Finalized External Evaluation Strategy

&

Initial Evaluation Report

CLIL Implementation with Pools of Resources for Teachers, Students, and Pupils (CLIL4U)

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1.INTRODUCTION

1.1 Report Objectives

This report is part of the evaluation and monitoring of the European Commissions's Lifelong Learning Programme project CLIL Implementation with Pools of Resources for Teachers, Students, and Pupils (CLIL4U).

The broader process seeks to enable formative and summative external quality control so as to support reaching of CLIL4U goals and objectives, through monitoring, feedback and recommendations for aspects of the development of work package actions and deliverables over the 30 month project time-frame.

1.2 Main Areas for Evaluation and Advisory Support
- Progress made towards the contractual outcomes in respect to the contractual work plan.
- Team effectiveness, timeliness of outcomes and solution-building when facing challenges of the partnership as an example of transnational collaboration.
- Quality of the outcomes and deliverables in relation to both contractual requirements and educational innovative practices.
- Piloting processes, outcomes and possible re-calibration.
- Benchmarking of deliverables, degree of inclusion and multilingualism, and strategies and impact of dissemination.
- Relevance, access, and usability of deliverables in diverse European educational environments.
- Sustainability of project outcomes with respect to post-project funding time-frame.
- Potential for CLIL4U to act as a catalyst for further initiating and supporting innovative practices in European education within the context of the objectives of the Lifelong Learning Programme.

1.3 Main Areas Focused on in this Report

- Progress made towards the contractual outcomes in respect to the contractual work plan.

- Team effectiveness, timeliness of outcomes and solution-building when facing challenges of the partnership as an example of transnational collaboration.
- Quality of the outcomes and deliverables in relation to both contractual requirements and educational innovative practices.

2. PROJECT OVERVIEW

2.1 How CLIL4U fits into the Objectives of the Lifelong Learning Programme according to Initial Application

The overview is as follows according to standard EACEA application format:

- To promote language learning and linguistic diversity.

- To encourage the best use of results, innovative products and processes and to exchange good practice in the fields covered by the Lifelong Learning Programme, in order to improve the quality of education and training.

Specific Objectives of the Action

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

Operational Objectives of the Action

- To promote language learning and support linguistic diversity in Member States.

Priority this application addresses

- Support for partially or fully bilingual education.

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.

Complementarity with other policies
- Recognition of qualifications.

3. THE FINALIZED EXTERNAL EVALUATION STRATEGY

Following participation in the first project kick-off meeting (Madrid 20-25 January 2014) by one of the external evaluators, and subsequent discussion with the project coordinator and team, the evaluation strategy remains as follows:

- Reporting is through Lars Bregnehøj Hansen, Syddansk Erhvervsskole Odense-Vejle, Munkemose Alle, 9, DK-5000, Odense, Denmark with direct communication with the operational project coordinator, specific experts as representative of sub-teams, and all project experts according to need.

- The main purpose of this process is to enable formative and summative external quality control so as to support reaching of goals and objectives of CLIL4U, through monitoring, feedback and recommendations for aspects of the development of work package actions and deliverables over the 30 month project time-frame.

- The evaluation assesses the activities throughout the eligibility period of the project, from intended start-up (February 2014 through to the end of the project time-frame, est. July 2016.)

- The scale and type of communication between the evaluation expert(s) and the representatives in the partnership is to agreed. It is understood that participation in at least two project meetings is a requirement and that these are currently planned for Madrid ES, St. Julian MT, and/or Nicosia CY. In addition, both telephonic and videoconferencing is used according to need.

- The evaluation processes and deliverables involve a combination of two inter-connected processes. One of these is formative (providing feedback, and, where optimal, guidance to project partners as they design and produce key deliverables); another is to evaluate specific project processes and outcomes according to the outputs and outcomes specified in the original application as accepted by the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency of the European Commission.

- The processes are summarized as:
    1. Initial evaluation report – at least 3 months after the project first meeting (this document)
    2. Interim evaluation report – at least 1 month before the due date of the contractual Progress Report
    3. Final evaluation report – at least 2 months prior to project end date in 2016
    4. Feedback on periodic monitoring reports in accordance with the contractual work plan
    5. Ad hoc substance-based expert recommendations according to process issues

- The operational principles are that the external evaluation process is completed by a full summative report at the project's end, which will re-visit any issues raised in the ongoing interim evaluation reports and where appropriate, raise additional elements occurring between the reports and the project's close.

