Ongoing Pools projects: Clil4U, Pools-3, and Methods

Hop on board and join the pools teams

Caomhin O Donnain, the software engineer behind Clilstore has published the entire, up-to-date program source for Clilstore (and Wordlink and Multidict) at: http://www.smo.uhi.ac.uk/~caoimhin/obair/tools/source_code/

This includes all the program libraries which the user interface programs require. He has also included a compressed SQL dump of the entire database which is behind Clilstore, Wordlink and Multidict. This includes all the Clilstore units, all the dictionaries which Multidict knows about and all the parameters required to access them. It includes all the usernames and names of Clilstore authors, but he has removed email addresses and passwords (even though the passwords were encrypted anyway).

EfVET was attending the Successful cooperation between educators and entrepreneurs seminar in San Sebastian (Basque Country, ES). The seminar aims to activate, encourage and disseminate good cooperation practices between VET-HE/R-rural SMEs and collect new ideas. EfVET did a short presentation to some delegates and distributed leaflet and tshirt.

The TOOLS project may be over, but Clilstore workshops and demonstrations continue at Sabhal Mór Ostaig in Skye: Development of Multidict, Wordlink and Clilstore continues, as can be seen from the log file: http://www.smo.uhi.ac.uk/~caoimhin/obair/tools/log.html#bonn including improvements for Arabic, Breton, Czech, Welsh and Old Irish.

In METHODS the Maltese teams have already started the piloting courses, and have done a tremendous amount of work on the course manual, they are also assisting the other partners with valuable feedback, using their expertise in the fields of teacher training and computer assisted language learning. Read about the project progress and download the materials from http://languages.dk/methods
The 1st of September was the 1st day of work for us, teachers, in Guadeloupe. The students arrived on the 2nd of September. We’ve been working hard with all our colleagues to prepare this new school year for the benefits of the students. As far as the project is concerned, we worked on the translation of the books during our summer holidays but we also had a break and had a rest so as to cope with the new school year. We came back to the translation work as soon as the school year started.

Recently, the survey concerning the evaluation of the TBL Method has been conducted with Mrs Désirée’s students. The results show that the students mostly think that the method is very satisfactory. The equipment provided and the quality of the materials used were good, the instructions given by the teacher were excellent; finally, the time assigned to complete the tasks and the type of lesson were both good.

The Slovenian methods team started the first piloting course with their colleagues, the language teachers at Srednja Šola za gostinstvo in turizem Celje took part in a pilot course in May 2014. The Slovenian partners reported that they had great success with the Simulation method which proved to be a focal point in the participants’ interest and motivation. During the pilot course evaluation, the Slovenian team managed to gather nuggets of valuable information for the adaptation of the additional materials, such as lesson plan suggestions. Some interesting ideas for additional materials (lesson plans) already emerged during the first feedback session. The Slovenian team is also busy working on the mobility guidebook, making relevant changes and ensuring that all the information is up to date and user friendly.

Therefore, as shown by these results, the TBL method is an advantage for language teaching and clearly has the approval of the students.

The Pools Methods project is aimed at developing, adapting and translating 5 communicative foreign language-teaching methods for vocational education. On top of this the project consortium is working on a course guide, for the training of teachers in the use of these methods, along with a mobility placement guide for students planning an international work placement. We are currently preparing a roundtable event at the next EfVET annual conference in Portugal.

During the spring and summer all teams have been busy adapting the existing methods and their corresponding manuals, which they are now busy translating and getting ready to publish online. The manuals already exist in English, Danish, Italian and Turkish and with the new translations, they will soon be available in French, Slovenian and Maltese.

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The French partners in the French Caribbean are defying the heat and a packed schedule, and are working hard on the translations of the manuals into French. They have also been working on the adaptation of the Task Based Learning manual. The members of the French team are connoisseurs of task based learning, as this is the preferred method in most vocational schools in Guadeloupe. Their expertise in this field has been an asset to the consortium and for the adaptation of the manual.

During autumn 2014 the teams will be running pilot in-service training courses, and interested persons can contact the consortium for more information, should they be interested taking part in the workshops, or if you have a project that might benefit from clustering with us.

