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## **Transforming the Latvian Multilingual and Intercultural Education Experience into Flourishing Europe**

### **ABSTRACT**

The article deals with the Latvian Association for Cooperation in Education (LACE, in Latvian LAPSA) expert experience to facilitate multilingual and intercultural education in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea first and later from 2014 in three Ukrainian regions: Odessa, Chernivtsi and Transcarpathia. Working in partnership with the Romanian non-governmental organization (NGO) The Peace Action, Training and Research Institute of Romania (PATRIR), LACE was supposed to give an indication of the strategic directions and partnerships that will allow full-fledged implementation of the MLE programme starting in 2016. A continuous action approach was ensured by logically planned project activities and it was based on the people involved. The LACE vision of the implementation of the MLE programme focused on a whole-school approach for sustainable education, school as an education institution, entity, school as a learning/teaching organisation, school – organisation which learns. The multilevel approach and integrated approach has been suggested to establish cooperation culture linking formal, non-formal and informal education. Ten educational establishments were visited, the prepared lessons and out-of-class events (presentations of national cultural events) were observed; discussions with stakeholders were organized as well. The DILL's methodology was used – the mastery of creating and asking questions on selected indicators for assessing the effectiveness of multilingual education methodology development and implementation – as a method of inquiry. The framework was based on three central questions: what is happening in this educational situation? What changes should be introduced? What happens when the changes are made?”. Creating a framework for observation and guided reflections, several resources on the implementation of inclusive, multilingual and multicultural programmes in

Latvia, Estonia, Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the USA have been approached. Seven strands were agreed upon for grouping observations, selecting theoretical standpoints or broader viewpoints as well as suggesting recommendations for further activities: *Family and Community Involvement, Multilingual Education Programme Structure and Management, Curriculum and Instruction, Support and Resources, Assessment, Staff Quality and Professional Development, Learning Environment, and School as a Learning Community*. Consequently, the most appreciated involvement of the Latvian NGO LACE could be seen as the application of DILL's approach – the mastery to create and ask questions that should be considered as an important step to transform the Latvian multilingual and intercultural education experience into flourishing Europe.

## Introduction

The transformation of the Latvian multilingual and intercultural education experience will be viewed in a context of Latvia's development cooperation policy. Latvia is a newcomer in the development cooperation field and, in a very brief period, had to transform from an aid-recipient to an aid-donor country. Therefore, it is worth investigating whether instead of being incorporated in the EU "official development assistance ideology" these ("new" EU member-states) countries with their different development-related experiences, can offer other ways for increasing aid effectiveness (Snikersproge 2010: 6). The two main policy implementers on the Latvian side are the government, i.e., line ministries and the non-governmental sector.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia (<http://www.mfa.gov.lv/en/about-the-ministry>) has stated

that the goal of development cooperation is "to provide assistance to poor and less developed countries by promoting their long-term social and economic development, and meanwhile eradicating poverty and ensuring peace and security in the world. In the term *development cooperation*, the word *development* determines the aim of assistance, but *cooperation* – cooperation of donors and organization with beneficiaries by mutually coming to agreement about development aims and tasks as well as both parts duties and responsibilities".

According to the Development Cooperation Policy Programme in 2008, the main priority areas of Latvia's development cooperation are „good governance, economic reform, security, integration into transatlantic space and the EU, and promotion of education, culture, social development, healthcare and environment

protection” (Dumpe 24.02.2010. in Snikersproge 2010: 8).

Since 2008 Latvia has gradually drawn closer to the group of developed countries and in the area of human development Latvia is among the 49 most developed countries (according to UN classification). “Since Latvia developed from an aid receiver to a donor it provides its expertise, knowledge and resources to those countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia that now seek assistance in various areas” (<http://www.mfa.gov.lv/en/policy/development-co-operation>).

Being a new and development cooperation country, Latvia needs to conceptualize its experience and evaluate what might be useful for other countries (Grigule, 2014; Grigule & Gorgadze, 2014) and as it has been stated before the non-governmental sector is the other main development cooperation policy implementer on the Latvian side.

The *Latvian Association for Cooperation in Education* (LACE, in Latvian LAPSA) is a Latvian non-governmental organisation founded with the aim to facilitate the research, the implementation of cooperative learning and other interactive learning methods into education to promote experience exchange, collaboration and in-service education among university lecturers, students and schoolteachers. LACE has an experience of introducing multilingual education in Latvia

as well as other former Soviet countries. By involving in development education and development cooperation, members of LACE have valuable experience of multilingual education. As Latvia is represented as a donor state, LACE is interested in sharing this experience to facilitate the long-term development of the developing countries and their multicultural societies. The partnership with the *Georgian Centre for Civil Integration and Inter-Ethnic Relations* (CCIIR) started in 2006 with cooperation in the project “Multilingual Education in Georgia”. Since 2012 LACE and CCIIR have been working together in the Tempus project “DIMTEGU-Development and Introduction of Multilingual Teacher Education Programs at Universities of Georgia and the Ukraine” and in 2015 in the project “Partnership of Non-governmental Organizations and Higher Education Institutions for Development Cooperation in Education”, the activity of the Latvian Platform for Development Cooperation (LAPAS) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia. During the project “Partnership of Non-governmental Organizations and Higher Education Institutions for Development Cooperation in Education”, LACE formed partnership with the Romanian non-governmental organization (NGO) *The Peace Action, Training and Research Institute of Romania* (PATRIR).