  Whilst the driving force of the evaluation would be an objective and rigorous appraisal of the project's progress toward, and success in meeting, its objectives, it is important to note as part of this description that there are some features of a TCP project in the context of the whole Lifelong Learning Programme field that will be of particular importance to the evaluators, and which are recorded here now particularly in terms of preparation for the final evaluation report at the end of the project.

  These include:
    1. The extent that the partnership works together as a true transnational unit.
    2. The rigour with which the needs of the target group are consistently addressed throughout the project.
    3. The extent to which feedback from the target group, internal assessors or other bodies is acted upon.
    4. The scale and effectiveness of the dissemination activities.
    5. The extent to which the partnership has worked to try and ensure that the main outcomes of the project are sustained beyond the end of initial funding.
    6. The extent to which the project performs as a Transfer of Innovation initiative.

3.1 INFORMATION SOURCES AND TOOLS USED FOR THE EVALUATION

- In order to assess from an objective point of view the achievements and the correlation between the original objectives and outcomes the external qualitative evaluation takes into account:
  1. All available sources of information about the project
  2. The internal evaluation and quality management tools such as quarterly reports and meeting evaluations
  3. How the partnership handles possible obstacles and delays during this period of time, and solutions implemented
  4. Impact assessment tools
  5. Reporting and advisory input into Work Package 1 on project coordination
  6. Close periodic engagement with experts managing Work Package 2 on Quality Management, alongside formative reporting input
  7. Impact and usability appraisal for experts managing Work Package 3 on website and communication platforms
  8. Review and advisory input for experts managing Work Package 4 on CLIL scenarios for primary schools
  9. Review and advisory input for experts managing Work Package 5 on CLIL scenarios for vocational colleges
  10. Analysis and advisory support for experts managing Work Package 6 on demonstration and promotion/awareness-raising videos
  11. Analysis and advisory support for experts managing Work Package 7 on the creation of a CLIL book/guide/manual
  12. Analysis and advisory support for experts managing Work Package 8 on the creation of an online materials bank
  13. Analysis and advisory support for experts managing Work Package 9 on the development of CLIL courses for subject and language teachers
  14. Impact appraisal for experts managing Work Packages 10-11 on dissemination and exploitation of results

- Tools to successfully carry out these activities include a range of analytic project management tools including document review throughout the process particularly through Work Packages 1 and 2; testing of prototypes produced particularly in Work Packages 4,5,6,7 and 8; benchmarking analysis of the output from Work Package 9, interviews, questionnaires and similar data collection tools.

4. PROJECT OVERVIEW

As described in the initial application: 'CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) is emerging across Europe where only six countries appear to be bystanders. In several countries, such as Malta and in parts of Spain, CLIL has been incorporated into the national curricula from primary schools to universities.

The project consortium represents different stages in the application of CLIL. The CY, CH, IT, and DK partners are in the process of implementing CLIL and have found an urgent need for better resources and CLIL teacher training.

The ES and MT partners have implemented CLIL in their teaching and also represent teacher training institutions that have offered CLIL in-service courses, but identified a need for freely available resources and for the development of a holistic competence based course on CLIL. Content and language teachers both need to learn how to apply constructivist based language teaching methods as part of their content/subject instructions – and there is a need for language level certification of the content teachers to ensure they have the needed language competences.

The needs identified by the partnership consortium are also present across Europe, as can be seen from reports and EU-funded surveys:

Two of the partner countries, Cyprus and Denmark, have not yet applied CLIL in any major scale, although Denmark "is considering measures that would lead to improved language proficiency among pupils. In particular, it has been proposed that some subjects might be taught using foreign languages". One main obstacle against the implementation of CLIL as a national strategy is that "the fact that many language teachers may be available is little help if – as in Cyprus – they have not been trained in the special skills needed to provide CLIL" (Key Data on Teaching Languages at School in Europe 2008, Eurydice/eurostat).

At the May 2005 Education Council, the Luxembourg presidency reported on the results of the symposium entitled 'The Changing European Classroom: The Potential of Plurilingual Education' The main conclusions included the specification of the need to ensure that pupils and students are involved in CLIL-type provision at the various levels of scholastic education, while also stating that teachers should be encouraged to undergo special training in CLIL.

