfactory marks
- Feelings of inadequacy



# Examples of motivating subjects & methodologies for the students:



- Sport – Olympics Beijing 2008, European World Cup final in Vienna 2008
- Favourite sports team
- Famous people
- Accelerated learning
- VAK
- Mind mapping
- ICT
- Film making, drama, pantomime
- Games, online, creation of board games
- Event organisation
- You Tube
- Europass
- Songs, popular music texts, karaoke singing
- Plotting
- Cooking & eating
- Intensive lessons
- Work experience abroad
- Exchanges
- Holidays (adventure)
- Vocational orientation abroad
- Outdoor education
- Motor shows
- Video conferencing
- Business simulation

# Europass



Europass is split into 5 components:

- Curriculum Vitae
- Diploma Supplement
- Certificate Supplement
- Language Passport
- Mobility

*Helps to increase the transparency of both formal and non formal learning*

<http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/>



# ICT

- Males use computers twice as much as females
- Computer games are very popular within the young male target group
- Also internet downloads and electronic communication are favoured
- Studies show that the internet is used by boys and men more due to the fascination of technology, games and pleasure.
- Teachers would be advised to assess and understand how to reach all students by understanding how to introduce ICT into course concepts of foreign language acquisition

# Creating a positive Learning Atmosphere



- Challenges
- Competitions
- Quizzes
- Sociable learning
- Group work
- Questions are directed at individual learners rather than whole class
- Making use of information and communications technologies (ICTs)
- At the end of each activity the teacher gives honest but positive feedback. When the possible praise should be given in private.

# Learning concepts to reach the target group



- Learning styles
- CLIL
- Self-directed learning

# Dominant male learning styles



## The preferred learning styles and methods of young males

- The teacher leads from the start
- Assertive, but friendly
- Lesson is made up of a series of short & varied activities
- The lesson objectives are on board and are explained
- Short time limited tasks, preferably visual with a starter
- Multimodal learning
- Male friendly learning styles tend to be kinaesthetic, visual, mathematical-logical
- Active learning



# Learning Styles



## Least popular learning styles

- Copying from the board
- Listening to the teacher
- Worksheets
- Writing on their own
- Reading on their own

## Preferred attitudes

- Males tend to be more achievement oriented (whereas females are more socially and performance oriented)
- Males tend to attribute their success in the classroom to external causes

# CLIL



## Content & Language Integrated Learning

- Means both learning another subject through a second/foreign language and
- learning a second/foreign language by studying a content-based subject
- CLIL is a form of bilingual/plurilingual education

## Why Content and Language Integrated Learning for young male language learners?

There are four important reasons for the integration of language and content:

- Firstly; language is acquired most effectively when it is learned for communication in meaningful and significant social situations.
- Secondly, the integration of content and second language instruction provides substantive basis and exposure for language learning.
- Thirdly, language acquisition naturally goes hand in hand with cognitive development.
- Finally, knowing how to use language in one context does not necessarily mean knowing how to use it in another. The integration of second language instruction with content instruction respects the specificity of functional language use.

## 1. The Culture Dimension – CULTUX

- Build intercultural knowledge & understanding
- Develop intercultural communication skills
- Learn about specific neighbouring countries/regions and/or minority groups
- Introduce the wider cultural context

## 2. The Environment Dimension – ENTIX

- Prepare for internationalisation, specifically EU-integration
- Access International Certification
- Enhance school profile

### 3. The Language Dimension – LANTIX

- Improve overall target language competence
- Develop oral communication skills
- Develop pluri-lingual interests and attitudes
- Introduce a target language

### 4. The Content Dimension – CONTIX

- Provide opportunities to study content through different perspectives
- Access subject-specific target language terminology
- Prepare for future studies and/or working life

### 5. The Learning Dimension – LEARNTIX

- Complement individual learning strategies
- Diversify methods & forms of classroom practice
- Increase learner motivation

# CLIL



## **Who are the learners and what are their aims and objectives?**

One of the starting-points of Content and Language Integrated Learning is that the learner takes an active role in the learning process, generating ideas and providing her/himself with learning opportunities, rather than simply reacting to various stimuli from the teacher.

