

Best Practice in Projects that were awarded the European Language Label in the field of School Education





Austria



Plurilingualism - The Present and Future of a United Europe

Plurilingualism - The Present and Future of a United Europe is a project initiated by the Cooperative School/Kooperative Mittelschule 16/I, where 90% of the pupils have another mother tongue than German. The project represents a successful example of promoting both the pupils' mother tongue (Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian), the teaching language (German) and another modern language (English).

During the English and German classes also Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian are used, emphasizing the aesthetic literary qualities of these languages. The promotion of linguistic abilities takes place during biology, mathematics, geography classes as well as the musical and physical education.

The most important success which has led to winning the ELL award is represented by the multilingual play 'Captive between Dream and Reality' / 'Gefangen zwischen Traum und Wirklichkeit', dedicated to the events lived by the pupils' parents during the war in former Yugoslavia, celebrating love and youth in several languages. The play is based on texts which have been translated into German by pupils of bilingual classes. Other important events were the visit to a partner class in Serbia, a traditional costume fashion show, a handicrafts exhibition.

The project 'Plurilingualism - The Present and Future of a United Europe' was selected as an example of Austrian Best Practice mainly because of the:

- promotion of new approaches in language teaching and learning (bilingualism as a method of integration of pupils with another mother tongue than German);
- promotion of multilingualism and multiculturalism;
- promotion of linguistic correctness and tolerant cohabitation in Europe;
- promotion of literature written in less spoken languages within the EU raising interest in "less important cultures" and their representatives getting the feeling of belonging to the great European family;
- evaluation of the pupils' performance through artistic methods, which contributed to motivate them;

Project coordinator

Cooperative School/Kooperative Mittelschule 16/I

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Partnership

- KMS 16 / I Koppstr 110
- the bilingual class (4 teachers, 25 pupils)
- 11 pupils of the partner school in Serbia: School 'King Alexander I Brdjani Gornji Milanovac'

Web site

www.kopp1.at

Project duration

6 years
2008 – 2013



http://nellip.pixel-online.org/DB_database_scheda.php?art_id=218&tla=&sec=&cou=6&yea=27&ppr=



Belgium



eJournal: Deutsch macht Spass - Jugendliche in Europa

The motivation to start the eJournal-project came from the project coordinator after participating in a course in Lapland ("the midnight sun course" eJournalism 2.0 - Educational Collaboration Across Borders Using Web based Tools (<http://ejournal.eduprojects.net/lapcom2/>) and there she learned how to use an eJournal. The motivation was totally personal.

The main objective of the project was to assist students of German to learn the language by using the eJournal method.

The pedagogical approach was that the students worked on the eJournal once a week for a whole school year: they wrote texts, made pictures and videos and at the end of the project they communicated with the other partners live via a tool embedded in the eJournal.

The main project result is that the eJournals are available yearly and the pupils are very enthusiastic every year.

We have selected this project as an example of good practice in the area of teaching foreign languages to teenagers. The initiative was challenging in that only one teacher was involved and she had to design and implement the project alone. Another challenge that we perceived as successfully overcome was the fact that the pupils are very involved.

The eJournal project also integrates very well a new teaching and learning approach in the school environment and we assume that one of the main success factors of the initiative is the fact that it gives pupils a chance to use innovative tools in their school work.

We have also selected this project because its longevity, it has been going on for four years since it was awarded the label.

Project coordinator

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Partnership

There are three schools involved in the project: one from Belgium, one from Finland and one from Island: Menntaskólinn á Akureyri (IS), Vihdin lukio (FI), Vihti Sekundarstufe2 and Sint-Lodewijkscollege Brugge (BE)

Web site

<http://www.ejournal.fi/inari05/index.php?output=FrontPage>

Project duration

2008 – on going



http://nellip.pixel-online.org/CS_scheda.php?art_id=68



Czech Republic



Becoming a Better Global Citizen – a challenge for the 21st century

Becoming a Better Global Citizen is a Comenius project implemented by primary schools from the Czech Republic, UK, Greece, Spain and Germany. It is a three-year project designed to help children become better global citizens through education for sustainable development.