From experienced CLIL teachers we learn that "It is clear that some

variables were underestimated by the teachers at the beginning of their approach to CLIL, such as the lack of specific CLIL materials and the consequent creation of new ones, the collaboration with colleagues to make CLIL work better and an accurate planning of the task to establish a balance between language and content." CLIL Practice: Perspectives from the Field, CLIL Cascade Network (CCN) 2009

The recommendations for good practice made in CLIL/EMILE: The European Dimension; Actions, Trends and Foresight Potential include:

- special focus should be placed on kindergarten, pre-school and primary schools with regard to low exposure of CLIL/EMILE, combining the principles of ´'language awareness' and 'language encounter' initiatives;

- special focus should be placed on vocational sector colleges, not only business-oriented institutions, with regard to low to medium exposure through CLIL/EMILE, combining sector-specific target language(s) knowledge with job-specific communication competencies;

- copyright-free prototypes of short introductory texts on CLIL/EMILE should be made available on the Internet;

- *thematic CLIL/EMILE units* (25+ hours) should be constructed in order to unify content areas in the form of modules, preferably drawing on topics which contextualise the European experience. Such modules, which could eventually be considered in terms of an informal form of 'European core curriculum', should be produced by an inter-disciplinary team.

The recommendations of the CLIL Initiatives for the Millennium report on the CEILINK Think Tank include an "Internet Materials Bank" to assist in the provision of quality materials. This Bank could be integrated into a range of national curricula and would ideally comprise downloadable resources designed with a view to flexibility and ease of adaptation, and links to other similar sites.

The need for CLIL materials and units is also indicated in Eurydice Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) at School in Europe 2006 (p. 57): "Finding teaching materials geared to CLIL is not easy for schools. Such materials not only have to be available in the target language but also cover subjects in the national curriculum."

We want to promote the use of ICT in CLIL in both the target sectors. The need is documented in the *Eurobarometer benchmarking survey* (September

2006), which shows that only 5% of language teachers use ICT as part of their teaching.

Moreover, Eurydice Key Data on Learning and Innovation through ICT at School in Europe – 2011 specifies that "Computer use in language of instruction and foreign languages is more the exception than the rule".

To summarise the above analysis there is a need for:
- a framework for implementation of CLIL;
- initial and in-service teacher courses on how to implement CLIL;
- CLIL and language courses for content teachers;
- certification of content teachers' language skills (matching CEFR);
- a collection of free, ready to use CLIL resources including ICT based materials;
- promotional materials that show the advantages of CLIL.

The application has been completed through online collaboration between the partners from past and ongoing projects dealing with teaching methods. In order to learn more about CLIL, we established cooperative relationships with several CLIL networks (e.g.: European Platform and CCN). The partners from an LdV ToI project (pools-m: languages.dk/methods) wanted to extend the five teaching methods developed in pools-m with the addition of CLIL teacher courses and the creation of a materials database, resulting in the present application.'

5. CLIL4U Initial Evaluation

5.1 Progress made towards the contractual outcomes in respect to the contractual work plan

Having received the confirmation of the grant award the coordinating team has swiftly established a coherent and professional process infrastructure within which the partners are able to operate. Noting that competition in applications for KA2 Languages Multilateral Projects was high for 2013 awards (success rate 18%) it has been evident that whilst the initial application submitted by Syddansk Erhversskole Odense-Vejle (DK) was of a very high standard, so was the initial start-up period. The start-up involved providing all partners (those with greater or lesser experience of this type of cooperative project) with a set of key tools in order to prepare for the decision-making and consensus-building required in the first major project meeting (Madrid 20-25 January 2014).

Documentation has been centrally stored with easy access (Drop Box) with particular emphasis at this stage on tools and templates which each partner may use to achieve high levels of cohesion and coherence. Files under 'Application' contain all key documents between the contracting party and the EACEA thus enabling a high degree of transparency from the outset. All information is also centrally accessible on partner contracts and budgets under 'CLIL4U Partner contracts'. All key LLP documents and handbooks have been collected into a single file 'Offocial' which is particularly useful for ensuring that persons involved with both the project and documentation within a given organisation have quick access to key principles of the financial and other measures applying to this type of European funding mechanism.

The workplan calender is excellent – spreading as it does the entire project cycle time-frame into a single easy-to-read format. One of the challenges of partnering in a European project of this type is combining involvement with the project tasks into everyday life. Thus it can be easy to fail to maintain deadlines. This workplan spreadsheet is a very good document for reducing the risk of this happening.

Overall progress made towards contractual outcomes in relation to the contractual workplan is on schedule.

