

Press release 1: General public

Martina teaches 24 girls and boys at a Primary school in Graz. Some of them were born in Morocco, one girl is from Finland, two of them can speak Spanish, the mother of one of the boys speaks Hindi but can also speak German fluently. The school shares the curriculum with all the other schools in town but in the corridors you can hear many different languages.

Schools today face new challenges: stronger demands on every students' knowledge and competences, new students from different parts of the world, new languages at the playground and the classroom,... Teachers are adapting themselves and their teaching practice to these social changes so as to meet their students' needs efficiently.

ConBat +, a project supported by the ECML from 2008 to 2011, aims at empowering teachers in this new situation. The project begins by making teachers aware of diversity; the participants will then create quality teaching materials that will have an impact on language teaching and the school curriculum.

Together with the coordinating team and a Canadian expert, Dr. Peter D. MacIntyre, 29 participants from all over Europe gathered at the ECML premises to develop resources and materials to teach the school subjects through a number of languages; the conclusions of this workshop, together with their work piloting and evaluating these resources and materials during the following years will be issued in a final publication by 2011. Thus, Martina can teach in German and at the same time she will give a voice to other languages and cultures. The desired outcomes of this new way of teaching are better attitudes, understanding and the improvement of school results.

Press release 2: Specialized Reader

Schools today face new challenges: stronger demands on every students' knowledge and competences, new students from different parts of the world, new languages at the playground and the classroom,... Teachers are adapting themselves and their teaching practice to these social changes so as to meet their students' needs efficiently.

Two of the most important lines of development in language teaching in Europe are Plurilingualism and the Content-based Approach. The first one has made us aware of linguistic and cultural diversity; the second one has proved not only that academic content and languages can be taught together but that learning results improve as a consequence.

ConBat +, a project supported by the ECML from 2008 to 2011, aims at merging these two lines of development. The project begins by making teachers aware of diversity; the participants will then create quality teaching materials that will have an impact on language teaching and the school curriculum.

Together with the coordinating team and the Canadian expert, Dr. Peter D. MacIntyre, 29 participants from all over Europe gathered at the ECML premises to analyze how to teach the school contents through a number of languages. During this four-year process, resources and materials will be created, piloted and evaluated in actual schools. The feedback obtained in the different national contexts will help to revise the materials and establish general principles, which will be conveyed through a final publication at the end of the project.