For more information contact project coordinator Cecilia Leboeuf at CLA5D@R.DK or read more about the project and download free to use language teaching materials on www.languages.dk

These last 6 months have been very busy for ETI with regard to Methods. After finishing the CALL handbook in March, the ETI team was tasked with peer reviewing and language-editing the other 4 manuals comprising METHODS:

- Simulations
- Task-Based Learning
- E-Tandem
- PhyEmoC

For the PhyEmoC manual, ETI wanted to bring in their own expertise in Teaching English as a Foreign Language, and after discussion with the Project Leader, decided to re-write the manual completely, bringing it up-to-date from its original form. Some of the techniques originally used had dated, and were replaced by other areas.

A wide range of activities was supplied for each section, and other worksheets for activities were added to the appendices.

Moreover, an introductory sector linking the theory behind the use of Physical, Emotional and Cultural activities to learning was explored and covered in some depth.

The other main area ETI has been heavily involved in is dissemination of METHODS to the teachers attending the
A large number of teachers from all over Europe, and outside Europe (Russia, Chile, China and Canada) were shown the Methods webpage, and the 5 Methods were explained. All the teachers were encouraged to follow the Methods Facebook page to be kept informed of any updates to the website. The number of teachers who listened to the talks since April, and received a Methods brochure totaled 220.

The group of teachers who attended the training were all lecturers at MCAST who teach students attending a vocational college. Two sessions were held with 5 participants in each. The participants were introduced to the Methods project and were given an overview of the aims involved. Information about each of the five methods was discussed with the participants, along with videos displaying the methods in practice, useful websites and different exercises which can be used with their students. The participants also had a chance to experience the methods in use by taking part in a Simulation exercise. The feedback received from the participants was very positive. From the results of the survey (Methods Survey – Teachers) it was clear that they especially enjoyed the opportunity to learn about different teaching methods and have a chance to practise them. They were also enthusiastic about being able to access websites and new material which was available online. Some helpful critical feedback was also given with regards to the format of the worksheets distributed where a suggestion was made that displaying information in table format would make the worksheet more accessible, especially to lower level students. When asked about which method they might use in the future, the preferred methods were Computer Assisted Language Learning, Task Based Learning and Simulation.

Based on the final results, it was evident that the participants benefitted from these sessions and are interested in using these methods with their students.

One of the tasks that MCAST was responsible for in this period of the Methods project was initiating a pilot course. This involves providing training with regards to the five different communicative language teaching methods outlined in the Methods project. The Slovenian Methods Team had a busy summer working on translations of the adapted manuals for 5 methods and the Course guide. SëGT Celje was also responsible for adapting the International Work Placement Guide (IWPG). Due to great changes in the programmes co-financed by the European Commission we found out that a lot of information and links in the IWPG to be adapted are out of date. The new Erasmus plus programme introduces new actions which replaced the former programmes supporting different types of mobility (Leonardo da Vinci, Comenius, Grundtvig etc). Therefore the team decided to create a new IWPG taking into account the above mentioned changes and to include the latest resources related to mobility partly available also as results of various EU projects. Some past and future mobility participants were involved in the preparatory phase, too. Their feedback on their experience respectively expectations will contribute to the contents of the new IWPG to meet the needs of mobility participants in the best possible way. The Methods project was disseminated via social media (posts on Facebook, Blog and Twitter) as well as at different meetings on the regional, national and international level (e.g. presentation of the LDV mobility project in Celje, regional Board of headmasters of secondary schools, international meeting of the VOCAL-MED project in Tralee, Ireland etc.).

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The METHODS project has been invited to Brussels on Monday September 29th for an event arranged by the French embassy, where Cecilia Leboeuf will present the project aims and objectives to decision takers and policy makers from France and overseas, the seminar is labelled: «RENFORCER MES CAPACITES D’INFLUENCEConnaître – Se faire connaître – Se faire reconnaître»

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E

TI are currently working on the CLIL4U Pre-Course, which involves an online course teachers will be able to do in order to develop their English, prior to doing the Face-to-Face Main Course.

In true CLIL fashion, we decided to use texts based on CLIL content, leading to language work arising from these texts. Teachers will therefore be learning both Content and Language. This technique, of learning about something through also experiencing it, is called Loop Input, and is a technique developed by Tessa Woodward (a well-known EFL innovator and writer, and ex President of IATEFL – the International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language). The beauty of this technique is that the learning becomes experiential.

