



Keys to Lifelong Language Learning

The third national **Language Parliament** was organized at the House of Science and Letters on Thursday 29 March 2012 by the Finnish Network for Language Education Policies, Kieliverkosto.

This year's theme was **lifelong language learning and teaching**. The Parliament brought together representatives of teacher education, teachers, students, researchers, education providers, associations, and authorities to discuss the theme.

These **Keys to Lifelong Language Learning** are based on the discussions at the Language Parliament. They are meant for **teacher trainees, teacher trainers, and practicing teachers** to provoke thought and stimulate discussion.

Additional information: kieliverkosto.fi/en

Lifelong language learning

Getting started

It is always the right age to start learning a language
Offering opportunities to begin language study at any age

Taking into account the characteristics and needs of language learners of different ages

Encouragement

Relaxed atmosphere in the learning and study environment
Encouragement for learners to use all means of communication and bring out their skills
Even some knowledge of a language is a pleasure as well as useful
Do not stick to grammatical correctness - people learn from their mistakes

Learning environments

Experiences of language learning and using a foreign language also outside the classroom
Recognition of language skills acquired outside the language classroom

Multiple senses

Teaching that activates all the senses and takes different learning styles into account

Experimenting with versatile teaching and learning methods and developing the weaker sensory channels

Individuality of learning

There is no need for everyone to learn and study languages in the same way
Taking the diversity of previous language learning experiences into account
Opportunities for learners to tell how their learning can best be supported

Personal relevance

Using language to interact
Interaction should have a personal significance and emotional relevance to the learner
Expressing one's own thoughts and feelings instead of repeating pre-learned lines

→ motivation

Multilingualism

Languages out of their pigeonholes:
different languages support each other
Teachers as multilingual role models
Multilingual communication is a resource



All teachers are language teachers

Educational institution

Linguistic goals for all subjects in the curriculum
Attitude-related pedagogical discussions about languages: how can we together actualize the idea that 'all teachers are language teachers'?

Our common language

Language is everywhere, even though one does not always come to think about it
Language is used differently in different situations
Language is not only about grammatical correctness
What kind of language is used in your subject area?

Cooperation

Sharing professional knowledge with both closest colleagues and teachers of other subjects
Sense of community and doing teamwork will help you cope
Cooperation between schools, also across language borders

Subject integration

Highlighting language in authentic everyday situations
Parallel teaching = collaboration between various subject areas and teachers
Project work on topics that combine the content of different subjects
Subject teaching in a foreign language

Student counselling

Prominent role for language skills in student and career counselling
Emphasis on the importance of language skills in studies, the choice of a career, and working life



Better skills from teacher training

Classroom observation

Opportunities for observation on various levels of education from early childhood to adult education

Classroom observation also across subject areas and outside normal schools

Learner centeredness

Reforming pedagogic practices:

Learners in focus instead of the subject content or the textbook

Teaching practice

Teaching practice early in university studies and on a wide range of school levels

Students of different subjects should jointly give training lessons integrating the contents of both/several subjects

Language as a tool

Language is both the goal of learning and the tool in learning content

Encourage student teachers to teach their subject in a foreign language

Contacts

Open the doors to society
Close cooperation with working life and student organizations in teacher education

Encourage teacher trainees and teachers to participate actively in international exchange programs

Identity

Provide students with tools to strengthen their identity as teachers

