

Tools

www.languages.dk

Tools for CLIL Language Teachers

Progress Report

Public Part

Project information

Project acronym: Tools
Project title: Tools for CLIL Language Teachers
Project number: 517543-LLP-2011-DK-KA2-KA2MP
Sub-programme or KA: KA2
Project website: www.languages.dk

Reporting period: From 01/01/2012
To 28/02/2013

Report version: 1
Date of preparation: 01/03/2013

Beneficiary organisation: Syddansk Erhvervsskole Odense Vejle

Project coordinator: Kent Andersen
Project coordinator organisation: Syddansk Erhvervsskole Odense Vejle
Project coordinator telephone number: 0045 40797720
Project coordinator email address: ka@sde.dk

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission.

This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

© 2008 Copyright Education, Audiovisual & Culture Executive Agency.

The document may be freely copied and distributed provided that no modifications are made, that the source is acknowledged and that this copyright notice is included.

Executive Summary

CLIL and LWUTL teachers depend on developing own resources (EURYDICE 2005 report “Key Data on Teaching Languages at School in Europe”) and “There will be a shift from passive consumption of ready-made programmes to independent building of content, tailor made for specific groups or individuals” (The ICC report “The Impact of New Information Technologies and Internet on the Teaching of Foreign Languages).

To help solve the above needs the project is developing an easy to use free online service / tool (Clilstore), which enables language teachers from LdV, Erasmus, and Grundtvig sectors to create multimedia webpages for language learning with all words automatically linked to online dictionaries in +100 languages.

The advantage of a fully online tool is that it works from all existing and future operating systems (not just Microsoft), it enables creation of language learning multimedia webpages from and to mobile devices like tablets (e.g. iPads).

The users can make the resulting webpages immediately online for free through the developed system or download them for uploads to their own websites.

The resulting webpages support all UTF8 characters so it may be used for languages like Lithuanian and Arabic.

The project teams demonstrate the system strengths by making exemplary language learning materials for Arabic, Danish, Irish Gaelic, Scottish Gaelic, Lithuanian, Portuguese, and Spanish.

The dissemination channels are through www.languages.dk (120,000 users/year), social media, ten newsletters, EfVET, CILT, Worldcall, and Eurocall conferences, pilot courses, and associated partners.

Exploitation will during the project period target 560 language teacher students and teachers (and thus ultimately language learners). Free online courses will continue to take place after the project period through e.g. “Webheads” and the associated project partners. Minimum target: +2,000 language teachers.

Table of Contents

1. PROJECT OBJECTIVES.....	5
2. PROJECT APPROACH.....	7
3. PROJECT OUTCOMES & RESULTS	9
4. PARTNERSHIPS	10
5. PLANS FOR THE FUTURE.....	12
6. CONTRIBUTION TO EU POLICIES	13

1. Project Objectives

The project teams create a fully online and free service with exemplary online resources for the LWUTL and run in-service development and methodological courses

CLIL is used extensively for teaching LWUTL (less widely used and taught languages), and VOLL (vocationally oriented language learning) including regional and minority languages as evidenced in the EURYDICE report “Key Data on Teaching Languages at School in Europe 2008”.

A EURYDICE survey in 2006 “Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) at School in Europe” states in chapter 5 that one of the “Factors inhibiting general implementation” is the lack of appropriate teaching materials geared to CLIL and the high cost of introducing CLIL. Also, “Finding teaching materials geared to CLIL is not easy for schools and “seeking and preparing appropriate materials (especially for new target languages) leads to additional work for the teachers involved.” The many years of experience with computer assisted language learning and CLIL in the partnership have shown that the main obstacle to successful implementation of CLIL is the lack of relevant and suitable materials and the time-consuming task of compiling such materials. It is therefore one of the project objectives to enable any language teacher to create online teaching materials and in minutes to be able to convert existing materials to online units where all words are linked to online dictionaries.

Two of the consortium partners developed a desktop tool (in a Leonardo project), which can convert a text into webpages where all words are linked to online dictionaries in +100 languages. The tool, TextBlender, works well with Western European characters, but has neither support for Eastern European languages nor Arabic. Another issue is that the TextBlender only works with Windows based computers, this means that about 25% of all language teachers and learners (using e.g. Linux, Unix, Mac OS, SunOS, FreeBSD and AIX) cannot make use of the software. This percentage will rise in 2011 and beyond with the increasing popularity of mobile devices like tablets (e.g. iPads).