We also decide to house the texts in CLILStore, to demonstrate the potential usefulness of CLILStore and MultiDict as tools. We are also preparing Grammar References to aid teachers in performing tasks, and have prepared a number of Interactive Online Exercises to practise what they learn. We will probably host these on a website we are designing for the CLIL4U Pre-Course.

C

CLIL WELCOMING PROJECT

The easy going days of summer have passed and a new school year started on September, 11th at IC Monte Grappa Bussero (Milan). The last weeks of vacation are already upon us and a new CLIL4U meeting is right around the corner. It’s time to prepare our pupils for the first term activities!

To warm up the classes a three days project has been organized for all the children of the Primary, around the EXPO Milano 2015 theme: “Feeding the Planet, Energy for life”, with different activities for each Year. The 3rd Year enjoyed a CLIL activity inspired by the use of lunchboxes to bring food at school, in many countries all around the World, particularly in India and Somalia. The pupils watched a short Indian movie in English “Stanley ka dabba” and saw photos of the Galkayo Education Center for Peace and Development in Somalia. Then the teachers, wearing traditional Somali dresses prepared for their little students Somali Tea and fruit juice with mango and spices such as cardamom.

A funny activity for developing intercultural competences and starting a new school year full of amazing experiences!!

Mrs Marilena Aurea, member of the CLIL4U staff at ICMG Bussero-Milan, wearing a traditional Somali dress, offers a Somali tea to her pupils during the clil welcoming project.

The CY team has finished the creation of the CLIL scenarios, already uploaded on the Internet, having as their subjects the vocational area of Culinary Arts and Mechanical and/or Electrical Engineering. To be more precise, the topics relate to “Fish” and “Photovoltaics”. The above named scenarios are scenarios to be used by anyone who wishes to get involved with the specific field by using CLIL as a method and the English as a second language to be used for teaching both the content and the language simultaneously. Corrections, as well as suggestions and feedback on the scenarios have been provided of course, by the other group members of the project.

Upon the finishing of the scenarios, the CY team got intrigued with the creation of our so called CLIL-Guide Book, which aims to inform/update/remind not only any language and/or subject teacher, but actually any person who wishes to find out information about CLIL. Skype meetings and collaboration have been fulfilled in order to set up the structure of the book and mainly the basic chapters of it, something that has been set. The structure of it will look like the following graph.

However, more FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions) are to be answered for a more vast coverage of people interested who might have doubts or questions. The aim for the book is to keep it as simple as possible and to the point so that it can be understandable by everybody (meaning also people who do not relate to the profession of the teacher; parents, students). In our next meeting in Malta, coming up soon, more work will be done on the CLIL-Guide Book before having it finished by this December.
TI has had a very busy, and highly productive, summer so far. Summer has always been, and will continue to be, the busiest period in the EFL industry. From May until September, the onslaught of trainees is like a tsunami continuously bringing more and more people to our little island for some form of personal or professional development. Summer in Malta also continues late into the year in comparison with the majority of Europe, but now our peak ‘Summer Period’ is beginning to draw to a close. And what a summer it has been! Following the conference in January, ETI have been running teacher training and development courses for teachers from around the globe over the Easter period and continuously through the summer months. We have had teachers from all over Europe, and even from as far as Chile, and all of these teachers have been duly informed about Clil4U. Some of the teachers are already actively involved in Clil whereas others recognise the benefits of using CLIL as a holistic approach to learning. Hot feedback has shown keen interest from the trainees and, although they may not yet be back at school, a willingness to try at least some of the ideas mentioned within the currently available scenarios. Many of our trainees have promised to contact us with some constructive feedback - both positive and negative. Having completed the language editing of the scenarios, we are currently working on designing and implementing the Clil4U Pre-Course which will be ready in September. With the first Clil4U course scheduled for the first quarter of next year, we are beginning to get things in order to progress to the next stage. We will also be helping the Cypriot team with their Clil guidebook.

In the meantime we are gearing up for the next conference which will be held in Malta at ETI and we are genuinely looking forward to welcoming the team to our little part of the world.

The first topic in English in 1. grade (7 years) and in German in 5. grade (11 years) this year was “chatterboxes”. They had never had English/German before and therefore we started with numbers and colors, but to make it more fun and to make them more active they were to make chatterboxes.