The aim of this educational language project is a co-operation with partners in united Europe to improve language skills and to teach children about the necessity to protect our planet. Ecological problems are the same all over the industrial Europe and it is very important to point them and to talk about them. The five partners do at the same time very similar activities (e.g. finding out a power consumption, compilation of data of recycling, introduction of their countries, and other ecological activities), which are proved by evidence, described in 5 languages and the results, are shared in project web pages (www.cpsp.info).

The project, divided into 3 years, is mainly for 11 – 13 years old pupils. The school integrates activities connected with the project to an ordinary curriculum. It is not only work for language teachers in language lessons but the project is related to all subjects.

Year 1: For the children to devise and implement energy saving measures to reduce consumption by 5%. (Whole school approach); To raise awareness of how recycled materials are valued in under developed countries, and to design and make toys from materials which would usually be thrown away, to illustrate this.

Year 2: For the children to devise and implement ways in which they can reduce school waste by 5% eg; paper reduction, composting and aluminum can recycling; To develop an appreciation of how children play traditional games in their schools.

Year 3: For the children to devise and implement ways of reducing water consumption by 5% whilst raising awareness of the global importance of water; To establish a shared mission statement of Global Citizenship.

This project also raised the following challenges:

- how to work closely with other countries with different levels of ICT ability;
- how the language barrier can be overcome
- how different countries adopt very different attitudes to energy matters.

The selection of the project as a best practice is based on its consistency with the current policies in the field of language learning. It is directed towards the promotion of new approaches to language teaching and learning as well as the promotion of language learning for specific purposes.

Project coordinator

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Partnership

Hagbourne C.E. Primary School, UK

4th Totsitsio Primary School, GR

Zakladni Skola Nove Mesto, CZ

Theresia-Haselmayr-Schule, DE

CP Cristo de las Misericordias, ES

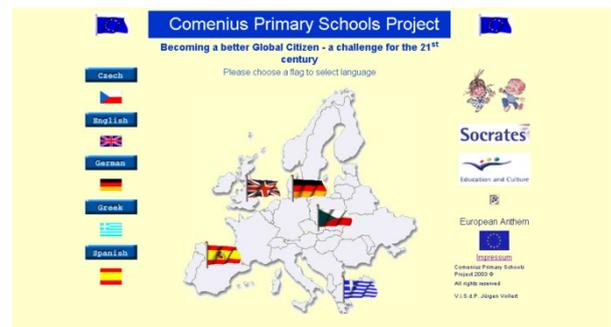
Web site

<http://www.cpsp.info/>

Project duration

3 years

2002-2005



http://nellip.pixel-online.org/DB_database_scheda.php?art_id=461&tla=&sec=&cou=&yea=&ppr=



Denmark



Alphabet Keyboard

The initiative provides an easy tool for teaching to read and write in training classes, preschool and in the youngest classes. More than 95% of the letters in a book or in a newspaper are lowercase letters, while on a standard keyboard there are only uppercase letter. It causes problems for many children in schooling age, since they have difficulties in recognizing the letters when they start working with computers.

The solution is a keyboard where the letter keys are colored, so it's easy to distinguish from the other keys. Red is used for vowels and blue for consonants. The individual letters are given in both uppercase and lowercase version on the same key.

The project's overall objective is to clarify what options Alphabet keyboard holds for the future of digital teaching in public schools. The project promoters also wanted to find out if it could be proved that the Alphabet keyboard has a beneficial effect on children's learning of letters and if it makes learning and using of PC more efficient.

Overall the pupils of the trial school (Skansevejens skole) were 30% faster on the Alphabet keyboard and in some cases twice as fast. The teachers reported that it was exciting to follow the pupils' different strategies for solving the tasks. One of the strategies the pupils took advantage of was running the forefinger systematically over the keys in the three letter rows. On the standard keyboard the forefinger was run over all the keys and often the pupils tried using the numbers as a solution.

This strategy turned out to be repeated by several first, second and third year pupils – which supports the theoretical cognition framework for the project, which is based on visual learning. With this strategy, the colours on the Alphabet keyboard help to limit the area to just the letters. This obviously had a big impact on how quickly the pupils could solve the task.

