Final Evaluation Report of the Teachers Intercultural Competences as Keystones for Learning in Europe (TICKLE)

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1. Purpose of the project

According to its application the TICKLE project aims to develop, test and disseminate didactical tools for the development of intercultural competences for teacher educators, student teachers and teachers. To fulfil this task identification of areas and contexts is needed where cultural diversity is of manifest relevance for the teaching and learning processes in the participating countries. The purpose of the project on the conceptual level is to raise the awareness of cultural diversity of professionals. On the action level this is realised by increasing cultural diversity competences and attitudes in teacher education and in the daily work of teachers.

The practical working plan was thought to follow a series of meetings in the seven participating countries, one meeting in each country. During the seven project meetings each of the participating countries was meant to present one keystone tool or methodological approach which could be used to enlarge intercultural competences of teacher educators, students teachers or teachers. Each partner had to develop six keystone tools; altogether this would lead to 42 keystone tools. The central idea is that all the tools can be used in other European pedagogical environments as an added value for the teaching profession.

To get feed back all keystone training units were planned to be placed for public download on the TICKLE webpage directly after the end of each project meeting. In this way a tool box with 42 training units for the development of intercultural competences would be ready at the end of the project.

2. Principles of the external evaluation

The purposes of the external evaluation
In general, evaluation means comparing purposes with outcomes. This highly simplified definition is, however, only a part of the total evaluation process. Much of the evaluation process takes place in practice by observing the processes leading to the results. According to this division also in the evaluation of the TICKLE project we have applied both of these procedures, evaluation observing the process of the project work as a well as evaluation according to the results of the projects.

The basis of all evaluation is founded on the description of the working process. In practice this means adding certain values to the descriptive facts. This means, at the same time, that evaluation is interpretation based on values but not on values whatever but defined through the purposes of the original application of the TICKLE project: what is promised and

how getting to the results is outlined. Stating it clearly it means how the realised working process and definite results correspond to the promises made in the application.

To get to know the process and results all possible methods are applied, in principle. From the beginning it has become, however, clear that we rely mostly on qualitative evaluation. It means that we have tried to become familiar with the participants in every national team, to spend time with them discussing the project problems, to get to know the outer circumstances at their departments and the atmosphere in the colleges and universities concerning the attitudes towards the project participation by the leading personnel of the institutions. We have also tried to become familiar with the national culture of the local area and the whole country with a special focus on the system of education and teacher education.

The working principles of the external evaluation
The main decision how to fulfil the evaluation was accordingly to follow the work of the TICKLE project *in situ*. We decided to visit the partner institutions and observe the process in some amount. This qualitative approach means, as mentiuoned before, meeting people, dicussing and interviewing them and getting familiar with the local circumstances and culture.

The role as external evaluators has also posed certain working principles. We have considered it relevant not to participate in or to be present at the working sessions. For that purpose the international coordinator has a scheme of internal evaluation going on at every project meeting. In that way independent work has been guaranteed both sides. When it has been possible we have arrived at the meetings one day before and interviewed the project personnel and become in this way familiar with the circumstances at the department. As a rule we have also participated in the common dinner on the arrival day and, further, at the sessions of keynote speeches in the following forenoon. After lunch we usually have left the project to work in its own tempo.

Following these principles the evaluation process has proceeded as follows. The first meeting in Arnhem was much of a planning conference by nature and we considered it not necessary to be present there, it was too early in the beginning. Tallinn (Estonia), Eger and Györ (Hungary) meetings, on the other hand, were meetings where we went one day before, participated in the beginning of the meeting and left after lunch. In Tallinn both of us had a keynote speech and we also participated in the meeting of the executive group in the evening. To Guebwiller (France) and Arnhem (the Netherlands) we made a separate excursion spending the first days of the week in Guebwiller and the last days of the week in Arnhem. To Lulea we travelled for the whole meeting starting on the Friday morning when the teams were already working. The reason for this decision was the excursion to Jokkmokk in order to become familiar with the Sami culture. This visit to Jokkmokk was also very informative and interesting. The last meeting in Offenburg (Germany) was a closing meeting and we participated in it from the beginning to the end. We also reserved a moment for the discussions with the local team before the meeting. The impressions and results of this evaluation cycle are described and analysed in this report.