The lack of ICT expertise among teachers also inhibits the creation of tailored online resources, as the results have to be uploaded to a website making use of FTP or similar devices (Eurydice Key Data on Information and Communication Technology in Schools in Europe 2004: “Teachers do not yet as a matter of course acquire skills in the use of ICT for educational purposes during their initial training, even though various in-service training programmes have been introduced..”)

The solution proposed is a fully online and free service, where a teacher (or student!) can paste in text, select the language of the text, add graphics and video (if required) and then with one click automatically create an online webpage - in less than five minutes. Like the TextBlender the new online service seamlessly links all words to multitudes of online free dictionaries in +100 languages and it supports all language characters (UTF8) including Arabic (right to left writing). See an example of a text which has been run through the online service: <http://multidict.net/cs/790>

The development of the online service matches the strategies and needs of the partnership as all the partners are involved in computer assisted language learning and CLIL.

The project is creating exemplary online resources for the LWUTL presented in the partnership (a KA2 priority) as well as creation of online resources for teaching two pairs of neighbour country languages (a KA2 priority) - Irish + Scottish Gaelic and Spanish +

Portuguese. Two of the partner institutions are involved in teaching languages that are not supported by the existing tool (Lithuanian and Arabic).

The proposed outcome and service match acknowledged needs across the EU, e.g. two of the specific objectives set out in Article 1.3 of the LLL-Programme Decision are to promote language learning and linguistic diversity and to support the development of innovative ICT-based content, services, pedagogies and practice for lifelong learning.

The partnership will in 2013 and 2014 run in-service methodological courses on the use of the online service in a task based and / or CLIL context. This is needed as several LWUTL teachers are often not educated as language teachers (The European Language Learning Materials Survey - December 2000: "Many felt that lower level course materials for LWUTL were rarely communicative in nature, which they attributed to the fact that teachers of LWUTL have little pedagogical and methodological training". CLIL teachers will likewise benefit from the planned courses (EURYDICE report Key Data on Teaching Languages at School in Europe 2008: "In very few countries do education authorities oblige teachers to have special qualifications to contribute to CLIL-type provision.").

2. Project Approach

Development is based on project workshops, online cooperation, and online-shared documents.

The development of the software / online system is taking place in cyclical approaches running A to D:

A -the partners compile task sheets describing features, behaviour, and interface for the proposed system and the output (the generated webpages for language learning).

B -the software developer Caoimhín Ó Donnaíle (SMO expert on PHP and JavaScript programming) compiles the website system layers mainly based on PHP coding with Javascript to enhance the user interface. The ongoing development will be continuously documented, step by step in an online log.

C -the software development is monitored, peer reviewed, and assisted by Ana Gimeno (UPV), Keith Becket (Ulster), Dr Caoimhín Ó Dónaill (Ulster), and Kent Andersen (SDE software developer).

D -alpha testing the development system and the webpage outputs by all the teams (except Eurocall) on a weekly basis with immediate reporting of errors to SMO. Compilation of a log with proposals for improvements to be used in step A.

After several cycles in the first six months the system reached the beta stage.

Quality indicator (after 6 months): The system is operational and can be used with functionality similar to the TextBlender.

Step D has then been extended so the system is piloted by language teachers to produce learning materials in Arabic, Danish, English, Irish Gaelic, Scottish Gaelic, Lithuanian, Portuguese, and Spanish. The output (language learning webpages) are tested by learners, and based on feedback from these recommendations for improvements or new functions will be compiled.

