

Lingua “Opening the Door to Language Learning” Project

Proforma for partners’ evaluative reports

Please use this proforma to write an evaluative report of your phase 2 activities to be sent to Paula by 10th September 2004. Where you worked with national collaborators, please remember to report on their activities as well as your own. Please attach any materials you have developed for the project (including feedback forms) and any other materials you have used and are prepared to share.

On this form, please fill in your answers in the grey fields.

1. Context

You and your collaborators? Also mention the national collaborators you have worked with.

Name	Role	Institution	Type of Institution
Jone Grigaliuniene	Project coordinator	Vilnius University	Institution of higher learning
Nijole Brazeniene	Trainer	Vilnius University	Institution of higher learning
Loreta Chodzkiene	Trainer	Vilnius University	Institution of higher learning
Inesa Seskauskiene	Trainer	Vilnius University	Institution of higher learning
Stanislovas Masiokas	National collaborator, trainer	Kaunas Technological University	Institution of higher learning

What did you do? (i.e. what model did you test?) Please indicate in the following table which model you tested. Eight models are described, please indicate with the word “**Main**” which model fits your tested model best. You might have used elements from other models, please indicate this with the word “**Elements**”. Also fill out the Learner Training, Learner support and Learning resources sections for each model.

	<i>Models</i>		<i>Independent Learning</i>		
	Home	Away	Learner training	Learner support	Learning resources
One	a. Open Space: opening up an institutional resource centre to the community, making host staff resources available to the community.	b. Create Space: setting up a resource centre in the community or using an existing community resource centre, e.g. library.			Use of university resources to help learners develop their lecturing in English skills, prepare their presentations
	Elements				

Two	a. Open Virtual Space: making electronic tools and materials held on an institutional server available to the community.	b. Create Virtual Space: setting up a website for, or delivering electronic materials/learning opportunities to the community.		Use of e-mail to send materials, to. communicate with the learners	
	Elements				
Three	a. Host Study Groups: providing staff and space for the community to meet as a group to learn together.	b. Community Study Groups: facilitating the setting up of study groups in the community.	The staff of the Faculty of Philology and Institute of Foreign languages engaged in designing a programme and running it	English language teachers worked as trainers and consultants	Use of the resources available at the University: videos, textbooks, cds, cassettes
	Main				
Four	a. Open Days: run language taster sessions, exhibitions, demonstrations etc. in the host institution.	b. Roadshows: language taster sessions, exhibitions, demonstrations etc. in the community.		Open sessions for university teachers on the visualisation of information	
	Elements				

What was the profile of your learners? (e.g. number, age, previous language learning experience, qualifications and identified needs including special needs).

- **Number** of Learners: 20
- **Age group** (please state the number of learners in the age groups):

18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
	6	5	5	2	2

- **Gender** (Please state numbers)

Female	Male
14	6

- **Educational experience** (Please state numbers)

Primary Education	Secondary Education	Higher Education / University	Post-HE / Post-University (Further education)	Adult Education	Evening Classes (not only languages)
20	20	20	18		

- **Language learning goals** (Please state how many times the reason was mentioned by your learners)

Goal	Number
I just like to study languages	
I have studied the language and want to refresh my knowledge	
I am interested in developing a greater degree of independence in my learning	
I have been advised to improve my language skills by my employer	
I like the country where this language is spoken	
In order to meet other people and socialise	
I have relatives in or from the country where this language is spoken	
I want to be able to use this language when I'm on holiday	
I want to be able to read books, papers and magazines in this language	
I want to be able to use this language in letters and/or e-mails	
I want to be able to watch TV and listen to the radio in this language	
I want to live/work where the language is spoken	
I am looking for a good way to use my free time	
I have a holiday home in the country where the language is spoken	
For professional purposes	20
Other reasons:	
"I would like to improve my spoken English and Business English"	1
"To get any advice on lecturing in English"	1
"I would like to learn about the structure and features of a lecture in English"	3
"I would like to improve my grammar and pronunciation"	2
"I would like to get new ideas how to make my lectures more interesting and clear for everybody"	1

- **Please write short summaries of the answers on the more open questions.** (Use words rather than sentences.)