Since 2010 PATRIR has engaged in an initiative to assess the context and later to pilot a multilingual education (MLE) project in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea first and later from 2014 in three Ukrainian regions: Odessa, Chernivtsi and Transcarpathia. Upon confirmation of interest in such an initiative by the main stakeholders in Ukraine, the objectives were set as three-fold:

1. To ensure the capacity for quality education;
2. To develop inter-community understanding, interaction and interdependence;
3. To improve social cohesion and reduce tensions.

A LACE expert was contracted as an international consultant and was involved in launching the multilingual education in the Ukraine programme in 2015. The expert's duties were to conduct monitoring, record the first reactions and experiences from students and teachers regarding MLE, present the experience and the academic results of piloting, and give an indication of the strategic directions and partnerships that will allow full-fledged implementation of the MLE programme starting in 2016. The DILL's methodology – the mastery of creating and asking questions on selected indicators for assessing the effectiveness of multilingual education methodology development and implementation – has

been piloted before in LACE projects. A multi-stakeholder approach was used to improve the DILL's methodology for implementing development cooperation at various levels and in forms of education. The development and implementation of partnership-based educational activities activated the experience of teaching staff, teachers, students and mentors in development cooperation at different levels of education, and aimed to build solidarity for development cooperation in a global context with partners in developing countries. The main beneficiaries of the implementation of project activities were the lecturers and students of higher education institutions, general education teachers and students, as well as indirectly parents, mentors and partners from NGOs in the Ukraine, Georgia and Romania. In cooperation with PATRIR, LACE continued its mission to “teach what you practice”.

The LACE vision of the implementation of the MLE programme focused on a whole-school approach for sustainable education, school as an education institution, entity, school as a learning/teaching organisation, school – organisation which learns. The questioning as a method of inquiry was used.

The multilevel approach and integrated approach has been suggested to establish a

cultural cooperation linking formal, non-formal and informal education.

The Project coordinator from PATRIR, local coordinators from 3 target regions in Ukraine, local experts, continuing MLE implementation from Crimean Political Dialogue and international consultant from LACE visited 10 educational establishments, observed the prepared lessons and out-of-class events (presentations of national cultural events) as well as took part in discussions with stakeholders.

During the first year that focused on piloting and capacity building, several consultations took place in all regions, regional coordination mechanisms were set up and capacity building included the creation of a set of resources on MLE, a set of methodological recommendations for the implementation of the MLE programmes in schools, and the training of a group of about 30 teachers and educators in the basic pedagogy of multilingual education. Additionally the project included such activities as an assessment of the learning environment in the selected schools, the close monitoring of the changes that the MLE programme is enabling at school level

and a video documentary on the experience of setting up an MLE system in a multicultural yet volatile environment in Ukraine.

### **Theoretical grounds and research method**

Bronfenbrenner (1979), Mehisto (2008) and the guidelines on the Council of Europe language policy (Beacco et al., 2010) encourage the treatment of possibilities and strategies to facilitate change in society at five levels: SUPRA, MACRO, MESO, MICRO, and NANO.

“Developing and implementing a curriculum involve numerous activities – political piloting, planning and development, implementation, evaluation – on several levels of the school system, from the “supra” to the “nano”, where various curriculum instruments are used” (Beacco et al. 2010:13).

Table 1. The curriculum on different levels of the education system (Beacco et al. 2010: 13) (This level-based approach derives from the work of the Netherlands Institute for Curriculum Development) (Aker 2006, Thijs & Akker, 2009).

<b>Level</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Examples</b>
SUPRA	International, comparative	international reference instruments, such as the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, international evaluation studies like the PISA survey or the European Indicator of Language Competence, analyses carried out by international experts (Language education policy profile), study visits to other countries, etc.
MACRO	National (education system), state, region	study plan, syllabus, strategic specific aims, common core, training standards
MESO	School, institution	adjustment of the school curriculum or study plan to match the specific profile of a school
MICRO	Class, group, teaching sequence, teacher	course, textbook used, resources
NANO	Individual	individual experience of learning, life-long (autonomous) personal development

Mehisto (2008) points out the importance of content and language-integrated learning – the methodological essence of multilingual education. Its successful implementation involves far more stakeholders than teachers and students. These stakeholders can work together in building successful programmes or they can work at cross-purposes impeding their development. A knowledgeable application of the

stakeholder approach can help to direct the process towards quality which leads to achieving the aims of global education: partnership, participation, cross-cultural awareness.

A continuous action approach was ensured by logically planned project activities and it was based on the people involved. Local experts implemented the programme in the West of the Ukraine. The

research and designed materials were made available to the general public.

Bassey (1998: 93) describes action research in terms of education as follows, „Educational action research is an inquiry which is carried out in order to understand, to evaluate and then to change, in order to improve some educational practice.”