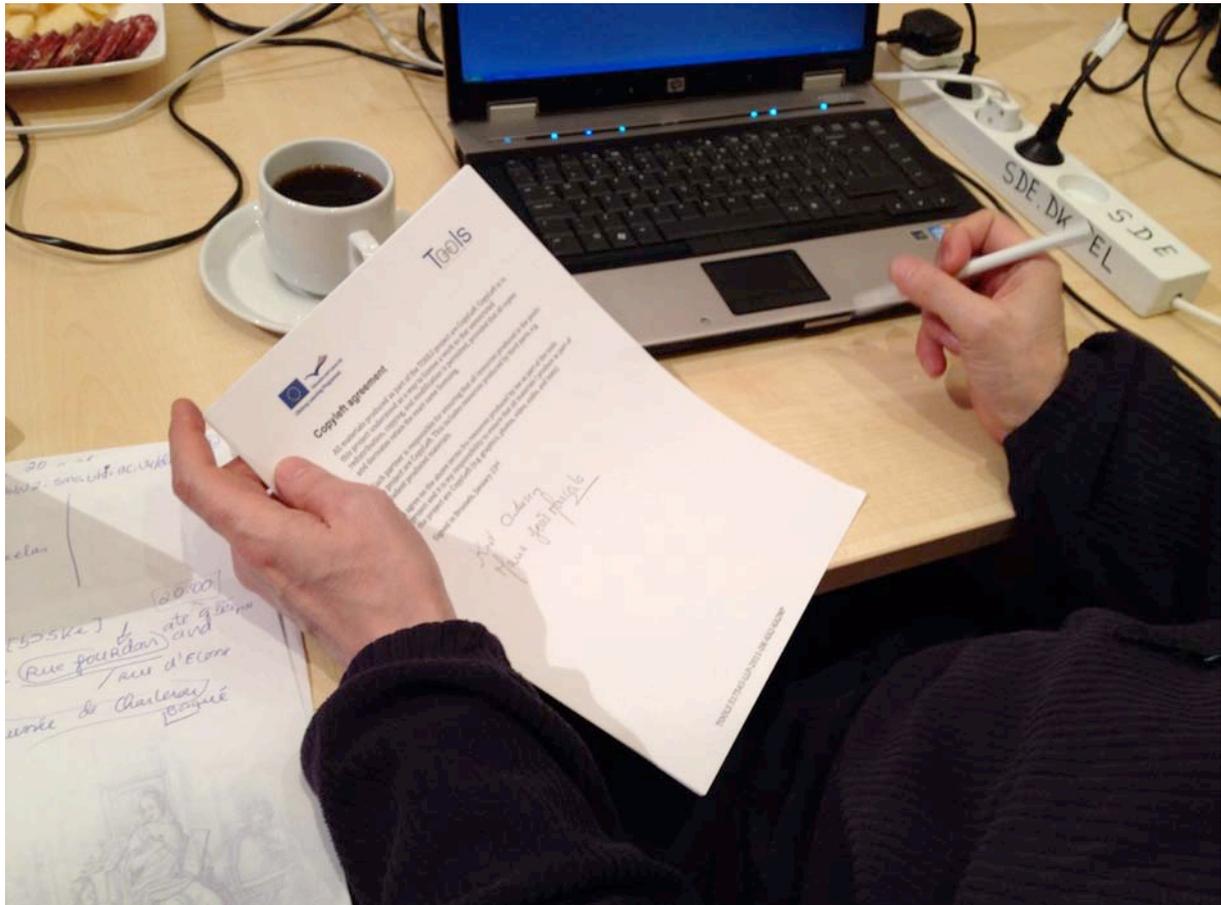
The final cycle A-D will be finished by July 2013, after which the system has reached its near final stage.

After six months of the final A-D cycle UPV and Ulster started preparing the pedagogical design of exploitation courses and materials, supported and peer reviewed by CLIL and VOLL experts from MPRC, Evora, and SDE.

Quality indicator (July 2013): Course has been piloted, the course description and a brief course book are available in Danish, English, Lithuanian, Portuguese, and Spanish.

The last twelve months of the project is dedicated the exploitation phase. Teachers from outside the partnership will attend CALL development and methodology courses and start using the online development system and employ the outcomes with their students. Only minor improvements are expected in the remaining project period, but the direct contact in the exploitation phase to the target groups will be used to ask for feed-back, and whenever relevant will result in improvements.

Quality indicator (after 30 months): The online system is state of the art. A minimum of 56 courses has been run across the partnership and 200 learning units (40 made during courses) have been produced.



Signing the Copyleft agreement. All outcomes are Copyleft and may be copied or repurposed

3. Project Outcomes & Results

The project has created a free online service where language teachers can author and share content-rich, multimedia learning units featuring the creator's own choice of audio, video (e.g. from Youtube), text (e.g. a transcript) and images/graphics. No installation or setup of software is required. The authoring tools feature a unique and innovative element of functionality i.e. the ability to automatically link every word in a text to online dictionaries in 100+ languages (in March 2013 it was 119 languages).

