

## **Meeting Minutes of the Best Practice – Best Language Teaching Method Kick-off Meeting in Bruxelles on 14<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> of November 2002.**

With representatives from all partner countries gathered in Bruxelles in the Efvet-building the work of the Best Practice – Best Language Teaching Method Project could begin. The meeting began at nine o'clock on 14. November 2002 and every project partner had been given assignments to prepare for the first meeting in Bruxelles. The plan of the two days looked as follows:

- Financial Handbook
- Partner responsibilities
- Partner tasks
- Electronic communication
- E-mail list – dissemination
- The products
- Demonstration / workshops
- Decision on methods

After a short welcome by Kent Andersen from Odense Technical College, Ole Beck Christensen also from Odense, went through the financial details of the project, including documentation and partner responsibilities in relation to the financial handbook.

At 10.45 Kent Andersen went through the details of partner responsibilities in relation to the project as such and all partners agreed to the following:

- All partners must make travel reports after each meeting
- The website must be visited by partners every week
- Tasks should be handed in on time, according to the project plan
- A content quality control must take place, project partners must carry out a quality control of each other's work, in other words, act as sparring partners
- Every partner has a dissemination responsibility in his or her respective country, e.g. articles for relevant sources within the countries
- Copies of articles, leaflets and work papers must be forwarded to Kent Andersen for documentation
- All partners agree that materials produced in this project are free to use – no copyrights.

Moreover the project partners were given specified assignments to do and they look as follows:

The Danish team:

- Video production
- Teaching materials

- Translations of teaching materials into Danish
- Class room demonstration / video
- Project management
- Website
- Sparring partner
- Arrange international workshop
- Dissemination

The German and Spanish teams:

- Sparring partners
- Content quality control
- Materials production
- Translations / adaptations of materials
- Dissemination
- Workshop tasks

Basque, Dutch, Gaelic, and Romanian Teams

- Produce a method description
- Arrange classroom demonstration of a method
- Sparring partners
- Content quality control
- Materials production
- Translations / adaptations of materials
- Dissemination
- Workshop tasks

Dutch extra:

- Compose Student Travel Guide (August 2003)

Products of the project:

- Handbook with description of 5 methods in English, German, Romanian and Spanish
- Materials to be used for each of the five methods in all partner languages
- 5 DVDs demonstrating the 5 methods with subtitles in English, German, Romanian and Spanish
- Student travel guide in English, German, Romanian and Spanish
- Website with the developed materials

Working plan for the first six months of 2003:

- January 31st 2003 Description and tutorial for method A (in English) OTS and SMO (sparring partner)

- March 31st 2003 Materials to be used for method A DK and RO (SMO sparring partner) responsible but all partners develop additional materials i.e. national WebQuests and for the proposed multimedia lesson (A CD-ROM with an instruction on how to wire a British plug followed by exercises) produce translations of wordlists, subtitles and prepare the national sound recording of the instruction.
- April 30th 2003 Adaptation of materials, description and tutorial for method A in German, Romanian and Spanish
- May 15th video of classroom demonstration of German, Romanian and Spanish method A and set of material.
- May 19th – 22nd Workshop two
- June 15th DVD demonstrating method A with subtitles in English, German, Romanian and Spanish
- Website with the developed materials

As a kick-off for the presentation round, a film clipping of John Rassias giving a lecture about his teaching methods was shown and afterwards discussed. Then followed the presentations and demonstrations by four of the project partners.

Lone Olsen from Odense Technical College had prepared a task in Danish with posters with pictures hanging on the wall. All partners had to move around physically in the room and had to work together in pairs to complete the task. It was a word-building task, constructed in line with the theory of task-based learning. After the task, all partners could take home with them new Danish words such as *cirkusprinsesse* and *ringeklokke* and a degree of knowledge about Danish articles, definite and indefinite.

The Basque team had also prepared a teaching method, again a demonstration of the TBL-methodology (task-based learning). As an introduction to the actual demonstration of the task, the Basque team had also prepared a mini lecture of the theory and ideology behind task-based learning.

Wearing original aprons from the Basque country and with the use of red wine and real food, Maite and [María José](#) carried through a complete task cycle of how to order tortillas and red wine in Basque. The task required great energy and activity from everybody and again all partners could take home regular words and phrases in Basque.

The German team, Claudia and Claus, had prepared a simulation. They also started with an introductory talk about the theory and use of simulation as a language teaching method. In groups everybody had to plan and agree on a sight seeing tour in his or her respective city. The simulation was based on an example from Frederike Klippel's book [Keep Talking](#).

The Spanish team, Raúl and Marian, ended the first working day with explaining the idea behind tandem learning. This was done with the use of many interesting examples from Spain. The power point presentation from the Spanish team can

be seen at this address:

<http://www.languages.dk/methods/documents/tandem.pps> or simply go to [www.languages.dk/methods](http://www.languages.dk/methods) to see it as well as all the other presentations. All documents, videos and photos from the workshop are planned to be in place in the website during December 2002

At approximately 17.00 the first working day of the meeting in Bruxelles ended. It had been an inspiring and successful first day.

Saturday, 16. November 2002

Nine o'clock a.m., the work shop continued. Kent Andersen went through the web site of the project. Subsequently, the plan of the project until June 2003 was also being presented and discussed. See the above listed plan.

At approximately 10 o'clock the next project team, the Gaelic team, was ready with their teaching method demonstration. Sean and Murdo managed to teach all partners the names of six different colours and a number of other words by the use of a brilliant mixture of simulation, TBL and the Rassias method. On top of that the exercise was spiced with a bit of rhyme and rhythm and last but not least, an element of competition.

Shortly after, the Roman team took over. Georghe and Mihai gave an interesting lecture of the history of the Roman language, explaining how it had developed from Latin and how the present state of the language was. They finished their lecture with the national anthem and managed to teach the project group the chorus of the anthem, sort of.

The last performer was Franz van der Schaik, who had prepared an oral exercise based on the tandem principle. In pairs of two the group had to converse together in their own languages, saying for example " My name is Sean, what's your name" and Kent would for example say in Danish " Mit navn er Kent, jeg bor i Danmark". Very symbolically, there was a buzz of seven different languages. A perfect conclusion of a workshop full of energy, inspiration and ideas.

The last thing to do at this point was to agree on a set of different language teaching methods and to agree on tasks for the different teams to work with. Who was to work with what? The result of the discussion looks as follows:

- Romanian team: the Rassias method
- Gaelic team: simulation
- The Dutch team: tandem and portfolio
- The Danish team: WebQuests and Multimedia (Computer assisted language learning in context) i.e. Electronically supported task based teaching

■ The Basque team: task-based learning

At around three o'clock the two-day workshop had finished and it was concluded by everybody in the group that the two days were a success, which had inspired every project member to continue the good work.

All presentations and demonstrations from the workshop in Bruxelles are planned to be in place in the website during December 2002 visit:

[www.languages.dk/methods](http://www.languages.dk/methods)