The eight-stage framework (based on Robson 2011: 190 and Bassey 1998: 94-95) was followed in order to carry out the research (Table 2).

Table 2. Stages of action research (based on Robson 2011: 190 and Bassey 1998: 94-95).

Stage 1:	Defining the enquiry. What is the issue of concern? What questions should be asked? Who will be involved? Where and when will it happen?
Stage 2:	Describing the educational situation. What is the expert required to do there? What is expert trying to do there? What thinking underpins what they are doing?
Stage 3:	Collecting and analysing evaluative data. What is happening in this situation now as understood by the various participants? Using research methods, what can be found about out about it?
Stage 4:	Reviewing the data and looking for contradictions. What contradictions are there between what we would like to happen and what seems to happen?
Stage 5:	Tackling a contradiction by introducing some aspect of change. By reflecting critically and creatively on the contradictions, what change can we introduce which we think is likely to be beneficial?
Stage 6:	Monitoring the change. What happens day by day when change is introduced?
Stage 7:	Analysing evaluative data concerning the change. What is happening in this situation now – as understood by various participants – as a result of changes introduced? Using research methods, what can be found about out about it?
Stage 8:	Reviewing the change and deciding what to do next. Was the change worthwhile? Should it be continued in the future? What needs to be done next? Is the change sufficient?

The framework is based on three central questions (Bassey 1998: 94): „what is happening in this educational situation of

ours now? (Stages 1 to 4); what changes are we going to introduce? (Stage 5); what

happens when we make the changes? (Stages 6 to 8)”.

A framework for observation and guided reflections were developed based on several resources to support the planning and ongoing implementation of inclusive, multilingual and multicultural programmes in Latvia, Estonia, Eastern Europe, Central Asia and USA. In Latvia in the terms of the Open School Project (1999 – 2003), attention was paid to the learning environment and school as a learning organisation being the main influencing factors of MLE quality.

Howard et al. (2007) developed the guiding principles as a tool to help dual language programmes with planning and ongoing implementation in the USA in seven strands: *Assessment and Accountability, Curriculum, Instruction, Staff Quality and Professional Development, Program Structure, Family and Community, and Support and Resources*.

The Estonian Language Immersion Programme (Genesee, 2005) and Central Asian Programme pointed out management as a very important aspect of MLE (Стойнова & Глушкова, 2015).

The Quality Pedagogy of International Step by Step Association (2011) proposes 7 principles: *Interactions; Family and*

*Community; Inclusion, Diversity and Values of Democracy; Assessment and Planning; Teaching Strategies; Learning Environment and Professional Development*.

In terms of this research, the following 7 strands were agreed upon for grouping observations, selecting theoretical standpoints or broader viewpoints as well as suggesting recommendations for further activities:

*Family and Community Involvement, Multilingual Education Programme Structure and Management, Curriculum and Instruction, Support and Resources, Assessment, Staff Quality and Professional Development, Learning Environment, and School as a Learning Community*.

## **Results and Discussion**

### ***Family and Community Involvement***

The Multilingual Education in the Ukraine project has paid significant attention to the *Family and Community* aspect, which is evidence of a smart and professional approach. During the initial planning meeting in Kyiv (January 2015), regional representatives carried out a needs analysis of the community contexts. The

Latvian experience and resources were introduced during the teaching seminar as a part of the Regional introductory seminar, which also hosted focus group discussions with parents and community representatives.

The education institutions whose MLE corresponded with their teachers and students' educational needs were involved in the piloting stage, i.e., the parents from the Zakarpattia Region Uzhhorod School (with extensive Slovak language instruction) appreciated the given opportunity as MLE was introduced in Grade 5, thus students first learned in the native (Slovak) language and the bilingual education ensured a gradual transition to studying in Ukrainian.

The implementation experience of MLE (Grigule, 2014) shows that unprepared, uneducated parents are a threat to MLE implementation. Parents choose the school according to the language of instruction that suits them and makes them confident in their capacity to help their child with homework.

During regional visits, project participants listed and described the activities which were organized in order to inform the community and involve parents, thus raising the parents' acceptance of the proposed school initiative.

The following strategies were applied:

- Parent meetings;
- Parent-teacher conferences;
- Individual meetings with parents;
- Presentations at national societies' meetings;
- Cooperation with the country/ies of ethnical origin – directly or through the consulate;
- Cooperation with embassy and consulate;
- Publications in the regional and local press, Television interviews and reportage;
- Information on MLE on the school's web page;
- Information boards in educational institutions to inform parents about MLE;
- Information bulletins addressed to parents about MLE distributed in educational institutions;
- Information for parents about the school teachers' professional training on MLE;
- Information for students about MLE with the task of informing their parents;
- Proposal for parents to make a choice;
- Chance to say “no” to MLE;
- Conversation with students;

- Cooperation with the cultural institutions of the community (museum);
- Parents' participation in lessons and evaluation of MLE.