We showed the pupils pictures to illustrate most of the terms used in the later instructions and we had to do a lot of acting to help them understand what to do. In the end all pupils had made one chatterbox each and now they were ready to choose colors and numbers for the chatterbox. The more difficult part were now to come. The pupils had to fill out the inside with small sentences like “you are sweet” or “you are clever”. To help them we talked in class about what to write and from their suggestions we wrote the words on the whiteboard for them to choose from. When they had finish their chatterbox they had to try each others chatterboxes.

The main goals for the pupils in English/German for this topic were to learn the alphabet, name the colors and to speak small sentences (eg. “I choose number…” and “you are cool!”). The main goals in math were to learn the terms for geometric shapes (eg. square, triangle, diagonal line, corner) and to follow an instruction.

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During the last months STUCOM has been working on POOLS 3 Catalun Videos. It has been a good experience. We have followed different steps that we would like to share with teachers interested in creating their own educational videos.

First, we wrote the scripts of the dialogues, we thought that real situations should be presented, as for example asking for an address, booking a flight or buying a product. Then we selected the people involved in the acting: teachers, students. To do that we looked for the ones who had a good intonation and those who did not speak very fast. Then we selected the materials needed for each recording as maps, bags, computers, and even some trousers. Later we decided the best location for each video. Most of them were filmed indoors but the ones on touristic information were shot outdoors. Then we started shooting the videos. For some of them we did 2 or 3 video shots. When we did the shooting outdoors we used an external microphone because the sound was not good at all. Afterwards one of the teachers, made all the editing using the program that is available for Windows. When external sound had to be added, one of us clapped our hands so it was easier for the editing process to add the external sound when the clapping was heard. We asked students to work in the activity and to motivate their creative skills so when one of the students watched the first videos, she created the start and ending of all of them, she is a composer so she added her music to them. Things sometimes were not as easy as we thought so - when shooting the fourth video we realized that it was much easier for the actors to develop the dialogue giving them some hints because if they followed the initial scripts sometimes they were stressed and we had to spend a lot of time repeating the videos so we decided to write the final dialogues after the shooting and editing was finished.

Moreover, some videos had to be made several times because as Catalan is second language in Catalonia, some Spanish words were used so we did them again using the right Catalan words. The experience has been great and we really want to do it again.

One link to watch a video that was shot in the University of Barcelona and a picture taken before the shooting, the actors trying to remember the scripts: http://player.vimeo.com/video/100876161

As well as the other POOLS-3 Project partners, we were assigned a task of producing a video package with dialogues in simple Czech to be used for online teaching resources. We had a lot of fun preparing for the actual shooting. All the PELICAN staff involved met in one of the classrooms and started with video recording preparation. Setting up scenery and background was really pleasant of getting out of the standard job routine. The videos were shot without major problems. Of course, some funny moments like slips of the tongue and skipped lines occurred every once in a while. The videos can be found on the POOLS-3 Project YouTube channel. We hope you will like them because we really did our best to make interesting and funny videos.

In addition to producing the videos we want to consider the best ways of using them and complete our work in the form of language learning units in cooperation with participants of planned workshops. This is directly related to other PELICAN activities such as dissemination of information about the POOLS-3 and its outputs.

Staff in the School of Irish Language and Literature at the University of Ulster have initiated an exciting new community-focused programme to provide CALL tutorials to a range of schools and organisations throughout Northern Ireland. ‘CALL in the Community’ is a student-centered initiative designed to enable participating students at campuses in Belfast and Derry to benefit from the experience garnered by School staff through participation in the EACEA funded TOOLS for CLIL Teachers and POOLS3 projects. Through this initiative students receive training before taking a lead role in sharing their knowledge with younger children and young adults.
role themselves by actively disseminating and raising awareness of some of the methods and materials developed by the TOOLS for CLIL Teachers and POOLS3 projects. Students will visit local schools (both primary and post-primary) and community groups engaged in the study/promotion of Irish. This initiative has been mutually beneficial for all concerned, as the students gain vital practical experience in the use of CALL in authentic settings while the schools and community groups benefit from the latest developments in learning Irish through CALL.