5.2 Team effectiveness, timeliness of outcomes and solution-building when facing challenges of the partnership as an example of transnational collaboration

One of the innovative features of this project is the multi-disciplinary partnership, covering primary education though to vocational/professional education. This raises some complexities as different levels of education even within a single member state may operate according to different operational procedures, and, indeed, attitudes towards aspects of project management and education. In this project the tools available are of high enough quality to encompass differences in approach. One example is the template under 'Dissemination' which is of generic value enabling all partners to record information on type of dissemination (these vary considerably across different educational cohorts); location (again some partners may be heavily focused on both regional/national and

international disemmination activities); size as in number of persons active – whether in face-to-face or virtual environments; and the event itselfm(the value of which varies from one context-to-another)

Timeliness of outcomes is often partly linked to availability of tools and guidance to help partners, espcially those not accustomed to the reporting requirements of EACEA and other European project funding mechanisms. Examples of biannual reports and records of meetings as found under 'Evaluation & Reporting' help considerably in this respect. The same applies to 'Financial Reporting' where report templates on all key budget headings have been individualized and made available to all partners. This is a highly user-friendly set of tools for the partners.

The first project meeting in Madrid was particularly important in enabling a high level of consensus to be established across the partnership about not only the project itself, but also about how to create the deliverables. There will inevitably be some need for adjustment and re-alignment of some features of these deliverables but the partnership has agreed on one single approach by which to capture and develop CLIL resources, and this a major step forward in a project of this type.

A final issue on team effectiveness at this stage has been the ability of the coordinating body, and other key partners, to respond swiftly and effectively in providing differing levels of support to other partners when needed. From the outset this project partnership has been able to form itself as a professional community with a high degree of distributive leadership, and the prognosis for the forthcoming project cycle is very positive in relation to what this particular community might be able to achieve in relation to processes, outcomes and impact.

5.3 Quality of the outcomes and deliverables in relation to both contractual requirements and educational innovative practices

'Confirmation of the outcomes and deliverables has been agreed, as has a detailed time-frame by which all partners adhere to specific schedules. These include: Detailed quality plan approved at first meeting, indicators and milestones met throughout the project lifetime, reports approved and corrective actions taken; Biannual reports from partners (five); Meeting minutes and agendas; Progress

Report (covering the first 14/15 project months); Final Report; Initial quality report; Interim quality report; Final quality report; Website and social media; 24 CLIL scenarios for primary schools; 24 CLIL scenarios for vocational colleges; Six CLIL videos; CLIL Book; Material bank; Pre-CLIL language course for content teachers; CLIL course for content and language teachers; Post CLIL course with language certification; Project Newsletters; Project brochures and an Exploitation report.'

At this stage all of these are in progress subject to separate start-up periods.

Various public relations and other documents and pictures are available to all partners under 'Brochure'. These are of draft quality and useful to have access to so early in the project cycle. A set of logos for various types of reproduction have been created.

A 30 month project like this often involves a considerable time lag in getting public relations and other tools made available, and in this respect the coordination team and partners have excelled in quickly establishing both design and availability of key tools such as logos and document/letter templates.

CLIL has emerged as a key educational innovation since its European launch in 1994. Because it involves innovation, it requires educational experts to reconsider standard practices and explore how, in this case through integration, education can be provided in education ranging from primary to vocational through CLIL. This is no easy task because there are two major cultures to address. One is of the educational level, and the other is the traditional separation of different subjects in that level. Thus blending language education with authentic content requires considerable 're-thinking' on the part of most people involved. Thus the inclusion in Dropbox of a section dedicated to 'Theory' is very useful.

This first phase of the project has focused, amongst other issues, on the development of key deliverables. These include CLIl scenarios, a book, and a material bank as key deliverables. Development of the CLIL scenarios has been rapid and focused on different partners producing modules, activities, worksheets, and other supplementary materials as single packages. This has invited inter-partner cooperation, modest levels of testing of the materials, and a high degree of creativity and pedagogic skill. The scenarios (produced as

they are for basic education and vocational/professional form the backbone of a major part of this project. Each scenario is not simply a set of activities and resources which form a learning unit. Rather, each is a learning unit which is fully comprehensible for an alternative educator to examine and possibly use. This is to facilitate a fast-track towards providing exemplars of CLIL in order to support multilingual and other aims embodied in this project application, and now in the ensuring process.

It has been wise on the part of all partners involved to focus on the development of the scenarios and let the development of other key deliverables such as the book/guide, materials bank and web site become even more focused on by the partnership as a whole once these basic scenario materials are firmly structured.

In this respect we see that the project is on schedule with respect to all outcomes-based activities.

We also acknowledge the skill and dedication found throughout the partnership, as evidenced in communications at the first project meeting, subsequent communications, and prototypes of deliverables.