

Empowering Students and Raising Critical Language Awareness Through a Collaborative Multidisciplinary Project



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Abstract This chapter presents the implementation and findings of a participatory research project about a local linguistic landscape project, with a lower secondary school class (children aged 13–14) in the East of France. The project involved teachers from a range of disciplines (French, Physical Education, History/Geography, Regional Language and Culture) who collaborated to develop a pluridisciplinary project focussing on the linguistic landscapes present in the school and local town. The project aimed at raising children’s knowledge about language(s) through a process which placed them at the centre as key actors and decision-makers. The chapter details the ways in which teachers were able to leverage children’s home languages and raise their critical language awareness through different pedagogical activities across the different disciplines. Some examples include creating language biographies (French), and participating in a linguistic landscape photo marathon in the town (P.E.). Based on data collected (observations and recordings of classroom activities, interviews with teachers and other educational actors and students’ written contributions), we analyse the pedagogical value of this project through the lens of concepts such as “plurilingual and pluricultural competence” (Coste et al., *Plurilingual and pluricultural competence*. Council of Europe, Strasbourg, 2009), “funds of knowledge” (González et al., *Funds of knowledge: Theorizing practices in households, communities, and classrooms*. Routledge, 2005) and “educational partnerships” (Cummins, *Language power and pedagogy: bilingual children in the crossfire*. *Multilingual Matters*, 2000). We discuss how such a project can contribute to the construction of “interpersonal spaces of reciprocal empowerment between

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teachers and students” (Cummins, Pedagogies of powerful communication: enabling minoritized students to express, expand, and project identities of competence, 2021, p. 284).

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1 Introduction

1.1 *Context of the Project*

In this chapter, we present and discuss the implementation of the LoCALL project in France in partnership with Collège Henri Meck (lower secondary school) in Molsheim, a small town of approximately 10,000 inhabitants, situated 25 kms from the city of Strasbourg near the French-German border. The diverse population of Molsheim includes inhabitants from the Alsace region and other regions of France as well as from border countries (e.g. Germany, Switzerland), different European countries (Poland, Italy, Spain, Portugal) and various countries outside Europe (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Turkey, Brazil, China) (INSEE, 2018a). The percentage of the population with a migration background represents 9.6% of the total population (INSEE, 2018b). The historical and geographical context of Molsheim contributes to its distinct local (small town) and regional (strong Alsatian culture and identity) dimensions, alongside its European and international dimensions. The town of Molsheim was chosen for the implementation of the LoCALL project in France for several reasons. Firstly, as previously mentioned, the town contains a diverse population speaking a large variety of languages. This can be observed in the linguistic landscape of the town as well as among the student population of the school selected. Secondly, one of the co-authors of this chapter, Sonia Cadi, a French teacher at Collège Henri Meck had expressed a strong interest in being part of the LoCALL project. In addition to the motivation and enthusiasm which she also transmitted to her students and colleagues, Sonia also holds a Master’s degree in Sociolinguistics which provided her with appropriate and valuable knowledge when designing the pedagogical framework of the project together with the other members of the team from the University of Strasbourg’s School of Education and Lifelong Learning (INSPE). During the 2020–2021 school year our team of researchers worked with Sonia’s class of 13–14 year olds (N = 28). As the project progressed, teachers of other disciplines (Physical Education, History/Geography, Regional Language and Culture), as well as other students and school staff from various services (canteen, administration, maintenance) also became involved in the project in a variety of ways.

1.2 *Theoretical Framework and Project Aims*

Many scholars in the field of bi-plurilingualism have argued that schools need to not only recognise and value the linguistic and cultural diversity of their pupils but that they also need to engage them in critical reflection on the role and place of languages in their local environment and school, and in society as a whole (Gage, 2020; García, 2017; Van Mensel & Hélot, 2019). One of the aims of the LoCALL project was indeed to encourage discussions:

On language presence, roles and dynamics in broader social contexts, acknowledging languages and the linguistic resources that young people have at their disposal and promoting their integration in teaching practices.¹

The French implementation of the project aimed therefore to raise pupils' and teachers' awareness of the linguistic and cultural diversity in their environment (school, homes, town) and to develop their knowledge of the notion of plurilingual and pluricultural competence (Coste et al., 2009; Galante, 2020) through the exploration of local linguistic landscapes as a pedagogical tool. (Hancock and Hancock, 2021). Plurilingual and pluricultural competence has been described in the following way as:

A more flexible definition of plurilingualism, capable of conveying the diversity of individual situations spread out over a multi-dimensional, dynamic and evolving set of continuous variations. Plurilingualism does not describe fixed competences. Individuals develop competences in a number of languages from desire or necessity, in order to meet the need to communicate with others. Plurilingualism is constructed as individuals pursue their lives, it is a reflection of their social path (Coste et al., 2009, p. 17).