When providing the feedback to pilot schools, experts pointed out as an example of good practice the chance given to parents to choose the education type as well as change it during the education process. The strategy of informing parents about the teachers' professional development turned out to be particularly successful. This creates a sense of safety that the piloting is reliable. The existence and distribution of information on MLE in schools is a great asset. The next step should be recommendations for parents how to support their child's plurilingual development without taking the teacher's role.

The USA Center for Applied Linguistics (Howard et al., 2007) proposes a couple of aspects for long-lasting cooperation with parents that could be further elaborated as working principles and criteria for quality assessment.

First, it is necessary for the school to incorporate ongoing **parent information and education** to help parents understand, support, and advocate for the bilingual and multicultural goals of the education.

Activities are designed to bring parents together to promote cross-cultural awareness. There is a specialist at educational institution for correspondence and communication with parents about MLE questions.

Secondly, the school should have a plan for positive, active, and ongoing relations with students' families and the community and provide different possibilities for **parents' participation**. Parents can be an MLE resource when educational content is connected to students' experience that includes their cultural experience.

In general, the school views and involves **parents and community members as strategic partners** in the implementation of multilingual education.

Addressing the issues of bilingualism that are seen as fundamental to parent bilingualism and bilingual education understanding, Baker (2014) puts forward: *family questions, language development questions (literacy) and educational questions (questions about problems)*. Zurer Pearson (2008) suggests educating parents in the following topics:

*„The arguments and the research to support your decision to raise bilingual children;  
Language-learning basics for your child's first language;*

*The basics of being bilingual;*  
*The major strategies for bilingual*  
*homes and communities;*  
*Testimonials from bilingual*  
*families;*  
*The research evidence that*  
*bilingual upbringing does not harm*  
*a child's cognitive and academic*  
*development;*  
*Questions of identity for bilingual*  
*children;*  
*People, places and resources for*  
*parents of bilingual children”*  
(Pearson 2008: xix).

In the project schools were recommended to plan parent teaching content in the following directions: *information* – to see advantages of children being multilingual; *encouragement, advice,* and *cooperation* for creating a positive bilingual environment.

Parents should be taught how to support and recognize/evaluate children's language development, not teach the language replacing the teachers, as parents “carry” the old understanding about learning, i.e., oriented towards memorizing, reproducing and formative assessment. One of the most effective strategies used in Latvia was to discuss and analyse common myths and misconceptions.

### ***Programme Structure and Management***

The Ukraine is a country with extensive multilingual and multicultural experience. According to the regional coordinator of the Odessa district, there is no monolingual system that has to be broken. The teachers are multilingual, and they use multiple languages during their average workday.

The MLE pilot project was initiated on the basis of situation analysis and methodological patterns. During the visits it was possible to learn that schools had developed their MLE programme based on and corresponding with the situation and needs of schools and community. The strength of the project was the volunteering principle and participants linked their work with parents' needs.

During the pilot project schools continued to rely on their national education standard, thus schools' MLE programmes were concerned only with the allocation of languages.

The allocation of languages in pilot project schools has been implemented by:

- choosing topics and / or training activities;
- selecting certain subjects from the curriculum and using two (or three) languages during the lesson;
- using teaching materials in two languages;

- organizing the learning environment with the help of two bilingual people (the nanny and the teacher);
- teaching the subject / content of two teachers in school;
- organizing preschool daily activities in children’s native language, but classes – in the state language.

International experts that conducted bilingual education investigation in Latvia (Batelaan, 2002, Pedersen, 2002) stressed that schools should develop their own syllabus, obviously based on national standards, but also including school context. This would make school more ‘business’-like rather than bureaucratic. Furthermore,

this offers possibilities for the school to link the syllabus with a real world context which includes the school with existing teacher competence and students’ knowledge, experience and skills. The syllabus has to be developed within the schools development context.

Schools were offered the following frame for language allocation description:

Table 3. The choice of languages. (Adapted from MLE application form, developed by OSCE/HCNM MLE experts Grigule and Gurbo (2010) for the project “Multilingual Education Implementation in Georgia”).

School’s MLE programme foresees the use of two (or more) languages of instruction in a class and the acquisition of the educational content in \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and in \_\_\_\_\_ (languages).

Language separation will be realized (underline the relevant type/ -s)

- a) by selecting some curriculum subjects,
- b) by allocating a part of the subject hours,
- c) by using teaching – learning materials specially developed for bilingual instruction,
- d) by two teachers teaching the subject (bilingually),
- e) by selecting topics and/or activities.

Concerning the management of the programme, observation revealed that schools organised leadership and cooperation in various ways.

- Cooperation practice between preschool and school should be particularly complimented: school teachers taught the Ukrainian

language for older preschool groups in kindergarten.

- In all regions the regional coordinators knew schools very well, they facilitated the choice of the schools for pilot project and kept regular contacts with schools, knew what was going on there.

