

<p>A. Examples of best practice in MAIL in &amp; outside of lessons</p>	<p>When asking ourselves what appeared to be the key differences between, say, a British classroom and a Norwegian one, we are struck by the air of purposeful calm which seemed to exist in all classroom we observed. So why is this the case and is it critical? If one can accept that this is a major benefit, it could be seen as the starting point, which enables the successful application of an inclusive (heterogeneous groups), mixed ability programme, where IL and students taking responsibility for their learning actually works.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Pupil teacher ratios are important, where for example this would be about 2X the UK ratio, on top of which we saw assistants attached to specific pupils with special needs.</li><li>2. In a primary school, we saw weekly work/task planning which enabled students to choose tasks and times to carry them out, the pace at which they would work, and even to what degree they worked in class or at home.</li><li>3. Differentiation in material and task expectations were in evidence in all cases.</li><li>4. The use of group working and peer support was widespread and formed a part of most lessons.</li><li>5. Use of teaching methods which were aimed at whole- class participation where the processes of reasoning were more important than the results. ('There is no right answer')</li><li>6. Clear focus on effective social interaction by the inclusion of presentation of work or findings to the rest of the class, either individually or in pairs.</li><li>7. The expectation that formal testing (in itself differentiated) is inevitable, built into the timetable as a routine to focus the week's activities.</li><li>8. The formal involvement of and feedback from parents in the weekly activities helps to reinforce the culture and discipline of the process.</li></ol>
<p>B. Results of comparison &amp; reflection</p>	<p>Within the extremes of disabilities and special needs the Norwegian system seems to work effectively. Clearly pupil-teacher ratio are lavish compared to the UK. From a limited number of observations the inclusion of special needs students in the mainstream of teaching appears to work adequately, especially when the students are incorporated into the class activities: group work, differentiated self-study, supported by their peer group, and clearly their inclusion in class is seen as normal, so this in itself fulfills a state aim in education. The education systems in Scandinavia are fairly homogeneous, thus some of the procedures observed could be found in Finnish schools, too.</p>

<p>C. Factors influencing IL in mixed ability groups either + / –</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. More effective use of teacher time in that he/she can spend time helping individuals during class work because the lesson has been structured around IL.</li> <li>2. Focus on creativity and style e.g in essay or portfolio work, which has the advantage of allowing continuous improvement and the student and teacher can use it as a tool for structured improvement.</li> <li>3. IL, to be effective, relies, in the opinion of some teachers spoken to, on the material being pitched at the 'middle' ground. It is easily adapted to lower ability students but there is doubt that it can truly stretch the more gifted.</li> <li>4. Emphasis on homework as a task to be completed in the lower school helped in focusing classwork, making it more concentrated; but at the secondary school, it was argued that excessive use of homework would disadvantage the less able, in that they could end up falling too far behind since they might need the resources of the class, both teacher-based and peer support.</li> </ol>
<p>D. Aspects concerning the effect of IL on the acquisition of curricular &amp; social competences</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Key to the successful application of IL are activities and lesson plans designed to ensure the acquisition of social competences. For example, we saw activities designed to reinforce: communication, self-evaluation, social interaction, independent study. These all relied on active rather than passive learning, and contributed to students' confidence with their abilities and in the group; mixed ability group work. (cf other specific activities mentioned earlier.)</li> <li>2. Highly structured resources relating to a national curriculum contained within text books (Maths, English, Norwegian as were observed). Teachers could use these as a template to structure lesson objectives so progress was easily measurable for the group and the individual.</li> </ol>

<p>E. All other aspects, factors, details which will help the conception and testing of modules for teachers &amp; further education at home in your country.</p>	<p>We have seen in Norway evidence of MAIL in practice. Our anecdotal research seems to support the desirability of this goal in the classroom. In our interviews, students at both primary and secondary level clearly favoured the choices made available, (giving instantaneous, positive responses!), as to when and how they learned within the classroom. They were convinced they learnt more and responsibility for their own learning gave them more of an incentive to work and learn. They enjoyed their lessons more. Teachers find advantage, as stated, in that the classroom environment can be more relaxed, they can act more as learning consultants, they can build better relationships, they can tailor and individualise their teaching across ability groups, even without heavy application of staff resources (co-teachers, assistants) so typical to the schools we saw. Having identified some clear benefits of Norway's approach, it would be desirable to adapt at first view, some aspects which may be easily transferrable to other regimes. Specifically, focus on design and implementation of programmes for primary teaching to encourage and condition students to individualised learning and to take responsibility for their own learning, which would then be carried through to the secondary stage. This would involve, broadly speaking, techniques, such as we have seen, being customised for core subjects. There is a significant difference in approach to be learnt in that teachers need to learn to be less controlling of the learning processes, to be less didactic, to be more trusting and appreciative of their students. The results of this programme, described fully elsewhere in our reports, would be to give students more space and time within the classroom environment to learn, where the teacher can be the learning consultant rather than the all-knowing fount of knowledge.</p>
<p>F. Hints for making videos.</p>	<p>Little of what we observed to be effective would be easily videoed for teaching purposes.</p>