Despite the presence of rich linguistic diversity in schools in France and in educational systems around the world, pupils' competences in languages other than the language of schooling and/or languages taught as part of the curriculum are often ignored or even seen as a hinderance to their progress in the language of schooling (Agirdag, 2014; Cummins, 2000). The monolingual direction taken by many schools often deprives pupils and the entire educational community of a school of opportunities for developing plurilingual competences and expanding knowledge of the various languages present in schools and pupils' environments outside school. Investigating the linguistic landscapes present in pupils' lives, whether these be on a personal or public level, allows educators to open the doors to greater understanding on the part of school communities of the rich resources already present in pupils' lives and to develop all pupils' plurilingual competences. Investigating linguistic landscapes also allows students and educational staff members to become aware of some of the (hidden) language ideologies present in society, possibly leading them to challenge these on a grass roots and/or institutional level at some point down the road (Gorter, 2013; Gorter, 2018; Krompak et al., 2021; Malinowski et al., 2020).

Moreover, the project was constructed as a participatory action research project (Genat, 2009; Braye & McDonnell, 2012; Welikala & Atkin, 2014; Gibson et al.,

¹ <https://localproject.eu/theproject/>.

2017), attributing an important place to students' expressions of their personalities and identities through their agency and empowerment (Cummins, 2021) and encouraging their identity engagement (Cummins et al., 2005). In fact, students became not only participants, but active researchers themselves in the project through suggesting ideas, taking initiatives, working in pairs, in groups, encouraging other students and school staff to take part in the project, and developing creative activities in different disciplines.

Taking into account this engagement of the students in the project, we can argue that beyond awareness raising of linguistic and cultural diversity, students also developed knowledge, skills and competences through the interdisciplinary and interactional dimensions of the project progression.

Including pupils in the research process allowed them to draw on their “funds of knowledge” (González et al., 2005; Vélez-Ibáñez & Greenberg, 1992) and created opportunities to foster “educational partnerships” (Cummins, 2000) between the research team, pupils, teachers and families. By drawing on pupils' funds of knowledge we acknowledged and valued not only the knowledge that pupils had acquired at school, but also the wealth of complex social and cultural knowledge, skills, assets and competences that they had or were to acquire at home, in their everyday lives. We have also analysed to what extent these funds of knowledge, in particular those relating to family languages and cultures, are perceived or not as legitimate, educational resources by teachers (González et al., 2005; Vélez-Ibáñez & Greenberg, 1992). In this chapter we demonstrate how a pedagogical project on linguistic landscapes can encourage the legitimisation of these “funds of knowledge” by students and teachers. Much as Young and Hélot found in their project involving collaboration and shared learning experiences between parents, teachers and pupils, we were also attentive to ‘maintaining a fine balance of power to the benefit of all and not an imbalance of power in favour of the professionals’ (Young & Hélot, 2007, p. 27).

2 Implementation of the Project and Methodological Approach

Collaboration between Henri Meck lower secondary school and the LoCALL French research team began in 2019. During the academic year 2019–2020 the European project was outlined and the main objectives of the project were explained to the school administrators and teachers of various disciplines who had expressed interest in participating in the project. During one formal meeting and several informal meetings and exchanges of correspondence between researchers and teaching staff, ideas about how to implement the project in the school and in which pupils and staff would participate were discussed. Once the participating class of pupils was chosen, a basic framework of class activities was agreed upon and served as a springboard for the first year of the project's implementation in the 2020–2021 school year. Due to health regulations in the context of the COVID 19 pandemic, the teacher was present with

students in class, but the three researchers from the University of Strasbourg were only able to participate in the sessions through videoconference. It was only at the very end of the 2020–2021 school year that the researchers were granted permission to physically access the classroom. In addition to bi-monthly class sessions, pupils also participated in the project outside class time through carrying out independent work set by their teachers.

