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

Hop on board and join the pools teams

The Cy team (Intercollege) along with the Maltese team at ETI have completed their task on the preparation of the Clil4U Guide book that is now available online: http://alturl.com/7j87e

In the meantime the Cy team has also finished the translation of the book in Greek as the rest of the teams did of course in their languages. This resulted in a six-language translation of the guide book also available online and also as an e-book for anybody to access/use.

Pools-3 teacher training courses are now accredited by Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport in the Czech Republic. Please, find the accreditation attached. This will help increase the attractiveness of the programme for teachers.

We also planned together with 2 business studies lecturers to conduct some of their classes this academic year in English, focusing on the key terminology related to the field of study. The lecturers provide the content, and, as language teachers, we assist in designing activities and exercises that focus on the development of both content and language. The student feedback (on line survey) at the end of the first semester was positive, and the project will probably be continued in the following academic years.

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Methods warmly received across Europe and Guadeloupe

Since the last article, we are still making significant steps towards the dissemination of the Methods. We finally had the second training session with the academic thinktank on January 16th 2015. They were completely won over by the practical activities related to the Methods. They advised us to launch an academic training session for the 4 academic areas of Guadeloupe under the supervision of our School Inspector. All the Vocational Schools of Guadeloupe will be aware of the Methods and will be asked to implement them as soon as possible and give us feedbacks.

We had 2 meetings (on February 3rd and 10th 2015) with the representatives of the « Mairie de Morne-à-l’Eau » to determine the roles of each partners in the dissemination process. Indeed, if the teachers of LRGA are responsible for the dissemination on an academic basis, the partner « Mairie de Morne-à-l’Eau » will focus on the non-academic part of the dissemination process. The latter will also provide a place for all the training sessions to be held. We also decided to include Methods in the school project so that it will soon appear on the school website. An article and pictures of this meeting are available on the website of «Mairie de Morne-à-l’Eau» http://alturl.com/xcp9a

Finally, the translation of the IWP Guide and Portfolio was completed for the end of February and we are now preparing for Malta and the rest of the dissemination process while waiting for the training calendar to be set up by our School Inspector and Headteacher.

The Methods project has now reached and passed the half-way mark and the positive results from the interim report have arrived. We are pleased to announce that the project has been given the green light to continue for the remaining part of the planned project period!

The Methods consortium is now already focusing on the next half of the work packages, which is getting the teacher training courses started and focusing on dissemination and exploitation of results. We are also working on testing the project’s method manuals for the 5 methods and a course guide for teachers wishing to teach the Methods to other parties. These texts not only exist in English but have also been translated into French, Maltese and Slovenian. An English version of an International Work Placement Guide, which will help international coordinators, teachers, students and others working with youths in vocational education and assisting them before, during and after a work placement abroad, is also ready to download on http://www.languages.dk/methods/

During autumn of 2014 all the partners carried out a series of pilot teacher training courses, and the results from the evaluations were examined and used to improve the contents and approaches of the teacher training courses that will be held in 2015. These results will add to the quality of the content and methods applied to the upcoming courses.

The consortium and the Danish team at SDE College have been disseminating the project, and apart from sending out information to network and contacts, they have also participated in events and conferences to present the project results and opportunities. One of these events resulted in a language school in Copenhagen expressing interest in receiving a visit from the methods project, and a course will be held for the teachers of Studiestokolen. This school teaches foreign languages to adults, and they are very interested in learning more about the PhyEmoC and Simulation methods.

On February 26th and 27th EfVET participated in the Cost-effectiveness of apprenticeship schemes seminar in Bratislava, Slovakia. The seminar objectives were: To help national employers in the target countries make concrete improvements towards well-functioning apprenticeship schemes. Ms. Valentina Chanina presented Methods and distributed the latest newsletter and showed the Pools website, blog and Facebook.

The participants showed great interest in outcomes, especially the ability when you work with migrant workers from different countries.
Latest news: The Work Placement Guide is ready

During the European Week of Languages, the Methods team presented the project at the ministry of foreign affairs in Copenhagen, where a great deal of interest was generated. One contact that was especially interested, was from the ECML (European Centre for Modern Languages). The Danish representative for the ECML has invited the Methods project to present the approaches to language learning in vocational education at a conference at the University College of Northern Jutland in March. They have also invited the Methods project to be added to their resources database, as well as presenting the project results to the European Language Portfolio. The Danish team is working on creating a link between the Methods project and the European Language Portfolio, hopefully resulting in the contents being added to their resource database also.

The next project meeting in Malta is also drawing close. This means that all the partners will be meeting again, to evaluate the contents of the project, the manuals that have been translated and how the consortium has used these in their respective institutions, as well as the planning of the teacher training courses. During the meeting, the partners will participate in a small teacher-training course for Maltese teachers. This will be a great opportunity for the partners to put their ideas, knowledge of the methods and teaching styles into practice. It will also be a great opportunity for the teachers to observe and evaluate each other, and get new inspiration for their own courses.