The teacher/author has the choice of sharing the resulting webpage online from the system's repository or of downloading the webpage for later upload to websites or networks e.g. institutional VLEs. The beauty of this system is that technical knowledge of FTP/URL and online publishing is not required.

The online service enables authoring of learning units from mobile devices (e.g. iPads) and is compatible with any operating system (Linux, Windows, MacOS, Unix etc.). The learning materials can be accessed and used via smart phones, and materials can even be authored from smart phones. The ability to access the learning materials from smart phones will encourage teachers to create even more materials, as the ability to provide computers for learners is not a prerequisite.

The partnership is developing and pilot a training program on how to use the system in a pedagogical context (CLIL, VOLL, and TBL), including a brief course book in the partnership languages. In the funded period the partnership plans to run 56 workshops to train teachers. Feedback received at the workshops will inform ongoing development of the system. In order to trial and demonstrate the value of the system, the partnership will create online learning units for learners of Arabic, Danish, English, Irish Gaelic, Scottish Gaelic, Lithuanian, Portuguese, and Spanish, after the first 14 months of the project the online service (<http://multidict.net/clilstore/>) contained 598 ready to use language learning units.

This online system, both the content authoring tools and the repository of materials, benefits educational institutions and learners alike, not least because the service is free of charge and open source (i.e. to enable future development). Crucially, the authoring tools and resulting content can be used from inexpensive mobile devices and older computers as they do not require high data processing capacity or bandwidth. This is a key factor in facilitating adoption of the technology, as there is no assumption that end users will need to acquire new hardware or upgrade their existing hardware in order to avail of the service. Such unseen costs frequently prevent the uptake of new technology and are a source of frustration for potential end users who recognise the benefits of new technology.



Example of Arabic unit www.multidict.net/cs/191

4. Partnerships

SDE College (Syddansk Erhvervsskole Odense-Vejle)
University of Southern Denmark
Universidad Politécnica de Valencia
Marijampolės profesinio rengimo centras
European Association for Computer-Assisted Language Learning
Sabhal Mòr Ostaig
University of Ulster
Universidade de Évora



The consortium (<http://www.languages.dk/membership/tools.html>) comprises institutions from Erasmus, Grundtvig, and Leonardo sectors involved in teaching Arabic, Danish, English, Scottish Gaelic, Irish Gaelic, Lithuanian, Portuguese and Spanish – i.e. covering minority, regional, neighbour, and less widely used and taught languages - thus targeting two of the KA2 priorities.

The eight consortium partners are all involved in CALL. One of the partners is EUROCALL (the European Association for Computer Assisted Language Learning) most of the partners have been members of Eurocall for more than a decade.

Two partners (SMO and SDE) were responsible for the development of the TextBlender in the pools-t project; the new online service will be programmed by Caoimhín Ó Donnaile (SMO expert on PHP and JavaScript programming) peer reviewed / assisted by Kent Andersen (SDE software developer responsible for the original TextBlender). Ana Gimeno (UPV) and Dr Caoimhín Ó Dónaill (Ulster) who both have expertise in software development from past projects will peer review the software development.

Four of the partners (SDU, MPRC, Ulster, and Evora) have given valuable feedback and advice during the software development of the TextBlender and know its constraints, but also its strengths that must be incorporated in the proposed online service.

Most of the partners have been in different project consortia together with SDE: SDE is the coordinator of a language teaching method project (2009-2011) with MPRC as a partner. Evora, SMO, and SDE are partners in a Spanish project piloting methodology and development courses (2009-2011).

