



Multilingual Early Language Transmission MELT Project

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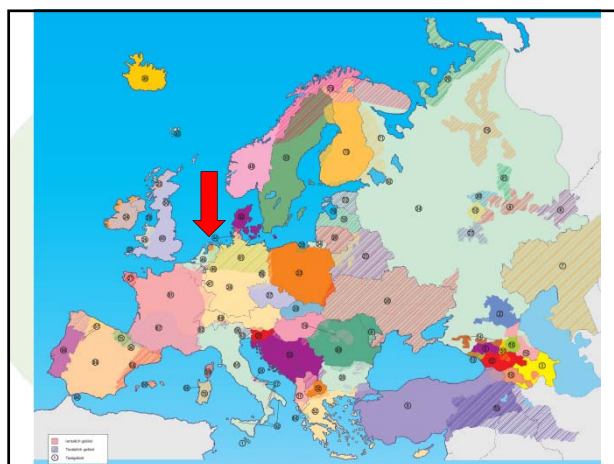
1st Hellenic Conference on Early Language Learning
Athens, 14-16 June, 2013

FRYSKE AKADEMY



Presentation overview

1. Background
 - Fryslân
 - Mercator Research Centre on Multilingualism and Language Learning
 - Education in Fryslân
2. The MELT project (Multilingual Early Language Transmission)

Well-known outside Fryslân





Mercator European Research Centre on Multilingualism and Language Learning

- Platform in Europe and beyond
- Background in Regional and Minority Languages
- Information/documentation and Research Centre
- Funded by the Province of Fryslân and the municipality of Ljouwert/Leeuwarden
- Co-operation with the Basque country



European Networks

- Mercator Network of Language Diversity Centres
- EUNoM: The European Universities' Network on Multilingualism
- Civil Society Platform on Multilingualism (Poliglotti4.eu)
- Network to Promote Linguistic Diversity



Mercator's activities

- Research
- Publications & databases
- Network of Schools
- Conferences & seminars
- Projects
- Q&A service



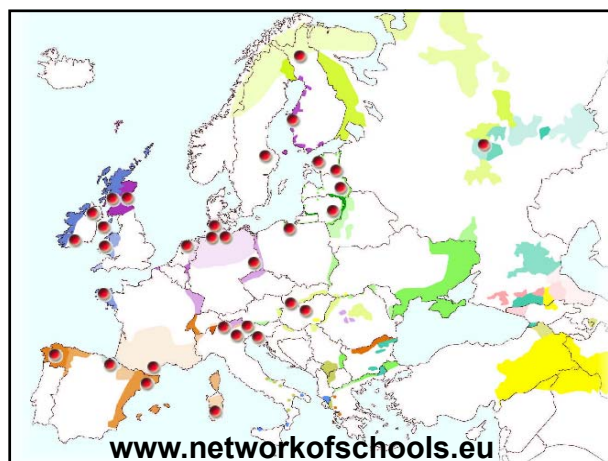
Fields of Research

- Early Language Learning
- Language Survey Fryslân
- Trends in Policies and Practices for Multilingualism in Europe (LRE)
- New technologies; E-learning & Social media
- Application of the CEFR and the ELP in Europe
- Informal learning and promotion of reading in families & households



Publications

- Research reports
- Articles
- Newsletters
- Regional dossiers series
 - > 40 language descriptions
 - Update every 5-8 years
 - Online available



Events in 2013

- January 25: Symposium 75th anniversary of the Fryske Akademy and 25th anniversary Mercator
- March 1: Workshop on results LRE in Fryslân
- June 17: Pre-conference Multilingualism and Multiculturalism, London, co-organised with SOAS
- October 23 – 25: European Expert Seminar on the cultural dimension in school curricula



Education in Fryslân



Trilingual education in Fryslân (1)



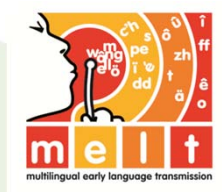
- **Model used:**
 - Group 1-6: 50 % Frisian, 50 % Dutch
 - Group 7-8: 40 % Frisian, 40 % Dutch, 20% English
- **Systematic use of Frisian, Dutch and English as a medium of instruction.**
- **Interactive language education**



Trilingual education in Fryslân (2)



- **Results:**
 - Good quality of Frisian
 - Results of Dutch at the same level at the end of grade 8 as all other pupils in the Netherlands
 - Results for English slightly better, but not significantly



Multilingual Early Language Transmission

MELT Project

Comenius- LLP, 2009-2012

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1. MELT project partners

- Mercator Research Centre on Multilingualism and Language Learning/ Fryske Akademy (Fryslân, Netherlands)
- Folkhälsan (Swedish community, Finland)
- Welsh Language Board (Wales, UK)
- Divskouarn and Conseil Régional du Bretagne (Brittany, France)

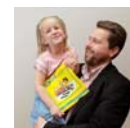


2. MELT target groups

The promotion of regional and minority languages from an early age is crucial for the long term future of those languages, particularly in an age of ever increasing globalisation.

