News

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Teachers and students in Lithuania making use of TOOLS outcomes during courses

Languages:

Arabic
Basque
Danish
Dutch
English
French
Gaelic
German
Greek
Irish
Italian
Lithuanian
Maltese
Portuguese
Romanian
Spanish
Turkish

Hop on board and join the pools teams

The TOOLS social networks expand their followers and likes

"446 people saw your post"… This is an example of just one post's statistics on the Tools4clil Facebook page, namely a post about courses in Marijampol (Lithuania) during which the Clilstore system was introduced to a group of foreign language teachers of the region.

The project FB pages have at least 200 friends/likes and the numbers are growing each day. Tools4clil LinkedIn group, which has 108 members, is open for discussions, polls and sharing views among language professionals, from all over the world.

The social networks- FB and LinkedIn as well as Twitter have proven to be very effective in spreading the message about the Tools project and CALL methods in many countries. The Tools pages promote Clilstore and CLIL methods, but since the tool is based on IT, it is relevant to language teachers- those who are involved in content and language integrated teaching methods (CLIL) and those who use IT in their classes generally.

The Tools team welcomes the growing family of Clilstore users and the growing excitement in anticipation of the fully completed system to be introduced to this multinational community of language professionals.

You are invited to read posts and comment on Tools4clil blog on tools4clil.wordpress.com/ You are also welcome to be authors in our blog and publish your own articles.

We have found that one of Gordon Wells's "Guthan nan Eilean videos" Island Voices (http://multidict.net/cs/773) is used as an illustration in the chapter on Multilingualism in a new online book on linguistics and endangered Languages: http://alturl.com/y2p6a (see it in red, near the end of the page). N.B. the whole online book is very good.

Tools (2012-2014) a KA2 project

Clilstore warmly received accross Europe

All the TOOLS teams want to deliver courses on how to use the online service Clilstore. In March Kent Andersen from SDE will run a small course for a language school in Rome "Percorsi d'Italiano", which offers custom language courses to take students beyond the mere assimilation of grammar rules. Students come into direct contact with everyday life in Italy, through both practical and cultural experiences. Tools teams offer free courses in Denmark, Ireland, Lithuania, Portugal, Spain, and Scotland. But other countries may be covered whenever we are there (often as part of project meetings or conferences as was the case with "Percorsi d'Italiano")

A visit with a group of teachers to Italy resulted in the invitation to demonstrate Clilstore to a language school

You can meet three of the TOOLS teams at the Worldcall conference, which will be hosted by the University of Ulster and held at the Scottish Exhibition Centre in Glasgow, Scotland. Congratulations, Glasgow! WorldCALL 2013 will be held July 10-13, 2013. See http://www.worldcall2013.org/ TOOLS and Clilstore will be presented by Caoimhín O Donaill with a paper presentations and a workshop

The simulation AIRPORT is now making use of Clilstore: The English version of the five profiles are available online with all words linked to dictionaries in +100 languages:
http://multidict.net/cs/939,
http://multidict.net/cs/938,
http://multidict.net/cs/937,
http://multidict.net/cs/936,
http://multidict.net/cs/935
To work with the simulation you need to print out the map squares and a table from
http://alturl.com/4jsu5

A group of teachers testing Airport

Airport can now, when supported by the units in Clilstore, be used by students with a language competence around level A2 (European Language Portfolio).

The simulation can be played in groups with three to five students (if less than five in a group then some students will have to have more than one profile in the simulation). The simulation is self explanatory; each student is given a text with a personal profile (or read it from Clilstore), the students read and inform the other group members about the content.