Throughout the implementation of the project, rich and varied data were collected, including: fieldnotes, audio recordings of classroom exchanges and student interviews (>100), videoconference recordings from the classroom and online training week, photographs and student productions such as language biographies. Examples of activities carried out by students and teachers are included in Table 1 and subsequently described.

- *Language biographies* (during French classes)

Students were first provided with explanations and some examples of creative representations of language biographies (e.g. in the form of a person, a flower, a map with the languages spoken, written, read, heard by the individual, the languages s/he would like to learn/learn more about, the emotions associated with these languages and their role in the life of the individual). Very quickly students appropriated the task and imagined new forms of language biographies, connected to their personalities (a trumpet, a plane, a cooking pot, a hand etc.) (Fig. 1).

- *Family migration histories* (History and Geography classes)

Table 1 Implementation of LoCALL project activities at Collège Henri Meck Molsheim

Activity	Dates
Language biographies	January 2021
Family migration histories	March 2021
Whole school interviews	March–April 2021
Plurilingual sports session	May 2021
Preparation of the linguistic pathway in Molsheim	May 2021
Presentation in the training week	June 2021

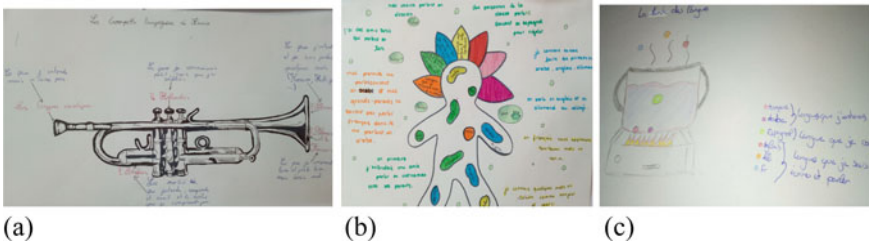


Fig. 1 Different forms of students’ language biographies: **a** trumpet **b** mannele **c** cooking pot

Students interviewed their families to uncover family migration stories and then presented the results in the form of collages including photographs, drawings and text explanations.

- *Whole school interviews* (prepared with the French teacher)

After discussing their own language biographies and migration stories, students also wanted to discuss these issues and learn about other people in the school. Therefore, they prepared an interview guide and conducted interviews with approximately 100 people in the school (other students, teachers, administrative staff, support and technical staff). They demonstrated initiative, courage and ability to work independently as they made the most of the opportunity to arrange to meet and interview people from the school that they did not know very well (for example, in addition to teachers who taught their class, they also interviewed other teachers with whom they did not have classes).

- *Plurilingual sports session* (Physical Education classes)

For the international LoCALL project online training week, students recorded an online sports session where they gave the names and explanations of sports exercises in different languages (the languages that they speak at home and the ones they learn at school).

- *Preparation of a pathway through the linguistic landscape of Molsheim*² (Fig. 2) (prepared with the French and P.E. teacher)

Students chose points of interests in the linguistic landscape of Molsheim and created questions relating to these points of interest, such as “Why is the name of a street written in two different languages? The language next to French, is it German or Alsatian? Does the writing in French and Alsatian mean the same thing?”

In order to value the students’ contribution to the project, the Henri Meck School and its linguistic and cultural diversity is presented as the first point of interest of the pathway (Fig. 2).

- *Presentation of the students’ contribution to the project at the third LoCALL international online training week* (prepared with the French teacher)

In the framework of the LoCALL project, every six months a different partner team organized a training week to share the project development and exchange with participants from different linguistic, cultural, social and professional backgrounds. The third LoCALL online training week was organized by the French team and took place from 31st May to 4th June 2021. The presentation of the project and of the activities undertaken by the students of Collège Henri Meck was one of the high points of the week-long program. Using different languages, students presented their work, their learning and were very active and keen to answer participants’ questions and to exchange with them.

² Pathway available in English and French in the LoCALL App: localproject.web.ua.pt/LoCALL.apk (chose “play” – “Strasbourg” – “Welcome to Molsheim”).