School cooperation modules can vary depending on the size of school and the selected focus for piloting (Grigule, 2012), but the most topical should be the cooperation of teachers of one grade including L1 and L2 teachers as well as the regional coordinator. The following model has been offered:

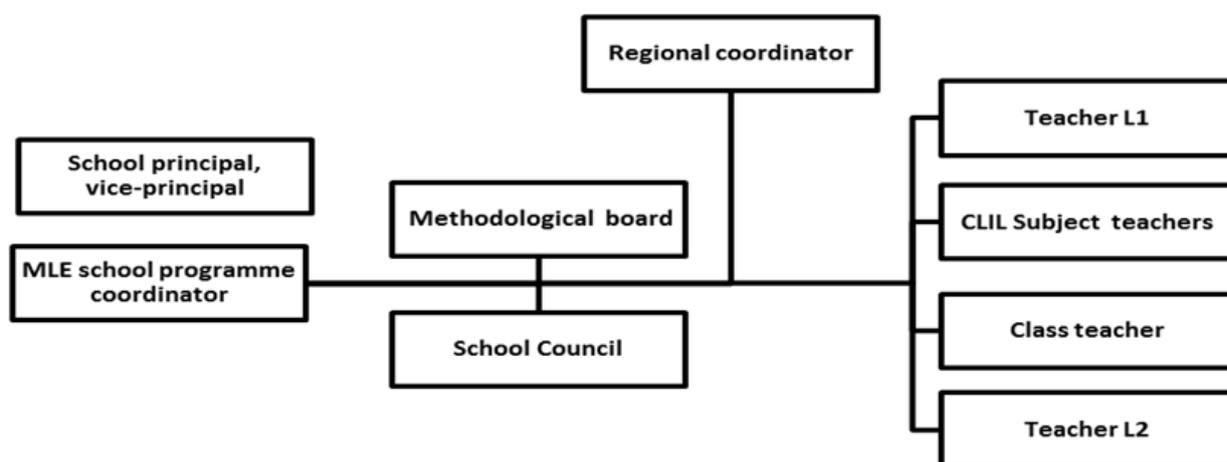


Figure 1. School MLE Programme Management and Self-evaluation Model (Adapted from Grigule, 2012).

School principal, vice-principal and MLE school programme coordinator should be responsible and manage the process and give feedback to the whole school – Methodological board and School Council (parents). Parents are important stakeholders. Language teachers, class teachers should be involved since in the new situation their tasks have changed. They cannot be excluded.

### ***Curriculum and Instruction***

In the project introductory seminar in Kyiv, the participants were asked to reflect on an experiential learning task. They formulated the key instructional features:

- Start and build on the prior knowledge of students;
- Use different media;

- Develop the study skills of students;
- Give the opportunity to build knowledge working in a group;
- Select themes: which are connected with the values; universal themes and issues (human, glocal – meaning global and local); reveal the diversity of the world; give the opportunity to see the similarities and differences.

During the observation, appropriate MLE work organisation forms were applied:

- Teachers facilitate understanding with the help of visual scaffolding and speaking frames;
- Students work in groups, positive atmosphere and positive peer evaluation is ensured;
- Teachers cater for all learning styles – ‘close your eyes and taste’;
- Learners are informed about lesson aim and instructional strategies;
- Teachers pay special attention to terminology in different languages;
- Learners are encouraged to come up with an appropriate term in their mother tongue (asked in Ukrainian to provide a Slovak equivalent for the term);

- Teachers encourage students to colour code languages in their note books – target language in green, first language in regular – blue.

In workshops to characterise the new approach to diversity, the teachers of pilot schools were faced to new terms used in multilingual education: *plurilingual competence, translanguaging*.

**“Plurilingual and intercultural competence is the ability to use a plural repertoire of linguistic and cultural resources to meet communication needs or interact with people from other backgrounds and contexts, and enrich that repertoire while doing so. Plurilingual competence refers to the repertoire of resources which individual learners acquire in all the languages they know or have learned, and which also relate to the cultures associated with those languages”**(Beacco et al. 2010: 16).

**“Translanguaging is the dynamic process whereby multilingual language users**

*mediate complex social and cognitive activities through strategic employment of multiple semiotic resources to act, to know and to be”* (Garsia 2014: 45).

To implement these concepts in the classroom, teachers require didactic and resource support. The Council of Europe (CoE) project “A Framework of Reference for Pluralistic Approaches to Languages and Cultures” (FREPA) provides a comprehensive description of the knowledge, attitudes and skills which constitute plurilingual and pluricultural competences and describes three didactic approaches to plurilingual education:

*Integrated didactics* – in which the teaching of different foreign languages is made complementary, by using links and similarities between them in an explicit way to help learning.

*Awakening to languages* – raising learners’ awareness of the diversity of languages at their homes, schools and societies, to encourage thinking about language and to give value to the different languages present in the school.

*Intercomprehension between related languages* – developing comprehension within families of languages, e.g., courses have been devised where students work in

parallel on several Romance or Slav languages.

Latvia has got the experience of implementing cross-curricular links in the National Basic Education Curriculum and Standards of the Latvian as a Second Language (2001); designing teaching course sets for German as a second foreign language (Maslo, 2005). As the Ukraine is ethnically and linguistically diverse, **it is recommended to develop universal teaching aids** which can be used with learners who have different first languages.

