The term "content area literacy" refers to teachers' competence to deal with reading/writing/learning instruction not only on the elementary level in the language arts classes, but in all subjects and all school levels. The project used a "multiplicator and coaching approach" which means that first teacher trainees were educated and then would be supported in a follow-on coaching and in sustaining these teachers' change of classroom practice.

The basic curriculum defines the minimal knowledge every secondary content area teacher in the EU should have about the reading skills at all school subjects. It provides 6 modules of 6 hours professional development course units each, including teaching material, collaborative tasks for improving one's own classroom practice and online support. Although the basic curriculum was only implemented in 6 European countries, it defines the first overall European minimal standard and research-based principles for in-service teacher training in content area literacy.

The six modules include a complete teaching material set of PPTs, worksheets, a Teachers' Workbook and a Trainer's Handbook with work plans for every course unit and theoretical background information. These Modules contain 'essential' and 'optional' content and can be taught flexibly, according to national conditions and the needs of diverse schools, teaching staff or single learners.

The main target groups are the content area teachers participating in the BaCuLit course in order to improve their own instruction or to become future BaCuLit trainers. The students will also benefit from the increased expertise of their teachers due to their knowledge of how to support their students by providing guided text comprehension. Furthermore, the project offers teacher training institutions and decision makers from educational policies an evaluation core curriculum for the admission and training of teachers which allows to reduce the striking deficits of adolescents in reading literacy. In the last project phase of the BaCuLit project, 12 partners from 7 countries founded a registered non-profit BaCuLit Association (www.baculit.eu) as a platform for the cooperation of scientists, teacher educators and stakeholders aiming at implementing the BaCuLit results into teacher training, especially into teachers' Professional Development. Main goal of establishing an association was to create a legal entity that will take over the ownership of the "intellectual property" worked out by the project; this includes the trademark "BaCuLit" and the copyright of all materials. The purpose of the BaCuLit Association is to preserve BaCuLit as high quality label for teacher training; it would be implemented in different ways in different countries (e.g. in inservice teacher training or in pre-service training) but should define common quality standards which have to be proved in order to get certified as a BaCuLit teacher or BaCuLit trainer.

BaCuLit PROJECT (2011 - 2012)

The follow-up project of BaCuLit was called BaCuLit. This Comenius project is based on the results of the international ADORE project. The BaCuLit project intended to train all educators and implement a Basic Curriculum for Teachers' In-service Training in Content Area Literacy in Secondary Schools (BaCuLit) for this purpose, 10 partners from universities of the EU and 10 institutions from 7 European countries cooperated in this project; they were supported and consulted by two American experts including a module developed by the Hungarian partner. The project was located within the field of attention focused on literacy and was intended to extend secondary school teachers' expertise to improve their students' fluency, reading habits and comprehension strategies for diverse texts in all school subjects and to help them building a stable self-concept as readers and learners. Most urgent in this respect is to foster the so-called "content area reading literacy or "reading across the curriculum".

The ISIT project focused on the evaluation of training teacher educators (narrow target group) it will reach out to secondary school teachers (second target group) which will have a positive impact to the long-term target group of students with low literacy skills (broadest target group). The project followed an action research approach, which means not to separate research from action. Therefore the trainers analyzed together with the scientists the obstacles and steps in implementing BaCuLit courses in institutions. Thus, ISIT intends to explore the general opportunities and obstacles in implementing innovation into teachers CPD in these 3 countries. A further objective is the dissemination of BaCuLit in 5 other countries: Partners from Belgium, Cyprus, Finland, Greece, and Portugal participated gaining comparative insights and providing input from the perspective of their countries.

The ISIT project (2013 – 2015)

"IST – Implementation Strategies for Innovations in Teachers’ Professional Development" was based upon the project under the Comenius project BaCuLit producing a comprehensive curriculum in CAL (=content area literacy) for CPD (=continuous professional development), including course materials and training manuals. IST aimed at improving the quality of CPD structure of Germany, Hungary and Romania (the core partners in this project were 3 out of 7 BaCuLit countries), where a total of 30 teacher educators from 25 different training institutions were made familiar with CAL instruction. The IST project addressed two of the crucial needs defined by the Education and Training Benchmarking for 2020 and by the High Level Group of Experts on Literacy (HLEGILE 2012): a) the problem of shifting skills in many European countries b) the situation of status teachers' CPD in the EU. Thus IST pursued two goals:

a) a specific goal: training 30 teacher educators from 3 European countries in CAL and fostering blended learning curriculum.

b) a general, comparative goal: analysing good examples of how to implement innovations into different national structures of CPD. In the IST project the opportunities and obstacles in implementing innovative approaches of teachers PD were related to the implementation of CAL, but we assumed that similar strategies shall be applied in implementing other innovations. Thus, these conclusions would be helpful for all actors in CPD. As a result we presented a Comparative Study of the gained experiences, accompanied by some recommendations for improving and giving ideas how to handle them participating countries.

The innovative aspect of the project is to effectively combine these two goals. The project followed an action research approach, by training teacher educators (narrow target group) it will reach out to secondary school teachers (second target group) which will have a positive impact to the long-term target group of students with low literacy skills (broadest target group). The project followed an action research approach, which means not to separate research from action. Therefore the trainers analyzed together with the scientists the obstacles and steps in implementing CAL courses in institutions. Thus, IST intends to explore the general opportunities and obstacles in implementing innovation into teachers CPD in these 3 countries. A further objective is the dissemination of CAL in 5 other countries: Partners from Belgium, Cyprus, Finland, Greece, and Portugal participated gaining comparative insights and providing input from the perspective of their countries.

This research is partially funded by the European Union’s Sixth Framework Programme through project IST-032942 IST and the European Social Fund. For more information please visit: www.ist-net.org.