Children aged 0 - 4 years in minority language settings

- Parents, families and peers
- Pre-school practitioners
- Policymakers, local and regional authorities



2. MELT goals

- 1) Development of pre-school teaching methodology.
- 2) Encouraging practitioners on how to immerse children in the minority language.
- 3) Increase of parents' awareness about multilingualism.
- 4) Raise awareness of policymakers across Europe.



3. MELT Products

- Products:
 - Brochure for parents
 - Guide for pre-school practitioners
 - Research paper
 - Local awareness raising events
 - Closing conference

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I. MELT product: Brochure for parents

Multilingualism in everyday life

Bilingual brochures translated in eight languages:

- Frisian-Dutch
- Welsh-English
- Swedish-Finnish
- Breton-French
- Arabic, Portuguese, Turkish, German, Low- German



II. MELT product: Guide for pre-school practitioners

- Implemented in 40 pre-school provisions in four regions
- Tested and evaluated by 120 practitioners and their mentors

The MELT Guide:

provides ideas → a supportive and rich language environment → language agreements in pre-school provisions → children's multilingual development in the pre-school age



II. MELT product: Guide for pre-school practitioners

- Adults as linguistic role models
- Interaction
- Observing and recording
- Collaboration with (grand) parents
- Working with themes and concrete materials



II. MELT product: Guide for pre-school practitioners



Using a 'minority character'



Story box- telling;
For example, the book:
'The Very Hungry Caterpillar'

Goals of those activities:

- Identification
- Methodology of story telling
- Immersion
- Interaction
- Increase vocabulary



III. MELT Research paper



Summary of relevant literature on early multilingual learning, related to European smaller state and regional & minority language communities

(2011, Bangma I. & Riemersma A.M.J.
www.mercator-research.eu)



5. Model: Conditions for a continuous multilingual development

(based on the models from Baker (2000), De Houwer (2009), Grosjean (2010), and MELT experiences).

A natural development, in a playful and conscious way, during the different developmental stages becoming an adult.

The need for language:
- to communicate with family and relatives;
- to take part in pre-school activities;
- to interact with others in the social environment;
- to watch television, playing, hobbies etc.

The factors:
- quality and varied language input;
- role of the family in the multilingual setting;
- role of the school and community;
- positive attitudes towards minority language.

The strategy of multilingual raising appropriate to the family situation and the language community.

A multilingual person

6. Some best practices

- Thematic and project manner
- Concrete materials; such as storybox telling, character approach
- Total immersion or two-way immersion
- One person-one language strategy
- Collaboration with (grand-/god) parents
- Parent and toddler groups
- Bachelor's degree



7. EU policy on Early multilingualism

- **It is the right of every child to become literate in their true mother tongue**, as declared in the Universal Declaration of Children's Rights.
- The European Commission released a Staff Working Paper within the Strategic Framework for Education and Training (ET 2020): **Language Learning at Pre-primary school level: Making it efficient and sustainable.**
- One of the four strategic objectives of the EU program Education and Training 2020: **improving the quality and efficiency of education and training.**



7. EU policy recommendations based on best practices of the four regions



- Necessary to draft a **conscious language policy** about multilingualism and immersion into the minority language
- Requires **good skills** of the pre-school practitioners, coached by mentors.
- To offer a **rich language environment**, including enough input in the minority language.



8. Future challenges:



- Promotion of Early Linguistic diversity and multilingualism (including migrant languages, regional and minority languages)
- Continuity from pre-school to secondary education.
- Training of pre-school practitioners.
- Dissemination: Best practices of the four MELT regions applied in different minority regions in Europe (in a digital and social media environment)



Thank you

γευχαριστώ

Nvala lepa

Köszönöm

Tige tank

• Eskerrik asko

• Mercé plan

• Graciis

• Diolch

• Hvala

• Trugarez

• Spassi Ba

• Multumesc

• Džakuju so

• Mange Takk



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