The pedagogical principle of MLE is the necessity to base understanding on structured learning in group. Unfortunately, observations reveal that the majority of lessons are teacher-centred. The expert’s observation proves the paradox:

*During discussions after the lessons, I received positive replies which contradicted the observed physical environment. Teachers gave excuses that group work skills should be taught which could be done in upper grades. I was positively surprised by the visit to a preschool – learning environment for very young learners and young learners’ was organized with the hexagonal desks. Joy and wish to share this with school disappeared when entering the*

*oldest group, it turned out desks were arranged in rows as children were getting ready for school (Grigule, 10.2015).*

Regarding the curriculum, the MLE implementation requires reviewing the second language (L2) standards. The relevance of language functions should be evaluated deciding on the language functions which should be added and whether they should be learned at receptive or productive level. Topics and tasks should also be reviewed to prevent overlapping of L2 curriculum with the other subjects. Thus, coordination of curricula and work towards an integrated programme should be conducted.

It is recommended to consider a whole-school approach to language acquisition. Theory sources highlight the whole-school approach as one of the key factors of effective MLE implementation. It means understanding that the development of learners' language skills is not the duty of only language teachers, namely in this case, not only the duty of the first language teachers or the Ukrainian language teachers. In the teaching process it means:

- integrated planning;
- unified teaching methodology;

- each teacher's plan to facilitate language use in their lessons.

The recommendations envisage:

- A clear vertical and horizontal alignment in the curriculum should be examined and ensured especially regarding possible instruction in several languages as well as content and language integrated instruction.
- Coordination and integration should be directed towards:
  - content integration (one topic for a week – repetition in various subjects should be avoided);
  - coordination and integration of learning skills and instructional strategies;
  - harmonisation of the curricula of languages – development of an integrated curriculum for languages which is based on the Council of Europe recommendations.
- Review of the intercultural aspect in teaching materials, i.e., whether minorities are represented.

### ***Support and Resources***

Observation provided information that in schools were used:

- Different visual materials, realia, movements and gestures, staging productions similar to the traditional verbal approach and promoting content comprehension;
- The terminology dictionaries from the national publishing house БукРек;
- School books published in countries of the ethnic origin (copied);
- A variety of materials developed and piloted by teachers themselves, and authors would like to publish these, but that requires support.

The recommendation is:

- To create multilingual work groups and develop teaching materials that would be useful and adaptable to multiple languages;
- To develop and publish multilingual (3-5 languages) illustrated dictionaries;
- To develop and publish terminology dictionaries orientated towards language functions rather than just a list of terms;
- To develop a unified lesson plan model that includes language teaching goals that are expressed as achievable results;

- (For the national pedagogical institute) to develop an integrated language acquisition plan;
- (For the school libraries) to acquire and maintain the selection of books in target languages;
- To make available (publish) teachers' created teaching and learning materials.

### **Assessment**

Assessment is one of the most important factors which provides information whether the innovations and reforms have been implemented or not and at what level. During the assessment it became clearly evident how much the teachers still relied on a teacher-centred approach. The specifics of a content-and-language-integrated-learning assessment is a mixture of formal and informal assessment; task-based and assignment-based; specific test times and classwork sampling. Learners should be familiar with the assessment measures and criteria of success. The criteria should be expressed in a student-friendly format. Content knowledge should be assessed using the simplest form of language and language assessed for a real purpose in a real context. Students should also take responsibility for self- and peer-assessment. During the

seminars teachers were recommended that scaffolding was not ‘cheating’ and assessment should take place in integrated learning, first – the assessment of what students ‘can do’ with support performance and only then – the assessment of what students ‘can do’ without support performance. The local expert shared the experience that self-evaluation did not need to be complicated but rather positively orientated: *What did you do well? What is the result of your good work? What did you forget?*

During the project it turned out that an important aspect concerning the assessment is the delicate handling and ownership of the results (Grigule & Gurbo, 2010). Mostly schools had the information in the aspect of initial situation, needs and motivation analysis, but lacked objective and comparative information on the levels of students’ languages.

The observation revealed:

- The increased role of parents – the responses from parents have to be used to assess the effectiveness of the programme, parents reported that children started using language, i.e., “my child corrects my language”;
- The application of diagnostic assessment – initial diagnostics of

language skills was carried out in a few schools prior to starting multilingual education piloting.

Developing the parents’ understanding of the usage and assessment of modern language skills is important to many different MLE aspects, but the assessment is especially significant. When considering the Ukrainian context it should be reminded that though the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (2011) developed by the European commission had been translated into Ukrainian, it had not been implemented in the schools’ language teaching practice.

### ***Staff Quality and Professional Development***

The following work organisation forms were mentioned and applied in the pilot project:

- Courses on learners’ native language acquisition for teachers;
- Study visits to countries of ethnic origin;
- Methodology courses in the respective countries;
- Cooperation with a teacher of the Ukrainian language – checking language accuracy in presentations.

As the leading motive for teachers' professional development could serve the statement by mentoring expert Malderez (2007) that teachers should not be content with their state of competence. In September, in courses in Kyiv the experts could hear the comments of the participants "I do not need help". To answer this the experts invited to focus on learners and their needs: "we are here to think how to help students".