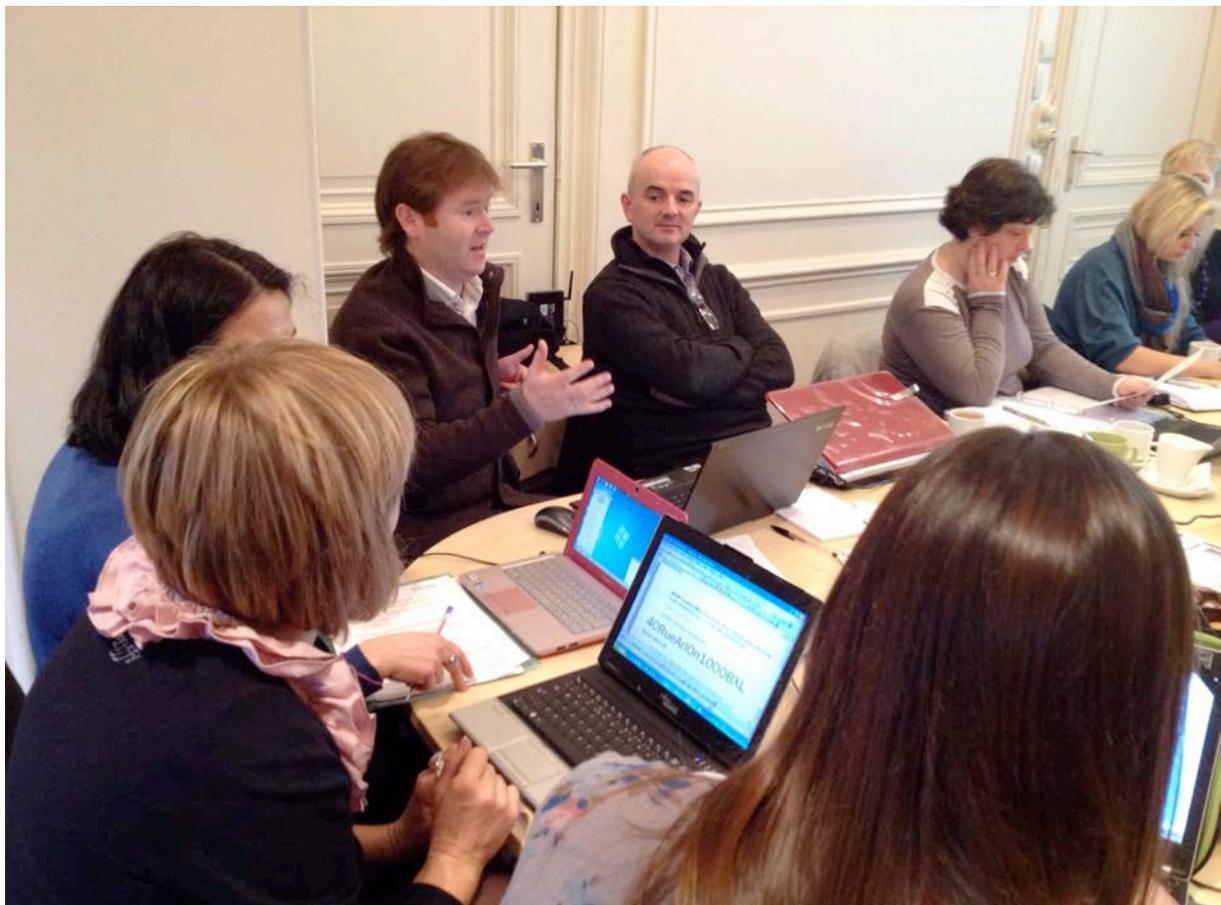
Ulster has a high reputation for expertise in developing CALL methodologies, and in researching dynamic, f2f learning in technology rich environments. Dr Caoimhín Ó Dónaill (Ulster expert on TBL) is a frequent speaker/presenter at Eurocall conferences, and has many years' experience of disseminating good practice through language learning symposia, workshops and conferences. He is, together with Ana Gimeno (UPV pedagogical expert and

Eurocall president) responsible for the pedagogical design of the exploitation courses and materials supported and peer reviewed by CLIL and VOLL experts from MPRC, Evora, and SDE.

The project teams teach Arabic, Danish, English, Irish, Scottish Gaelic, Lithuanian, Portuguese, and Spanish. The online learning units that are compiled for these languages during the project will therefore target minority, LWUTL, regional, mainstream, and neighbour languages.

SDU is testing the service with a non-European language: Arabic. The large population of immigrants across the EU speaking “colloquial” Arabic as well as university students learning Arabic will be provided with online learning resources as well as tools for creation of new learning materials.

Eurocall will provide a project stand at the annual conferences where the developers can showcase the service, but more importantly the partnership will consult / interview attendees to gain feedback from them and further details of the key target group’s needs.



CLIL debate in Brussels during the kick-off workshop

5. Plans for the Future

The advantage of being able to prepare content-rich online learning units that through the proposed system are made immediately available for the language students, is already after 14 months generating a high number of users – both teachers and their students.

