

Action for Supporting Linguistic Sensitivity in Education

Key Findings

Action is needed to support school instructional language(s), linguistic dimensions in all subjects, and plurilingual language skills for all learners.

Active participation in school community, access to knowledge, and identity growth require language(s).

Linguistic sensitivity is a part of general teacher competence for all teachers and needs to be promoted and supported in teacher education.

Student teachers express unfamiliarity with meeting pupils with diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds in Europe.

Professional development and action research are ideal for promoting change towards linguistically sensitive teaching for all.

Summary

Being linguistically sensitive in education is a European value that educational stakeholders agree upon.

There is a need to adjust to new realities and appreciate plurilingualism as a positive norm for education. How to promote learning for all pupils in Europe by supporting their linguistic and cultural identities?

Teacher education plays a significant role in changing education towards linguistic sensitivity for all as part of systemic approach to educational change.



The Project

Listiac is a European project co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union. The main coordinator of the project is Åbo Akademi University in Vaasa, Finland. Other participants in the project include nine European universities, three public ministries, and one international organisation.

THE PROJECT brings forth educational change on multiple levels and targets primarily teacher educators, student teachers, and teachers by developing and experimenting with a theoretically informed reflection tool aimed at making (future) teachers linguistically more sensitive in their beliefs, attitudes, and actions in mainstream classrooms.

THE IMPACT is gained through:

- a model for renewed initial teacher education curriculum for supportive and empowering multilingual pedagogies
- a pedagogical reflection tool for supportive and empowering multilingual pedagogies within the whole school community
- an open access research report
- language sensitive teaching recommendations for policy makers, teacher educators, and pedagogical counsellors.

THE ACTIVE PARTICIPATION in the project is an important first step on the road to creating opportunities for teacher educators to evaluate their existing beliefs and change them from (parallel) monolingual ideologies to a language sensitive teaching with the ideology of a positive view on the multilingual resources of students.

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Recommendations for policy makers to take action



At the supranational level

Draft new policies that pave the way for multilingual practices in education and initial teacher education (ITE) and have the following aims:

Raise awareness of all languages involved in the local and global contexts; systematically plan support activities for all these languages; support the use of receptive language skills between closely related languages; critically examine the role of English as a lingua franca.

Facilitate long-term action research projects on LST in ITE that result in evidence that bridges theory and practice.

Highlight the importance of interactive inquiry designs in ITE, which view teacher educators and student teachers as researchers.

Prioritise research on the topics of beliefs and attitudes among teacher educators and student teachers, and on educational policy and practice in ITE.

At the national level

Incorporate a broad inclusive and equity-centred concept of LST as a general teacher competence in the legislation or the curriculum.

Extend the right of the child, if necessary, as to include the knowledge and respect of other languages and cultures.

Support multi-site networks and partnerships on multiple levels to connect players in ITE with various educational stakeholders, parents, media, and policy makers.

Include LST as a priority topic in ITE-related professional development initiatives that are eligible for public financial support.

The Partnership



FINNISH NATIONAL
AGENCY FOR EDUCATION

Ministry of Education and Culture, Finland



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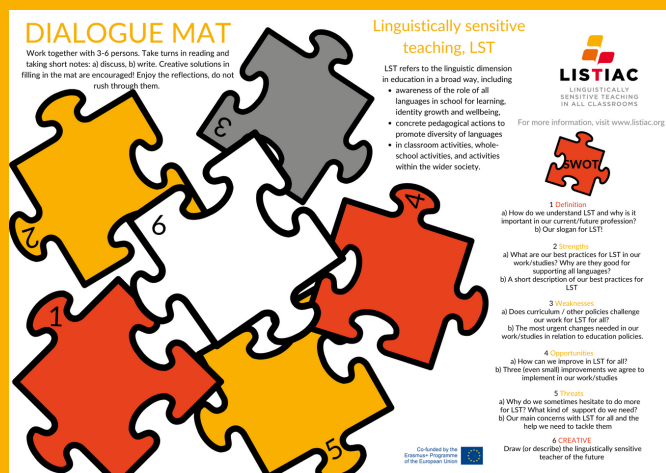
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Reflection toolkit for LST

1. Simple to use both in contact and distance teaching
2. Suitable for different stages of teacher studies/professionality
3. Suitable for different courses in initial teacher education
4. Continuity in reflections
5. Supports cooperation
6. Reflections on educational policies and on emotions and identity
7. Supports both reflective reading, observation, practices, and discussion



LST Linguistically Sensitive Teaching

Teachers' awareness of and the ability to act on the awareness regarding the role languages play in learning, in all school subjects.