To support students during Work Placement the teams have prepared a portfolio that will be used by the students during their preparation and actual work placement periods. The International Work Placement Portfolio can be downloaded from:

http://alturl.com/ypyr9

The members of the team prepared the materials for piloting the Methods courses which will start in March 2015. The first course will be implemented with the language teachers of regional primary schools – a result of our dissemination activity at the meeting of headmasters of primary schools, organized by the National Education Institute of the Republic of Slovenia.

SGT Celje: This period was very intensive for the Slovenian team. We completed the International Work Placement Guide (IWPG) which was completely rewritten taking into account the new Erasmus+ programme, particularly the KA1 action-mobility of VET learners and staff. Compared with the IWPG developed in the previous Pools project new chapters were added for the target groups IWP coordinators and mentors in host companies thus including all parties involved in a mobility action / work placement abroad: students, coordinators and mentors. The tasks for each target group cover the periods before, during and after the work placement. The new IWP Guide is a collection of tips with an overview of the main tasks for all three target groups and many useful links to further resources of information rather than an exhaustive guide. The innovative aspect is represented by an additional product to accompany the IWP Guide – the International Work Placement Portfolio (IWPP) for students.

Download the guide from:
http://alturl.com/u5tc7

Why not take a really active role in the Methods project and join the teams by taking part in the debates and activities from the project Facebook page:

https://www.facebook.com/Pools.methods
Clil4U teams are busy running the first online CLIL courses

On March 3rd and 4th, Kroggårdsskolen was part of Danmarks læringsfestival (Denmark’s learning festival) in Bella Centret, Copenhagen. We had our own stand and we were placed between other schools with different learning development projects.

We are at the moment writing about our project for our schools homepage to ensure that it is possible to read about the project there. It’s going to look really good with plenty of pictures from the different scenarios the students have tested.

A Spanish school has contacted us, and they are interested in the CLIL-method and the way we teach in Denmark. They will be visiting us in late May this year to hear more about CLIL and to see a class working with the method.

The course has been finalised and teachers can now access this site and learn English, without any further teacher input.

ETI has also been very actively involved in the CLIL Guide Book, which we worked upon with the team in Cyprus. This CLIL Guidebook is now also online on the Clil4U webpage, and downloadable either in PDF or e-Pub format.

The other deliverable ETI has finished for Clil4U is the construction of an online Blended Learning course about CLIL. This consists of 10 online modules which teachers can follow in their own time. After the online component, teachers could attend a one day face-to-face course about CLIL. After the F2F part, teachers will be asked to do an assignment, which will lead to the planning and design of a CLIL lesson.

The website for the Blended Learning course is: http://alturl.com/7jo5s

The establishment of evaluation grids, that consider assessment as a result of the arithmetic sum of two scores is not new at ICMG, where similar record sheets are already in use at the Secondary School. However the model we wanted to try out for Clil4U classes has some points of interest: a distinction between short-term outcomes and competences maintained after a longer period of time; a meaningful enhancement in terms of scoring for abilities of working in a team, care carrying out a work, creativity. But the children age (from 6 to 10 years old) encouraged ICMG teachers toward an assessment not exclusively...
or markedly focused on academic skills. In the grids that the ICMG is experiencing, there is the desire to convey the message that kids need to learn content and concepts, English words, both in the short and in the long term; but that it’s equally important for them to work together as a team, treat the writing and colouring in their work, get involved by the topic. Eventually students who study with CLIL4U scenarios, know that they have to work hard and that they will be evaluated, but teachers help them to live this learning experience with a playful and engaging attitude, differently from what might happen for older pupils from the secondary.

During last month, Intercollege got involved in several dissemination activities including two presentations on the CLIL4U project (one took place at the A’ Technical High-School of Nicosia and the other at the University of Nicosia) both as part of day seminars/workshops aiming at the Teachers’ development. Overall more than 70 people have attended our presentations and more than 100 have received information about the project and taken our brochure in English and Greek. The teachers of the primary schools and especially the vocational schools have shown great interest in the CLIL method, therefore future contact will be made after our 3rd meeting in Malta in March. A video with an interview of one of our content teachers who supports the method of CLIL, is also available on https://vimeo.com/112289876

In December 2014 the Cy team created a new scenario regarding Office Administration and during this month, February 2015, it has been intrigued with the translation of all of its scenarios made in Greek. At the same time we have made some posts on Facebook concerning our actions on the project and we still continue to apply the CLIL method in our classes where possible.

Vocational education is no longer just for young adults coming out of Secondary education in the hopes of achieving a certificate, diploma or degree in a vocational trade. MCAST has seen an influx of returning adult students, students from member EU countries and also asylum seekers / refugees coming to our many institutes. Their aim is to develop their knowledge and skills which will make them more competent and employable. Their unique perspectives to education allow us to understand how people learn and experience education across Europe, the Middle East and Africa. Using this knowledge we are able to better prepare our students to work together cooperatively in a diverse environment. We are opening our doors to make education diverse and breaking down cultural barriers in the process.

Learning is a universal pursuit. This is evident from the IEEE class demonstration of testing circuits. A lecturer can pair students within the same class and at the same time between different nationalities. A Maltese and a Somali student working side by side to connect and test electrical circuits is an exciting sight. Students can cope with language barriers and challenges associated with accents and technical vocabulary translation. Working together can help students learn and develop their understanding of specific terms. Another key component to our diverse educational system is that the previous work and school experiences of students are shared and in turn, assist to develop greater vocational and personal understanding.