The final part of the project official period (March 2013 through June 2014) is dedicated online publishing of a brief course book/guide in the project languages and running a large number of teacher pilot courses. The online service “Clilstore”, will be based on feedbacks from the users as well as from the courses be fine tuned during that period.

The online service will be continued (and free) after the funded period. Teachers who are new to the system will benefit from online instructional videos demonstrating how to use the service (DIY videos) as well as the developed support materials.

The five project university partners as well as associated project partners and networks will offer in-service courses. The project outputs and results are all Copyleft, this means that anyone can exploit the results and even repurpose these without asking for permission as long as new outputs remain Copyleft. In 2013 a Malta based teacher training institution ETI-Malta is offering a number of Comenius and Grundtvig supported courses with international participation that exploit the results from TOOLS, similar courses are in future expected to be offered under the Erasmus4All umbrella. Like ETI-Malta any teacher training institution may use the TOOLS results and the TOOLS partnership will be happy to assist with advice.

The partnership will continue to offer free online courses e.g. through “Webheads”
<http://webheadsinaction.org/>

The estimated minimum target impact in the first year following the project period is 2.000+ language teachers who on a regular basis make use of the system. After the first 14 months 240 users have created 662 units (64 of these are still labelled as test units). By March 2013 the registered users have created units in 21 languages: DA, DE, EN, ES, EU, FR, GA, GD, IT, LT, NL, PT, RO, SL, SO, SV, TR, EL, RU, AR, and HI

Both the site hosting the online service (www.multidict.net) and the project website (www.languages.dk) are prepaid five years ahead (and will be continued in all future;-), they will be serviced by Caoimhin O Donnaille (caoimhin@smo.uhi.ac.uk) and Kent Andersen (ka@sde.dk). We will continue fine honing the online outcomes, suggestions for new or better online dictionaries that we can address through the service should be sent to caoimhin@smo.uhi.ac.uk



We seek to aim higher

6. Contribution to EU policies

Objectives of the Lifelong Learning Programme

To promote language learning and linguistic diversity:

The proposal promotes linguistic diversity through the creation of freely available online learning units in a minimum of 8 languages, 4 of these are neighbour languages, 6 are LWUTL, and the inclusion of Arabic will cater for a growing need across Europe. The large number of teacher training courses planned will extend the number of target languages. Using multidict.net in the tool enable students of different mother tongues to work with the exact same material but with different help available

To support the development of innovative ICT-based content, services, pedagogies and practice for lifelong learning:

The proposed online authoring tool will promote the use of ICT in language learning as it will let anyone, who can Google or use Facebook, create immediately online language learning units where a text is word by word linked to a plethora of free dictionaries. The courses following the development will ensure that the teachers apply the tool through pedagogically sound methods in CLIL, TBL and VOLL contexts.

Specific Objectives of the Action

To promote European co-operation in fields covering two or more sub-programmes:

The proposal addresses the needs of 3 target groups; Ldv, Erasmus, and Grundtvig. The partners present all the three sectors, this will enable input and exchange of expertise, eg. CLIL and VOLL experience from the Ldv and Grundtvig colleges will be used by the pedagogical experts in the universities to create the method guide and courses and cater for exploitation to all three sectors. Feedback from 3 sector students will ensure that the outcomes match their language learning needs.

Operational Objectives of the Action

To promote language learning and support linguistic diversity in Member State:

Targeting two Gaelic languages and a series of LWUTL supports linguistic diversity. The inclusion of neighbour languages also works towards motivation of the students and helps mobility between those countries. The online and free materials remove the economic barriers for many LWUTL teachers and learners thus supporting and reinforcing motivation for language learning.

Priorities this application addresses

Promotion and reinforcement of the acquisition of less used European languages:

The project will create an online authoring system and through this develop online materials for the teaching/learning of Arabic, Danish, English, Scottish Gaelic, Irish Gaelic, Lithuanian, Portuguese and Spanish. At least six of the languages can be considered LWUTL in Europe. The resulting multimedia supported units for students will enable these to easier pick up new words and handle more complicated FL authentic texts.