Languages in education in a broad sense, with a focus on inclusive education for social justice for all learners.

Mainstreaming plurilingual pedagogies as a natural part of classroom work.

Supporting positive plurilingual identity growth for all learners.



REFLECTION

IN TEACHER STUDIES

for linguistically sensitive teaching in all classrooms

READING AND DISCUSSING

BEGINNER

You and your fellow student teachers are asked to *reflect on your own experiences* with (not) meeting/living with diverse languages and cultures in school. Compare your experiences with the introduction materials

INTERMEDIATE

You as student teachers are asked to reflect on *who you want to be as teachers*. Systematically analyse your strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for becoming that teacher.

ADVANCED

Teachers never work alone. You are asked to reflect on how you in future can, together with your colleagues, support linguistically sensitive teaching through whole school approach.

OBSERVING AND PRACTICING

OBSERVATION

Take the observation guide to a school with you. Look around, how well is linguistically sensitive teaching practised in this school? How would you improve the practices? It is a fantastic opportunity to share your thoughts with teachers or fellow students after the observations!

PRACTICUMS

Or what if it was your practical experience in schools that is observed? Take this guide to your supervisor or mentor in your practicums. Discuss together your ideas for developing linguistically sensitive teaching and try them out in practice!



Read more

Bergroth M., Dražnik T.,
Llombart Esbert J., Pepiot N.,
van der Worp K, & Sierens S.
(2022). *Linguistically sensitive
teacher education. Toolkit for
reflection tasks and action
research.*

WE ARE HERE FOR
CHANGE

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Action Research

is an iterative process
involving educational practitioners, student
teachers, and (Listiac) researchers acting
together in performing a particular cycle of
activities.

These include problem diagnoses, action
interventions, and reflective learning.
All action research approaches have a
common feature in that they enable
practitioners to investigate and evaluate
their work.

This means, by definition, that
active practitioner agency
is always needed.

ACTION RESEARCH

for linguistically
sensitive teaching in
all classrooms

IN INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION

DIALOGUE MAT

ESTABLISH YOUR STARTING POINT

Collect a group of colleagues and reflect on your
strongpoints and challenges in promoting linguistically
sensitive teaching for all. Try to give concrete examples
from your daily work and *reflect on your own experiences*
with (not) meeting/living with diverse languages and
cultures in teacher education.

CHECK POINT REFLECTIONS

Meet up regularly to follow up on dialogue mat reflections.
What changes have you managed to implement? Have new
challenges arisen? Systematically and continually analyse
your strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for
ITE that actively promotes linguistically sensitive
teaching/education.

OBSERVING

OBSERVATION ITE

Use the observation guide to observe your ITE. Look
around, how well is linguistically sensitive teaching
practiced in this ITE? How would you improve the
practices? Perhaps you can ask your students to do the
same? Take the opportunity to share your thoughts with
teachers or other stakeholders after the observations!

OBSERVATION SCHOOLS

Use the observation guide to support your student teachers
during their practicums or use the guide to shadow
teachers, helping them to fine tune their current practices
for linguistically sensitive teaching.

DOCUMENTING

LOGBOOKS

Keeping a simple logbook is a valuable tool for
documenting the process of becoming linguistically
sensitive teacher education. It will deepen the analysis of
issues and challenges faced during the development
process and enable stakeholder voices to be heard.

SHARE YOUR GOOD PRACTICES!

LISTIAC
LINGUISTICALLY
SENSITIVE TEACHING
IN ALL CLASSROOMS