Aspect	Summary
Occupation	All of the learners were lecturers of Vilnius University working in different faculties and departments: Faculty of Philosophy - 3; Faculty of Philology - 2; Medicine- 5; Natural sciences- 5; Economics - 4; Insitute of Political Science and International Relations -1
Previous occupation if not currently working	All of them working as professors, associate professors, senior lecturers, research assistants
Why choose this way of learning?	There was an expressed demand for linguistic support to lecturers giving lectures in English.
Language learning experiences and qualifications	Secondary school (6-10 years), university (2-4 years), various language courses
Native/first language	Lithuanian
Target language	English
What other languages known and levels?	Levels 1-6 (see the grid used in the application form) English: Level 5 - 8 persons Level 4 - 8 persons Level 3 - 2 persons Level 2 - 2 persons German: Level 5 - 3 persons Level 4 - 1 person

	<p>Level 3 - 1 person Level 2 - 3 persons Level 1 - 6 persons</p> <p>French: Level 4 - 1 person Level 2 - 3 persons Level 1 - 2 persons</p> <p>Russian: Level 6 - 7 persons Level 5 - 9 persons Level 4 - 3 persons level 2 - 1 person</p> <p>Polish: Level 6 - 1 person level 4 - 2 persons Level 3 - 2 persons Level 2 - 1 person Level 1 - 4 persons</p> <p>Spanish: Level 3 - 1 person Level 2 - 1 person</p> <p>Esperanto: Level 3 - 1 person</p> <p>Finnish - Level 3 - 1 person</p>
Why do you want to take part?	<p>"I would like to improve my fluency in academic discourse. I feel my English is not very academic".</p> <p>" I would like to improve skills of scientific communication".</p> <p>"I would like to learn how to present information more effectively, how to present non-textual information, to get some ideas on how to make my lectures more interesting and clear for everybody".</p> <p>"I would like to improve my spoken language as well as practical English grammar".</p> <p>"I would like to learn about the structure and features of the lecture in English and improve my English speaking skills in a specific field - giving lectures in English".</p>
Computing skills/experience	This question was not used in the questionnaire, as it was understood that all university lecturers were computer literate.
Where did you hear about scheme?	The project was advertised in the university website, information was sent to the deans of the faculties.

2. Delivery / implementation

Please use **short** answers!

- Give a brief description of your activity, i.e. what exactly did you do and where did you do it? (max 100 words)

The model of Supported Independent Learning: an independent learning programme supported by activating sessions, independent learner pack was tried in Phase 2.

The independent learning programme was designed and the materials necessary for running such a project collected. The idea of the model was prompted by the request from the lecturers giving lectures and making presentations in English. They addressed the Institute of Foreign Languages asking for linguistic support in order to improve their lectures and to develop their presentation skills. The project team devised a programme which could equip lecturers with the skills enabling them to function effectively in an academic environment as well as develop a degree of independence in coping with the issues of lecturing in English.

The project was carried out at the University of Vilnius, Faculty of Philology. There were 10 activating sessions, dealing with such issues as giving academic presentations in English, differences between spoken and written language, developing academic vocabulary, handling questions, making use of visuals and IT in the classroom. The sessions (with the exception of the ones on the Visualisation of information) were delivered in English. At the end of the programme the participants gave their presentations (in English) which were assessed by the audience and a panel of trainers.

- How does your phase 2 model differ from your phase 1 model? If your phase 2 model is a refinement of another partner's phase 1 model, how does it differ from their model?

The model chosen for Phase 2 was completely different from the model tried in Phase 1. Firstly, in Phase 2 we used a group motivated by a clear objective- to improve their lecturing in English skills. Secondly, this activity was more focused (a group of university lecturers) in comparison to the activity tried in Phase 1. Thirdly, the model was better planned and managed from the very beginning (thanks to the questionnaires developed by the project management team we managed to collect all the socio-economic data, keep the learners enrolment/attendance/completion rates more accurately, get feedback from the learners.

- What were your aims and objectives and how did you set about achieving them?

The aim of the model was to design and develop an independent learning programme which through activating sessions would provide training in how to become independent when coping with the issues of English arising in professional sphere. The learners had regular sessions with a language tutor to discuss different issues of lecturing in English and monitor their progress. The learners were provided with the Independent Learner Packs developed in Phase 1 of the Project. The Institute helped the learners with the materials, advice and feedback on their progress. This package model was seeking to train and develop the skills necessary for university lecturers to function effectively in an academic environment, e.g. deliver lectures, handle questions, make presentations etc.; the experiment will also aim to develop the skills needed in office environment.

- How did you publicise your activity and recruit your learners?

The project was advertised through the university website. Besides, all the deans of all the faculties received written ads for the course and were advised to inform their staff. The University Public Relations Department as well as the University newspaper were involved in giving more publicity to the project.

- How did you organise and manage the activity, e.g. how many sessions and how often, who lead these sessions, what was the content?