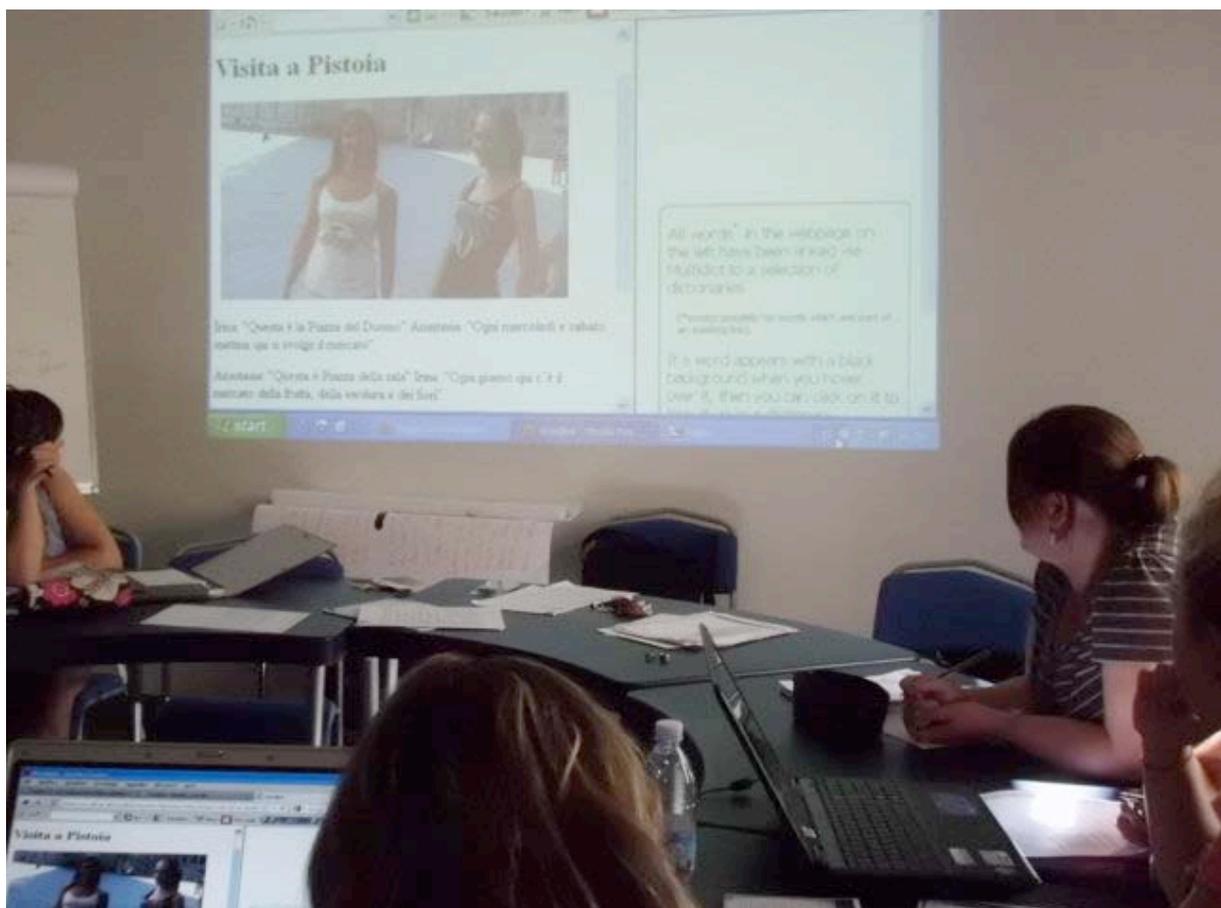
Promotion of learning of languages of neighbouring countries:

Four of the target languages Spanish-Portuguese and Irish-Scottish Gaelic are neighbour country languages. This combined with the partnership institutions and their associated partners, who already offer and teach those languages, will through the development of exemplary online materials work towards promotion of “learning of languages of neighbouring countries”.

LLP Horizontal policies

Promoting an awareness of the importance of cultural and linguistic diversity within Europe, as well as of the need to combat racism, prejudice and xenophobia:

The project will enable easy and fast creation of authentic, cultural, and linguistic rich materials. The partners will to demonstrate how to include culture in the language teaching develop 160 free language learning units for learning Arabic, Danish, English, Scottish Gaelic, Irish Gaelic, Lithuanian, Portuguese and Spanish. The support for Arabic and also for combinations of support in Arabic while learning other languages will enable a large group of learners across Europe to learn FL



Students from Spain learning Italian in Tuscany supported by TOOLS outcomes