We chose this project to be presented as best practice due to the fact that the Alphabet keyboard has undoubtedly proved to have a considerable impact on the effectiveness of teaching. The teacher can use the PC as a tool for learning and not just for training in the use of the PC.

Furthermore the project is innovative in the sense that there are no similar projects that we are aware of. The creator had a truly original idea and to use visual aids in the form of colors proved to work well. The project also meets each student's need in the sense that they can learn how to write faster and recognize the letters easier while learning how to spell words.

The project at Skansevejens School in Fredericia, Denmark shows that the Alphabet keyboard truly has a beneficial effect on children's learning of letters. This can be seen, measured and evaluated. The Alphabet keyboard can also make learning and the use of the PC more efficient for both pupils and individual teachers in schools.

It is transversal in the case of using this product to assist in learning how to read and write. Children from different countries can experience the same difficulty in recognizing the letters on a keyboard to the ones that they see in front of them in a text which would make a case for trying out this product.

Project coordinator

Chriba.dk and Børnehaveklasseleder.dk

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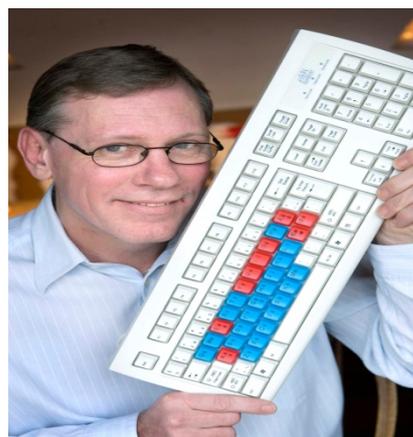
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Project duration

10 years
2002 – on going



http://projects.pixel-online.org/nellip/CS_scheda.php?art_id=86



Estonia



Tallinn-Berliin: Eesti-Saksa kuluturisõnastik

The project dealt with the history of Tallinn and Tallinn as Cultural Capital 2011. 15 students from Tallinna Õismäe Gümnaasium and 15 students from Humboldt-Schule Berlin as well as their teachers participated in the process of developing the questions on the project theme. The students read texts on country study in German lessons and during the class exchange.

Estonian pupils prepared and organized a guided tour for the German pupils. From these texts, 300 thematic words and phrases were selected and inserted in a German-Estonian mini-dictionary. The dictionary became very popular among pupils. The dictionary gives the explanation of terms concerning linguistics as well as history. This dictionary can be successfully used in German classes.

Tallinn Õismäe Gymnasium has a long experience in co-operation with Berlin Humboldt-Gymnasium (since 1989) and in advanced German teaching. Our pupils can learn different foreign languages: English, German, Russian, French, Finnish. In 2011 Tallinn was one of the cultural capitals in Europe. The choice of the aim depended on that fact.

The project consisted of two parts: 1) four Internet online-competitions *Who? When? Where?* between German and Estonian pupils (15 and 15 pupils) during five months; 2) a visit of the pupils from Berlin in Tallinn in May 2011. In September the Estonian pupils visited Berlin. The aim of the 8-days visit will be the same but opposite: the Estonian pupils learned the history of Berlin. The pupils use their knowledge and skills in communication in their everyday life.

The project resulted in good knowledge in the history and culture of Tallinn – the cultural capital of Europe 2011 and a bilingual Estonian-German vocabulary (about 300 words) of culture.

Project coordinator

Tallinna Õismäe Gümnaasium Aina Porman

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Partnership

Berlin Humboldt-Gymnasium

Web site

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Project duration

1 year

2010-2011



<http://nellip.pixel->

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Finland



The Language Circus

Kielitivoli – The Language Circus – is a joint project between the schools of the city of Hämeenlinna with the supervision of the city’s administration and school board. The main objective has been to build a network whose purpose is to create awareness and visibility to broaden the selection of foreign languages offered and studied in all lower and upper level comprehensive schools. The aim has been reached by active and strategic policy and decision-making throughout the community e.g. by designing a language path that can be followed from pre-primary school to secondary education.