The broader perspectives of an EU-project evaluation
In this evaluation report we also want to emphase a broader perspective of a special EU-project, in this case TICKLE project. The TICKLE project is naturally a part of a more extensive cooperation programme between European countries. The internal work of the process may develop the competences and understanding of the individual persons of the local groups and in that way improve the professional standards of the participants. For this reason the evaluation of the proceeding working process is of paramount importance. The results, on the other hand, of this work are meant to being disseminated to other communities

and countries and for that reason the presentation form of the results is important. It remains to be seen how the TICKLE project succeeds in this respect and in which way the results will be published. In addition to an ordinary report in the INTERNET website some kinds of texts are wanted as well.

3. Basic background of multicultural education

Multicultural education, according to Banks and Banks (1995), is a field of study and an emerging discipline. Its major aim is to create equal educational opportunities for students from diverse racial, ethnic, social-class, and cultural groups. One of its important goals is to help all students to acquire the knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to function effectively in a pluralistic democratic society and to interact, negotiate, and communicate with peoples from diverse groups in order to create a civic and moral community that works for the common good. Multicultural education not only draws content, concepts, paradigms, and theories from specialized interdisciplinary fields such as ethnic studies, history and the social and behavioral sciences, it also interrogates, challenges, and reinterprets content, concepts, and paradigms from the established disciplines. Multicultural education applies content from these fields and disciplines to pedagogy and curriculum development in educational settings.

Banks (1993) and Sleeter & McLaren (1995) view multicultural education as a 'systemic process' involving politics, society, and education that is more than just a curriculum reform to include content about ethnic groups, women, and other cultural groups. Vaughn, Bos, and Schumm (2003) described multicultural education as much more than a curriculum focused on learning about diverse cultures based on such parameters as gender, ethnicity, and race. The authors conceptualize multicultural education as having four dimensions. The first is content integration, where concepts, principles, generalization, and theories are illustrated with ethnic and cultural content and the second, knowledge construction refers to students' learning about how implicit assumptions, frames of references, perspectives and perspectives influence their construction of knowledge. Third dimension is equity pedagogy where by teacher uses a variety of teaching styles to suit different learning styles and the fourth, empowering school culture, which promotes gender, racial, and social class equity. In yet another study Mason (1999) pointed out that while the significance of effecting change in preservice teachers should not be minimized, there is a need to continue examining what occurs when teachers assume responsibility for their own classroom.

The definition of multiculturalism is based on the cooperativeness of cultural actors and educational organizations. In that respect that definition emphasizes the element of legal regulation in the cultural diffusion. This definition easily neglects the fact that relations between cultures have two sides in multicultural living surroundings. The dream about harmonious relations is always accompanied by the fear of assimilation and a strong will to defend cultural particularities. One of the possible consequences of this kind of definition of multiculturalism is reflected in the imposed concept of aculturization, so that the qusrion who directs to contacts between different cultures in a multinational surroundings ca be a permanent source of public debates.

An other possibility for definition in a multicultural project finds the ways of finding changing answers if the three key forms of cultural identity of every community: creative, everyday, historical-political. It does not remove the fear of smaller cultures of the domination of bigger ones, but it controls that fear in a rational way. While in the domain of creative identity contacts with other cultures have mainly fermenting roles, meetings with other cultures in the domains of everyday life and historical-political identity may potentially lead to conflicting situations in the society. The advantage of this definition lies also in fact

that it counts on the tradition of the meaning of the basic symbols of each national directed culture (language, religion, art, myth, believes, history).

The strategy and implementation of multicultural programs should minimize the passion for exclusivity of national centered cultural identities in multicultural living surroundings. The forcing of that latter easily ends in separation and break of contacts with other cultures. Having that ambition, multicultural programs can provide answers to some basic questions of existence and development of local cultures:

- Is that the way for the creation of a new common culture in multicultural projects?
- Does this concept succeed in establishing a balance between cultural giving and taking?
- In what degree does it stimulate to transfer the elements of some cultural system into the other one?
- Does multicultural programs suppress stereotypes about other cultures?
- Does it stimulate the conscience about the relativity of cultural values?
- In what degree it is possible to generalize different experiences of multicultural projects and programs?