Fig. 2 General overview of the linguistic pathway created by Collège Henri Meck students in 2021

In order to understand the approach of the project and its possible pedagogical impact, it is crucial to mention that it was conducted as a “participatory action research” project (Braye & McDonnell, 2012; Genat, 2009; Gibson et al., 2017; Nind, 2011; Welikala & Atkin, 2014). A twofold reason motivated this choice of approach. Firstly, from a research methodology and data analysis perspective, following the work of Genat (2009), Gibson et al. (2017) and Welikala and Atkin (2014), the team wished to “engage with participants on an equal platform, or as equal as is possible, to enable the views and stories of those being researched to be heard clearly and without re- or mis-interpretation by the researchers” (Gibson et al., 2017, p. 110). Secondly, inspired by the work of Cummins et al. (2005) and Cummins and Early (2011), we consider that it is by sharing this particular space with students that they “will engage academically to the extent that instruction affirms their identities and enables them to invest their identities in learning” (Cummins et al., 2005, p. 41). In addition, our overarching aim for the project was to empower students and teachers and create opportunities for them to develop new knowledge, competences and skills. We will illustrate these aspects with examples in the following section.

3 Project Outcomes and Findings

As mentioned in the previous sections, students demonstrated ownership of the project from the very outset and during the initial activities, becoming not only beneficiaries, but active participants and co-constructors of the project and its pedagogical program. As a result of their personal implication in the project, their learning rapidly not only met the first objective of the project, raising awareness of linguistic and cultural diversity within the local environment, but went beyond it. Students learned a great deal about themselves, their classmates, and other people in the school as well as details of their own family history. We present examples of the acquired knowledge and skills below, revisiting the concepts previously defined in the theoretical framework section and grouping the data under three of the themes which have emerged from the data collected so far.

3.1 *Development of Plurilingual and Pluricultural Competences*

Through the creation of their own language biographies and the survey they conducted with their families and within the school, students identified more than 23 languages spoken in their class and more than 30 languages spoken by people on their school campus (lower Collège and upper Lycée schools). Students admitted that they knew that there were a number of different languages spoken by school members before undertaking this work, but that they were surprised to learn that there were so many of them. This was the first step for students towards discovering the linguistic and cultural diversity of their environment and is illustrated by the following extract from one of the hybrid interactive sessions:

Dans notre classe il n'y a pas que le français, il y a aussi le turc, l'arabe, l'espagnol, l'italien, l'albanais et le portugais. (Student, original quote, online class recording 03/06/2021).

In our class there is not only French, there is also Turkish, Arabic, Spanish, Italian, Albanian and Portuguese. (Student, our translation).

Later, in the Physical Education class and also during their presentation at the online training week, students took this awareness a step further and chose to speak their languages in front of their class and the other participants, many of whom were attending from other countries or areas of France. We consider that not only discovering the presence of these languages, but also using them in the classroom was a very important step in the development of students' and teachers' plurilingual and pluricultural competences. It encouraged them to value their own languages and also to find out more about other languages, other writing systems and other systems of pronunciation.

With respect to plurilingual and pluricultural competences, students not only gained knowledge about other languages, but they also developed “critical language awareness” (Alim, 2010), that is, language awareness that goes “beyond cognitive awareness’ directing it ‘toward social and political consciousness-raising and action” (Alim, 2010, p. 215).

Regarding the pedagogical value of critical language awareness activities, Alim also notes that:

After collecting data on their own speech, students gain a much higher level of metalinguistic awareness (speaking of themselves as style shifters possessing multiple languages and a range of speech styles) that allows them to not only better understand the abstract theory of ‘speaking’, but also to better understand the linguistic landscape of their social worlds. These worlds are not marginalized in the classroom, or ‘checked at the door’, but they are viewed as valuable cultural and linguistic spaces for learning (Alim, 2010, p. 218).

During the French implementation of the LoCALL project, one of the most explicit illustrations of this was the students’ discussion about what constitutes a “foreign” language in their eyes, but also from the perspective of others³:

1. Une langue étrangère est une langue autre que la langue maternelle. (Student 1, original quote).

A foreign language is a language other than the mother tongue. (Student 1, our translation).

2. Les langues étrangères sont les langues autres que le français. (Student 2, original quote).

Foreign languages are languages other than French. (Student 2, our translation).

3. La langue vivante est une langue que l’on parle dans la vie de tous les jours et une langue étrangère et une langue que l’on parle pas. (Student 3, original quote).

A living language is a language that you speak in everyday life and a foreign language is a language that you don’t speak. (Student 3, our translation).