The project has involved cooperation between administration, teachers, pupils, pupils’ parents, local entrepreneurs and other local and national interest groups. An example of cooperation has been having 9th graders survey language needs of local enterprises.

Project coordination lies in the hands of a group of active language teachers. Bodies such as Confederation of Finnish Industries and the Nordic Institution in Finland have also been involved to voice their opinion in terms of working life language needs.

As results of the Language Circus project, there can be seen many results that have been integrated into the schools’ everyday life: strengthening of cooperation between teachers in different school grades, development of multicultural teaching, teaching of a great variety of migrants’ languages, intensification of information about learning languages. One of the concrete products the has been a manual for international education (“Osasena maailmassa”) which promotes the fact that diverse language skills are one of the key skills in the future. It can also be seen as a tool for international education in schools and may be put into practice according to the schools’ resources. The project team has worked actively to promote its application and ideology both nationally and on an international level.

Here are the reasons why the Language Circus was included among the Finnish Best Practice:

- it shows innovative initiative in taking proactive measures throughout different sectors to enhance language learning
- its initiatives motivate pupils and teachers to improve their language skills and it uses effectively it’s networks for this purpose

- the project has worked very closely with all stakeholders and decision makers in the city of Hämeenlinna. This helps to ensure the equal opportunities for language learning in different schools and in different grades.
- the project results have been successfully integrated into the schools’ curricula
- close contacts and cooperation with the working life is a special add to the project’s achievements

The project has been part of a national project funded by the Finnish National Board of Education in 2009-2010 and it has been chosen to represent Finland at the Label of the Label ceremony held in Cyprus on 26-28 September 2012.

Project coordinator

The City of Hämeenlinna / School Board

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Project duration

2 years

2010-2012



http://nellip.pixel-online.org/DB_database_scheda.php?art_id=345&tla=&sec=&cou=13&yea=&ppr=



France

DeutschMobil

DeutschMobil

In 2011 the number of French students choosing German as second foreign language after English was very low. The DeutschMobil started from those data with the objective to increase the interest of French students for the German language.

Several language assistants, driving a German car with the logo of the project, started to visit primary and secondary schools all around France. They introduced their language and culture to pupils with entertaining, informative and interactive methods (quiz, games, music) in order to motivate them in learning German.

The “DeutschMobil” aims to provide a dynamic, interesting and attractive image of the German language, in order to develop the number of French students choosing it as second foreign language after English. In addition, the project offers an innovative pedagogic approach in order to draw up the French students to this significant language.

From 2001, 553.700 students have been reached by this initiative. The results are well evident: a 50% increase of inscriptions to German classes after the passage of the “DeutschMobil” cars. In response to those data, the number of cars increased from 4 to 10 and, after the German attention, the initiative went also under the patronage of the French Ministry of Education.

The project was selected as Best Practice by the French National Agency “Europe-Education-Formation”. According to the French evaluator, as stated in the “Label des Labels – 10 ans de projets” publication, this is an ambitious and innovative project. Created in 2001, during the last 10 years, it showed great pertinence and effectiveness.

In addition, the good quality of its partners can explain the reasons why it can be considered a French best practice. It has also been translated in several languages and adopted in different countries, contributing to a relevant revival of the German language.

In addition, the “DeutschMobil” project promotes the multilingualism and supports the historical relation between France and Germany.

Project coordinator

Maison de Heidelberg

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Partnership

Robert Bosch Stiftung
Mercedes-Benz
Goethe Institut
DAAD
Région Aquitaine
Région Midi-Pyrénées
Conseil Général Calvados
Région Rhône-Alpes

Web site

<http://www.deutschmobil.fr/>

Project duration

2011 – on going



http://nellip.pixel-online.org/CS_scheda.php?art_id=29



Germany



YELL – Young Europeans Love Languages

YELL is a Key Activities Languages Network project with 11 partner institutions in 10 partner countries which was supported by the European Commission. The participating countries were Germany, Spain, Belgium, Bulgaria, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, the United Kingdom, Latvia and Austria. The common themes of the project were to disseminate best practice in a network and to encourage language learning for young people in non-formal settings.

