

Bilingual assignments 'Poetry Day'

Lesson example provided by Hans de Grave (Het Spectrum Gent)

Functional multilingual learning in secondary education

Source:

https://stad.gent/sites/default/files/page/documents/Lesvoorbeeld_Tweetalige%20opdrachten_poeziedag_1.pdf

from Onderwijscentrum Gent - Ghent Education Centre

1. Objectives

- a. Pupil level: home language and home culture is presented in a positive light, given a place in school and experienced as a support tool in meaningful contexts.
- b. Teacher level: home languages of pupils are valorised and their added value demonstrated in the learning process.

2. Duration: 50 minutes

3. Target group: (former) OKAN pupils

4. Class arrangement: plenary, tables possibly in U-shape

5. Working method:

a. Assignment beforehand:

× Find a poem in your mother tongue/home language that you like. You can ask your parents to help you with this.

b. Read poems aloud and discuss:

× The teacher has also chosen a poem himself (in Dutch), and reads that poem aloud. He also tells why he chose this poem and what it means to him.

× The students each take turns reading the poem they have chosen, in their mother/third language. Then they tell in Dutch what the poem they read is about and what it means to them.

× The others (teacher and other pupils) can ask questions.

6. Material

- Poems in the pupils' home languages (looked up or collected by them).

7. Effects / evaluation

- Valorisation of pupils' home language and home culture.
- Increase of pupils' well-being.
- Pupils and teacher get to know each other's (cultural and linguistic) background better.

8. Tips / experiences

- Be aware that for some pupils it is not obvious to find a poem in their home language (e.g. because there are few or no written sources, or few opportunities to involve family or acquaintances). In such cases, explore possible solutions with your pupils.
- The language level in the home language is also often very different among pupils (ability to read and write, fluency, vocabulary...). Therefore, give pupils the choice to choose a poem in a language they feel comfortable with.
- This assignment (or a variation of it) can of course also be used more widely than just with (former) OKAN students: you can do the assignment with all your students (including students whose home language is Dutch).