The project team met at the end of November (after the Antwerp meeting) and started thinking about the next phase of the project. The idea of giving some support for university professors and teachers lecturing in English had been around for a long time: the Institute of Foreign Languages had received many requests for language support from different faculties. We decided we could use the project money to materialise the idea of giving linguistic support to university lecturers. Initially we were thinking of 8 activating sessions, but later we added 2 more. The activating sessions were devoted to the following topics:

- the Launch of the Project and the Idea of Independent Language Learning (led by J. Grigaliuniene);
- two sessions, led by I. Seskauskiene, were devoted to Presentation skills (watching Video and discussing good and bad examples of various presentation aspects);
- one session dealt with the differences between spoken and written language (led by N. Brazeniene);
- one tackled the Academic vocabulary as well as the language of presentations (led by L. Chodzkiene);
- the issue of Handling questions was discussed in one of the activating sessions (led by J. Grigaliuniene)
- two sessions of the Visualisation of information followed (led by S. Masiokas);
- then our learners were sent away for two weeks to prepare their own presentations and they came back for two more sessions to deliver their presentations. The sessions were led by experienced language teachers of the Faculty of Philology and Institute of Foreign Languages.

- What learning and support resources did you use? (equipment and human!)

All the trainers were experienced teachers of English from the Faculty of Philology and the Institute of Foreign Languages. The learners received either handouts before the session or the materials were sent to their e-mail addresses before the sessions to get acquainted with them in advance; The Video "Effective Presentations" was used during 2 of the sessions with good and bad examples of presentations - the learners noted that the discussions were extremely useful; during the "Visualisation of information" lecture prof. Masiokas from Kaunas Technological University used multi-media equipment and gave a great deal of useful information on how to present information. Prof. Masiokas used a multi-media projector and supplied all the participants with CDs containing copies of all the material used in the session. (The CD is attached to the report). The learners also received lists of recommended books and other sources of information that could come in handy in the future.

- What was the timetable for your activity? (refer to your work plan)

3 March - Launch of the project
10 and 17 March - Presentation skills (video and discussion)
24 March - Spoken/Written Language
31 March - Academic Vocabulary
7 April - Handling questions
16 April (2 sessions) - Visualisation of information
9 - 26 May - Giving presentations
26 May - Closing the project

- How did you monitor your learners, i.e. how were you kept informed about their progress?

Learner attendance register was kept. There was an e-mail list - so all the relevant information was sent to the course participants, the course participants could also write to the trainers seeking advice.

3. Outcomes

Please use **short** answers!

- What was the attendance rate for your activity? How many people attended all sessions?

**14 learners out of 20 attended all the activating sessions (10)
17 learners attended 9 activating sessions
17 learners attended 8 activating sessions**

- What was the retention rate, i.e. number of learners at the end compared to the number of learners at the start of the test phase? How many people gave you feedback? What reasons did learners give for dropping out?

No of completions: 20

No of feedback forms: 11

Reasons for drop-outs: 2 students joined later and then dropped early because of other commitments

- Please give details of any products/materials you have developed for the project and, if possible, attach examples in the original language (i.e. no need for translations).

We have collected a file of handouts and training materials to be used in the follow-up courses in the autumn.

- How did you / will you disseminate your results?

The article was published in the academic newspaper ""Universitas Vilnensis" The results will be disseminated during the International conference at the University of Vilnius on 17 September 2004; A seminar for future collaborators will be held in Vilnius in October 2004.

4. Evaluation

Please write a 1500 word evaluation of your phase 2 experience. This should include discussion of the following:

- *Learner feedback and what this revealed about the learners and the scheme e.g. language learning gains, response to the scheme, future plans*
- *Tutor/facilitator feedback e.g. What went well, what challenges were encountered/overcome, what was gained in study group sessions?*
- *Evaluation of model e.g. did you meet your aims and targets (refer back to section 2), what worked and why; what didn't work and why not; what changes did you make; what future revisions to the model would you make?*
- *Comparison of your phase 2 model with phase 1 e.g. What did you learn from phase 1 (from your own model and from other partners' models) that helped you in phase 2?*

- *Impact on language learning, i.e. what was the effect of learning in this way? (Base this on comments from learners and your own observations on how this programme contributed to language learning, raising awareness, equal opportunities, widening / increasing participation, etc.)*
- *Results of working with national collaborators , e.g. what have you learnt from this experience about yourself, your own institution, language learning and teaching, working with non-traditional learners, your own country and other countries? What did you/your institution gain from the experience?*
- *Continuity and sustainability: how do you see this model developing? Do you have any ideas for taking it forward?*

Please also include quotes (translated into English) from learners and tutors and other evidence in support of your evaluation.

Learner feedback: The learner feedback forms revealed that all the course participants were happy with the scheme. They praised the idea of the model a great deal, but noted at the same time that they would have liked to have had more language practice during the activating sessions. They appreciated the materials used during the sessions and the handouts received. The learners also found the recommended literature very useful. Almost all of them were ready to continue learning English. "I have gained a lot of useful things - I have improved fluency in speaking, learned the typical linking phrases used in presenting facts and figures". "These were brilliant lecturers with wonderful ideas, deep knowledge of the subject and a clear way of presenting things". "Everything was extremely useful". "I have really enjoyed learning the language". "Everything worked very well". "In my opinion, the tutors themselves were an excellent example of an effective way of lecturing in English".

