

## PROJECTE ERASMUS + 2019-1-ES01-KA104-061738

# Integració europea a través de la mediació cultural i lingüística en la EOI de Castelló **SHADOWING PROJECT BASED LEARNING (DUBLIN)**

On 14th October 2022 I participated, through the Erasmus+ project of EOI Castelló, in a one-week training course in Dublin entitled "Shadowing Project Based Learning". The objectives of this course were the following:

- Planning project based learning (PBL) and adapting it to the resources and needs of the students.
- Incorporating language outcomes into the project
- Establishing a meaningful question or problem
- Selection of the final product by teams
- Classroom layout and team measurements
- Feedback and assessment for PBL learning
- Drawbacks and challenges in implementing PBL
- Managing activities and deadlines
- Managing teamwork and fostering collaborative skills
- Creating a sense of ownership of the project and assigning roles

Of course, the fact that the location was sa charming city like Dublin also helped my decision. I also requested accommodation at a students' residence near the academy, so I was able to combine full linguistic immersion with the educational and cultural experience. Another positive aspect is that the school is very close to the city center, which made it easy for me to access the various cultural activities I enjoyed every afternoon.



On the first day, the staff welcomed me and the teacher I observed during my stay, Lucía, explained what was done the week before, what she was going to teach during the current week, the characteristics of her group of students and what project-based learning consists of.

As you can see in the image on the previous page, the students are adults from different countries, there were people from Brazil, Italy, El Salvador, Mexico, etc. Their level of English was C1 and almost all of them had the purpose of obtaining residency in Ireland and being able to practice their profession there.

So, although both Lucia and I have adult learners and a similar way of conducting the class, I soon realized that our goals in the classroom are completely different.

Almost all of Lucia's students are required to take a 25-week English course in order to live in Ireland. At the same time, although almost all of them have a university degree, they have to take unskilled jobs to make ends meet. This conditions her classes a lot since, given that they are already fluent English speakers and their lexical knowledge is extensive, Lucia focuses on making them feel comfortable speaking about specific topics and making her lessons fun to alleviate the burden they already have in their day to day life. Therefore, Lucia can afford games that have no linguistic purpose, play for play's sake, in order to create a good atmosphere in the classroom.



On the contrary, at EOIs we have a curriculum marked by the state that we have to teach throughout the academic year, when they finish the course, some of our students seek to obtain a certificate. This means that, without neglecting the recreational and cultural part of language learning, we strive to ensure that our students know a series of grammatical structures, vocabulary, texts, etc. before the end of the school year.

In short, each day the classes would start with one or more games followed by a discussion on a topic related to the project the students would be asked to carry out on Thursday in order to start the presentations on Friday and finish them on Monday. The discussion usually began with a series of statements that Lucia would project, for example:

#### HOW TO BE A GOOD CITIZEN.

- Volunteer in the neighborhood where you live
- Obey the laws without questioning them

- Exercise your right to vote
- Take care of the environment

After discussing the topic, the class read a text or listened to audio where some of the relevant aspects of the main topic were discussed.

During my visit the text was about the happiest countries in the world. After reading it on Thursday, the students had to choose a country to do the project. The project consisted of playing an interview with a resident of the chosen country and a sociologist. I have to admit that the topics students tackled were very interesting, some of them are euthanasia, same-sex marriage and environmental protection. Each group was provided with a laptop computer because they did the project in the classroom during the last two hours of Thursday and the first hour of Friday. Then they started the presentations to the group but there were some presentations left for Monday.



In conclusion, the students made very interesting presentations and I enjoyed a very enriching experience.