4. J’entends de l’alsacien à la maison mais je ne le parle pas, est-ce que c’est une langue étrangère ? (Student 4, original quote).

I hear Alsatian at home but I don’t speak it, is it a foreign language for me ? (Student 4, our translation).

5. Je parle portugais à la maison ce n’est pas une langue étrangère pour moi. (Student 5, original quote).

I speak Portuguese at home, it is not a foreign language for me. (Student 5, our translation).

6. Je parle Albanais à la maison et c’est pas une langue étrangère pour moi. (student 6 , original quote).

I speak Albanian at home and it is not a foreign language for me. (Student 6, our translation).

³ (Source, for all quotes: class chat exchange at online session, 09/04/2021, via the videoconference platform BBB, University of Strasbourg).

7. Pour moi il n’y a aucune différence. Ce que nous considérons comme des langues vivantes pour nous (Français) peut être considéré comme une langue étrangère pour les Japonais par exemple. (Student 7, original quote).

For me there is no difference. What we consider as living languages for us (French people) can be considered as a foreign language for the Japanese for example. (Student 7, our translation).

8. “Langue étrangère” est un bien grand mot. La seule réponse possible est “tout est une question de point de vue”. (Student 8, original quote).

“Foreign language” is quite a loose word. The only possible answer is that “everything is a question of point of view”. (Student 8, our translation).

We see this critical side of language awareness through the students’ analyses of their own perspectives on the question, as well as other people’s stances, both in their immediate environment and from other countries. For example, to define a language as foreign some students (students 3 and 4) referred to the criteria of language competence and the level of mastery of the language (“the language you don’t speak”). Others (students 5 and 6) highlighted their everyday language practices and the languages they speak at home (Portuguese and Albanian) maintaining that these languages are not “foreign”. This led the class to discuss the question of why languages other than French, usually referred to as “mother tongue languages”, can also be considered as “not foreign”. One of the explanations proposed was the different ways languages are perceived at home and in the school. While these languages are “familiar” at home, they are considered as “foreign” languages at school where legitimate languages include the language of schooling and the languages taught in school.

To conclude this section, we can affirm that during the online training week not only were students able to take pride in their work and showcase their expertise concerning the linguistic landscape of their homes, school, town and region, but they were also able to understand first-hand how speaking different languages opens doors to communication with the wider world. They were clearly impressed by their teacher’s language skills in English, as well as those of the team, as they had never heard any of us speak a language other than French prior to this exchange.

3.2 Intergenerational Development of “Funds of Knowledge”

Both the aforementioned and the following quotations from the students also reveal how they began to understand that all these diverse languages are closely connected to the personal and family history of each person, and how this work led them to get to know other people better:

1. Le travail en Histoire Géo m’a appris beaucoup sur mes origines, parce que je pensais que j’avais plus d’origines portugaises qu’italiennes. Et en fait j’ai beaucoup parlé et échangé avec ma famille, mes grands-parents, etc. et ils m’ont beaucoup appris, et j’ai vu que

j'avais tout autant d'origines italiennes que portugaises. (Student of Portuguese-Italian origin, original quote, online class recording 03/06/2021).

The work in the History and Geography class taught me a lot about my origins, because I thought that I had more Portuguese than Italian origins. And in fact, I spoke and exchanged a lot with my family, my grand-parents, etc. and they taught me a lot, and I saw that I had as many Italian as Portuguese origins. (Student of Portuguese-Italian origin, our translation).

2. Moi avec ma grand-mère, je pensais que toute ma famille était d'origine de la France, et avec ma grand-mère j'ai appris que en fait du côté de ma grand-mère ils viennent tous d'Algérie, donc grâce à ça j'ai appris surtout d'où je viens. (Student from a French family who also lived in Algeria for some time, original quote, online class recording 03/06/2021).

Me with my grand-mother, I thought that all my family was originally from France, and with my grand-mother I learned that in fact on my grand-mother's side they all come from Algeria, so thanks to this I learnt where I come from. (Student from a French family who also lived in Algeria for some time, our translation).