When all members of a group know the given information the success of the group in the simulation depends on following the information and having a proper strategy. The students should not be allowed to speak their own language

during the simulation. To play the simulation the students need 81 map squares. Each square has a top side with a number, the squares represent parts of a land map. The students can move across the map by choosing squares, when a square is chosen the students turn around the map square to see the bottom side which has information. Before class the teacher should print the file with the map squares and cut these out.
Airport is Copyleft and the five profiles are available in eight languages. You are very welcome to mail new translations to ka@sde.dk

Students from an Erasmus Intensive Language Course at the University of Évora

An Erasmus Intensive Language Course took place at the University of Évora between the 21st of January and the 8th of February. We had 17 students from Spain, Italy, Hungary, Czech Republic and Poland. These were 17 very enthusiastic young men and women who were preparing themselves for a semester in Portugal. They came from diferente areas, such as architecture, archaelogy, finances, psychology, tourism… so they had diferente ways of looking at the learning of a foreign language.

These students were asked to try the online units available on Clilstore. So, after a full day of classes, they were given time to explore Portuguese on their own. Every day from 16h30 to 18h30 students had the chance not only to explore the existing units on Clilstore, but were also encouraged to create new ones. Their favourite unit was "Amor de estudante", but they

Latest news: How to teach beginners of Arabic

also practiced their language skills "Vou às compras" and "O quarto de uma estudante universitária". And the unit about the Alphabet was very useful to practice the sounds of the portuguese language. About Clistore one of them said that it is "Easy to find & understand words." Anther enphasized how quick it was when you want to understand a text: "It was easy to use, fast." One of the points made was that Clilstore gives the possibility "(…) to read and translate on the same webpage". As for the downsides of the Clilstore area one criticism was very common: "It was cold in the computer room". Well, unfortunately Clilstore did not come with a heating system! It was a very cold room, but still students enjoyed their time there. In more than one occasion we had to let them know that it was past the time.

Students from an Erasmus Intensive Language Course at the University of Évora receiving project T-shirts

The Arab Spring on Clilstore
Have you ever considered how to explain what the Arab Spring is to an Arabic beginners' class – that is, in Arabic? Using a blended learning approach including two learning units from Clilstore this has been tried out in an Arabic beginners' class at University of Southern Denmark.

By focusing on simple vocabulary, storytelling, repetitive explanations and pictures the teacher attempted to convey a sense of what the Arab Spring was to two classes of beginners' Arabic. Included in the lessons were two learning units from Clilstore, namely a song with a slogan used in the Arab Spring and a list of basic information on the reasons behind the Arab Spring.

The Clilstore learning units were used to make the students work

independently with a complex subject. As the students have only been studying Arabic for a half a year they are not yet able to read long texts in Clilstore. The focus was therefore on a limited amount of words in both of the learning units, where, for example, the students were asked to only find out the meaning of words starting with the Arabic equivalent to 'the'; that is, to focus on the idioms rather than comprehending whole sentences.

The information the students obtained from working with the Clilstore learning units were used as, respectively, a catchy example of one among several slogans and as the background for a fictive story on a corrupt political system and youth unemployment.

"Bread, freedom and social justice", the young guy is singing. You can listen to the catchy tune on Clilstore, http://multidict.net/cs/365

On the 18th of February, 2013 Marijampoles profesinio rengimo centras team of TOOLS project introduced Clilstore and the whole project system to a large group of Marijampole teachers of foreign languages. The course was advertised through the Department of Education of Marijampole Administration, and at least 18 teachers registered for the course and tested the Clilstore system. The workshop took place in Marijampole VET Centre with teachers from our institution participating as well. The group was really big-20 teachers occupied every seat of IT class, because for Clilstore we certainly needed internet connection. We were glad to welcome teachers of various ages and representing different schools. A pleasant surprise was seeing teachers not only from Marijampole town, but from smaller towns of the region as well.