Explaining the situation why students in preschool mostly learned poems by heart in the Ukrainian language, the preschool teacher stated that she herself did not feel safe to talk in Ukrainian, therefore she used poems as a reference of correct and literal language samples. In terms of the project it had been evaluated as a sensible solution. Although the teachers involved in the project are mostly multilingual, the chance to participate in the pilot project should be given to those teachers that are motivated for the career development.

Considering professional development the following principle should be introduced – the school administration plans teachers' long-term professional development (subject didactics, MLE methodology, State and national minority languages) according to MLE programme.

In the implementation of MLE, the emphasis should be put on team-based, school-based teachers' professional development – at regional level, MLE school consultants (multipliers) should be educated and teachers' initiative and cooperation development should be facilitated. Monitoring revealed that teachers lacked cooperation skills and experience to work in teams. In situations where schools plan to reallocate the number of lessons for subjects, i.e., maths – one lesson in a second language, four lessons in the mother tongue, teachers' cooperation skills become of the utmost importance to agree about the objectives of the school subject.

The development of the sample of integrated teaching and learning plans should become a task for the curriculum and assessment centre; development of the social and cooperation skills among teachers at the grade level particularly – one of the teacher education topics; social competence /cooperation skills – part of the teachers' standard.

Assessing a similar project in Georgia, teachers evaluated as the most valuable asset the project seminars where they had a chance to share their experience. This is the essence of the new pedagogy which is based on adult education principles – active,

reflective learning. Exchange of teachers', students' learning and teaching ideas and materials could also be advised.

Talking about effective forms of professional development Chachkhiani & Tabatadze (2010) state mentoring, teacher meetings to analyse the data; modelling lessons; team teaching; analysis of learning situations.

Based on the expertise the schools of the project were recommended to plan the teachers' professional development in accordance with MLE implementation plan. Taking into consideration research and observation data, an open and flexible plan

should be devised both for the whole school and the target groups. There should be differentiation for each teacher involved or planning to be involved in the MLE implementation organized in school years, i.e., Table 4.

The transferable experience of Latvia is to conduct lessons in team – subject and language professional, as well as the “loop input” methodology (Woodward, 1991) when teaching and learning methodologies is the content of the language course, respectively the learners learn teaching and learning methodology in the target language.

Table 4. Teacher's professional development plan (based on Grigule and Gurbo, 2010).

School Year s	Teacher's name, surname, personal code Language of instruction / working language Involvement in the MLE Teacher's present professional qualification	Professional development completed by September 15, 2016 (X if yes) (year, course code, hours)		Future plan of the professional development (X if needed)		
		Trainin g in the ... languag e	Training in the MLE methodol ogy	Subje ct didact ics	The MLE methodol ogy	Langu age didacti cs
<b>2016</b>						
<b>2017</b>						

The content of the future professional development should be flexible and open to new topics emerging from the teaching experience. To start with, the following topics should be considered:

**in subject didactics:** review of teaching materials according to intercultural education criteria;

**in the MLE methodology:** Cummin's (2000, 2001) theory on BICS (Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills) and CALP (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency/Academic Language Proficiency) and understanding of academic language, incorporating higher order thinking to prevent reproduction.

**in language didactics:** the concept of plurilingual competence, fluency and accuracy; attitude to language – dialect is treated as a problem while it should be considered within the richness of the languages, as well as how to educate parents on modern understanding of language skills and language assessment.

### ***Learning Environment and School as a Learning Community***

Some basic issues concerning the learning environment have been formulated in Latvia when introducing changes in the content of education, namely, an effective

learning environment is characterised (Gavrilina, 2004) by

- chance to participate according to one's abilities;
- chance to get feedback on one's achievements;
- being allowed to make mistakes;
- attaching no labels;
- shared accountability by a teacher and learners.

Learning is facilitated by a safe, fair and supportive learning environment. A safe environment means a feeling of belonging and appreciation. Learners should feel they belong to their school and their grade. Safety involves possibilities to express one's opinion, not being afraid of making mistakes or being punished for mistakes. The set requirements (tasks, rules, anticipated outcomes) should be clear.

A fair environment means that everybody has the same requirements and rules; assessment criteria are understandable; learners' achievements are not compared; no labels are put on learners, i.e., the students' evaluation does not depend on their status at school, behaviour, social environment etc.

A supportive environment means that everybody has a chance to work according to their abilities, they can get the necessary help and support. They are encouraged to

show their best performance and get corresponding evaluation. A positive environment is a precondition for facilitating learner autonomy which leads to motivated and successful learning.

### **Conclusion**

The implementation of MLE is about the change of the education paradigm in correlation with socio-political processes and concerning stakeholders at all levels. At international level Ukraine is gradually becoming aware of the need for multicultural policies. This process is facilitated both: from inside and outside. Partly this process is being stimulated by their own policies to build relations and the become members of Western organizations, such as the NATO, and the European Union. From outside Ukraine has been „required” to formulate minority policies in terms of Western values of pluralism, human rights, and tolerance, as well as cultural and linguistic diversity by such organizations as the OSCE/HCNM, and The Council of Europe. The High Commissioner on national Minorities Astrid Thors (2015: <http://www.osce.org>) urges “the Ukrainian government to significantly strengthen the institutional framework for minority policy and to ensure adequate consultation with minority communities in

the course of the reforms”. While it has been noted that it is not easy to carry out comprehensive reforms during a profound security and economic crisis, the authorities have been also reminded that the reforms should respect European standards regarding the protection and promotion of minority cultures and languages, and the participation of minorities in public life.