We observed that working on plurilingual and pluricultural competences encouraged intergenerational exchanges. These intergenerational exchanges can be a source of intergenerational transfer of knowledge and skills and therefore contribute to the development of diverse funds of knowledge. Therefore, based on these examples, we can say that using linguistic landscapes and linguistic diversity as a pedagogical tool can help teachers and students to become more aware of these funds of knowledge. Moreover, if we analyse the following quotation from another student:

Grâce par exemple, grâce au travail qu'on a fait en Histoire Géographie, moi j'ai voulu apprendre l'italien pour me rapprocher de mon arrière-grand-mère. (Student of Italian origin, original quote, online class recording 03/06/2021).

Thanks for example, thanks to the work that we did in History and Geography, me, I wanted to learn Italian to get closer to my great-grand-mother. (Student of Italian origin, our translation).

We see that this student also recognized the value of these intergenerational exchanges and family funds of knowledge, as this activity encouraged him not only to reflect but also to act—to take initiative and to go in search of these interactions and funds of knowledge. From this example we can also see the importance of the recognition of these funds of knowledge by the school (González et al., 2005; Vélez-Ibáñez & Greenberg, 1992) in order to encourage the valuing of these funds of knowledge by the students themselves.

3.3 *Development of Educational Partnerships*

Educational partnerships were developed on different levels, but first and foremost inside the classroom: in pairs (working on the interviews), in small groups (preparing the linguistic pathway) and with the whole class (working in class throughout the

whole year and also presenting the project during the online training week). As we can see from the following testimony, students do not explicitly name this collaboration as a “partnership”, but they do talk about solidarity and supportive relationships created in class:

On a réussi vraiment à s’entraider, on était vraiment tous ensemble, on a vraiment fait des groupes avec des gens avec qui on parlait moins, et du coup ça nous a rapproché tous ensemble, on était vraiment solidaires, on s’est tous aidés, et c’était vraiment bien. (Student, original quote, online class recording 03/06/2021).

We all managed to help each other, we were really all together, we really made groups with people with whom we spoke less, and so we got closer to each other, there was real solidarity, we all helped each other, and that was really nice. (Student, our translation).

Moreover, students, as partners in the research also developed a very close relationship with their French teacher, Sonia Cadi, who was the main driving force behind the project in school. It is very important to say that this educational partnership between Sonia and her students was also possible because Sonia allowed this partnership to happen by encouraging autonomy and confidence among her students (which is not very common in vertical authority structures where teacher-led work tends to be the norm) and perceived and valued them not just as her students, but as individuals:

So for me as a teacher it was a very interesting activity to know, to have knowledge about language abilities of my students and their feelings too, and their lives. (Teacher, original quote, online class recording 03/06/2021).

Moreover, thanks to the activities in other disciplines, and in particular to the whole-school survey, students could also create partnerships with other people in their school:

Quand on a travaillé avec les autres classes, ça faisait bizarre, en fait au début on ne les connaissait pas tous, mais à force de les interviewer on a appris plein de choses sur eux, bon moi par exemple j’ai appris plein de choses sur plein d’élèves, et quand on travaillait avec les 3^{ème} ça faisait bizarre parce qu’ils sont plus grands que nous, et pour les adultes aussi, pour les professeurs, et voilà. (Student, original quote, online class recording 03/06/2021).

When we worked with other classes, it was strange, in fact at the beginning we didn’t know all of them well, but while interviewing them we learnt a lot of things about them, well, me for example, I learnt many things about many students, and when we worked with 3^{ème} class it was strange because they are older than us, and for the adults too, for the teachers, that’s it. (Student, our translation).

Such comments indicate the creation of “interpersonal spaces of reciprocal empowerment between teachers and students” (Cummins, 2021, p. 284) and additionally between students.

4 Concluding Remarks

Although the positive repercussions of undertaking this project, as we have reported on, were many and varied, setting out on a journey into the unknown linguistic landscape was challenging. One of these challenges was that some teachers did not initially appreciate the linguistic diversity potential of what in their eyes was a small town in a rural setting. However, when presented with the first concrete results, the work produced by the students, teachers were encouraged to persevere and to move forward with the project. Moreover, regarding the workload and the packed school curriculum, they could easily see how they could connect the project to their school programmes and realised that they could adapt it to their aims and objectives—some took part in the interviews, some contributed throughout the whole year, while others just gave a one-off session. As for example Nathalie Luttringer, teacher of History and Geography and of Regional Language and culture, mentioned:

A un moment donné il va falloir faire des choix, parce que dans mon programme, j'ai consacré du temps au projet, et dans mon programme mon temps n'étant pas extensible, je vais devoir raccourcir ou traiter plus rapidement certains chapitres du programme, mais en même temps on a le programme et les compétences, aujourd'hui. Et dans les compétences on nous demande de travailler les compétences orales, on nous demande de travailler les compétences d'autonomie, on nous demande les compétences du travail collaboratif, donc en même temps moi j'ai travaillé les compétences. Donc je n'ai pas perdu mon temps. (Interview with Nathalie Luttringer, 13/01/2022, Collège Henri Meck de Molsheim, original quote).