How did the project exemplify best practice?

The YELL project reflects best practice in a number of ways: First of all it is based on promoting the concept of best practice, and a major outcome of the project is a collection of examples of this from the participating countries.

One of the features of this was the collection of examples of innovations which had been developed, but which had not been fully exploited. The project handbook describes the different practices and in this way provides a useful source of information and contributes to ensuring continuity of work and implementation of innovations which might otherwise be lost.

The handbook – in nine languages (another example of best practice in its preservation of language diversity) – combines advice on how to go about innovation in language learning, together with practical examples from different countries and a number of useful tools for applying the ideas which have been developed.

The project provides a new impetus for language learning by putting the emphasis on informal and non-formal language learning for young people and linking it with sporting, leisure and cultural activities. It promotes the idea of learning for pleasure. In this way it has created approaches which give added value to school language learning.

Alexandra Sikorska, the coordinator of the project states that: "We believe that the YELL project is able to become a new impetus for language learning throughout Europe, as it offers innovative concepts and tools that can be used by educational institutions and teachers, trainers and lecturers as an inspiration for their own courses."

In particular, the concepts which are not dedicated to conventional classroom instruction and which are thematically attractive and motivating for young people could be pioneering for the future of modern language learning,"

Project coordinator

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Web site

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Project duration

3 years
2009 to 2011



http://nellip.pixel-online.org/DB_database_scheda.php?art_id=173&tla=&sec=&cou=&yea=&ppr=



Ireland



A Whole School Approach to the Teaching and Learning of Spanish

The main objective of this initiative promoted by St. Laurence's National School was to integrate Spanish into the school curriculum at all levels and to provide a user friendly curriculum so that all teachers, including those with very little Spanish, could teach Spanish to their pupils.

A further aim was to provide opportunities for all members of the school community to understand and use their knowledge of the Spanish language, to give every member of the school community a "feel" for the Spanish language, Spanish culture and traditions and to have every member of the school community aware that Spanish was being taught in the school.

The project has involved intensive engagement from pupils, teachers and school administration in promotion of the language and cultures of the Hispanic world. There has been an imaginative use of materials, activities and technologies to embed an appreciation of all things Spanish. In a dynamic and innovative matrix.

Since 2000 the Principal with her colleagues have set about to integrate Spanish language learning into the school curriculum at all levels. To achieve this, the school put in place a program for each class level using project work with a particular focus e.g. song, drama, art, poetry, cookery or ICT. Those involved in setting up the program included the school principal, the visiting language teacher, the class teachers, the Comenius Assistant and Spanish teacher-training students.

The program is now incorporated into the school plan and can be taught by any class teacher and adjusted to take into account the needs of all pupils. It is envisaged that the program will be updated on a yearly basis. Spanish is now taught to all pupils throughout the school and there is now a curriculum for Spanish for all classes.

This ensured continuity for the different teachers of Spanish, some of whom are in the school for short periods only, such as the Comenius assistants and Spanish teacher training college students.

Children are given opportunities to show-off their Spanish at school assemblies, concerts, Christmas Services, celebration of Europe Day, visits to and from the local private Spanish school, displays of work on corridors and in class rooms.

Project coordinator

St Laurence's National School

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Web site

www.stlaurences.com

Project duration

2008 - on going



http://nellip.pixel-online.org/DB_database_scheda.php?art_id=144



Lithuania



VILNIUS
SIMONO DAUKANTO
GIMNAZIJA

The Ambassador of Languages of 2012

Simonas Daukantas Gymnasium is an example of an educational institution that offers a wide choice of languages to their pupils: the language of tuition is Lithuanian, besides, up to seven foreign languages are taught every year. The gymnasium website – in five languages – provides a multifaceted view of the varied and eventful school life, projects being its indispensable part. The administration of the school attaches significant importance to the raising of qualification of school teachers and to promoting most modern methods, both in class and in extra-curriculum activities. The school holds a leading position in organizing international education exchange projects, university and college students from other countries are invited to school to do their teaching practice here.