4. External evaluation reports by country

4.1. Estonia – Tallinn

We made a visit to Tallinn University on the 29 – 30 May 2008. One of the purposes of our visit was to introduce ourselves to the members of the project. In the beginning of the meeting we both had the opportunity to speak to the participants about the theme of the TICKLE project: *Moral education and intercultural learning in teacher education* (Kansanen) and *Intercultural questions in Finnish education* (Meri). We also observed some workshops and interviewed the participants during the sessions.

Concerning the special case of Estonia we had the opportunity to meet the national coordinator Inge Timoštšuk and prof. Anne Uusen whose specialty is mother tongue and general didactics in teacher education. First, the general background and developmental trends of the Estonian school system and teacher education were discussed. The main part of our discussion was, however, concerning the topic of the Estonian part contributing to the TICKLE project: Russian speaking people and their position in the Estonian school system and teacher education. There are about 400 000 Russian speaking people in Estonia, most of them living in Narva, close to the eastern border of Estonia and Russia. The role oof the Estonian TICKLE team concentrates thus on the integration of these language groups in teacher education.

4.2. Hungary – Eger

We made a visit to Karoly Esterhazy College on the 16 – 19 September 2008. On Wednesday afternoon we had the opportunity to visit the Department of Teacher Education and meet the Eger colleagues – Mária Nagy, Magdolna Keller, Zsolt Mogyorósi and György Mészáros. We could continue the discussion at the department the whole Thursday and we met the whole TICKLE group in the evening at a common dinner. On Friday morning we participated in the project meeting by listening to two local keynote speeches:

Eszter Regényi (Office of the Ombudsman of Minorities): The Ombudsman for Minorities and his investigations in the field of education, and after her

Dr. Péter Radó: Educational policies targeting the underachievement of Roma students in Central-Eastern Europe.

The case of Eger team deals mainly with the problem of Romany children. The task of the department is to educate teachers to be more sensitive for Romany children in schools. The amount of Romany children varies from 5 % to areas where they are a majority. The number of Romany children seems to increase all the time.

To get a more comprehensive picture of the task of the department and the entire faculty we had the opportunity to discuss the Romany issues with the vice dean of the faculty. The discussion proved very fruitful and some basic problems of the Romany children, their cultural background, life style as well as historical traditions, were clarified. From the viewpoint of the university and the faculty the question is also juridical and political; in other words, who has the right to interfere in other people's lives. In addition, many cultural groups build their own communities and keep their own rules. One important point, as a consequence of this, is that the minorities quite often are monocultural and they must live, however, in a multicultural society. It may also lead to a risk of exaggerating the basic problems.

4.3. Hungary – Györ

The TICKLE project meeting was held on the 11 – 14 December 2008 at the University of West Hungary, at the Apáczai Csere János Faculty. We started our evaluation visit on the day before, on Wednesday, December 10, and stayed until Friday morning attending the keynote presentations:

Edit Bauer (European Parliament): Slovakia in these days: contradictions and perspectives in minority-majority relations, and
Zsolt Hornyák (NATO trainer): Education in multicultural environment

On Wednesday afternoon we had the opportunity to visit the Department of Teacher Education and meet the Györ colleagues – Sandor Remsei, Anikó Makkos, Szalai Zsolt, and Balazs Varga. We could continue the discussion at the department the whole Thursday and we met the whole TICKLE group again in the evening at a common dinner. We could also visit the rooms and facilities of the department, the library and sport research laboratories in particular.

The Györ viewpoint in the TICKLE project has at least two main problems in multicultural education. The first one concerns the Hungarian people living in the neighbour countries, e.g. Slovakia (nearly 400 000), Romania (about 1 500 000), the Ukraine (100 000) and Austria (50 000). It has been estimated that in addition to the 10 million Hungarians living in Hungary there are altogether about 5 million Hungarians living outside Hungary. The close connection to Slovakia is also characterised in the Györ faculty in that way that there is a filial in Slovakia for primary teacher education.

