

# Action research communities for language teachers

ECML PROJECT 2016-2018



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Languages at the heart of learning  
Les langues au cœur des apprentissages  
Sprachen als Herzstück des Lernens

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## Overview

- ARC project overview
- Project examples and teachers' experiences - leading to tool development
- Tools



# ARC Team & Project Languages

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- 
- Languages: English & German



# Professional Learning Communities

## Action research as an essential teachers' tool

- To cope with
  - “the speed of societal change together with the increasing linguistic and cultural diversity in our schools”
  - “ever-increasing demands on the teachers”
- To demonstrate
  - “how learning communities for language teaching practitioners {can} bridge this gap and help ensure their continued professionalism and expertise”
- To foster
  - Involvement in professional networks at European, local, regional and national level





## Project & Network 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 and 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 and to propose and test innovations within a community of practice



# Central Issue

How can Action Research as a key-instrument of language teaching support the self-confidence of language teachers and enhance the quality of teaching?



## Steps

- Starting from national contexts:

Austria, Iceland, Italy, Romania, Switzerland, U.K.

- Workshops during International Weeks at the Pedagogical University
- Workshop on Action research in Graz, November 2016
- Follow-up Network Meeting May 2018
- Workshop on Action Research in Sibiu / Hermannstadt, October 2016
- Workshop on Action Research in Reykjavik, June 2018
- Contact with participants – support and collaboration on reports
- Tools



## Experiences during project process leading to results

- 11 transnational collaborative action research projects developed and carried out by workshop participants different themes in language classes (intercultural learning, CLIL, use of the target language, mentoring...)
- Dialogue throughout the year between teams and ARC team
- 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: <https://padlet.com/ecmlworkshops/s3bh5p66m3zh>
- Marked differences in approaches
- Some struggles with finding focus, differentiation between planning teaching and planning AR
- Leading to thoughts on tools





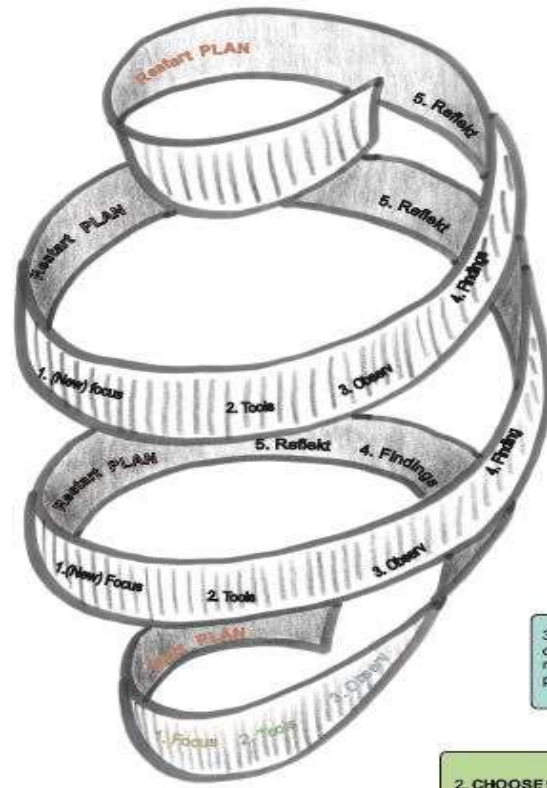
## Addressing the challenges

- **ARC-Spiral**
- Checklist
- Dialogue sheet
- Workshop template



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**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.

<https://www.ecml.at/ECML-Programme/Programme2016-2019/Professionallearningcommunities/Results/tabid/3040/language/en-GB/Default.aspx>