The school is fully equipped with all the necessary language learning facilities. The pupils are encouraged to collaborate in the classroom and to use the foreign language not only during classes but also in various school events, in correspondence with peers in other countries in the framework of various international projects or on more personal levels.

In terms of the language learning programmes, the Gymnasium pursues the following objectives: to increase the range of languages offered to the school pupils; to raise pupils for operating in multilingual and multicultural Europe and to ensure high quality of teaching.

In 2012 Vilnius Simono Daukanto Gymnasium was awarded the title of “Ambassador of Languages” : this title is given to persons and institutions that have achieved outstanding results in raising motivation and promoting attractive and innovative ways of learning languages.

The 2012 award was to be given to a school that encourages language learning and creates multilingual learning environment. The selection process was part of the programme of the Multilingual competition held in Vilnius International American school in March 2012; 33 Lithuanian schools competed in using their multi-language skills: each participant spoke not fewer than two foreign languages, all in all the “working” languages of the competition amounted to 19.

The participants had to accomplish various tasks that comprised reading, writing and speaking skills. The event was supported by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania, the Education Exchange

Support Foundation, the Education Development Centre, the British Council, Goethe Institut, the French Cultural Centre, ISM University.

The team of S. Daukanto gymnasium won the competition and received the Ambassador of the Year title, which proves its high achievements in teaching languages and creating a motivating multilingual learning environment. The selection criteria: European priority for the 2012-2013 Label campaigns ('Multilingual classrooms'), ability to act as the ambassador of languages and innovation in language teaching.

Project coordinator

Vilnius Simono Daukanto Gimnazija

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Partnership

At present the school is taking part in 11 national and international projects with partners from over 15 countries

Web site

<http://www.daukanto.vilnius.lm.lt/index.php?group=56>

Project duration

2012



http://projects.pixel-online.org/nellip/DB_database_scheda.php?art_id=463&ta=&sec=&cou=21&yea=&ppr



Norway



The Saami Language Centre

The language center was founded to amass expertise in the Saami language, to coordinate language resources, to increase public awareness and to create more arenas for the use of the Saami language and to legitimize the use of the Saami language in more areas.

One general feature of the development and implementation of the majority of the courses was the importance attached to intensive periods of training that used a wide range of culture-based and practical tasks in a natural environment for language learning.

The Saami Language Centre employs the resources of regular instructors with formal skills and people with non-formalised knowledge of the Saami language, Saami traditions and local history. In this way, valuable and informal knowledge of the Saami language and culture is also transferred to others.

Many of the courses are also product-oriented and are based on the notion that the Saami language shall be a natural language for communication during, for example, training in traditional Saami handicrafts. The courses involved natural training and allowed different generations to work together.

Available resources were used in a holistic process of language and culture learning, contributing to the preservation of expertise and knowledge of the Saami culture and language, as well as stimulating new generations - of both Saami and Norwegian heritage - to become bilingual and to increase cross-cultural understanding.

The project responded to the European themes for language learning that were cultural awareness of regional/minority languages, intercultural awareness (any language) and informal language learning.

The Saami Language Centre project was selected as an Norwegian Best Practice mainly because it:

- addresses to a specific target group of the Saami people
- integrates language training to cultural and practical tasks and in that way enhanced language learning in natural contexts

- aims at inspiring young people to become bilingual and to understand the importance of the local culture

Project coordinator

Norwegian Board of Education

Partnership

Norwegian Board of Education

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http://nellip.pixel-online.org/DB_database_scheda.php?art_id=48&tla=&sec=&cou=39&yea=&ppr=



Romania



ISPY - Online Networking Platform for Language Learning

The ISPY project is a Key Activity 2 Languages Multilateral Project, financially supported by the Lifelong Learning programme. The project aims to develop a new online networking platform which allows interaction between young adults across Europe and helps them learn a new language via problem-solving challenges and tasks. The project partners have drawn inspiration from the espionage theme in order to keep foreign language learning fresh and exciting. Learners log in and they are soon challenged, perplexed and entertained while covering a set of ten modules in the target language of their choice. Each module consists of a range of activities including photo stories, web quests, short tasks, quizzes, listening tasks and extended tasks that call for collaboration through a moderated forum. Guidelines are also developed as part of the project to support teacher training.