The second problem is more general, it deals with the mixed groups living in the area. The background of these groups may be quite different; most of them are children of employees in foreign companies. That means that their social background is without severe problems but there are significant cultural differences as well as language differences. The situation differs considerably in different schools and in different parts in the country. Teachers, however, are quite unprepared for these new circumstances and need in-service teacher education to manage.

4.4. France – Guebwiller

The project meeting in Guebwiller was held on the 12 – 15 March 2009. We made our visit just after the meeting on the 16 – 18 March 2009. We had the opportunity to meet the national coordinator Edith Weber and the other colleagues of the team David Lind and Nicolas Schreck.

The Guebwiller site is today a part of the University of Strasbourg together with the other sites in Colmar and Sélestat. The Centre of Bilingual Training was established in Guebwiller in 1994 concentrating on bi-lingual teacher education. According to its history the area of Alsace is bi-lingual, many of its habitants speaking German in addition to French or vice versa. The missions of the department are divided into three parts: teacher education for primary and secondary teachers teaching in bi-lingual classes, production of teaching tools for these teachers, and research on bilingualism and particularly on its role in pedagogy.

The rooms and facilities are planned according to the missions of the department with an amphitheatre (translation cabin, modern audio-visual equipment, a sound library) and a special resource centre, mediatheke.

We had also the opportunity to observe teaching *in situ*, student teachers studying fachdidaktik of history. In a friendly atmosphere some questions from both sides were posed and discussed.

A visit to the Colmar site was also arranged. We met Dr. Angela Young who also had had a key note speak at the project meeting. She told of her research on an intercultural project in French primary schools where the pupils were bilingual the other language being German but quite often also some other language.

4.5. Netherlands – Arnhem

The Arnhem visit was made on the 18 – 20 March 2009. We spent one whole day with the local colleagues, the coordinator Henk Boer and the team members Bernadet Tijnagel and Gerbert Sipman. The visit was well organised with rounds in the department building and discussions with many colleagues. The building is planned for open teaching and it was possible to observe students at work in their working sites. The atmosphere in the building was open and positive, many activities taking place around. The students were ready to discuss and mostly quite extraverted in their behaviour. The multicultural context was also clearly to be seen in the building.

Arnhem Campus and Nijmegen Campus form a common Hogeschool van Arnhem en Nijmegen (HAN University) Arnhem department participating in the work of the TICKLE project (Pabo = Pedagogische academie basisonderwijs). In general, HAN University has built up a network of approximately two hundred partner institutes within Europe with additional partners also in the United States of America, Australia, Indonesia, New Zealand and Canada. That kind of policy is clearly mirrored in the daily activities at the department.

A special discussion was arranged with the leader of the department Dr. Betty T.M. van Waesberghe and, further, with two female students with Turkish background. These discussions were very informative and opened many themes for questions. In the Netherlands there are among other nationalities about 700 000 inhabitants with a Turkish background. It seems that the department and, apparently, the whole society is well adapted with multicultural life. At the department this was noticed from the very beginning. Also the plan of working in the TICKLE project and the documents so far provided a good insight into the phase and questions of the common project.

4.6. Sweden – Luleå

The project meeting was held on the 5 – 7 June 2009 at the Lulea University. This time we had the opportunity to participate in the whole project meeting starting on Friday. This was due to the programme while the second part of the meeting was taking place in Jokkmokk; about 170 km from Lulea and our aim was to stay with the project group also in Jokkmokk.

The first part of the meeting was held in Lulea and it consisted mainly of the national teams preparing their presentations to the iniative by György Mészáros (Eger, Hungary). It was about the common theoretical understanding about the general framework; the purpose was to clarify its theoretical background and the part of the national groups in relation to it.