At national, state and regional level, it is connected with the gap between MLE management and methodological support in the decentralisation context of the Ukrainian regional reform.

At the level of community and parents, there are the decisions on the choice of the learning language. Currently the parents ground their choice of language for learning on the argument “whether they will be able to help their children with homework”. If at MICRO – classroom level the teaching is to be changed, it should guide the decision-making process of the formulation and awareness of multilingual education goal oriented towards a sustainable education and sharing individual and social objectives.

Already in the first school, there were comments: “the main thing is to get a positive result” and then they repeated again and again. The rhetoric question is – what is the expected outcome?

The textbooks on strategic management often refer to the scene in Lewis Carroll's "Alice in Wonderland" where Alice asks the Cheshire cat which way she should go. The cat replies that it largely depends on where she wants to get. If it does not matter where one wants to get, then it makes little difference which way to go. The teams of schools and each individual teacher should be able to answer: *what do I do? why do I do this?*

Answering the question of how the effectiveness of the programme will be measured, such factors as the career, higher education, the opportunity to study at the universities of the ethnic homeland, the popularity of school, language prestige (the language which is taught at school), strengthening the national language are mentioned. Attention should be paid to the social markers – the change of social practice in the community.

It is recommended to think and formulate the aims and expected outcomes at different levels of social participation – individual, community, state; at different time scales: long, medium, short-term: both future career, as well as here and now (an interesting lesson) and opportunities at attitude level.

Both researchers and non-governmental organization leaders

analytically evaluate the impact and opportunities international consultants can bring to development cooperation. However, there are also challenges for international cooperation: in the Ukraine a non-governmental organization representative said that international consultants "see the Ukraine through the window of the Merriott Hotel". Columbia University Professor Gita Steiner-Khamsi has said that "The best international consultant's work is the one that strengthens and develops local partners so that your own involvement is no longer necessary" (Grigule, 2014).

Consequently, the most appreciated involvement of Latvian NGO LACE could be seen as the application of DILL's approach – the mastery to create and ask questions that should be considered as an important step to transform the Latvian multilingual and intercultural education experience into flourishing Europe.

### ***Family and Community Involvement:***

What signs do the parents take into account to evaluate their child's language acquisition? What is the evidence of this? How should I take it into account and deal with it?

How do the parents show interest and initiative in language learning?

How can I encourage parents' involvement?

What kind of help do I expect from the parents?

***Multilingual Education Programme Structure and Management:***

What MLE cooperation model is used in our school?

What else, apart from material resources, is still needed to create favourable conditions for learning?

Can learners see themselves, their community, their culture in textbooks?

Where is my place in the school's multilingual education cooperation model?

How knowledgeable are students, families and communities about the multilingual education and can they advocate on its behalf?

***Curriculum and Instruction:***

What has changed in my way of lesson planning and teaching?

What methodological approaches do I deliberately use in bilingual teaching?

What motivates the students' learning in bilingual lessons, what makes learning active, what holds the students' activity?

How do I explicitly develop the students' understanding of multilingualism?

How do I develop the students' learning skills and plurilingual competence?

Can I reflect on and value students' culture?

How do I adjust the compulsory education curriculum considering students ethno-cultural identity and cross-cultural experiences?

How do I manage to give assignments that are meaningful, academically challenging and integrates higher order thinking?

What motivates students' learning in bilingual lessons, what makes learning active, what holds students' activity?

***Support and Resources:***

What are my students learning with?

Who are they learning with?

What variety of (authentic, visual and hands-on) materials and technologies do I incorporate in my lessons?

What kind of support do we will get to the programme from the community, the Ministry of Education and regional Board of Education?

***Assessment:***

Are we testing the results accurately interpreted and disseminated to appropriate audiences in a delicate way?

Do I get a full contextual account of the students' language skills involving the parents, students themselves, teachers, and staff?

How do I develop students' skills of working independently and test taking practice?

Why are students learning? Toward which goals are my students learning?

Is teaching at school enriching not remedial?

***Staff Quality and Professional Development:***

What will I say to explain the process of multilingual education to someone?

What has changed in my way of lesson planning and teaching in connection with the MLE?

What methodological approaches (scaffolding) do I deliberately use in multilingual teaching?

How do I conduct teacher research to reflect on instructional strengths and shortcomings?

How much time do I have to examine my own beliefs and practices in the light of theory and the school's vision and goals?

How are the assessment data used / should be used as – a topic for the professional development of teachers, administrators and parents?

***Learning Environment, and School as a Learning Community:***

What would we write on the signpost leading to our school?

Is the multilingual education a permanent and enriching part of the school and region?

What causes and maintains a welcoming school environment for parents and community?

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