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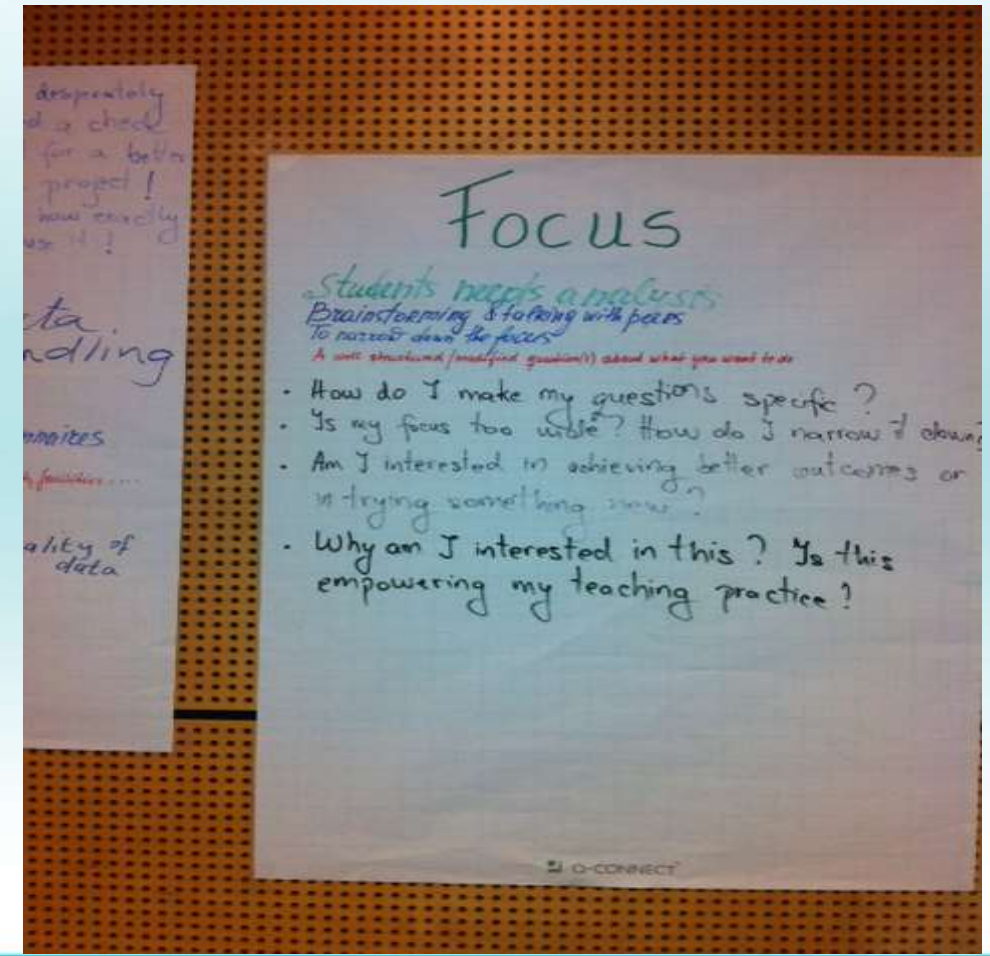
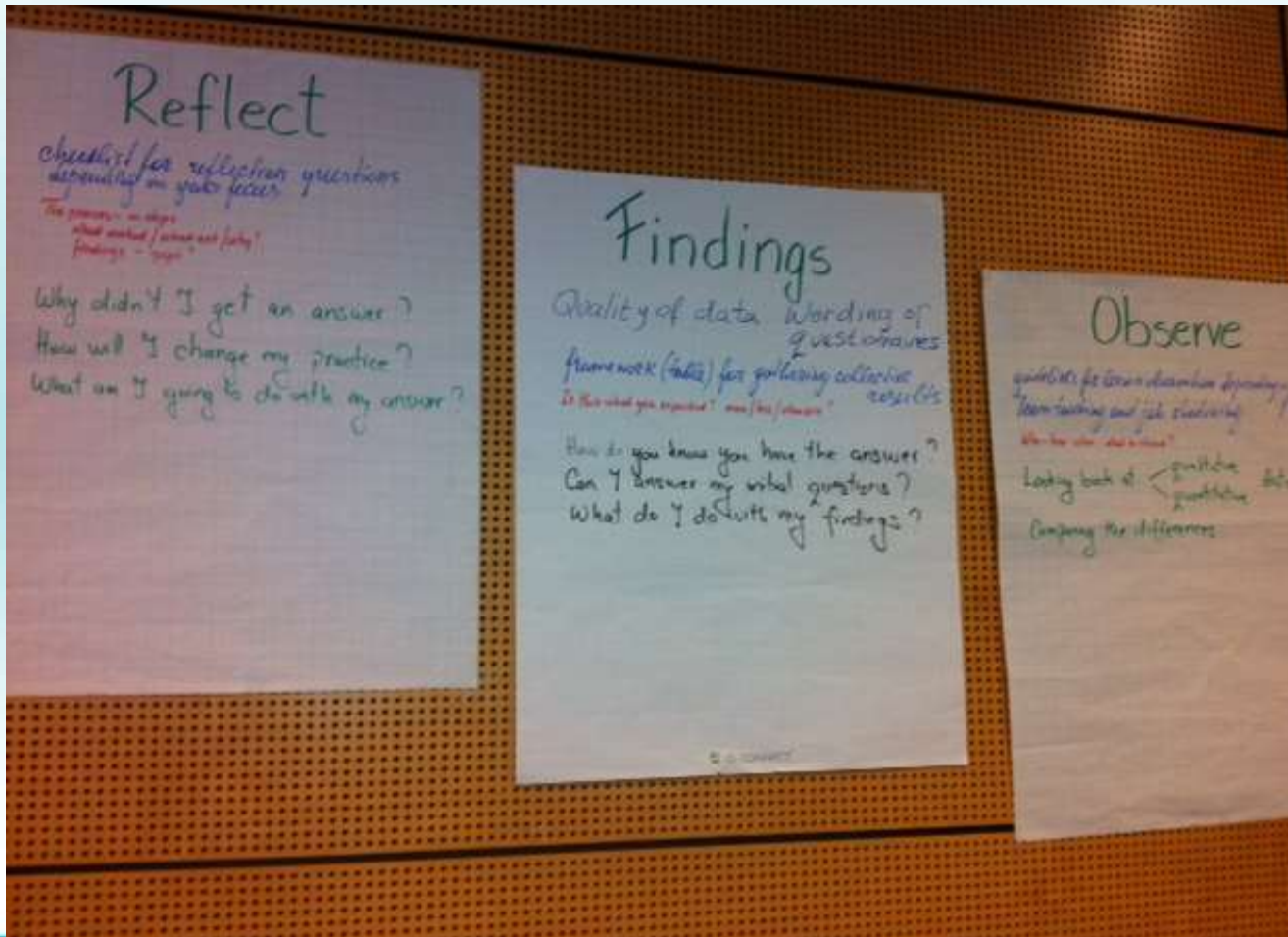
## Is it lesson planning or action research planning?

