

Bilingual Education Reinforces Vocational Education and Training

The essence of bilingual education approach is that learning results not only in foreign language skills as such, but it also serves as a method to help to convey the content of the subject and to develop important key competencies as well as professional expertise. This is the reason why bilingual education is realised at Alytus Vocational Training Centre (APRC, *Alytaus profesinio rengimo centras*) combining training in Lithuanian and French languages in barmen, hotel workers and cooks VET programmes. Analysis of the literature, presentation of ideas in French and communication at international dimension enables students not only to learn French proficiently, but also to get acquainted with production and services technologies from foreign countries. The graduates of APRC who can master French have wider perspectives for further studies and professional career in Lithuania and abroad. In addition, bilingual education vitalizes the pedagogical environment of school, promotes the diversity of methods applied and ensures constant progress.

A great support for bilingual training is the enthusiasm of school's community and international relations of school. The teachers have been involved in various dissemination seminars and conferences on bilingual education since 2007, the school was visited by representatives from International Organization of the Francophonie (OIF) and the analysis of implementing the bilingual education idea at APRC was performed. In 2009 cooperation with Capital City Hotel School of Quebec (*l'École hôtelière de la Capitale à Québec*) was started and in 2010 representatives of APRC visited the Quebec school with the OIF invitation. Later this year internship for one teacher from Quebec was organized in Alytus, and it is foreseen to organize a professional internship for APRC teachers in Quebec service sector in 2010-2011. Two weeks internship will combine practical training, theory courses, visits to enterprises, consultations with teachers and analysis of training materials.

School's community is constantly and actively looking for new possibilities for developing bilingual education. For example, it responded to the invitation of the Ministry of Education and Science and the French Embassy to participate in the project "*Classes Emile en Lituanie - Content and Language Integrated Learning*". After the written agreement with the French Culture Centre in 2009, the students are suggested a modern learning method involving content and French language integrated learning (CLILL). This method provides students with the possibility to achieve a high level language competence and opens up the Francophonie culture. The French Culture Centre has undertaken to provide linguistic (300 hour French language courses during three years and three intensive internships for teachers in France) and didactic support for teachers training, to supply with the necessary methodological material and to assist in search for partners in French training institutions. The support from Education Exchanges Support Foundation offered an opportunity to receive an assistant from France from September 2010. Such practice of the assistant will help to strengthen the European dimension at the institution and to implement CLIL.

Alytus is one of the most francophonic regions in Lithuania. Thus, by developing bilingual education APRC contributes to retaining the image of francophonic city and dissemination of French culture.

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