Between the working sessions there was also a keynote speech about minority groups in the northern Sweden by doc. **Lars Elenius** (Minority Center at Lulea University). He emphasised the positive consequences of those groups although language and different cultures bring their problems to the common life in the society. Of special interest was his mentioning of an intercultural network consisting of places such as Umea, Lulea, Tromsö (Norway), Kirkenaes (Norway) and Murmansk (Russia). From the perspective of Lulea the two greatest minority groups are the Sami and the Finnish speaking people in the Tornea valley.

The programme continued on Saturday in Jokkmokk, the whole project moved to Jokkmokk by buses. There were two keynote speeches in the programme:

PhD student **Ylva Jannok Nutti**: The Sámi year in Jokkmokk, and
PhD **Gunvor Guttorm**: The Sámi Hándicraft - Duoddje

The role of the Sami people is also the reason of the Swedish team to participate in the TICKLE project and therefore it was very interesting to learn how the Sami people lived and what is their number in the neighboring northern countries. Altogether there are about 70 000 Sami people; of those 20 000 are living in Sweden, 40 000 in Norway, 6 000 in Finland and 2 000 in Russia. About 20 000 people speak the Sami language. In 1989 the Sami University College was founded in Kautokeino, Norway. The language there is Sami and it is possible to study at least teacher education, journalism and general higher education. At present it is possible to study a BA in duoddje, Sami handicraft; perhaps a MA examination is possible in the future. Cooperation with Canada and Russia (Kamsatka) is also in the programme.

On Saturday evening the project participated in a cultural programme about Sami culture with many presentations and performances; also Sami food was served. On Sunday a visit to the local Sami museum was organized.

The total picture of the Lulea programme was extremely rich exposing experiences from all sides of the Sami people.

Our part as evaluators was to present an intermediate review of the TICKLE project progress during the Saturday afternoon. We tried to remind of the original standpoint of the TICKLE project with its original aims and goals. The tool box with its 42 keystones was discussed lively and its role as a teaching material or as a handbook was brought into the discussion. The role of a vocabulary as a guiding tool was also discussed. In the end the meaning of evaluation and also the position and responsibilities of the evaluators were considered as important part of the whole project.

4.7. Germany – Offenburg

The last project meeting took place in Offenburg (Germany) on the 17 – 20 September 2009 at the Staatliches Seminar für Didaktik und Lehrerbildung. The programme concentrated on

the finalising of the system of the keystones and it was characterised by intensive work of the national and mixed groups.

On the arrival day, Thursday, we had the opportunity to discuss with the national coordinator of the Offenburg team Eva Woelki. We had also opportunities to meet other member of the group Bernd Schüssele and Rose Bauer.

There were two keynote speeches in the programme:

Hatice Hagar (Social scientist with migrant background)**:** How to manage knowledge transfer in intercultural settings
Dr. Regina Trüb (German Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, Nuremberg)**:** Migrants and refugees in the German Republic: Problems, Solutions, Projects

The main focus of the prohject work concentrated on finalizing the keystone model.

5. Tool box of 42 keystones – the product of the TICKLE project

The practical aim of the TICKLE project has been to produce study material to teachers and teacher educators for multicultural education. The project expresses this aim on its website as follows: "The main activities of the project in the seven countries will be to create 42 keystone tools or methodological approaches, which can be used to enlarge intercultural competences." The meetings have been organised according to this practical aim and keystones have been produced, discussed and also applied in practice. In addition, general lectures of local experts have been arranged dealing with intercultural questions in the organising country. In all, the meetings have been highly informative. Most of the partner presentations can be seen on the TICKLE project website.

The theoretical background of the TICKLE project is based on "The Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity" (DMIS) created by Milton Bennett (1986; 1993). He observed that individuals confronted cultural difference in some predictable ways and he organized these observations into six stages of increasing sensitivity to cultural difference. To start with, the individuals usually experience their own culture as central to reality; the first stages are accordingly defined as ethnocentric: denial, defence, and minimisation. In the context of other cultures the next stages are acceptance, adaptation, and integration; these are defined as ethnorelative.

The Bennett model has been of help when building a coherent system of 42 separate keystones. It is understandable that such a number of separate tools for teaching is difficult to outline and perceive as a system. A substantial advancement in the project work was inventing and developing a common framework for the keystones (cf. website).