Clilstore programmer Caoimhín Ó Donnaille (SMO) attended the recent POOLS-3 meeting in Brno to present the multiple functionalities of the platform and associated programs. It was a fascinating session, and over the course of the meeting all participants had the chance to experiment with the software. Caoimhín was also able to talk participants through the latest developments, including the file upload facility, which means that unit creators can now add Hot Potatoes exercises to their Clilstore units. Caoimhín produced a new unit himself, based on a poem by Níall Gordon, which highlights the one drawback of the new possibilities offered by Internet technologies - their potentially addictive properties! [http://multidict.net/cs/1611](http://multidict.net/cs/1611)

The Pelican team has prepared a new video which will be used during CALL courses stating that good teachers are born and not made renders personality the sole characteristic determining teachers’ success. Bearing in mind the attractive image of a teacher as an entertainer, it is not hard to agree with the statement, however, at the cost of condemning excellent educators who do not possess the capability to enliven crowds. Even though students certainly like teachers who make them laugh, amusement does not necessarily imply the occurrence of learning. However, even an ability to teach is a problematic aspect since it relies on the idea of transmitting knowledge directly from a teacher to students. This is often not the case in an effective classroom environment in which students take the responsibility for their own education.

A concept perhaps more apt for defining a teacher is that of a provider of suitable learning conditions. This foregrounds students’ needs while placing emphasis on characteristics sustaining progress. For example, the primary source of enjoyment should arise from properly developed activities rather than from teachers themselves. Similarly, if teachers limit their role to that of a guide through the various aspects of language, the attention is only diverted further from them.

Our students have expressed such needs during the past academic year rather clearly, considering their choices of extracurricular activities at PELICAN, by writing articles for the school magazine, doing interviews with bands, recording various videos, and getting acquainted with other cultures during international visits. Altogether, their main concern appears to lie within the boundaries of a successful communication, well outside the prototypical paradigm of passing a language exam.

An appropriate response could be to venture outside the comfort zone delineated by the simplified language of textbooks in order to explore authentic examples. Not only such input provides an inventory of prefabricated chunks as well as the opportunity to observe semantic prosody, both aspects successfully omitted by the usual choice of materials, a lexical syllabus also includes the central areas of grammar. However, as a significant portion of such content depends on the learners, it makes one wonder where the next course will end ([From the pools-3 blog](http://multidict.net/cs/1611)).

The EU funded project Video for ALL is almost ready for your help. We need language educators to help with their ideas and the testing of the ‘Video in language learning, best practices’. Find out more and how you can join us as an Associate Partner on our sign up form at [https://app.box.com/s/x6w83aa351vtox9kr](https://app.box.com/s/x6w83aa351vtox9kr).
the TOOLS Legacy in Ireland

The TOOLS for CLIL Teachers project set itself a series of complex goals ranging from the development of cutting edge software solutions for creating multimedia webpages with ease, to the design of paradigm shifting approaches to Content and Language Integrated Learning. These goals were articulated for the specific needs of a broad range of educational sectors and were accompanied by an ambitious set of targets relating to the training of content and language teachers and the production of sample materials in the project languages. The target numbers for teachers trained and sample units produced were well exceeded throughout the partnership and many new unforeseen applications for the software, and interested parties were identified during the lifetime of the project. One area which proved to be particularly productive for the TOOLS project team at Ulster was the partnerships developed with Irish Language publishers and media organisations such as Comhaltas Uladh, Nuacht24 and RTÉ Raidió na Gaeltachta. The approach adopted at Ulster was to demonstrate the affordances of Clilstore for learners of Irish at all levels, and then to discuss the potential for using the texts, audio and video archives of these organisations as the basis of future Clilstore units. The organisations in question all demonstrated a remarkable level of goodwill towards the project by either granting permission to use their materials immediately or by agreeing to enter into further discussions on how to collaborate going forward.

Despite the summer period we at SUPSI have been quite busy over the last few months. Our business studies department organized a one-week programme in July - Fashion & Luxury Sustainability Summer School - conducted completely in English. In order to help the students prepare for this intensive course, we were asked to hold some preparatory lessons with the aim of ensuring that the students had read and understood all the required pre-course papers, and that they had an understanding of the key concepts involved.

These lessons were held by Jan Hardie, implementing CLIL-type techniques, and the student feedbacks were positive. We have also planned together with a marketing lecturer to conduct some of his classes this academic year in English, focusing on the key terminology related to the field of study. He will provide the content, and, as language teachers, we will assist in designing activities and exercises that will focus on the development of both content and language. Should this experiment be successful, we hope to extend the experience to other course modules.

The new academic semester has now begun, so we are thinking about our next scenarios, and looking forward.