Teachers from high schools usually don't work with CLIL method, because in Lithuania the decision to apply it belongs as a rule to the country's general policies of education. And the choice at smaller scale has to be made by the administration of the institution and included in the curriculum. However, the teachers were pleased to discover multiple ways of applying the tool simply to teach their subject- a foreign language. Most teachers ensure that language is taught/learnt by topics, e.g. family, school, eating out, travel, etc. The Clilstore and the system offer an interesting supplement to the items and exercises provided by textbooks. Moreover, every teacher agreed that each class has its own "eager" students, who cope with every task much quicker than the rest of the group and are asking for more all the time. Clilstore is an attractive way to satisfy those eager students. They can be involved in the topics to suit their specific interests, thus building their intercultural knowledge and understanding. The key issue is that the learner is gaining new knowledge about the 'non-language' subject while encountering, using and learning the foreign language, and this process of language learning is simplified through engagement in "real life" stories and issues, that the students can choose themselves. The choice on Youtube, TED and other popular networks don't show any signs of short supply. In the workshop the language teachers' community of the region was represented by specialists of the English, German and Russian languages.

Join the project from its FaceBook page: www.facebook.com/ tools4clil

Lifelong Learning

My Clilstore in MPRC: Before introducing the Clilstore to my students at MPRC (Marijampole VET Centre) I wasn't really sure they would like it, because rejection is a very common genuine reaction of some, especially when you talk about something new. However to my great surprise I discovered that there is a huge number of students who are not only very positive about innovations in the classroom, but actually look forward to something new, especially if we talk about IT. Here I remember a thought that was quoted by Kent Andersen about our students being "computer natives", while the older generation of teachers – "computer immigrants". My students turned out 100% proof of this!

According to some students, it is boring to sit in the classroom with a textbook in your hand, while Clilstore gives entirely different experience. It is true that the experience is great and that the students learn without any particular stress in the process. On the other hand, it is also true that the preparation requires more commitment from the teacher. However, no matter how much preparatory work it would require, Clilstore is an excellent program for every language teacher and undoubtedly a great help to each student in the class. Learning foreign languages through sounds, videos and images is an incomparable experience for the student, while for the teacher the programme is much easier to use than most would think. After my first try, I use it quite often, and during the 1st semester of the school year 2012/2013 more than 30 students tested the Clilstore program. "Wow! It's interesting and easy to work with!" With these words students always finish the lesson. They are happy because at the same time they can watch videos, listen to sounds, read the entire text and translate the words they do not understand. Teachers have the possibility to observe students entirely captured by the working process, which is really fun. They also enjoy watching videos together with their students and get the students' view on many things, including views and ideas, connected to their future profession. Simona Dapkknait

The University of Évora ready for Eurocall 2013 and TOOLS

Meet the TOOLS teams in Évora, Portugal at Eurocall 2013. Yoy can read all about the Eurocall conference in ÉVORA, Portugal 11th to 14th September 2013 http://alturl.com/banzu where the TOOLS teams will run a half-day workshop on how to apply CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) with the support of the free software service which we are developing.

An Interactive eBook: The TOOLS teams have started the work on the CLIL book, which will show how to use Clilstore in a pedagogical sound context. The book will be available in .pdf format and as a REAL eBook. The eBook will be in five languages and will make use of video demonstrations with soundtrack in these languages, this means that the user will be able to read the eBook on any smartphone or tablet and watch the example videos without need for Internet access.

On 24-25 January Caoimhín Ó Dónaill and Neil Comer from the Ulster Tools team travelled to the University of Southampton, England to deliver a Clilstore workshop at the Centre for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies' (LLAS) annual eLearning Symposium. The workshop drew a capacity crowd who were made up of course developers and teachers of a wide variety of languages. The feedback the participants provided following the workshop was very positive, and we are particularly grateful for the constructive recommendations for improvement which we received from the group.

Transparency has been one of the key elements in all the POOLS projects. This means that all project documents are available for download from the project website www.languages.dk/archive.html. This means that anyone can download the Progress Report both the public part and the one, which is labelled "confidential". We have also put online the interim Quality Management Report from our external quality expert. All outcomes are copyleft and anyone is allowed to use, copy, and repurpose the results as long as new versions remain copyleft. Which also means that anyone is allowed to transfer the results of POOLS projects in "Transfer of Innovation Projects"