A framework called "creating intercultural competence" (ICC) consists of four broader categories that at the same time build a progressive dimension: awareness, attitudes, adding knowledge by action, and skills as well as methodological proficiency. The main categories are further divided into subcategories, each to two subcategories; under these subcategories the separate keystones are described. This organized framework comprises a practical system where the separate keystones are easy to find and easy to understand in its proper context. It is also of interest that the contributions of different partners or countries are made explicit.

At the moment of writing this report just after the Offenburg meeting it remains to be seen how the final publication strategy is decided and what shall be the form of publishing the results; a pdf-file, a book or a broscure?

Summarising the work and product of the TICKLE project as a systematic model "creating intercultural competence" (ICC) it can be said that the model is logical and coherent, apparently easy to apply in the schools and teacher education. The exact amount of 42 keystones is not a rigid aim and this amount depends on how to calculate the separate keystones and how to keep them together or how to separate them from each other. It is more important that the separate keystones are flexible to use and that they build a possible reservoir for practice according to the local circumstances. The separate keystones have each been discussed and experimented in the project groups and they offer in this way a reliable potential for teachers and teacher educators. From the standpoint of the external evaluators the model (ICC) is a successful product and it is highly recommended to further use.

6. Additional comments

In all, the TICKLE project has followed its aims expressed in the application. As a summary we refer to some central aspects concerning the whole of the TICKLE project.

Results

Process and product
During the process it became evident that there are some connecting aspects between certain partner countries. In general, the intercultural questions in the project could ce classified into two categories: partners mainly with language issues and countries with general multicultural questions.

The countries working with the intercultural issues of language or where the situation is based on minority position determined originally from language are Sweden, Estonia and France. The position is not, however, monothematic, all other intercultural questions are intertwined with the language. Therefore attention directed only to language questions is no solution to the situation. The Sami people, the Russian speaking people and the German speaking people in Alsace are easy to find out as a cultural group and language seems to be the most important reason for their coherence. This is only a starting point and should not obscure the totality. In spite of one strong connecting factor the groups in each partner country differ as regards their background and culture as well as other societal aspects including history. In any case, some connecting aspecs seem to produce cooperation between these partner groups.

The other three countries have more traditional intercultural educational problems. In addition to language – that seems to be of paramount importance in all intercultural questions – the background of the target groups is more heterogeneous. Some target groups have stabilised their position in the society during years but have maintained their cultural habits and religion and the younger generation gets well along with the language of the majority (the Netherlands, Germany), some target groups, on the other hand, live their safe life inside a foreign culture parents working in an international firm (Hungary, Györ) while in Germany there are citizen coming back from Russia with a mixture of different cultural habits and difficulties with the local language.

These reflections indicate that already in six partner countries the intercultural questions and problems are extremely different. The work of the TICKLE project seems to prove that it is possible to develop certain pedagogical tools that can be used in most educational systems.

Atmosphere – Cultural programme

Observations dealing with the way of working and cooperation between groups are very delightful. The working ethos has been correct, arrangements have passed without problems and the general atmosphere in the project has been motivated and friendly. According to the principles of these kinds of projects a certain cultural programme has been integrated to the working sessions. Without exception these have been informative and successful. This aspect could also be expressed so that without any cultural programmes the development ot the project work had not been as favourable as it proved. The common dinners with informal talk must also be mentioned, they are an essential part ot the project work although quite different in character.

Website

The project has promised from the very beginning that its work can be followed in the INTERNET. There has been, apparently, some delays in updating the website. The good point is that in the website it is possible to get acquainted with the project principles and there is abundantly background material to be read if someone is interested. Following the progress or decisions from the minutes of the meetings has not been as effective. Our recommendation and wish is that the website will be updated and the final results will be put there after closing the project.

The project also designed a flyer, an informative broschure which has been in the website quite a long. The original meaning was that this flyer would be translated and be used in partner countries increasing information of the TICKLE project. For some reason, the use of this flyer has been slight.

Dissemination

The question of dissemination is the last challenge of the project. During its work there have been some presentations in international conferences and a few papers have been published. Of importance in this respect is how the project results will be published.

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