# Self-directed Learning



## SDL – autonomous learning management

Putting learner in charge of:

- Learning goals
  - Lesson content
  - Time and location
  - Learning evaluation
- 
- Also allows learner to empathize with the teacher

# Social skills training



## The most frequently used skills that are understood to be soft Skills (1):

- Team orientation
- Communication skills
- Organisational skills
- Flexibility
- Mobility
- Motivation
- Self-esteem
- Self assertion
- Creativity



# Social skills training



## The most frequently used skills that are understood to be soft Skills (2):

- Analytical and logical thinking
- Ability to take stress
- Empathy
- Conscientiousness
- Conflict management
- Persuasiveness
- Translation-into-action orientation
- Negotiation competence
- Time and self management
- Self-reflection

# Social skills training



## Training methods:

- Dialogue and role plays promote extending communication skills. The students are asked to put themselves in someone's position or into a specific situation, to think about alternative arguments and different ways of acting.
- Talking Rounds often provide a welcome change, they promote spontaneous statements, encourage differentiated views and the giving of opinions openly. Verbal skills as well as the capability of showing expression are exercised.
- "Self-reflection" is also conducted on an individual basis and supported by personal questionnaires. In this way self-reflection is encouraged and can be further assisted individually via one-to-one meetings of students and trainers. The behavioural improvement can, for example, be achieved by the use of video analysis, by individual talks and group analysis or permanent mutual feedback.

# Social skills training



## Focus: Building self-confidence

Young male language learners need to realize that putting oneself into new situations that are outside of their comfort zone and relinquishing control are important steps to greater self-confidence and enhancing the need to feel competence.

### Tips for greater confidence (1)

- Relinquish the need for approval from others
- Don't obsess over criticism but do remember praise
- Don't let the past determine your future
- Don't let other's opinions be more important than your own
- Don't assume your negative thoughts are shared by others
- Take calculated risks
- Stop comparing yourself to others

# Social skills training



## Tips for greater confidence (2)

- Recognize your own achievements
- Stand tall and alter your body posture
- Tell that negative inner voice to give it a rest
- Get a hobby in fact get a few
- Share worries with friends or family
- Make small improvements in yourself everyday

# Social skills training



## Tackling Procrastination

Procrastination means consciously putting off something that will cause problems by delaying. There are different reasons and types of procrastination and it's a relatively hard area to change as students frequently don't learn by the past negative outcomes caused by procrastination.

One of the more successful ways of approaching procrastination is to start the task without the need of thinking that it has to be continued for long periods of time. Quite often once a task is begun the students spend more time on it than originally intended. Also getting some kind of feedback of a small part of it can be motivating and encourage further work on the task.

# Social skills training

## Ten tips to postpone procrastination (1):

- Prioritise realistically
- Boost your moral before starting a task to put you in the right frame of mind
- Minimise distractions
- If you are used to taking orders from parents or other significant figures take control over your own planning
- If the task appears enormous break it down into smaller chunks
- Reward yourself with the things you would usually do instead (maybe not cleaning out the cupboards perhaps going out or watching TV, gardening whatever you might well choose over starting something)

# Social skills training



## Ten tips to postpone procrastination (2):

- Stop making excuses for not doing the task and face the fact that you not starting has negative effects for you
- Even if the work won't for example get you a prize it may certainly be noticed and have an eventual part to play – impatience and over ambition may have a lot to answer for
- Prepare to get started by for example gathering necessary books, equipment, tidying desks etc.
- Get started!

Trying to attain a goal typically exposes the students to stress inducing situations. Therefore, good stress management is vital to eventually succeeding.

# Vocational Guidance



Putting language learning into context with vocational guidance to help individuals find a profession or an occupation

Individuals need to take an inventory regarding their:

- Interests
- Skills
- Qualities
- Experience
- Personal and social needs

From the teacher/trainer's perspective introducing relevant contents on a foreign language course would hopefully render the lessons more interesting for learners and have benefits for their career orientation

This can be done through self-evaluation/self-reflection



# Self-Evaluation/Self-Reflection



- Encouraging a positive learner self-evaluation, that means to work on the way learners feel about their accomplishments in order to make each feeling “positive”. Dornyei shows three strategies:
  - promoting attributions to effort rather than to ability;
  - providing motivational feedback
  - increasing learner satisfaction experience after a task completion

# Self-Evaluation/Self-Reflection



The mapping could be done in the following way (and of course in the learners' mother tongue).

