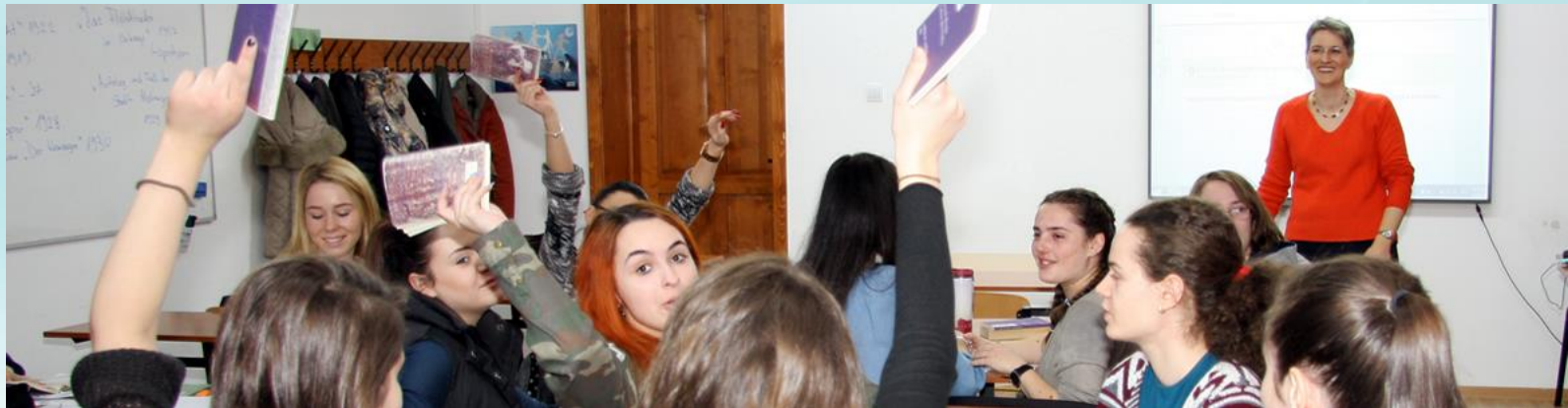


## Enhancing language teaching through Action research communities for language teachers

Angela Gallagher-Brett & Christine Lechner

CARN CONFERENCE 2017



[www.ecml.at/actionresearch](http://www.ecml.at/actionresearch)



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## Project aims

- To make techniques for action research widely available to language teachers through the establishment of a community of practice
- To strengthen professional networks by linking academic expertise on action research & good practice in the language classroom
- To contribute to improvements in language education by giving teachers across Europe better access to action research
- To enable teachers to reflect on practice & to propose & test innovations within a community of practice



## Project objectives

- To design action research tools which help to improve the quality of teaching & foster dialogue between teachers in different sectors
- To demonstrate how research can feed into practice & practice into research
- To show how undertaking action research is beneficial to teachers & learners
- To create European models for peer learning activities which can be implemented at school/national level



## Project team

**Christine Lechner**, Pädagogische Hochschule Tirol

- Co-ordinator

**Brynhildur Ragnarsdóttir**, Language Centre, Reykjavik

- Web-site correspondent

**Angela Gallagher-Brett**, SOAS, University of London

- Communications person

**Tita Mihaiu**, [Centrul pentru formarea continuă în limba germană \(CPD\)](#)

- Second language documentalist





## Project team

### Associate partners

**Renata Zanin**, University of Bolzano

- Teacher educator

**Jim Murphy** - CALL expert from Newfoundland

**Anita Konrad**, Pädagogische Hochschule Tirol

- German specialist

**Melanie Steiner**, Pädagogische Hochschule Tirol

- German Specialist

**Marianne Jacquin**, Teacher training institute (IUFE),  
University of Geneva



# Project first steps

- Networking & discussions at regional levels of partners
- First workshop during International Week at Pedagogical University Tirol
- Action Research Workshop for German teachers in Sibiu / Hermannstadt October 2016
- Action Research Workshop in Graz November 2016



## Sibiu / Hermannstadt template for 3-day Action research workshop : Day 1

Getting into action research	Content-pack	Aims
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opening &amp; introductions</li> <li>Activity finding out what we have in common</li> </ul>	<b>Learning about target-language country culture</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Austria</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To open up to working together, challenging ideas and developing teaching</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What do I already know about the theme?</li> </ul>	<b>Getting into the theme</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do we all have the same ideas when we think of Austria?</li> <li>How to be an Austrian?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To clarify that there are different approaches to a topic &amp; different ideas</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analytic discourse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Posters on teaching about the target language country: my status quo</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To get to know each other &amp; to demonstrate an action research tool</li> <li>To show that discussions about teaching aren't always critical, comparative...</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>From analytic discourse to perspectives on themes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Current (opposing) trends in cultural studies &amp; intercultural learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To bring the strands together</li> <li>To demonstrate a feedback cycle</li> </ul>



## Sibiu / Hermannstadt template for 3-day Action research workshop: Day 2

Getting into action research	Content-pack	Aims
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Welcome &amp; arrival activity</li> <li>Different ideas &amp; perspectives</li> <li>Comments on feedback from Day 1 &amp; procedures for Days 2 &amp; 3</li> </ul>	<p>True or not true?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Which of three stories is not an Austrian story?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To bring group back together</li> <li>To continue with multi-perspective thinking</li> <li>To demonstrate taking feedback on board</li> </ul>
Some ideas about action research		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To provide a theoretical framework</li> </ul>
	<p>Input on theme in form of islands</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aspects of life in Austria</li> <li>Regions</li> <li>Literature from Austria</li> <li>My life in my environment</li> <li>Thinking about stereotypes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To provide content for development of joint lessons</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finding themes &amp; groups for lesson development</li> <li>Short evaluation: The Wailing Wall</li> </ul>	<p>Which materials provided were useful?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To ensure that joint planning will work in a concrete way</li> <li>To demonstrate a feedback cycle</li> </ul>