Tutor feedback: the tutors noted that the attendance of the sessions was exemplary, almost all the sessions were attended by all the participants. However, not all the participants were willing to take part in the discussions (unfortunately, there were a couple of people who always tried to dominate and some who never spoke). The tutors also mentioned that the level of English of the participants varied considerably (from Level 2 to Level 5), which made the communication complicated. The tutors also pointed out that for some (especially older generation) lecturers it was not easy to accept the Anglo-Saxon tradition of scientific rhetoric (they said that the style of presentations taught reminded them of a show, which they found difficult to accept). The challenges: new content, very demanding audience, too little time, too many things to cover. Gains: new, challenging, useful experience, feeling of satisfaction as the model seemed to have worked well.

Evaluation of the model: The aims of the model have been met (a model designed, tried, evaluated and approved). The course participants were given some input on how to improve their lecturing skills and had an opportunity to demonstrate their skills. What didn't work: the learners didn't have enough language practice (which was one of their expectations), it was very difficult to think of individual tasks and assignments and check them as too many trainers were involved in the project (each session was run by a different tutor). The tutors tried to give too much input and sometimes there was too little time left for the learners to discuss things. "There was too little time spent on individual assignments. It would have been better to spend some time every session rather than devote two separate sessions at the end of the course". "There could have been more homework".

Changes: to include individual assignments and homework, to check and monitor the course participants' progress, to make the sessions more interactive. The groups of

course participants should be streamed according to the level of English. More time should also be devoted to the promotion of the idea of independent learning.

Model in Phase 1 and Phase 2: Phase 1 model showed to us that the idea of independent learning is not only underdeveloped and ill-perceived in our country, but also idealistic: very few people would ever undertake to learn a language independently. The very idea of giving something for free is taken suspiciously: people are more prepared to pay money for the course and expect somebody else to be responsible for their progress. Phase 1 has shown that learners should be helped (and maybe pushed) to acquire the skills necessary to become independent, some on-going support with learning materials, resources is also necessary. Therefore, in Phase 2 we used a more controlled, more focused approach - we had a group of learners motivated by a clear objective - to acquire the skills that would make their lectures better.

In Phase 1, the reports written by the British, Belgian and Irish partners served as examples that could be followed. The external examiner's comments were also very helpful. The external examiner's constructive criticism and sometimes ruthless comments were a motivating factor. The recommendations were particularly useful - they helped not only to form a clearer picture of the model to be tested, but also to structure the model, to review and choose the methods of data collection.

Impact on language learning: almost all course participants noted that the participation in the project boosted their confidence, they also wrote about their determination to continue with the study of English after the completion of the project: - some of them were considering joining the Language school or studying on their own. On the other hand, however, some of them noted in their feedback forms that they were not sure whether their language skills improved.

"I have gained greater confidence and I am planning to continue learning English at the Language School of the Institute of Foreign Languages".

"The most important thing about the project for me personally was the confidence I gained."

"Such a type of learning is very useful".

Another important aspect of the project was the propagation of the idea of independent learning. Lithuanian educational system is still too much teacher-directed, although some considerable changes have taken place during the fifteen years of independence. The idea of independent learning needs further promotion at all levels of education (and not only in the study of languages).

Work with national collaborators is always a problem in Lithuania: our collaborators in Kaunas could not run the same model in their institution due to bureaucratic obstacles. Initially there were more institutions willing to participate, but when they learned about the contents of the project they found our cooperation too complicated. We tried to look for other forms of cooperation - Kaunas Technological University suggested their professor (S. Masiokas) who could be of interest to our course participants. After a long correspondence and negotiations we agreed upon a four-session course to our project participants as well as some other staff from the Faculty of Philology and the Institute of Foreign languages. The sessions were extremely useful and informative. We were really happy to involve him.

We are planning to continue collaboration with Kaunas Technological University as well as involve more language departments from other institutions of higher education: at the end of October we are planning to run a seminar in order to share our experience.

One more very important gain for the Institute of Foreign Languages and the Faculty of Philology the change in the image of the institution - the Project enabled us to offer to the lecturers from other faculties something very useful for free. This undoubtedly contributed to the shaping of a favourable image of our institute.

Continuity and sustainability: we are happy that the course proved not only very popular from the very beginning (we had more than 50 people signed), but also received very favourable and enthusiastic response - we are getting phone calls from

lecturers from other institutions in Lithuania who would be willing to attend such a course. The authorities of the University consider this project to be very important. Over the last 15 years political, educational and economic circumstances have led to an increase in the number of international students at the University of Vilnius, so more and more attention is being paid to the ways of training lecturers giving lectures in English. The authorities view this project as a way of professional development. In the autumn the Institute of Foreign Languages, having received funding from the University, is going to use our model and introduce regular courses for university lecturers. The course participants will be granted certificates of professional development.