There comes a time when a choice has to be made, because in my programme, I dedicated some time to the project, and my time is not expandable, I have to shorten or to go quicker through certain chapters of my programme, but at the same time there is a curriculum and there are competences today. And within competences we are asked to work on oral competences, competences of autonomy, of collaborative work, so at the same time I have worked on these competences. Therefore I haven't wasted my time. (Interview with Nathalie Luttringer, 13/01/2022, Collège Henri Meck de Molsheim, our translation).

Teacher implication in this kind of project also depends, on the one hand on the support of the administration and more specifically on the support from the head teacher (who we would like to thank her once again for her support), and on the other hand on the relationships between the colleagues and their readiness to support each other's projects. As for example Danièle Pion, teacher of Sports and Physical Education notes:

Je suis ici au Collège depuis une dizaine d'années, je travaille avec Madame Cadi depuis une dizaine d'années, nous avons l'habitude de travailler ensemble sur différents projets, on s'entend bien, on a des affinités, donc dès que l'une d'entre nous s'investit dans un projet, l'autre s'implique parce qu'elle sait qu'en général ce sont des projets intéressants. Au sein du Collège Henri Meck on est quelques enseignants comme ça qui sont dynamiques, qui ont envie d'innover, qui ont envie de découvrir d'autres, qui sont curieux, qui s'intéressent aussi aux autres matières qui sont pas fermés sur leurs matières et qui savent que pour les élèves, un projet, quand ça vient de plusieurs disciplines, ça a plus de sens pour les élèves [...] Donc quand elle m'a proposé ce projet je me suis tout de suite dit que j'allais trouver des moyens

pour faire des liens en EPS [...] et en fait j'ai vraiment fait confiance à Sonia. C'est-à-dire elle m'a dit voilà ce projet est intéressant et moi j'ai dit je suis partante. (Interview with Danièle Pion, 13/01/2022, Collège Henri Meck de Molsheim, original quote).

I have been here in this collège for about ten years, I have been working with Madame Cadi for about ten years, we are used to working together on different projects, we get on well, we have similar interests, when one of us gets involved in a project, the other one follows because we know that generally these are interesting projects. At Collège Henri Meck we are several teachers like this who are dynamic, who would like to innovate, who would like to discover, who are curious, who are not closed off in their subjects, who take an interest in other subjects and who know that for students a project, when it involves several disciplines, it makes more sense for the students [...] So, when she suggested this project to me, I thought at once that I would find a way to make connections with the Sports classes [...] In fact I really followed Sonia. That means she told me here is an interesting project and I said I'm in. (Interview with Danièle Pion, 13/01/2022, Collège Henri Meck de Molsheim, our translation).

In conclusion, there were different levels of implication amongst staff, but this enabled a whole school approach and students became empowered and learned a lot while communicating with other students, teachers and school staff not only on a student to student basis, or a student to teacher one, but as individuals in their own right with their rich and varied identities revealed through meaningful, interpersonal exchanges. It is important to highlight pupils' increased motivation and initiative, and the fact that even the teachers were pleasantly surprised by what the pupils were capable of doing independently. As mentioned for example by Sonia Cadi, French language and literature teacher and project coordinator within the school, one of the illustrations of the students' involvement is the presence of almost all of the students at a session which took place exclusively online when students had to connect to a videoconference link from their home. Their teacher was proud to say that this online class dedicated to LoCALL was joined by almost all of the students, which was not always the case for online classes in other disciplines.