## Sibiu / Hermannstadt template for 3-day Action research workshop: Day 3

Getting into action research	Content-pack	Aims
<b>Welcome &amp; comments on evaluation</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To bring group back together</li> <li>To demonstrate taking feedback on board</li> </ul>
<b>Ideas on joint planning</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Group diamond activity to find a common vision</li> </ul>	<b>Our vision for good lessons about the cultures of target-language countries</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To open up ideas for joint planning/ joint visions</li> </ul>
<b>Developing a lesson together</b>	<b>Lessons on the culture of a target-language country</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To put joint planning/ joint visions into practice</li> </ul>
<b>Presentations &amp; conclusions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“What is different now?”</li> <li>Expectations how the lesson will work in the different classes</li> <li>Clarifying reports</li> <li>Official written evaluation &amp; paper-ball evaluation</li> </ul>	<b>Lesson formats on the culture of a target-language country</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To stimulate interest for the work of others</li> <li>To demonstrate a feedback cycle</li> </ul>





## Graz workshop participants



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# Graz workshop: our languages tree

- **Tree representing the languages spoken by workshop participants**



## Graz workshop mini-projects: research topics

- Does an explicit focus on critical thinking skills in our lesson planning and instruction enable students to engage in critical thinking? Participating countries: [Albania, Netherlands, Malta, Latvia](#)
- How can pupils' language skills be enhanced by using news media and Facebook sharing in language teaching? [Croatia, Iceland](#)
- Breaking barriers: Can we identify barriers for professional learning English as a second language at university level? [Armenia, France](#)
- What is the role of the teacher in university student-centred activities? [Finland, France](#)
- How does teaching vocabulary learning strategies contribute to learner autonomy in CLIL & MFL classrooms? [Ireland](#)
- Wie kann erreicht werden, dass die Kinder im Unterricht in der Zielsprache Deutsch sprechen? [Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Romania](#)



## Graz workshop mini-projects: research topics

- Using the European Portfolio of Student Teachers of Languages ([EPOSTL](#)) as a self-reflection tool for improving pre- and in-service teachers' competences. [Bosnia and Herzegovina, Estonia, Greece](#)
- Challenges of CLIL teachers  
Intercultural competences through a student- based project. [Czech Republic, Poland](#)
- CLIL in secondary vocational schools seen through students' perspectives. „[The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia](#)“, [Serbia](#)
- Intercultural competences through a student-based project. [Austria, Denmark, Montenegro](#)
- The teacher as co-constructor of knowledge. [Bulgaria, Switzerland, Germany, Norway, Slovenia](#)





## Workshop Follow-up

- Collaborative action research projects developed and carried out by workshop participants
- Dialogue throughout the year between teams and ARC co-ordinator
- Abstracts published on project web-page:  
<http://www.ecml.at/ECML-Programme/Programme2016-2019/Professionallearningcommunities/Results/tabid/3040/language/en-GB/Default.aspx>
- Full project reports shared on a Padlet wall



## Next steps

- Project team is working on a tool for teachers of languages
- Action research projects continuing
- Network meeting being prepared where projects will be shared and tools will be trialled



# Action research communities for language teachers

ECML PROJECT 201



## Action research communities for language teachers

### Steps

**START** your lesson planning by thinking about & reflecting on several areas of focus.  
**RECORD** your thinking & make this an explicit aspect of your planning.

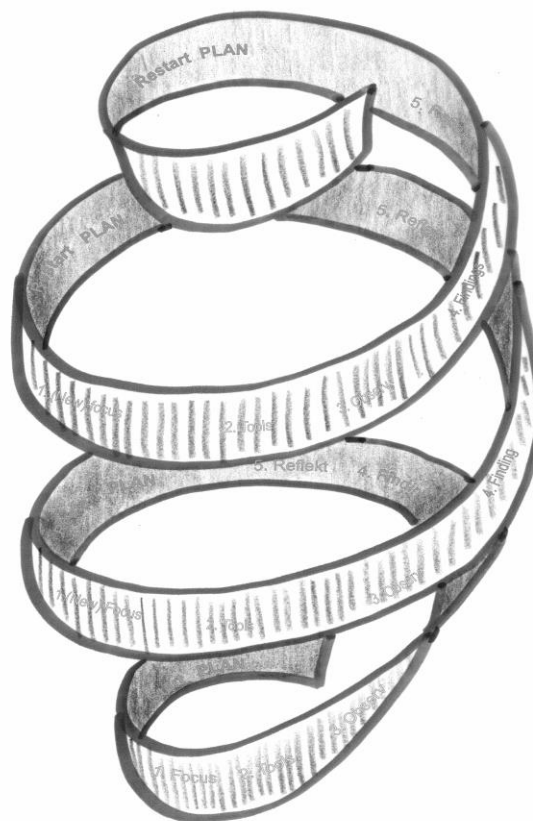
1. **DEFINE** your focus/foci in a question format for your action research, **your** practice and **your** role in this process.

2. **CHOOSE** the appropriate action research tools for each focus. See list.

3. **OBSERVE** what is going on in your classroom whilst thinking about your action research focus. Be open to what you find & be prepared to readjust your focus.

4. **PRESENT** your findings so others can understand and describe in detail what you have discovered.

5. **ANALYSE** and **INTERPRETE** your findings: What do your findings mean? What are the implications for your practice? Based on your findings & reflections, readjust your focus or choose a new one.



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- EU Project on Quality (dialogue sheets in English, German, French & Spanish) <http://www.lanqua.eu/speaq-project/>







## Project website

Action research communities for language teachers

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