MCAST multi-lingual and multi-cultural belief

Two Asylum Seekers from Africa attending a CLIL based course at MCAST

ICMG Infant School - For the 1st time at Bussero a CLIL4U scenario "Fruit and Veg" has been presented to five-year old children by Teacher Rosi Spina!! Read more from: https://www.facebook.com/Clil4U

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Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, Scotland’s Gaelic College, and Ulster University have been working together on community-based recording and computer-assisted language learning (CALL) for three years now, starting with the European TOOLS project – which itself grew out of earlier POOLS projects in which Sabhal Mòr Ostaig had already been involved, and out of which Island Voices/Guthann nan Eilean developed - and continuing with POOLS-3. So the recent Irish visit (https://guthanna.wordpress.com/2014/10/29/guthanna-na-noilean/) to Benbecula can be seen as part of a wider collaborative venture, in which similarities (and differences) between Irish and Scottish Gaelic are explored, with the aim of developing practical solutions to common problems.

Another side to this work can be seen in the online publication of a joint paper – "CALL Support in Context: Contrasting Approaches in Irish and Scottish Gaelic" - written by Gordon Wells and Caoimhín Ó Dónaill(http://alturl.com/8sz4w).

In the Scottish section the paper draws substantially on community-level work and research that has been conducted in parallel with Island Voices over the past few years. The Irish section, then, discusses the need for pedagogical projects such as TOOLS to demonstrate an acute awareness of the sociocultural and sociolinguistic needs of their target users. It is available online in the Research/Reports http://alturl.com/zv4rp section of the Island Voices site, or by visiting: http://alturl.com/8kq69

Pools-3 was also presented last January in the presentation of another Erasmus+ project EUapps4us in Elazig, Turkey. There we could share our project among teachers and managers from Lithuania and Norway and representatives of the Ministry of Education of Elazig.

In January 2015 Caoimhín Ó Dónaill of the Ulster POOLS3 team delivered a workshop based on the POOLS3 Introduction to CALL and Course Units Catalogue for 20 Chinese teachers from Confucius Institute Northern Ireland, based at Ulster University. The teachers work in primary and secondary schools throughout Northern Ireland teaching Chinese language and culture. The training focused on the suite of tools available at www.multidict.net and on using the planning and evaluation templates developed by the POOLS3 project. The trainees were impressed not only by the pedagogical underpinning the POOLS3 project outputs provide for teachers using CALL and multimedia resources, but also with the potential benefits the tools at www.multidict.net provided for the easy creation of materials to assist with the content and language based elements of Confusius Institute’s teaching syllabus. Prior to the workshop Caoimhín Ó Donnaile of the SMO POOLS3 team had conducted extensive trialling of dictionaries supporting Chinese-English-Chinese consultations, as a result the workshop participants were treated to a dynamic new teaching resource which they were previously unaware of and which could also help them personally in their acquisition of English.

You can get more updates from the project Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/
Below you can read about some of the Language Projects that the POOLS members find interesting. You too can make use of our newsletter to share your results with our registered users. The POOLS newsletter is mailed four times every year to approximately 850 registered readers, 2000 vocational teachers through the EFVET network and website (www.efvet.org) and 2200 schools through the CRCE network, website, and magazine (http://www.red2001.com/)

We greatly appreciate when fellow projects offer to share their ideas with the visitors of the pools project web. If you want us to make your project results available to our users then please e-mail Kent Andersen at ka@sde.dk. Please include a short text to go with the link, a similar link from your project to the pools portal is of course appreciated.

Lingu@network is a new project to involve users in Lingu@netWorldwide. Lingu@net is a website to promote language learning, a multilingual virtual resource centre developed over more than 10 years by language, information and technical experts worldwide. It offers 5,000 online resources in 100s of languages and is searchable in over 30 languages.

For the TEACHER: Interact with other teachers, comment on your experience in class (face to face or online), Suggest new resources to help other colleagues!, and Learn from the experience of the Lingu@netteacher community!

For the STUDENT: Search and find the resources you are looking for in the language you want!, Help other students by adding resources that you have found useful!, and Join a community of learners across the world!

For the LANGUAGE RESOURCECENTRE: Have access to a worldwide community of multilingual resources!, Share your expertise in language teaching!, and Interact with other centres in Europe and beyond!

Lingu@network website: http://www.linguonet-worldwide.org
By e-mail: enquires@languagescompany.com

Pools of Online Open Learning Systems

In order to communicate in a second language, as the majority of researchers point out, oral ability plays a key role. But this ability is often considered to be the hardest to acquire. It is not enough to take grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation lessons. One must also practice. But practicing implies the need for other people, people who are not always available to the learner.

ABELIUM has two primary aims: The improvement of language skills relevant on the job market in order to improve European competitiveness and employability and to improve the way that adults learn second languages.

The Bebelium website is http://www.babelium-project.eu

Read about other interesting projects from: http://languages.dk/cooperations.html