Finally, last but not the least, regarding the outcomes of the project, many parents reported unexpected positives as a result of the project concerning their children: students gaining in confidence, learning to speak in public, to communicate clearly, gaining in maturity, digital and team work skills (individual interviews with parents, 13/01.2022, Collège Henri Meck Molsheim):

1. La co-construction pour l'interview, la prise de parole parce que je pense que c'est vraiment le fait marquant, sur le partage aussi le fait de s'intéresser aux autres, même si on leur le ramène un peu sur le plateau là, de se dire, ouvre-toi quand-même, y a pas que ta vie, y a pas que tes copains, y a pas que le sport, y a des choses qui se passent ailleurs. (Interview with Mme L., mother of a student, original quote, 13/01/ 2022).

The co-construction for the interview, speaking in public because I think it's a key outcome, sharing also and taking an interest in other people, even if everything is delivered to them on a plate, saying to yourself, come on, look around, there's more than your life, there's more than your friends, there's more than sport, there are things happening elsewhere. (Interview with Mme L., mother of a student, our translation).

2. Moi j'avais l'impression que justement il avait, est allé chercher pas mal d'informations, à se questionner à ce qui semblait être pertinent par rapport à un projet donné, par rapport à

un objectif donné, en tout cas c'est la première fois, je pense que ce sont des compétences qu'il avait déjà certainement mais il n'en parlait pas, alors que là il a posé des mots, il en a parlé, en disant voilà on voudrait ça à la fin, qu'est-ce qu'on doit faire, quelles seraient les questions, dans le parcours qu'est-ce qui serait intéressant dans Molsheim de montrer à voir, quelles questions, quels thèmes on pourrait aborder dans l'Application. (Interview with Mme B. mother of a student, original quote, 13/01/2022).

I had the impression that he had really, he looked for quite a lot of information, asked questions about what might be relevant concerning a given project, concerning a specific objective, in any case, it's the first time, I think they're competences he had almost certainly already developed, but he's never talked about them, but this time he put them into words, he talked about them, saying so this is what we would like at the end, what do we have to do, what questions could we have, for the pathway what would be interesting to show, to see in Molsheim, what questions, what themes could we address in the app (Interview with Mme B. mother of a student, original quote).

3. L'histoire de Molsheim, déjà ça, et la cohésion car on est des rugbymans dans l'âme, donc l'esprit d'équipe, travailler ensemble.. et tout ce qu'il y a, le côté aussi virtuel, les logiciels, [prénom de son fils] m'en a parlé, il a dit il y a des logiciels que je ne connaissais pas, et ça ça lui a plu [...] aller vers les gens, rencontrer les adultes, et se confronter un petit peu au monde d'adultes.. il y a des mots à utiliser, à ne pas utiliser, ce qu'on essaie de lui apprendre depuis tout petit...la politesse et tout... et je pense que ça a été un plus. (Interview with Mr M, father of a student, original quote, 13/01/2022).

The history of Molsheim, for a start, and cohesion because we are rugby men at heart, so team spirit, working together.. and everything that's, the online side of things too, the software, [name of his son] told me about it, he said there were programmes I didn't know, and he really liked that [...]going up to people, meeting adults, facing the adult world a bit... there are certain words you can use or not use, things we have tried to teach him since he was little... good manners and all that... and I think that was a bonus. (Interview with Mr M, father of a student, our translation).

These testimonies from parents show the importance of home-school interactions, the co-construction of educational projects and the recognition of parental involvement by the school, as was the case for the LoCALL project at Collège Henri Meck Molsheim:

Souvent on considère l'élève comme une page blanche quand il entre en cours... alors que selon moi, le reconnaître dans son identité plurilingue c'est le légitimer dans son identité, cela contribue à effacer tout conflit de loyauté entre la famille et l'école, et le rend ainsi disponible pour les apprentissages (ça c'est bien la raison pour laquelle tous les profs peuvent se reconnaître dans ce type de projet). (Teacher email exchange with the team, original quote, 25/02/2022).

A student is often considered as a blank page when he enters the classroom...but for me, recognising his plurilingual identity means legitimatising his identity, it contributes to erasing all loyalty conflicts between family and school, and therefore enables him to be attentive to learning (that's exactly the reason why all teachers can identify with this type of project). (Teacher email exchange with the team, our translation).

These testimonies reveal that although collaborative projects are certainly challenging, they are also a very enriching experience for all the people involved, in terms of developing knowledge, competences, but also human relations. In these ways, we hope that the LoCALL project has added its modest but concrete contribution to the recognition of linguistic and cultural diversity in our societies.

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