- In groups the participants brainstorm a list of what they need to be able to do in English in each of the four skills: listen, speak, read, write (e.g. speak and understand reasonably fluently, write instructions, read the paper). The teacher then draws a list of what all the participants have identified they need to be able to do in each of the four skills.
- Self-assessment. The learners then take time to fill in their self-assessment sheets individually: Map out your language biography. What languages do you speak? How did you learn them? What use do you have for them in your private life, in the workplace, in your studies, in your communication with local, state, and European agencies? Your sense of identity in relation to the languages that you speak? In what language do you have the most intimate sense of identity?

# Portfolios



There are numerous ways to compiling a portfolio to demonstrate prior learning and there are many benefits of using portfolio for social skills training:

- Allows the teachers to see the students' needs, disabilities and strengths.
- Serves as a concrete vehicle for communication.
- Gives the students possibilities to make personal learning goals.
- Promotes a shift in ownership (more responsibility for learning).
- Can be motivating to visual evidence of outcomes of learning and progress

# Portfolios



## Portfolio Structure

### Foreign language skills

- Hours and content of training
- Tasks and duties performed
- Skills developed
- Exchanges of information
- New procedures
- New technologies
- Contact addresses

# Portfolios

## Interpersonal skills

- Personal development
- Communication skills (letters, faxes, e-mail etc)
- Team working (organisation of the work, relations etc)
- Improvement of linguistic skills (speaking, reading, writing)
- Additional (unanticipated) skills

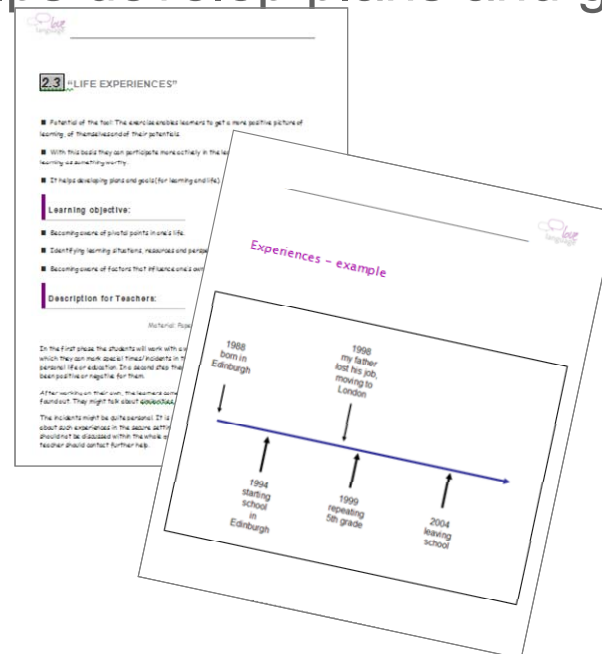
## Evaluation and Certification

- Strengths/weaknesses of past experiences
- Statements explaining how they have benefited from past experiences
- Future plan – how the new skills will be used in the future
- Details of previous courses studied
- Any relevant certification

# Portfolios

## Self evaluation

Furthermore the LoveLanguage Toolbox provides an exercise on self evaluation. It enables learners to get a more positive picture of learning, of themselves and of their potentials. With this basis they can participate more actively in the learning process and experience learning as something worthy. It helps develop plans and goals (for learning and life).



# Portfolios



## Appendices

- Evaluation questionnaires
- Records of self-assessment
- Records of group and peer assessment
- Tutor records of assessment activities
- CV

# It's no secret



- A love of a subject often stems from a love of a teacher
- How things are presented will either engage or bore a learner to death
- Whilst being fun and wacky may not actually improve marks it may retain interest and prevent drop-out
- Are the teachers enjoying their own lessons?