By encouraging learners to communicate with peers across Europe through a funny virtual environment this innovative project aims to have a positive impact on developing language and intercultural skills. It focuses not only on improving intercultural dialogue in Europe but also on reinforcing language skills that are relevant to the workplace. In doing so we envisage that learners will be able to develop general and vocational language skills for use in both formal and informal situations. Reasons why the project was selected as best practice. The project course provides a flexible learning format: learners work at their own pace and work through the activities and quizzes on their own schedule. Learners have an easy access to all materials.

They also have access to authentic materials in six European languages (English, German, Spanish, Romanian, Polish and Dutch); all materials are designed with audio files that are embedded into each module (which definitely will help learners improve their pronunciation: from a single word to complete conversations) Learners will have an enjoyable experience while learning by being exposed to a story (on the topic of espionage) that enables them to make decisions based on their knowledge of a situation together with their learned understanding of a language and culture.

In addition to basic vocabulary building and grammar activities, the language online course programme includes

reading comprehension activities that allow learners to understand new meanings, expressions and words in different contexts.

The project provides innovative tools to sustain and enhance learners' engagement and motivation in language learning in upper secondary and pre-vocational and vocational education and training. The theme chosen appeals to people's appetite for problem solving, which makes learning a language memorable and pleasant. The learner is provided with clues from which the identity of the criminal may be deduced but the solution to the crime is revealed at the end of the course/game. The learner cannot find the solution unless s/he achieves the tasks in the target language. Thus, finding a solution to the crime becomes similar to learning a foreign language.

Language learning is interactive, challenging and takes place through a virtual environment which encourages learners to communicate with peers across Europe. The platform benefits from using excellent creative graphics, which suits the learners' expectations. Its graphics systems stem from advances in image technology, which enables the new story to be told. Its graphics elucidates a decision, dispels a doubt, or adds dynamism to all the project stages

Project coordinator

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Partnership

EuroEd, Romania
University of Extremadura, Spain
University of Lodz, Poland
Volkshochschule im Landkreis Cham
Fontys University of Applied Sciences

Web site

<http://www.ispy-project.eu>

Project duration

2 years
2010 – 2012



http://nellip.pixel-online.org/DB_database_scheda.php?art_id=481&tla=&sec=&cou=&yea=&ppr=



Sweden



The State of the Nation

In the project, The State of the Nation, children are working together with questions such as citizenship, politics, culture, education, industry, environment, health and identity. The children work with common themes and send their work over to a school in another country via e-mail. The works are adapted in the classroom and then groups of children discuss their work in a videoconference. The goals of the project are multiple: To develop young pupils' linguistic and communicative skills in a partnership with a school abroad, to learn a new language in a natural way, to develop as an individual and to discover similarities and differences in different societies and cultures. It also aims to strengthen children's self-confidence and to give them a deeper understanding of themselves and the children in England and Portugal with whom they are working.

Some reported results are that when using e-mails, community zero and video conferences, the motivation and enthusiasm for learning among the pupils have increased. Pupils' self-confidence has been strengthened, and their language skills have improved. All pupils dare to communicate in English even pupils who rarely speak in classroom. Underachievers are promoted and feel confirmed. Pupils get motivated and have fun. The working method gives the pupils a natural approach to English. The teachers had never experienced such a big improvement in language learning.

When the pupils go from grade 6 to grade seven their new teachers say that it is easier for them to communicate and they assimilate new languages in a completely different way than other students. All students who have worked with video conferencing, community zero and email and have passed national tests in English. Parents say that their children have gained more self-confidence.

The reasons for choosing this project as an example of a best practice are many. It is a very long-lasting and successful project. To be able to report that all children who have taken part of this project have passed the national tests in English is tremendous. Furthermore the European criterion which states that initiatives should provide a tangible improvement in the teaching and learning of languages is met. The results of working with video conferencing and exchanges have not only provided knowledge and experiences for the pupils. It has also enriched the teachers and involved parents.