Questions asked when planning teaching units	Questions asked when planning AR
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What will the unit be about?</li> <li>• What is the general topic?</li> <li>• What is the theme of the lesson(s)?</li> <li>• How does the topic fit into the curriculum?</li> <li>• What will I have to consider concerning the learners' age and language level?</li> <li>• Which other factors may play a role?</li> <li>• What is the current mood in the class?</li> <li>• What will the learning aims be?</li> <li>• What competences will be reached?</li> <li>• How will I assess learning outcomes?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do I want to know?</li> <li>• What am I interested in finding out?</li> <li>• Why am I interested in this?</li> <li>• Is the question something that can be answered through action research tools?</li> <li>• Does the scope of the question fit with the possibilities that I have? Is it feasible?</li> <li>• Which action research tools will I use?</li> <li>• At which point will I employ which tools?</li> <li>• How will I know when I have found something out?</li> <li>• How will I analyse and interpret the findings?</li> <li>• How will I share my findings?</li> <li>• Where will this lead me?</li> </ul>





## Working with our participants (workshop Graz, May 2018)





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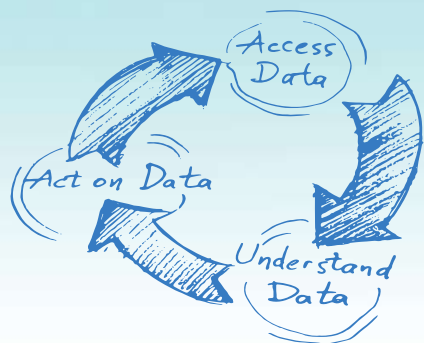
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Dialogue sheet



Where do I start?



Actionable Data & Analytics Cycle



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## Questions raised

- How do we overcome the barriers for teachers who want to do action research?
- Will teachers be able to continue with action research without the project community?
- To what extent can we say that we have helped teachers to develop their voices and change their classrooms?



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