The State of the Nation project also meets the criterion for mobility in language teaching. The students interact and learn through video conferences, which moves the learning outside the regular classroom as well.

As reported in the case study the teachers of the municipality of Sandviken have also gained a lot from this project. The network of contacts that they have built has been incredibly valuable for the development of language learning in the community and for the training of the teachers. In the years since the project started between 2-300 teachers have attended different Comenius courses abroad.

The project has a comprehensive approach. Every element of the language initiative should ensure that the needs of the students are identified and met. This method allows every pupil to work at their own level giving them confirmation and acknowledgement. To be able to work and learn in a situation of authentic language use is very valuable to all students of all different levels of linguistic skills.

Project coordinator

Kungsgårdens skola

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Partnership

Sandviken Municipality, Sweden
The project is between three schools in three countries: Kungsgarden School, Headley Park School, Bristol and Senhora DA Hora Porto, Portugal

Web site

<http://sandviken.se/omskolan/projekt/videokonferenser.4.17c477910355e9d1ff80002906.html>

Project duration

15 years
1997 – on going



http://projects.pixel-online.org/nellip/CS_scheda.php?art_id=85



United Kingdom



Primary Language Podcasting

The main aim of this project was to provide resources to enable primary school teachers across the 480 primary schools in Lancashire (NW England), who are in general not speakers of French, to be able to provide interesting, motivating lessons and to develop their own classroom language and language teaching skills.

30 podcasts were produced for French using up-to-date technology to serve as an easily available resource that could be directly used in class. The podcasts were accompanied by notes and worksheets to make them easier to use. The Lancashire local authority was able to inform teachers about them through their own newsletters and website.

The podcasts were short (8-10 minutes) but were packed with ideas for teaching: games, songs, rhymes, ways of teaching language in context, cultural awareness, etc. This was to encourage a flexible learning approach and to enable teachers to use them in any order according to their programme of work and the pace of learning/teaching in their classes.

The project was organised in three main phases. The first involved a cross-section of teachers in practical tasks followed by feedback and sharing. The second phase focused on piloting the units in the developers' own schools with the developers evaluating this, before piloting them with teachers who were not familiar with the project and obtaining feedback by questionnaire and oral discussion.

The final phase was making the units freely available (not just in Lancashire) via the local authority's website.

How did the project exemplify best practice?

- The key issue with introducing languages at primary level (from age 7 in this case) is the ability of teachers to deal with the challenge, given that they usually do not know the language at all well and are incorporating language teaching into their weekly routine of cross-curricular teaching with the same pupils. This project was an efficient and innovative way of providing easy training and support to a large number of teachers across hundreds of schools who were new to language teaching.

- A small core team of motivated 'specialists' was formed to actually write and produce the podcasts. Attempts were made to widen the team, but when this proved unsuccessful, the core team again took over to ensure delivery of the materials. Having a core group who think alike, communicate well and share the same vision is critical in achieving project objectives.
- The materials, which are simple and not intimidating for inexperienced teachers of languages, were carefully piloted first with the involvement of the developers themselves, then beyond this group. In both cases, feedback was collected and acted on before the materials were more widely disseminated. This kind of trialling and experimentation with a small group and the gathering of and reflection on feedback is essential in any project that involves innovation and targets a wide group of teachers and pupils.
- The material was supported by notes and worksheets in PDF form and was made easily downloadable for use at home (by teachers) or in class with pupils, depending on the content. The website provided guidance in how to download and use the materials and the local authority ensured that teachers were informed about what was available and where. Making materials easily available to teachers and keeping them simple is important in ensuring that they will be widely used.

Project coordinator:

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Web sites

<http://www.lancsngfl.ac.uk/nationalstrategy/primary/pml/>

<http://www.lancsngfl.ac.uk/podcast/pml/french/rss.xml> ;

<http://www.lancsngfl.ac.uk/podcast/pml/spanish/rss.xml>

Project duration

2008 to July 2011

http://projects.pixel-online.org/nellip/DB_database_scheda.php?art_id=129